

Running Scared

by Rolfe Barnard

Rolfe Barnard emphasizes the necessity of desperation for true salvation and the importance of confessing Christ's lordship in every aspect of life.

Duration: 48:09

Scripture: Luke 12:1

Topics: "Desperation And Faith", "Effective Witnessing"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by expressing his gratitude for the opportunity to speak to the congregation. He acknowledges the challenge of finding the right message for each new audience. The preacher emphasizes the importance of desperation in truly hearing and receiving the gospel of God. He references the Gospel of Luke and encourages the congregation to have their Bibles open to that passage. The preacher also raises questions about the effectiveness of organized churches and challenges the congregation to assess their impact and witness. He concludes by urging the congregation to represent God and Jesus Christ in the best possible manner.

Transcript

Now, if you want to, if you have your Bible, I'm going to ask you to turn to the Gospel of Luke. That's the twelfth chapter of the Gospel of Luke. And if you sit by someone, you do not have a Bible, maybe they'll let you share it with them.

If you do not have the Word before you, you listen and get as much as you're able. May I say thank you for this opportunity. I hope that our meetings will be blessed of the Lord.

There are two thoughts that we have to face today relative to organized churches. One of them is, are we going to be able to keep on having services much longer? And the other is, ought we to continue to call ourselves churches? Now, that's not just the whining of somebody that's married to everybody. That's a pretty good question that we need to face today.

Are we doing any good? Are we making an impact? Are we witnessing a good confession? We can't talk about the days in the past, about how glorious they were. Evidently they weren't as glorious as we thought. Things wouldn't have got as bad a shape as they're in now, all at once.

But we got to witness a good confession of the Lord in our day. If hells are popping, we've still got to witness a good confession. That's the purpose of a congregation.

That's a local assembly, a representative. The body of Christ meet together, prosecute the Lord's business, go out and witness a good confession, whatever the circumstances are. So I come to you hopeful that I shall be able to be of help and not of hurt, and I hope you'll be able to hear me.

Now, chances are it'll take you about time out of here before you begin to hear me. It's difficult to hear the Word of God now, especially from a new voice. But you do your level best to receive the Word in so much as you believe it to be the Word, and that is blessed of the Lord.

You can only do two things when you are called upon to hear. You can hear or reject. If you reject and it's truth, well, that's better.

If you receive, sometimes miracles happen and men hear the voice of God who alone can raise dead men and give them life. Thank you for the privilege of being your guest here. I want to face you, first of all, in this first message.

It's always difficult for the man who goes from place to place, as I do, to know what would be a word in season as he faces a new congregation. But I hope that I'll find the mind of the Lord. If after this morning and tonight I find out I'm chasing a rabbit didn't know, I'll switch and chase some other one.

But I'll be hopeful that I could say one thing in this brief visit, and that would be the one thing that the Lord would say that's the word for that hour. And if we could say one thing in your hearing for your prophet, your acceptance or rejection while I'm here, that'd be good. We'd get over one thing.

And I'm going to start out this morning and preach for this morning at least, and tonight I'm pretty certain and I do not know just exactly what will happen according to the feeling when they continue. But I'm going to start out this morning with just one thought, and try to face you with it, get you somewhat concerned about it, with your responsibility. And that one thought is that unless a man is desperate, he cannot even hear, much less receive the gospel of God concerning his son.

A man has to be desperate before he'll cry for help. And you can offer him help till you're blue in the face, and he'll not be the slightest bit interested until he's desperate. Now that seems to me the fundamental truth that we need to camp on as congregations of supposedly people who've been conquered by the Lord Jesus Christ, who are not their own, who do not live for themselves.

They've lost their own lives that they may gain. Of course, that isn't true. They are, of course, not Christians.

But you and I, by God's providence, happen to be God's professing people, a little group of them in a given community, who up against and must face and come out the best you know how, must face this signal of truth, this signal of truth, that we are attempting to preach the gospel today in a generation that has been utterly, utterly sinned against, in that we've forgotten that the gospel must be preached in its purity. But it has to be preached in its proper order. And there isn't a person here that's old enough to remember when the pulpits as such paid any attention to the fact that a man cannot even hear the gospel until he's been utterly slain and left desperate with no hope in himself.

Not until that time comes will he give a hook whether Jesus is the Son of God or not. He won't care whether Jesus died for sinners or not, because he's not interested. Do you understand me yet? Our task as God's people is to about face and turn around and begin to be true to our generation and take the only weapon that God the Holy Spirit has or ever has had to prepare men to listen and receive the gospel.

That's God's holy law, God's holy requirement. We have a Jesus today in America. Everybody thinks mighty well of Jesus, the hill of God.

Is that too rough for you? And so we've got a generation now of professing Christians and great believers in Jesus, but they don't know God. But Jesus sent down here to bring men to God. And what we have to face now is that in our churches we've been getting people converted to some kind of a Jesus, but it hasn't brought them to obedience and worship and devotion to Almighty God.

Witness the Sabbath day is a holiday now. Everybody believes in Jesus, let's go raise hell on Sunday. Don't know God, see? Witness the generation now.

It has no morals. Everybody's accepted Jesus, but they don't know the lawgiver. Our gospel has been wronged.

Would you be interested in a week trying to get geared in the hope that somebody would like to hear the gospel and has ever heard that, oh, isn't that wonderful? That's for me. That's the only hope for me. You see, it's definitely true, dear one, that the first time any human being ever hears the gospel as gospel, he'll be saved right there on the spot.

Let me repeat it. I've gone across an expression, I'm an Alabamian by birth, I was born and raised in Alabama, so I can talk about my kinfolks. We said that the Southern states, you know, are gospel-hardened.

They've heard the gospel. So much that it just goes in one ear and out the other. That's a good statement, just not a word of truth in it.

First time you ever heard the gospel. If you ever heard it well, it says gospel. That settled it, brother.

You got converted right then and there. You never did hear it as gospel. The gospel means good news.

And if what God says is good news, if you ever hear it as good news, you'll clothe with it right there. And that's a word to whet your appetites. The big need of every community now is churches handling the word of truth like it ought to be handled, so that some will definitely reject and some will definitely be conquered by the Christ and the gospel.

Anything except everybody straddling the fence, putting one foot down on one side one day and on the next, the next. Let's speak to you this morning on the subject running scared. Running scared.

How can Ralph Barnett, who's speaking to you, as a brother member of the body of Christ that is set in this generation to represent God, to be God's voice, as God's witness, as God's testimony, how can I join with my brothers and sisters, join to Jesus Christ and conduct myself in the best possible manner, having been commissioned as I have, to represent Jesus Christ? I think the only way we can do it in just common sore bones and lashes language is we'll have to run scared. And I take my scripture from the 12th chapter of the Gospel of Luke, beginning in the first verse. In the meantime, when they were gathered together, an

innumerable company, a multitude of people, insomuch that they trod one upon another, the Lord began to say unto his disciples, first of all, Beware ye the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy, for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, neither is there anything hid that shall not be known.

Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light, and that which is spoken in the air and closet shall be proclaimed upon the housetops. And I say unto you, my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body. We're told what we're not to be afraid of.

After they've killed the body, they can't do any more. But he said, I'll tell you what I want you to be desperately and deadly afraid of. I forewarn you whom ye shall fear.

Fear him, this talking to disciples, this talking to people he calls friends. He says, fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell. Yea, I say unto you, fear him.

God knows if that isn't a word for this silly, giddy stuff that passes for salvation today. This familiarity with God, this levity. When the Welsh Revival was in great progress, somebody asked a couple of the leaders, men that God had seen fit to honor by letting them sort of have a leading part in the movement of the Holy Ghost.

They asked them if they didn't look forward to their simmering in little houses around little worship places. These dear men of God who'd learned something of what it meant when God was in the midst and his presence was felt. They said, no, they dreaded the time when they assembled together.

They wanted to go off somewhere and hide. For when God makes himself manifest in the midst of his people, his presence is thrice holy, and about all people can do is sit around and groan and sob in the presence of God. We know nothing about that, do we? Oh, fear God.

Who's to fear him? His friends, his disciples. He said, are not thy sparrow's soul for too far thence? And not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore, ye of more value than many sparrows.

Also I say unto you, whosoever shall confess me, my confession is always to God, testimony is to man. I can stand here and say I love the Lord. That's testimony.

I may be lying, I may be mistaken, I may be deceived, but there's no deceit in confession. We're not called on to save. We're Christians, we're called upon to be.

Whosoever shall confess me before man. You don't do that by what you save, you do that by what you are. And ladies and gentlemen, we've about done out now.

And the only thing that's going to ride the storm that's ahead of us is not some people busy as bumblebees, but some people who are, are children of God. Your testimony is not worth a dime, your confession is what counts. And we're called upon to confess Christ before man.

And there's no room for any slip-ups there. That has to do with character and what we are, not our activities. Whosoever shall confess me before men.

Him shall the Son of Man also confess before the angels of God. But he that denies me, you deny him by what you aren't, or what you are. Before men shall be denied before the angels of God.

How can you make a good confession in the day in which you live? Not mouth around about what you're doing, what you're going to do, but occupy some territory, crown the Lord Jesus, give him his rightful place, spit on the abuse in the devil's face and say, Yeah! Yeah! Jesus Christ reigns as Lord. You know, we've had a brand of Christianity now that ain't worth a dime. Every one of you mothers now have been brought up on a perverted gospel where parents advocated what God Almighty gave them to do.

You're too lazy and so busy raising some kind of king somewhere and spouting off about how what a wonderful Christian you were. While you spouting off, you turned over the education of your children to the state. Instead of keeping your hand on it and understanding that all education must be Christian, not pagan.

And so they said, Jesus is Lord! But we'll turn our kids over to that devil to educate them. Huh? You ain't got a Chinaman's chance to get your children to Christ now, because when they go to the public school six, eight hours a day, they've got no capacity to listen to the gospel. So you and I are facing the fact that we're going to have to let our kids all go to hell for one more generation in the public schools of America where you can't even have a prayer now, much less teach Christianity.

You talk about going to have some churches? You ain't neither. You'll be out of business! For this nation is going to be pagan to the core! And it's hurrying up! And the only hope for anybody to come out of it outside the grip of Antichrist is to once more recover a gospel that demands that everything, your financial, the way you make a living, your home life, your body, your mind, your social life, your church life, every piece of your life must be under the Lordship of Christ. For brother and sister, if we don't claim everything and bring everything unto Him now, we're going to be on the other side and the whole outfit of us going to hell.

That's all. Whether you know it or not, this ain't no time for little peanut butter and sandwich stuff called the gospel and salvation. This is the time to realize the fact that it's all under Christ or it's all under Satan.

No way on earth we can keep on like we've been doing, trying to please both sides. That's right. I was going to make a good confession.

Well, you and I are really humping it here. We're going to have to claim everything for Christ Jesus. We're going to have to demand that He is the Lord of education.

He's the Lord of society. He's the Lord of government. He's the Lord of money.

He owns it all. He's the Lord of conduct. He's the Lord of our salt fires.

He's Lord. He's not a nice little fellow we meet on Sunday morning. He's the Lord of all.

And I'm not going to waste my time fooling with a bunch of people that are not willing to get the wax out of their ears and to lay down their feet and begin to rise up and confess Christ in this awful hour. Confess Him in your business life. Confess Him in your social life.

Confess Him in your church life. Confess Him in your home life. It's better nothing.

For if the Scripture teaches anything, it dead sure teaches that on that bloody cross, Jesus Christ bought the right and He exercises it in everybody that falls on the wayside of it. He bought the right to be the absolute dictator and ruler and master and Lord of everything that rise and reign. It's no small thing then there was to face this question.

How can I confess Christ so He won't deny me, but we keep on with what we call salvation in Christian that denies Him His Lordship in our finances. We're denying Him now. You talk about the death of God movement.

Every one of us mothers and fathers that have been asleep and turned our children over to a godless state. We're saying God's dead. He doesn't have the right to control the education of our children.

You read the other day, did you? They're raising the salaries of the congressman, the president, everybody. You know why they're doing that? Because the outgoing administration knows we're headed for the awfulest inflation where your dollar ain't going to be worth a penny. Huh? What's all that about? Because we haven't preached Christ as Lord.

He's been the nicest little fellow by the past. This little Jesus we've been acquainted with couldn't save a flea. Save a flea! For Christ demands all.

Demands all. My Lord says you'd better be afraid of God. You'd better reverence God.

You'd better not be afraid of the folks that can kill you. I've been preaching a good bit, I expect, while I'm here on the rule of Antichrist. I believe it's already there.

Just raise your hand. And I think this little, my religion's on the way out, folks. This little Sunday morning religion that doesn't make Christ Lord of our home life and our bodies and our social life and our finances and our children and our government and everything.

Yeah! How can I confess Christ? It'll not do to talk a good Bible. It's not a Bible, any sign that's living to be. But there is one thing the Bible tells about that's dead sure so.

This world was destroyed by flood. And they say there's at least 3 billion, 3 billion people. Every one of them except 8 people were destroyed.

And there was just one man alive on the face of the earth that was straight before God in his sex life. That was Noah. Bible says Noah found grace in the sight of the Lord.

And what it means is the next verse says he was perfect in his generations. The rest of mankind were going to be sent to hell. God was telling them, I'm going to get rid of them, wipe them off the face of the earth and start all over again.

Because of the same sin that is behind the moral degradation and the spiritual collapse of America today. And that's sex perversion. Now Noah lived in a day like that.

Young man, this is something solid. God came to Noah and said, Noah, judgment's coming. The scriptures say by faith.

Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet. God said, judgment's coming. We know now the flood.

In other words, God said, I'm going to deliver this out to you. No sign of it. Couldn't see it.

All over the earth. Noah had to go by with God's word. And the most solemn thing I faced this morning I've been trying to be a preacher 43 years.

The last 37 I've been going from one little congregation to another. I'm 64 years old. I'm not exactly a novice.

But I speak to you now and tell you the most crushing burden any human being can ever bear is the burden of living in a generation that doesn't believe a word of this word. You are clean to believe. God knows what a burden it is to live every day of your life amongst your neighbors and your church members and the folks you work for and you believe that every step men take is one step nearer the awful consuming judgment of God.

And if I talk to them, they don't believe a word. I, in the name of God, cannot confess Christ in a generation that don't give a hoot whether he died or not. In a generation that don't believe in God.

In a generation that if you talk to them about the judgment of God, they don't know what on God's earth you're talking about. And you believe it! And the fire burns within that old bill. He's headed straight for the judgment.

There's no sign he's headed straight for the judgment but he don't believe it. And I do. My brother, that's the burden.

And here's old Noah. He lived in exactly that generation. And you believe what got ya.

He believed in an act that he moved by faith Noah being warned of God of things not yet seen. He scared it. He began to run scared.

You know what he did? He went and bought him a hammer and some lumber and some nails and he started tacking away. What did he do? Bailed in the place. What's the purpose of the place? To provide safety for everybody inside and condemn everybody outside.

That's the gospel. That's purpose. In here, deliverance from the wrath to come.

Outside of here, no hope. No hope. And old Noah bleeds the death that is coming.

He believed that people needed to escape it. He believed that there ought to be a way of escape. And so he spent his life doing two things.

Preaching righteousness and preparing an ark. That's how you'd witness a confession in any day. Running scared.

His life was limited I know it's foolish to claim to be a Christian unless you devote your life to just two things. The proclamation of the holy character of God and his righteous demands and commands. And then pointing and running to listen to the only place of escape.

That's what Noah did. He ran scared. He ran scared.

He ran scared. He's all excited. He believed something.

He believed that God was going to bring death on men and women. He couldn't see it. But he believed it.

I recognize two, three, four of them in your faces. Last June I was over in the Milldale Conference, the blessed place. And I had the honor of Brother Jimmy asking me who he thought he ought to bring this next year.

It would be a blessing to the people who come to that conference. I think now it's all settled. And I asked him, I said, why don't you get Leonard Ravenhill? He's a holiness preacher from the other side of the water.

I know that I believe he's coming. Leonard Ravenhill said some of these days some little humble believer listen to this now. Go and pick up the Bible and read it and believe it.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could believe it? Not argue about it, just believe it. Huh? And he said that little simple believer going to make the rest of us folks ashamed of ourselves. I'm familiar with these people.

Oh, I'm fond of men that I believe the Bible from cover to cover but they ain't never looked inside. See what I mean? And I'm also familiar with the fact that this man believes only what he obeys. I just believe what I put into practice.

Old Noah. God said judgment's coming. He believes.

Whew! Old Pharaoh didn't have a converse but tell you what he did. He minded God. I tell you what he did.

He prepared a place of safety and he warned men of judgment to come. That's about as far as you can do, but I don't know how we, all this tomfool business about how many people we want to crush. I know that has some meaning and we can weep and mourn and pray and everything else but not a one of us can win in the body of Christ.

All we can do is witness to him and pray for him and preach to him and weep over them but we can't act for him. And old Noah for 120 years as he hammered away on that ark while the long suffering of God waited. And he preached.

And nobody believed him. And this thing was there. Anybody that's preaching righteousness today in the church that's standing for him.

And saying that the only hope is to get in the ark. Nobody must listen to you either if you do it. But it's not our business whether we're Christian or not.

You just got one business and that's to confess Christ. You hear me? That's right. But that means they don't burn you at the stake.

You just got one job. Not to get burned at the stake but to confess Christ. You know him.

He'll deny you. You deny him. God knows this is serious.

All Noah is called upon to do in his day is the same thing we are called upon to do. Confess Christ. When you're going to ask for her it's the only hope.

That's the coming judgment. The only place of faith to be in here. That's confession.

He said all my hope and faith is here. This will be the only place of faith. And there will still be judgment.

That's confessing Christ. That's not saying that Christ is a nice fella. That's not saying that he's maybe a little better than Buddha.

That's not saying that he's one of the ways. That's saying he's there. He has no rivals.

It's Christ that's judgment. Confessing Christ. Move with faith.

In your own spirit. Second way. This step everywhere else.

Now so, how deep this language sounds to me. I know it's true for me. This is a battle.

Listen to me. It's to have the conviction of the coming of the judgment of God. After you believe that it's in Christ or the awful wrath of judgment of God for the best man that ever lived.

You'll be so overwhelmed with that conviction that we move out to a new God. Whatever it costs. To warn men that's the night of this hour.

Under God, folks, it's time to quit time to get somebody to take Jesus. They don't want him. They don't have any need of him.

Under God, it's time to proclaim him and all of the glory of his passion and the perfection of his voice and warn this generation with tears. It's Christ or the judgment of God. Suffer me.

Repeat these three minutes. Maybe I'm getting what I'm trying to say this way. Adolf Eichmann, that man who worked under Adolf Hitler and had charge of the burning of six million Jews and using the ashes of their bodies bodies to make soap to wash the bodies of the German army.

Six million Jews. And when they finally caught him, you know, and brought him into Israel and tried him, you read about him. Some Christian worker on the hour he did it that he got in Eichmann's desk fell.

Asked him to come down to the house to witness the story. And he didn't go anywhere. Adolf Eichmann to do was a typical Jew.

He said he wasn't afraid to meet God. That he didn't need Jesus. This personal worker put Christ to him as a mediator.

He quoted the Scripture where he was one mediator between God and man. The man Christ to him. That man knew the Danishman some day to storm the kingdom and to stroke and rash and rash of God's holy law.

Mr. Eichmann said, I don't need the Jesus. I don't need a mediator. I'm all right.

And he died that way. Ladies and gentlemen, if I had just one sermon to preach and I could get out some public preach the people of the world would pass by and I was the only preacher on God's earth. And the only assignment the people would ever have would be to pass me by.

I'll tell you what I'd do. I'd get out there and I'd lift up my hands and I'd lift up my voice and I'd say, Stop people! You are headed for a meeting with the holy law of God. There is one thing that no human being will escape.

Every human being has got to deal with God's holy law. I've got to be able to come up to face God whose will and His will His demands His commands His requirements are expressed in His law. No man is going to be judged by what he did about Jesus.

He's not going to be judged. He's done about God's holy law. Here I come to the judgment.

According to this book everybody's going to come. Some of the men of sin have been judged before and others least till the time of judgment. But there's one thing God's judgment.

God's Father. He's going to just lie before the judgment. He's going to have to deal with God's holy law.

God's holy law will take the best human being in the world and tear it to pieces like sanctioned to fly and pull him apart. Oh! I say, women, women. Don't go.

Don't keep on taking another step. You're headed right back into the Holy Lord. Anybody that tries to deal with it in your own strength it will tear you to pieces.

It will tear you to pieces. Spend your life never looking at yourself in God's mirror. God's been good.

He's fixed it so any human being can get a look at himself. See yourself as God's Savior. See what God requires of you.

See what God will not. You just won't ignore it. The law is going to be satisfied.

It's going to be vindicated in you no matter what you do. You take a look in that mirror and you do one thing and you'll kiss God and go into hell. Or you'll fall and say, oh my God is there any hope for me? And somebody comes along and tells you about the one mediator that'll be good news.

Yes? There's always a law God can be dealt with in Jesus Christ. All of this wrath falls on Jesus. I need him as my mediator.

I need him as my substitute. If it won't hurt him to deal with the law in my stead I'm going to have to deal with it in my strength. And that'll be eternal hell for every human being.

Everybody. You need a mediator. And I am Christ Jesus.

That's the gospel. My only hope. My only plea.

Christ Jesus, darling. And he died for me. That's my faith.

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