

A Sweetheart Love for Jesus Christ

by Rolfe Barnard

The sermon emphasizes the importance of having a tender heart and a heart that cares, and the need to borrow a passion for men from Jesus Christ.

Duration: 54:04

Scripture: Matthew 13:44, Ephesians 2:8

Topics: "Evangelism", "Holy Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a powerful story of a revival meeting that caused a stir in a community. The preacher describes how people who had never been to a church service before were drawn to the meeting. One particular 16-year-old Roman Catholic girl, who didn't understand much about the gospel, was moved to come forward and kneel down. The preacher emphasizes the importance of having a deep conviction and passion for sharing the truth of Christ's death and resurrection. He warns against relying solely on intellectual knowledge without the power of the Holy Spirit. The preacher also highlights the persecution that some believers face for their faith, recounting the story of a girl who was physically and verbally abused by her family for her decision to follow Christ. The sermon concludes with a call for believers to have a burning desire to share the message of reconciliation with others.

Transcript

said, I believe that Christ died for me because it is incredible. I believe that he rose from the dead because it is impossible. I believe that Christ died for me because it is incredible.

I believe he rose from the dead because it is impossible. Is there any hope for us today to recapture such daring faith? If we can't, we're in for some bad time. I won't exhort a little while tonight.

Couldn't hold our mouth. People taking a bath, that's a sign of the days in which we're living. Most churches now do not dare to attempt to reach anybody during the week.

Many more have gone now to three-day evangelistic efforts. We're hanging on for dear life. We're finding out that we can get through and still be dead.

We're finding out that we can have fine methods and it won't work. I think for my own heart that we ought to do one two things. We ought to close up our church doors, or we ought to set our hearts partly after recovery of this incredible gospel that talks about something that is just out of this world, that God was

manifest in the flesh and that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.

I think the only hope for this preacher and the people to whom I minister is that please God I shall yet live to see the day when my own heart will leap within me as it did when that good news, impossible, incredible news was made real to my spirit. You should never forget Dr. Hamm after Mr. Graham came on the scene. In the days of Dr. Hamm's descent, that mighty man of God had almost been put on a shelf.

It seemed that he could rejoice in and get comfort out of nothing except the ministry of young brother Graham. In the early days of Graham's ministry he made a journey to see the old gentleman under whose preaching he had been brought to Christ. And he asked the old preacher, so mightily used in other days by God, to give him one word of counsel.

And Brother Hamm said, Billy, never lose your sweetheart love for Jesus Christ. I think maybe that's what's the matter with us. Never lose your sweetheart love for Jesus Christ.

I had the privilege of sitting under the teaching of Dr. W.T. Conner. Dr. Conner was a non-emotional man, pragmatic, brilliant, devoted to the gospel of Jesus Christ. He used to come into the classroom at 8 o'clock in the morning, call the roll, have somebody lead in prayer.

And then time after time after time, the three years I sat under his teaching, he'd throw the lesson away. He never brought any book to the class with him except the Hebrew and Greek Bible. And he'd say, young gentleman, I want to read my favorite passage of scripture again.

He'd read from Matthew chapter 13 about the fellow that found the treasure and went and bought the field so he could have the treasure. About the merchant that discovered a pearl of great price and went and sold all he had and bought it. Then Dr. Conner, non-emotional as he was, he began to cry.

He'd say, young gentleman, if my class in systematic theology fails to send some of you youngsters out, with something you just can't keep from telling, something you just can't keep from telling, he said, it'll all fail. Oh, if we could believe that Christ died for sin, if we could believe that he rose from the dead, that he's the living Lord and the Lord of life. I think I have earned the right to speak about the terrible, terrible danger of coming to think that truth, unbaptized in tears and the Holy Ghost, will get the job done.

It just won't do it. I can remember the time in my ministry when the brethren thought if they became pre-millenarian they'd get this world of Christ. But something happened.

My contacts with people who've changed their doctrine to where they say they believe in sovereign grace, I think I've earned the right to speak on this, because I sat at the feet of Dr. Conner and he taught them to me. And I've never preached anything else. But I want to exhort you a little tonight, from my own experience in the word of God, and the heart cry of the man whom God used to expound the gospel, the apostle Paul, and call my own heart back and yours to a sweetheart love for Jesus Christ, until we just can't keep from telling what a wonderful Savior is Jesus my Lord.

Incredible that he died for sin. The great work my Lord did on the cross, not something to be argued about, not something to develop your theory about, not something to cause you to fall down and wonder that Christ should die for sin. But I don't know what a day is going to bring forth.

I don't know whether God's through with America or not. I don't know. I'm not that kind of a prophet.

But under God, I want to have truth, if I can get it, that will make me not always have to give an excuse for following in the train of Paul. Paul said he was a pattern God appointed and is a human pattern for all who shall thereafter believe. I want to preach the same Christ, the same Jesus, and witness the same Jesus that he did.

But I don't want to do it if I can do it without the heartache and the heartbreak that he had. I believe that whatever tomorrow brings forth, we are not worthy of the name of Christ unless with no active faith, whatever the results, this world will go to hell over our breaking heart. And I believe the hardest battle that any human being will ever fight is to have a tender heart, a heart that cares.

My God-given preachers, don't think you've got any truth right, and call it doctrine you learned from Paul, until you can pray like he did. But my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that the night is safe. Don't think you've got it right, and don't try to cram it down anybody else, unless you can say with him, I say the truth in Christ.

I'm not lying. And when I thus speak my conscience that God-given monitor, not native to men, it's a gift of God. When I say the truth in Christ, that I'm going to say in just a minute, Paul said, my conscience don't say you're lying, you're just being religious now.

No, my conscience also bears me witness and the Holy Ghost that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. Now we reap in what we've been sowing for the last six years. We've had revival meetings in the first three nights, all the Christians got their hearts burdened.

And then after the meeting was over, they went back and picked up the cold hearts of the next meeting. But the Apostle Paul had something on his mind and his heart that bore heavily all the time. God knows I wish I could get to where I could sit down beside him and have a little of what he's got.

He's got continual sorrow, something bothering him. God sent him to be a light to the Gentiles and told him for the most part in his ministry to turn his back on his own people. And he spent his life trying to answer an unanswerable question.

And in the ninth through the eleventh chapters of Romans, you can hear him sobbing as he's trying to unravel under the inspiration, we believe, of the Holy Ghost. Why it is that he's running around all over the country trying to get the Gentiles to bow to King Jesus when his own people have. And I think the Gentiles, when he speaks to them, talk to him like they do us and say, if what you've got will make hair grow on your head, how come you're bald-headed? And they were saying to Paul, what do you mean coming here knocking on my door and bothering me and making a mess of my favorite television program? Interfering with my private life, trying to talk to me about your Jesus? And your own Jewish race to whom God gave the fathers and the glory and the covenants and the adoption and the law and the promises and the service of God.

And they've turned their back. They don't want any of Jesus. And I tell you, brother, preaching to others with an ache in his heart because that little insignificant nation that God picked up out of a sea of great nations and made them his people.

Oh, Paul spent his life, spent his life agonized over his Jewish people, his kinsmen according to the flesh, so greatly blessed of God who had so rejected. That's what the man of me, Paul, said. People so greatly blessed, they've rejected the Messiah.

And he said, I'll tell you how it bothers me. It bothers me so much that if it were possible, get your theology professor, Dr. Conley, maybe he can straighten this out for you. I don't have the biggest idea what on earth God, Paul, is talking about here, but he says, I could wish that I myself were damned, anathematized, accursed from Christ, separated from Christ, cut off from my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.

It would never win another soul to Christ. For God's sake, let's get an aching, breaking heart. Let's be done with doctrinitis.

Let's be done with professionalism. Let's be done with parasitism. Let's just come back and drink at the water trough, days that sow in tears.

To reap and join ain't nobody else going to. It's still so that he that goeth and weepeth bearing precious seeds. The unkind folks God promises shall doubtless come again, rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them.

Oh, for a borrowed passion. The apostle Paul wasn't a much better man than I am. There's not that much difference in me.

He couldn't preach much better than I can. There's not that much difference in me. He couldn't pray much better than I can.

There's not that much difference in me. Our debt is a difference. He learned something.

He learned that Paul and Ralph Barnett don't give a hoot whether a Jew or a Gentile is brought into the family of God. He learned that the only way to have what we used to call a passion for men is to borrow that passion from the one because he had such a passion, though he were rich, became poor for our sake. You mean to tell me you can mutilate or cut up or command or work up yourself to what I'm talking about? You'll have to borrow this from Jesus Christ.

You'll have to get it from Jesus Christ. I believe that Christ died for me because it's incredible. If we could believe that, I believe we could have some of his passion.

I believe that God raised him from the dead because that's just impossible. Read the popular theologians of the day. Well, that's just silly.

I believe that God raised me from the dead because that just can't raise Jesus from the dead. That just can't happen. That's impossible.

Read the latest from the latest hot theologians of the day. Bow your heads in shame with me that you living in the generation can walk in for a little time. Billion young theologians in leading institutions trying to put their finger on the pulse of the time could come up and get a hearing for a while with the God is dead theology.

They could have never got a hearing at all if the evidence were there that this generation of preachers and teachers believed the truths of the Bible in their heads, but have never believed them in their hearts. That's the thing that makes us tick. Whoa! Explain a man who go around with a sob in his heart night and day for old speaking.

Have at us, brother, if you know Jews. Somebody said God can save them, but that's all he can do for them. They're the most hateful people that God ever had put up with.

And Paul was one of them. And he had a moan and a groan and an ache in his heart. God took the kingdom away from him and gave it to another.

And all these years, blindness in part, has been their portion. And Paul was found in the theology, but he didn't become a Calvinist and sit down and say, well, they deserve what they got. He said, no, I've got a burden, Paul.

I've got a continual heaviness and sorrow. I could wish that I'd be separated from Christ, from my brethren. God give us, I've got to face your Sunday morning prayer.

And we'd just well come to the morning of the day. Greenwood Baptist Church kind of getting to be a Sunday morning out there. Not you, but all that gang that'll show up.

It used to be that way. Oh, God, I've got to preach to them. If any of us got any warm hearts, by the time the gang gets in in the morning, the icicles will be hanging from all of these legs.

Oh, God, if I lose everything else, I'm not fit to preach to anybody. I'm not fit to knock on anybody's doorbell. I'm not fit to argue anything with anybody in the spiritual realm, unless I've got some of this aching heart, some of this yearning for me.

Brethren and sisters, we're not selling insurance. We're not trying to prove a point. We're trying to lift up hands as ambassadors of Jesus Christ and plead with men and women to be reconciled with God.

God give us a passion, we'll have to get it from Christ. Yes, since I went to Boston, Massachusetts, if you've never managed to step in there, you've got some nice things in store for you. I went to a church that they made me put on a cocktail coat and everything.

I didn't have one, went and bought one for me. Well, I just had to wear that on Sunday morning. I just, I don't know why.

Oh, boy, they were the most courteous, clean, orthodox, fundamental, separated bunch I'd ever got into. And after the third night, I said to the pastor, Brother Pastor, I believe it's all right with you. I'll preach if you want me to tomorrow night, and then I believe I'll close my part of the meeting.

Well, he was just utterly amazed, and he said, oh, you couldn't do that. But I said, there's no kindred, we don't have kindred spirits. I said, you haven't done the thing I've asked you to do, you and your people.

And I don't know, I don't know what to do. We're not getting anywhere. Everything I say seems to go against your grain.

God's not the author of confusion. I've been in so many scraps, I ain't looking for another one, you know, but I guess we'll have some. But he said, oh, praise the Lord about it.

And the wife and I, she was with me, and we went on to where we were being entertained a little while, and there came the pastor and the deacons. They were good men. And they said, we just got to talk with you.

I said, why, to just give our church a bad name if the preacher left us? And I said, well, brethren, I don't want to be contrary, but it looks to me like things will get worse the longer I stay. And they said, well, Brother Barnett, you'll just tell us what you want to do. You'll promise not to leave us.

Why, we'll do it. And I said, but I don't believe I could pray with you there. I said, I've not been trying to get you to do anything, because I say it so.

I've been trying to tell you this is God's way. I said, you never make a visit. I haven't seen a tear since I've been here.

Nobody's come around and said I'm burdened for Bill Smith or Susie Jones. I said, everything I ask you to do, you say you're not accustomed to doing it yet. And I said, it's too late now.

I don't want you to just do something for my sake, for the reputation of your church's sake. And they said, under God's preacher, the pastor led and said, we've been wrong. Tell us again what God wants.

And by the grace of God, we'll reverse and we'll seek to do it. Well, I told them the simple story, that the service begins after the meeting ends, and that the place to whip this is out yonder, not in a nice, comfortable church building. And that the whole Bible was saturated with the word, Geo-go, not send somebody else, but God's people to go.

And to go with the precious truth. And to go saturated in tears. And to go with the anointing of the Spirit and the promise of His accompaniment.

And I said, you've refused to do it, you've told me you've never done it, and you wouldn't know how if you started. They said, by the grace of God, if you'll help us, we'll learn. Well, that bunch of Yankees just went crazy.

And the next day, they almost stormed the city of Boston. That's a Unitarian and the Christian side hotbed. And they went in places that no Christian possibly would go.

And I left, we went in the saloons, we went in every place we could get in the door. And we just acted a fool. And in Boston, that if you put down an atomic bomb, they'd never wink an eye.

They're so nice and pious and ostentatious in religion, it creates a little stir. And that night, under God, that house was packed out. Folks that never had even been invited to a church service were so startled when they were, they came out to see what on God's earth was going on.

And in that service that night, as soon as we stood and started to sing, a little 16-year-old girl came running down. She's a Roman Catholic girl. And she'd never been in a gospel service in her life.

And I don't think she understood a thing on God's earth that is going on in her head. But she understood something in that which makes us take this thing dearer to us. And she just found herself down on that carpet, and it liked to scare everybody to death.

And my wife came and dealt with her. And of course, I don't know, but I think God came to that little girl. And Friday, that was Thursday night, and she wasn't back Friday night.

And Saturday night, she wasn't back. And I said to the preacher, do you know where that little girl lives? I have a strange feeling about her. And he said, I do too.

He said, I'm sorry to tell you, Brother Barnes, it's new to us, anything like that ever happened. Nobody thought to even ask her where she lived. And we don't know where she is.

But she said, I promise you, if she's not back in the service in the morning, we're going to comb this town until we find her. I want to find out what happened to her. But Sunday morning came, and the little girl was present.

And she sat way back. And my wife noticed her, and she went and sat down by her. And I preached that morning on Hail the Sinner's Long Home.

I remember that couple had been coming every other night during that meeting, 176 miles from Springfield, Massachusetts. And I noticed a young couple in the service every other night. And one night I got acquainted with them.

I said, I'm sort of puzzled why you're here every other night. And they said, we live in Springfield, 176 miles. And they said, we both work public works.

And they said, we get off and run home and change clothes and grab a sandwich and drive like mad, 176 miles. I said, we just can't do it physically every night. And I thought, because I was such a big preacher, and I kept talking with them, and they said, we never heard a man even say the word, much less preach on hail in our lives.

And we've come to get it. And that little girl sat down. I preached for about 20 minutes, and she began to weep.

And then she quit weeping and began to cry. And then she quit crying and began to sob. And you could almost hear her body tearing apart all over that audience.

My wife put her arm around it. Pretty soon she got up and broke up my big sermon. And it stood in that passion of a Boston church full of icicles of orthodoxy, without tears and the Holy Ghost.

And I had to give her testimony. If I lived to be a million years, I'd never forget her testimony. Her face had great scars on it.

I had my wife turn her dress down in the back as long as it was modest. And it was just beaten pulp. She had just been beaten nearly into an inch of her life.

And she stood there and told how Thursday night she ran all the way home. And she ran into the front room, and daddy, Italian daddy, Italian mother, and brother and two sisters were there. And she went in and told them that she went down to the Baptist church, and that Jesus Christ came into her heart, and Jesus was so glad.

She was so glad. Her daddy stood up and said, young lady, what did you say? And she repeated it. And if you do not think this is happening, you go into the great centers of America now where people cluster together according to race from the old country, where the word of the Father is law.

And the Father went and got his black snake whip and made that little 16-year-old girl stand up. And she said he whipped me until I fell in a pain, unconscious in the floor. And she said I don't know how long I stayed there, but I was awakened by a sense of pain.

And I opened my eyes just as my brother stood there kicking me. And when he got through, my sisters came and both of them stood on each side of me and spat in my face. And my mother came and cursed me.

And my father came and commanded me to stand up. And then he told me to go to my room. And he locked me in and kept the key on the outside.

And as he was letting me in the room, he said, young lady, if you ever make such a blasphemous statement as that again, I'll kill you, so help me God. He said I stayed in that room with my beaten body all Thursday night. By Friday, the wounds were causing fever and beginning to fester until I was burning up.

I stayed all day Friday, all day Thursday. Thursday night, Friday night, my father unlocked the door and gave me a piece of bread and a glass of water and locked the door. Saturday morning, I was screaming in pain and I crouched like an animal.

When my daddy unlocked that door, I was waiting for him. As the knob turned a little bit from the time I turned it quickly and pulled it, and he came rushing in and fell. And as he fell, I ran out the door and got out of the house and escaped.

He said I spent all day Saturday in an empty boxcar down at the railroad yard and said the night acted as dark. I summoned up my courage. I was hungry and thirsty and feverish and screaming with pain.

And I went to a drug store and the man knew me and he dressed my wounds a little bit and I slept in that car. And said this morning, not knowing what to do, afraid to go back home. If I did, my daddy'd kill me.

Not knowing where to turn, he said I know what I'll do. I'll go down where the Jesus people are and they'll help me. And said I came this morning hoping somebody would help me.

And then I began to listen to the preacher. And then I forgot myself and all I could think of was my daddy who whipped me, my mother who cursed me, my sisters who spat on me, and my brother who kicked me. And then she held up her arms like this and she broke the heart of that aristocratic Boston church in her piercing breath.

She said oh men and women of Jesus, please help me pray for my daddy who burned in a hole you heard about this morning. Please help me pray for my brother and my sisters and my mother. He said I forgot everything else except that those dear ones were going to hell.

Oh my soul, my soul, my soul is in a way we could forget our aches and pains. I closed that meeting on Sunday night. I was supposed to open in New York City the next night.

The pastor called him up in New York City and said the preacher can't get there till Tuesday. Tuesday got important business. And Monday night they got up and were going to have baptizing.

The pastor said I'll entertain a motion to ask Brother Barnard, our visiting preacher, to act for this church. There are several people here tonight. I want him to have the honor of baptizing.

I went down in the baptismal pool, lifted up my hand and took the hand of that little 16 year old girl. Then I took the hand of her mother and her father and her two sisters and her brother and I brought them all down in the pool together and had the joy of putting them in the water in the likeness of the death and resurrection of my Lord. I saw what men who really care could do.

What men who really care can do. Ladies and gentlemen, let's don't go on without this. Please let's don't go on without this.

Borrow it from King Jesus. Borrow it from King Jesus. We've got incredible news without controversy.

Great is the mystery of godliness. Great! God was manifest in the flesh. Without controversy he ascended to glory.

There's a man in glory faithfully representing us. God called us to such faithfulness that we've never known. Let us stand.

I will keep thy cross, O Lord, where the eye will fall. Where he leads me, I will follow with him. I wish I could put my arm around you and you put your arm around me.

Share this burden and make a covenant tonight. I believe your pastor would say that I have tried to stand for truth such as I've been able to understand it. I've tried to.

For many years I was known as the only evangelist in America who believed in the sovereignty of God and salvation. I've gone through hell for that truth. But it's no good if I haven't got what Paul had.

I've stormed and screamed at God shutting us up. People are not attending places of divine service to hear about God now. They're going to have to be reached by God's blessed little people.

I don't know where you work, your next door neighbor. But if all you've got is just the truth, that won't get them done. It's got to be bathed in what we're talking about tonight.

I wish I knew how, for my own heart. There's been a battle, controversy, greed, bitterness. I've prayed God never let me get that way.

I don't want to be. I don't know what to ask of you tonight. Under God I don't accept for you to do business with God.

This passion's got to be borrowed. You'll never have it yourself. If you feel anything you want to see, I wish you'd come here and see it.

If you've got anything you want to do, I wish you'd come here and do it. If you've got any requests you want to make, I wish you'd come and make it. Father, let me just say this for the kids and my folks.

I was saved about ten years ago. Some of you here know it. I feel impressed to say this tonight.

I was saved about seven years before I was saved. Somebody told me to go into church on Mother's Day and I went. Seven years to my knowledge after that, I was asked a number of times, weeped over and pleaded with to go.

I never did go. I wouldn't go. But one night in a home, a man personally dealt with me about my soul and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I don't believe that I would have ever gone inside of a church. There's only one way that a lot of people will ever be born again. I thought somebody was concerned enough to come and tell me about the Lord Jesus Christ and a number prayed for me deathly and get concerned because some of my family was concerned.

It's been a battle for truth in our days. It's going to still be a battle. The Bible talks about speaking the truth in love.

Many years ago a preacher got in his car and drove 150 miles to my house. I'd never seen him. He'd never seen me.

I was preaching over the radio in Fort Worth, Texas. He came and knocked on my door and told me his name and said, can I come in for a moment. He came in and said, I've driven 150 miles to say that I believe you've learned the gospel.

Preach it with tears. And he turned and walked out, got in his car and went home. Preach it with tears.

Witness it. Not with this that comes out of the eyes, but this that comes out of the heart. I went to hear Dr. Truett preach one time in Amarillo, Texas.

I was a neighboring young pastor in Boulder, Texas. My church said, you go where we'll pay the bill. I want you to hear the great preacher.

I got that the day service. I got in late. After the service was dismissed, no fewer than 500 people shook my hand and asked me if I knew the Lord.

They knew who I was. They wanted to find out, find out whether I was right with the Lord. I remember when us Baptists, we saw somebody we didn't know and got a chance to get acquainted with the Massicans as well.

Do you think there's any truth in the Bible that would be against that? I don't know. There's a preacher down in a certain city in Tennessee. He's in his eighties now, still pretty spry.

For over 50 years he's tried to preach a God who's really God, without apology. He's maintained a radio broadcast. They've since had radios in that section.

He's known all over that section as a man who believes that salvation is the gift of God. It's in his hands. The only thing a poor old sinner can do is reach out hungry, starving hands to receive bread.

I held a meeting for him. Most of the time I'd preach. All the time we'd talk to an inpatient, he'd sob like his heart would break.

That's good Calvinism, folks. That's what I want, don't you? We're going to tarry just another minute. Anybody else got a word to say, a request to make, a confession to make? Anybody like to come and go in a room and pray? Anybody want to make this night the night you begin to seek the Lord? If you do, you come on.

I'd like for us to continue just a little bit in prayer. This lady that came is one that's been dealt with and witnessed to. I tell you, I want us to go to God in prayer for the salvation of her soul, that God will work real richness in her heart.

And then if we pray, I trust that you'll pray that God will cause you to go out. That he'll just thrust you out. Get somebody and bring them to this service and witness to him.

I want this church to get to the place that we'll make ourselves available to every person who visits and inquire in regard to the welfare of their soul. I want us to get hot-ass men, speak to them about Christ. Not just to get decisions, we could get a lot of decisions out of the buses, boys and girls that are coming, but get real concern, valuable concern about the welfare of men and the welfare of women.

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