

How Almighty God Brings Sinners to Himself

by Rolfe Barnard

This sermon explains how Almighty God brings sinners to Himself through the work of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Duration: 42:30

Scripture: Psalm 107:6, Psalm 107:29-30, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Sinners"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the different ways in which God works in the lives of individuals. He emphasizes that God does not have a one-size-fits-all approach and that He deals with each person uniquely. However, one common aspect of salvation is that God's Holy Spirit brings individuals to a place of trouble and distress, leading them to cry out to the Lord. The preacher also highlights the power of God to calm storms and bring peace to those who trust in Him. Additionally, he emphasizes the importance of praising the Lord for His goodness and works. The sermon also touches on the concept of God being one yet three, which may be difficult to understand without experiencing God personally.

Transcript

They're taking this down, I believe, and I've got a one-sided audience, I'm looking at a blank space, it's a joy to be here. We drove up Friday evening from God's country down south to do a little missionary work with you Yankees up there. And we've had a delightful time as a guest to the Resingers, and last evening we had dinner with the Irvins, and this morning breakfast with George.

That's all I'm going to say, George somebody. If you'll turn in the word of God this morning to the 107th Psalm, I thought perhaps that I was not acquainted with your lesson for the morning. I neglected to get a book or whatever you have, so I'll just give you a Bible reading and a Bible study if it's all right.

Of the 107th Psalm, I take it that you have your Bible, do you? Always, I've ministered a great deal in other years in the north, and I always know when I'm back south, when the people do not have their Bible. We don't have much use for them down our way, we've already graduated from them. But typical of the people in the north whom I've come to love very much is the fact that you do bring the shores along with you.

By the way, they told me last evening there's one Democrat here. Where is he? I'd like to get acquainted with him. I hope I'll be a great help to you Republicans.

I feel sorry for you and want to do you good. It's such a joy to be here, and my wife is along, and we've had the time of our lives. Would you follow me in this morning Sunday school study as we browse about a little bit in the 107th Psalm? Before I read it, I'd preface the reading of it by stating that here in the Old Testament, in Psalm 107, we have a delightful and very accurate description of how Almighty God brings sinners into a saving relationship with himself.

Every scripture we've been taught is bifocal, whatever that big word means. It means that it looks in two directions at the same time. And for those of you who are Bible students, you'll immediately understand that the first meaning of the 107th Psalm has to do with how God's deals are dealt with this elect, the covenant people, the nation of Israel, in bringing them back from captivity.

But since scripture cannot be pinned up very well, we have also here, without doing any violence to the word of God, we have a blessed description of the work of God in the saving, making whole, bringing into right relationship to himself of lost men and women. In verse 1, we have a plain statement of the ministry of the work of God as Father. And in verse 2, we have the ministry and work of God as Son.

And in verse 3, we have a description of the ministry or work of God as the Holy Spirit. Nobody, of course, can explain our God. The scriptures and experience make us know that God is Father, that God is Son, and God is Holy Ghost.

They were having a Bible conference in England years since, on the subject of the Trinity. You understand there is no doctrine worked out in the Bible about God as three or God as one. And yet if you know him, you know him as your Father, you know him as your Redeemer, and you know him as your Sanctifier, the Holy Ghost.

You know that God brought you to himself because he intended to, because he set out to, and because he was in Christ on the cross reconciling you, and because for the finger of God, the Holy Ghost, he gathered you, he sought you out, he overcame you, he broke you, he brought you to himself. They were having a very learned discussion by learned preachers in England on the Trinity. They were trying to explain the unexplainable and to make plain that which cannot be claimed.

And the learned preacher was discoursing on the fact that God was one and yet he was three. Three in one and one in three. That's just as clear as mud unless you've experienced God.

And they had in that congregation a sort of, they called him a half-wit. He wasn't quite all there. I just must tell this.

We were out yesterday with a fellow that suffers that way. He ran out of gas in that snowstorm. But this fellow was named Silly Billy.

Silly Billy. And they noticed that Silly Billy was not being reverent during the discussion. He was scribbling on a piece of paper.

And in those days they were a little more conscious of being in a house of God than they are now. And finally the warden, who I guess we call one of the deacons of some official, one of the wardens during the message went and tapped Silly Billy on the shoulder and reprimanded him for not paying attention to the preacher. And took the pencil and the piece of paper away from him and took it up like he used to when I was a boy in school to the teacher.

Writing notes, doing books as we called it in our day. And the speaker looked at it just a moment and didn't pay much attention to it and continued to learn his discourse and finally looked at it again and read it. And then he took it up and put his message for a little bit and said, I want to read to you what Silly Billy has written.

He wasn't being irreverent. And he read what Silly Billy had tried to transcribe and translate as what he'd been hearing from the distant preacher about God. God three and yet one, one yet three.

And the half-wit had written down three and one and one and three. This is too much for Silly Billy. But this can Silly Billy see that one of them has died for me.

That's good theology. That's good theology. One of them has died for me.

So I have here the work of the Trinitarian God, the Godhead. God is Father, God is Son, and God is Holy Spirit. The first verse, the work of the Father.

The second verse, the work of the Son. The third verse, the work of the Spirit. And then the remainder of the chapter is a description or an explanation of the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing men into what we call salvation.

I thought perhaps, since we didn't know what else to talk about, to talk about this this morning. And with your Bible before you, let's read along with that outline before you and see if the Lord might be blessed to reveal himself afresh to us. In the first verse, I have before me an authorized version, a King James version.

I would just almost imagine that most of you do. Perhaps all of you do. You have the authorized version.

I'd like you to take your pencil or your pen, I hope you use your Bible, and do a little marking out. For in the first verse, there is one word here that you notice in italics. You youngsters who are sitting here on the front, thanks for it, know that the reason this word in Durreth is in italics is because it does not appear in the original.

The oldest manuscripts would have the word of God. The translators of the King James version thought that it would add to or simplify or explain what the Spirit was saying in this verse if they would put the word in Durreth in there. But as a matter of fact, the word in Durreth robs the verse of its blessed truth.

So I've gone to that length to ask you to rub out that word that's put in there in italics, thus emphasizing that it does not occur in the original. We'll read it without that word. Oh, give thanks unto Jehovah the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy forever.

His mercy forever. People are enjoined to give thanks unto Almighty God for his goodness, for his forever, that's not good English or good grammar, for his forever is eternal mercy. The thought that how long it lasts robs it of the glorious truth that God the Father is a redeeming God and that God's eternal purpose is the heart of the Bible and is the heart of the gospel and that God has determined, God's fixed it, God's marked out beforehand that out of the wreck and ruin of the sin of Adam and us in the garden he's going to have for himself a family, for his son a body and for the Holy Spirit a house in which to live.

Now, down south we're a little bit flacker in our language. I trust I wouldn't offend you if I brought in a little Southern. You know, you people talk funny.

I don't know whether you can understand me talking good English and all that, but I enjoy it. But down south we have an expression, Come hell or high water, God's going to have a family. He's determined to do that, praise the Lord.

And he's going to have a body, the Church, which is his body, for his son. He's got it, he's working on it now, he's building it, he's completing it, bless the Lord. And he's going to have a house in which the Holy Spirit, the temple, the sanctuary, corporately it's the Church, which is Christ's body, individually it's the body, this body you see here is the sanctuary, isn't that wonderful, of God, the Holy Spirit.

Now, if I didn't believe this, I'd quit preaching a long time ago. I've been a hitchhiker evangelist a long time. And I'll tell you a fact, I just nearly wasn't in a dignified Yankee Baptist church.

I showed a little bit to the world. I am so tickled that I can go up and down the land and just announce in this pessimistic day that I'm preaching the message of a God who is determined by the use of all the means that he sees fit to have for himself a family of men and women who when he gets through with them will be exactly like the son of his Lord. Oh, give thanks unto the Lord.

He is good, amen? What would you give thanks for? For his mercy forever. Now, I do not know any great truth that can be experienced by an eternally bound soul that I can explain. I do not try to explain it.

I just rejoice that I am the object of God's affection. That I am his magnificent obsession that God set over heels in love with me. That I am the apple of his eye.

Amen? That don't make me mad, I just... That's good. That's good. A woman came up to me one day and asked me, she said, Brother Barnes, I don't understand that election business.

I said, I don't either. She said, I don't know whether I'd pick for it or not. And I said, Sister, are you saved? Do you know the Lord? She said, I sure do.

I said, then who saved you? She said, the Lord saved me. I said, did he do it on purpose or was it an accident? She said, praise God, he did it on purpose. I said, that's the election.

Praise the Lord. Well, I'm not good at preaching all that. I like that.

I like that. Oh, my soul. How long in these days, this is the most pessimistic day the world ever knew.

Everybody's got the blues, except God's people. What a message we have for this hour. I long to preach about a God who's working according to schedule, according to his plan, according to his purpose, and that he will not fail.

Hallelujah. Well, let's look at the second verse. God is Son, is Redeemer.

Takes more than the purpose of God to keep a man out of hell and to bring forth a peculiar people zealous unto good works for the glory of Christ. And the second verse here tells us about the work in person of the Lord God, Jesus Christ. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so. Does that speak in on you? Let the redeemed of the Lord. He is the Redeemer.

He has redeemed us by his blood in whom we have redemption. He's the Redeemer. I asked people about the state of their soul and they needed to begin to tell me something they've done.

But I didn't ask them what they've done. I asked them if they got united to the one who really does something. Let the redeemed of the Lord.

We were talking last evening about all the controversy of doctrine and things. You know, our present company accepts that most people are awful dogs. When we fell in the fall, something happened to this noggin of ours.

We haven't got much sense, you know that? That's the truth. We're just well-faced. But thank God every child of God agrees perfectly on every point of doctrine when we're on our faces talking to God.

That's right. That's right. Nobody but God himself, when he got his eyes closed to this world, for communing with him.

And I've heard people excite me on my doctrinal position till they're blue in the face and say I'm a false trumpet and this, that, and the other and get them down on their knees and to pray. And just this sound, doctrinally, they say, Oh Lord, Oh God, have mercy on us, Lord. Come and do something for us, Lord.

There's my boy. He won't listen to me. He won't listen to preachers.

He's headed for hell, oh Lord. Stop him. Arrest him.

Pour out your spirit upon him. Amen. We ought to quit fussing about some things we believe in our head because we haven't got sense enough to be right in much of it.

But in our hearts, experience when we're on our knees and that's where we're at our best. Isn't that right? Talking to God. We give Jesus Christ the glory.

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so. Just let them. Don't have to force them.

Don't have to make them. Just get out of the way and let the redeemed of the Lord say so. Now it's awfully hard to get a fellow who decided to accept Jesus to witness but can't keep a fellow who's been redeemed by the Lord.

He's just going to get out on him and he's going to witness. That's the difference, isn't it? So just get out of the way and let the redeemed of the Lord say so whom he has redeemed out of the hand, from the hand of the enemy. You know, there are just three enemies of God and three enemies of man.

And the Lord Jesus Christ has taken care of every enemy of the soul. The Bible mentions three, S-I in sin, S-A-T-A in Satan, and D-E-A-T-H, death. And the Lord Jesus Christ has done something about sin, he's done something about Satan, and he's done something about death that'll loose every sinner out of hell that can be brought to faith in him so that sin cannot lord it over the believer, praise God.

Sin's going to put out of business when Jesus comes back, but why wait for him to come back? Thank God, sin has already been dealt a death blow, and the book of Romans chapter 6 says that sin shall not lord it over you anymore. The child of God need not be mastered or under dominion of sin anymore. If we could have a race of people who were lords over him, not victims of S-I in sin, that's what this chant is all about.

This would be a nice world, wouldn't it? The snow up here in Pennsylvania would be a good place to have heaven, these hills and the fertile plains and all this beautiful snow. But just yet we have sin, well, the Lord's already dealt his death blow, he's already fixed it, so sin cannot lord it over the person who's joined to him. Then there's another enemy, Satan, and the works of Satan have already been destroyed by the Lord Jesus Christ, rendered inoperable so they haven't any power, and the Lord's already done something to Satan that enables the Holy Spirit to say, draw nigh unto God and he'll draw nigh unto you.

Resist the devil and he'll do what? He'll tuck your tail and run, praise God. Isn't that wonderful? All I've got to do is just, and the devil'll skeed out. That's right.

That's right. He can't boss me around, I'm bigger than he is. If I'm joined to Christ, I can just resist it, and what'll he do? He'll flee from me! Amen? And then the Lord's already done something about death.

One day, the Scriptures say, the Lord must reign until the last enemy be destroyed, and the last enemy to be destroyed is B-H-E-H-M, and he's going to go away with it when he comes. But already he's taken the sting out of it, like the boy down south would catch Yellow Jackets and pull the stinger out, get the stinger out of Yellow Jackets, take her chin. Death cannot hurt the child of God because the sting of death is S-I-N-C, and he's removed that and left it in the grave.

My, about all God's got to do to make this present earth sufficient for the new Jerusalem to be housed in is to finally deal with sin and to finally deal with Satan and to finally put death out of business, and we've got heaven on earth. But already the child of God, united to Christ, got a lot of heaven on his way to heaven. Of course, sin cannot lord it over him through Christ.

Satan cannot rule him, he'll sleep on him through the blood of Christ. And death does not offer us fear now. He's delivered us through all our lifetimes in fear and bondage to death! But death now is no longer that mortal enemy.

Now, that's the work of the Redeemer. In order to save a sinner, the Lord's got to do something about sin for that sinner. In order to save a sinner, to redeem a sinner, he's got to do something about the power of Satan for reference to that sinner.

And in order for our salvation to be rich and full and free and eternal, he's got to do something about death! And he's done something about those three things. Let the Redeemer, the Lord, face over whom he hath redeemed from the hand of his enemies. Praise God, we've got a sufficient poor Redeemer.

Then verse 3, is the work of the Holy Ghost. The word gathered is the Holy Ghost, the Holy Spirit word. Here are these people, the object of God's eternal love and affection.

Here are these people, the apple of God's eye, whom he's determined to incorporate into his family, the body of Christ and the tabernacle of the Holy Ghost. And the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, in his perfect life and sacrificial substitutionary death, has dealt a blow to sin and Satan and death, that those things can be stricken from the center. He'll be a whole man.

He'll be on his way to glory. Now the Holy Spirit's got to go find those people. So we have the expression, and gathered them.

I love that word. Where two or three are gathered, the Holy Spirit brings them together. It's the Holy Spirit word.

And gathered them, here he is, going from north and from the east and from the west and from the north and from the south. And he's finding. He's gathering.

He's lifting. He's bringing to himself those whom God loves with an eternal love. And for whom Christ died, he's out here looking for them.

Amen? He brings them to himself. Then the rest of this chapter says three things. And for the time remaining, let us look at those right quickly.

First, we have four different times repeated in the chapter from different directions because God cannot be hemmed up into just one little way of doing things. And because there are no two stars alike, no two individuals, and God never deals exactly the same way with any two individuals in bringing them to himself. But there's one thing peculiar to everybody whom God ever saves.

God's Holy Spirit does bring them to the place of trouble and dire distress and hems them up unto where, like in verse 6, then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble. People won't do it in their prosperity. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble.

And he delivered them out of their distresses. 13, the same expression, Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble. And he saved them out of their distresses.

Verse 19, the same expression. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble. And he savest them out of their distresses.

Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses." Four different times here we have the Holy Spirit bringing a fellow by this route to this place of trouble where he will cry unto the Lord. Then again he comes around this direction, but he lands in the center, in the place of trouble. So deep in trouble that he will do what he never will do otherwise, he will look to the Lord.

It's still true there's life in the look, but it's likewise true that if a lost man has anything to say about it, he'll never be saved. If God Almighty in his goodness and his mercy, through the merits of the blood of Jesus Christ, doesn't go looking for the sinner and crowd him and hem him and strip him and rob him and bring him to the place of deep spiritual trouble and distress, he'll never cry unto the Lord. If he doesn't cry unto the Lord he'll never get acquainted with him.

It's a terrible commentary on the awful depravity of the human heart that the sinner loves darkness, loves in light, and he'll busy himself like the bugs in the early spring. You turn over a stone down our way and the bugs have been under that stone with a log all winter, and when the sun shines on those bugs you'd think they'd shout hallelujah, but they'll skedaddle to get back in the darkness. They love darkness rather than light.

You'd cut out a piece of cloth, a dream that says let the redeemed of the Lord say so. Why if a man is a member of the human race and God ever saves him, why of course that man will say oh give thanks unto the Lord for his mercy forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so whom he has redeemed out of the hand of his enemies.

Believe me you'll praise God and that's the mission. There'll be no worshiping of God until we recover the fact that salvation is of the Lord and we're the products of his goodness. We're the objects of his mercy.

We're washed in the blood of his son. And it's all God from start to finish. Glory hallelujah give thanks unto the Lord.

He has redeemed us. How'd he do it? The work of the Holy Spirit got people in trouble. People who had called on the Lord, he whittled them down and him the men brought them to the place of spiritual agony.

And then and not until then they cried unto the Lord. Nobody ever cried unto the Lord out of the agony of his soul. They didn't get on the direct line but he'd find out there is a living God and he'd know what it means to touch God and be touched by God.

I wonder if you believe it. You got anybody around here you'd like to see saved? Brother George is telling us that the King brought us this morning about somebody and try to have him out tonight. Oh, I wish the Lord would save him.

Well, Brother George, start praying for the Lord to get him in trouble. Don't pray, oh Lord, bless sinners. Oh, they never will call on the Lord until they get in trouble.

You believe that? A man who is dissatisfied with accepting a preacher's proposition, deciding to accept Jesus, join the church, be in true tradition to his fathers, doing this, that and the other, and die and go to hell and not know he's lost until he wakes up in hell, he's dissatisfied with those substitutes unless God in mercy strips him and makes him a spiritual pauper and brings him to the place of trouble, then he'll cry unto the Lord. Thank God. And then the Lord will save him and deliver him out of his distresses.

I want to call your attention to this last thought. I'd like to dwell on that a little more. I don't know if it's clear or not.

I hope it is. But I want to just spend the next two minutes, I think I have about that much time, in just reading the other thing that's here in this psalm. The Holy Spirit goes out on the basis of the work and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The blood's under everything, of course, and the blood is shed because God is a God of mercy, not Lord forgiven in the notion of showing mercy. And God's Holy Spirit gives people up. Just look there in verse 4 and 5, how the Holy Spirit, just in one instance, how he goes about getting a man in spiritual distress so he'll call on the Lord.

He has an old sinner, and the Holy Spirit goes to working on him, and the old fellow becomes a wanderer. They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary weave, but they couldn't find any city to dwell in. President Cartman accepted, I think nearly everybody I know that gives the slightest evidence they have a vital union with the living Christ, has been saved after they made their decision and acted to join the church.

Most everybody I know. First time they did it, second time God did it. That's right.

That's right. And it's interesting how the Holy Spirit, oh, what a wonderful God we preach and serve and worship. He's determined to have a family.

He's determined to have some people to sing praises to his grace throughout eternity. He's determined to have some people for himself. His inheritance in the saints.

Christ saves people for himself, that he might, he saves us from our iniquities, that he might bring unto himself, purify unto himself, unto himself, himself, himself, that the peculiar people zealous unto good

works. And so here he is. He's trying to bring somebody to himself.

He drives him over here in this corner and the old fellow sees a place and he ducks in that little isle cove and he has peace there for a little while and the Holy Spirit takes the Lord God with him. He doesn't have any place to lie and finally he looks and he finds a little hollow over here and he snuggles up in that and that gives him peace for a little while but the Holy Spirit still asks him and he'll drive him out of that like a slave driver, he'll whip him out of that little nest he's built and he'll keep pushing him and driving him and that old fellow along and he'll hide and he'll do everything. That's a while.

He's got no place to hide. He can find no city to dwell in. He's got nowhere to look but to God now and the Holy Spirit keeps working on him until he gets so hungry and thirsty and he gets so hungry spiritually, so hungry.

He looks up and calls on God and then God just delivers him. Isn't that wonderful? That's how God saves people. Now in verse 7, the thing I was going to say then and got off on, I want to read you the Holy Spirit description of what it means to be saved.

Verse 7. After man has been brought to trouble by the Lord and the Lord has delivered him out of his distresses and in all of it. The Lord takes them and he led them forth by the right way. Amen.

This is salvation now. That they might go to a city of habitation, oh that man would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men. For he satisfied the longing soul.

Is that amen? Does it? Huh? Does it? For he satisfied the what? The longing soul and filled the hungry soul with goodness. Huh? No wonder the psalmist says, oh give thanks and let the redeemed of the Lord say so. Look down in, look down in, I think, look down at verse 29.

I want to read that and then I'll close. Four different descriptions of salvation here at each one of these divisions. After men are brought to crime to the Lord.

Verse 29. Boy this is wonderful. He maketh the storm to come so that the waves thereof are still.

Then are they glad because they be quiet. And so he bringeth them unto their desired haven. Oh that man would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works unto the children of men.

Salvation, he takes it with a hand. He satisfies the longing of the soul. He filleth the hungry soul.

He brings us to our desired haven. Amen. This Reformation audio track is a production of Stillwater's Revival Books.

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And remember that John Calvin, in defending the Reformation's regulative principle of worship, or what is sometimes called the scriptural law of worship, commenting on the words of God, which I commanded them not, neither came into my heart, from his commentary on Jeremiah 731, writes, God here cuts off

from men every occasion for making evasions, since he condemns by this one phrase, I have not commanded them, whatever the Jews devised. There is then no other argument needed to condemn superstitions than that they are not commanded by God. For when men allow themselves to worship God according to their own fancies, and attend not to his commands, they pervert true religion.

And if this principle was adopted by the Papists, all those fictitious modes of worship, in which they absurdly exercise themselves, would fall to the ground. It is indeed a horrible thing for the Papists to seek to discharge their duties towards God by performing their own superstitions. There is an immense number of them, as it is well known, and as it manifestly appears.

Were they to admit this principle, that we cannot rightly worship God except by obeying his word, they would be delivered from their deep abyss of error. The prophet's words, then, are very important, when he says that God had commanded no such thing, and that it never came to his mind. As though he had said that men assume too much wisdom when they devise what he never required, nay, what he never knew.

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