

Save Yourself From This Untoward Generation

by Rolfe Barnard

Rolfe Barnard's sermon calls for Christians to actively engage in their faith and address the moral decay of their generation with passion and urgency.

Duration: 53:13

Topics: "Repentance", "Salvation"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the need for repentance and salvation from the impending judgment of God. He warns that if God does not bring judgment upon this generation, He would owe an apology to those whom He has destroyed in the past. The preacher urges the congregation to have a heart cry and a baptism of concern for the lost. He emphasizes that salvation can only be found in being baptized in the Spirit of God through Jesus Christ. The sermon is based on Acts 2:40, where the preacher passionately exhorts the listeners to save themselves from the corrupt generation they are living in.

Transcript

I'd be glad if you'd open the words to the second chapter of the Book of Acts. I wish to take one verse to scripture for a text, starting point, the message tonight. Verse forty of Acts chapter two.

And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. There was a man who raised his voice, who was impassioned, who was excited. He testified, he exhorted, and he admonished, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

We have all been shocked in the last several weeks by reading of occurrences in New York City, one place where, I mean, there was thirty, forty people watched from their windows and doorfronts as somebody killed or murdered a woman. When asked why they didn't jump in, they said they did not wish to be involved. Every time I pass a building today, it calls itself a place where God's Church meets, I cannot help but think about how this generation's being cut up and butchered by every ism and false doctrine and everything in the world.

How that this generation full of people made for heaven yet headed for hell, made to wear the robe of righteousness, yet watering in the hog pen and tatters. And increasingly, this generation of people who claim to be Christ's representatives do not wish to get involved. I have become in the last several years

quite a long-distance admirer of a preacher who's now gone back to his native land.

Some eleven years ago, he came to one of the outstanding fundamental so-called gospel churches of America that had sat under the ministry of a man for many, many years, and were noted far and wide for the amount of money they gave somebody else to serve God for them, for their big meals at many, many of their homes, but known as the deathbed of evangelism. They called a young man after this man died and butchered him in ten months, and he quietly resigned and went elsewhere. And then in desperation, they went across the waters and got the preacher that I had in mind, and he came, and he insisted, he had him draw up the contract that he'd be pastor three years, whatever happened, because he knew what he was I never heard of before.

And he had a great, great time. In the first two years of his ministry there, a few over four thousand of the members withdrew and went and joined other churches where they could be nice believers, good givers, but not get involved. Not get involved.

We must have our nice services and believe our nice doctrines, but we must not get involved with the forces that are cutting down men all about us. We must draw our nice little ropes about us and become sick or cursed, congratulating ourselves on how nice and sound we are, but we must not get involved. We must roll up our sleeves and engage the territory that's now in the hands of Satan, where men are being butchered while we're going through the motions.

Now, as you understand, this church was as orthodox as all get-outs, almost as orthodox as some of you. But the one thing they wouldn't do, they wouldn't get involved. They watched from our comfortable so-called Christianity while men are being butchered.

This man did nothing on earth but begin to preach that the only way the Lordship of Christ can be expressed is in practical, obedient service to him, getting involved. Salvation's not a matter of believing the right thing. It's a matter of getting involved, identified with one who refused to stay in heaven and send us some good advice.

He came down here and got involved. That's what his people must be summoned afresh to do. Now that church, they had to move out of the auditorium upstairs, I won't tell you the name of it, and they became the laughingstock of certain groups of so-called saints all over America who didn't want to be disturbed themselves in promoting their sound doctrine but not invading Satan's territory.

And they'd better keep their nice little profession of faith and keep on thanking God for what he's done for us, but we'd better not take it down where Satan is reigning we might get it soiled. But that church is leading the way in America now. We've got a new crop of people who are seeking to be baptized into the passion into the mission of Jesus Christ.

Made up of people now who are trying to understand and enter in somewhat to the experience of the missionary to the letters, who never got anywhere preaching to the letters until he became a leper himself. There's many other words. Did he testify? Any thought? As long as Mr. Wet Eyes and Mr. Amen are absent from the assembly of the saints, you can have your doctrine and go to hell with it and everybody that knows you will too.

This thing's got to be baptized in passion and tears. There's many other words. Did he make a nice little proposition, a simple plan? No.

With many other words, did he testify? I know what I'm talking about. I know that I'm experienced, I speak that which I do. No.

Many other words, did he testify? Any thought? He put on his old free Methodist garments, sluggish hands, while tears rolled out of his heart, and I can see him now and with constraint and compassion and sympathy and something of the spirit of Jesus Christ in him. Say, save yourself, you unterrable mortal, eternal thing. You take the lead out of your feet and the wax out of your ears.

Save yourself from this untoward generation. You're reminded, of course, when you read such a text describing the passion, the involvement, the plea, the agitation of Peter, you're reminded of a man by the name of Noah, who in another day lived in a generation where if that generation could not experience the awful judgments of the Almighty God, God would have to abdicate. You read of that man running scared.

You read of him trembling. You read of him going out on the lam. You read of him acting on something he couldn't see.

You read that Noah, being warned of God, of things not yet seen, moved with fear. It scared him to death. It set him on fire.

He moved with fear. He moved with fear. Nothing under God's shining sun that's got as much of hell in it as a professing Christian trying to witness to this generation without a broken, bleeding heart.

He moved with fear. He moved with fear. Now, he said, yet he's done it.

Cut! Show me! Can't show you. God said it! My face! Native face! All the evidence God will ever give any man, that is. Hold your breath, God! God said, Noah, I'm gonna break just below this outfit.

And by faith, it burned into Noah's soul, and he moved with fear. My brothers and sisters, God pity us. You reckon he'll give us another chance? How long has it been since there was a tear in our fire for the awful condition that this generation's in? If God don't visit this generation with judgment, he'll have to apologize to the folks in Sodom and Gomorrah.

If God don't visit this generation in judgment, he'll have to apologize to the sons of Korah. He opened up the earth and sent them to hell without time to pack a suitcase. If God don't visit this generation with judgment, he'll have to apologize to the whole outfit whom he destroyed less eight people by sending the flood.

Oh, God help us! I say the truth, and I lie not. The greatest battle that's being lost in our hearts today is a hard cry. We've got no right to try to witness to anybody with a dry eye or a hard heart.

A day that's so in tears is still in the Bible. We desperately need a baptism of concern. We're almost like I used to be when I was five years old.

It was poor Jokes Turkey. I got me a job selling Saturday evening post, and I'd go around Saturday night to school and have a good selling. I'd knock on the door.

Nothing on there. It was scary looking. It was mean.

There's a housewife with a broom in one hand and a hair wrapped up in a towel. They used to have them had a way, and I was a boy. They come to the door.

Well, you are. I never did have any more conversation. I'd just start running and said, don't guess you want to buy no Saturday evening post, do you? I'd be in the other block.

I'd break it a little bit, but I'm telling you right now, that's almost our witness there. When I look you in the face, and I'm not a novice, the easiest battle to lose is the one that if you win it, you're going to have to stand guard. God help us.

If you don't want a broken heart, if you do not want a cry in your heart, if you do not want a concern for this butchered generation, God knows I do. This will take more discipline than any pain this side of heaven to keep your heart from where it bleeds, from where you can ignore it. Oh, sinner, make way for heaven.

Don't go ahead. My God, sinner, the kids are right down around the corner. For God's sake, stop and turn around, save yourself, this untoward generation.

Can't tell me old Peter wasn't all concerned. He was, oh boy. He put on a little Methodist rousements.

God, give us another chance. For this generation, butchered by preachers, paralyzed by the present skill of living, I hope we'll all enjoy every moment of our lives, because we ain't gonna live long with killing ourselves, paying for all the time, saving the nation. That's the God's truth.

So hold out, dear Lord. We have been warned. I doubt if God would explode an atomic bomb inside your head, one of us would blink an eye.

We've heard everything. We've been everywhere. God knows.

We need an atomic bomb to explode in our hearts to break up the fountains of the deep, where once again, men and women will get their impression. We'll get sure in earnest as we run through the streets, warning of things not yet seen, but of things which are bound to come according to the word of God. I'm not preaching down to you.

You love me to death. You treat me so good, I couldn't make it without you. But I look you in the face and I love you enough to tell you, you need to join old brother Ralph Barnes.

We don't quit this nice little stuff. We've been called and called and crashed. We're going to become a bunch of eyesickers.

We got to get involved in this thing. We got to get involved in this thing. Save yourself.

We got to start screaming. Save yourself. Get on your hands.

Get inside this center. You need to be saved in this generation from exactly what the generation Peter spoke to stood in peril. And every generation just needs to be saved from the consequences of two things.

First, our part in the murder of the son of God. And second, second, every generation needs to save itself from the consequences of falling into his hand, into the hand of all judgment been given, and authority to execute. We find that the New Testament preachers didn't have the two tunes to play.

You kill Jesus, God raised him from the dead. They just didn't have anything else to say. We've had a lot of talk in the last two, three months, about involvement.

They brought before the ecumenical council over in Rome, last time, a paper in which they attempted to Roman curia, even devil a little bit, in the removing of another block in unity. And they flirted with the idea, say, that the Jews were not responsible for the death of the son of God. And then they backed off from that.

Now they've gone on some other directions. And when, last November, an assassin's bullet plunged this nation into a religious orgy, and when we're all stunned how that the course of history and the life of a man could be changed just like that, when for the first time in the history of mankind, people almost saw a president murdered. They didn't quite see it, but we're almost there.

And when a whole world was in a state of shock, and out of that tragedy, this matter of involvement came up again. And some said it was the communists. They're the ones responsible for the death of President Kennedy.

And others said it was the Republicans or the conservatives or the, what is, the John Bolton Society. Everybody was telling all the fellas he was involved. But I'll tell you, ladies and gentlemen, I can't answer that question.

But I'll tell you who was involved around Augustus Hill. Every son of Adam was there. Every human being was involved in the murder of the son of God.

There are so many scriptures that I can quote and rejoice in but cannot explain. And one of them is that he was as a lamb slain and before the foundation of the world. And the only meaning I get out of that, and whether I can get out of that, that I'm going to say is so whether that verse teaches it or not.

There is a cross for us in the heart of God. There never was a moment when Christ in the purpose and heart of God was not hanging on that tree. And while it is true that our faith is built on something that happened in history, that at a given moment, at a given point of time on this earth, God invaded this earth and hung on a cross.

While that's true, it is likewise true that the cross is now as much as it was 2,000 years ago. Oh, ladies and gentlemen, I ain't ticked the word by whether you choose a back or good to pick your show or rob bags. Ain't no use to mess with that.

You will burn in hell forever for you're, you're, you're venomous. You're malicious. You're vengeful.

You're a loathsome voice that joined in the crowd yonder. Send him up forever and crucify him. And I can hear him, the mayhem voice leading the chorus.

Crucify! I'm not treating the, teaching the class in theology, but when Adam sinned, the whole outfit of us were there. When they nailed Christ to the cross, they spoke for me. Oh, my soul, it sure as God made little green apples.

This generation needs to be invaded one more time, not with a message of side issues, but with a message to men and women that they stand unforgiven and unswerving of the blood of the Son of God, and that he will cry out, and reach his vengeance through the reaches of eternity, unless forgiveness is granted. My wife has been trying for 37 years to improve me. If she breaks me one bad habit in the pulpit, fine, she gets me broke with that, I'm into another.

Ah, you men need to make your hand pick too. I ain't as optimistic about making angels out of you folks as I was 35 years ago, and so I do not waste much time shooting the jackrackets. What's the use to talk about some of these little things as long as marked down against your record is the murder of the Son of God? We speak much today that there's no conviction, and there isn't.

How in the name of God could anybody be in a conviction these days when we found out that somebody back 2,000 years ago was awful mean, and when God invaded this world, they took his only begotten son, and in willful ignorance they nailed him with wicked hands to a tree. But we can't get off that life, honey. We did it too.

We did it too. We did it too. And this generation needs to be faced afresh with the awful judgment that falls on every generation.

As a preview of the coming judgment, old Peter was excited, and for a little while after Peter preached, that same gang of people he had preached unto were killing their children and eating their flesh, and Titus surrounded that session. Old Noah was excited for a little while after he began, just a short hundred and twenty years. He looked out one morning from a hole in the park and saw these floating swollen bodies of scientists tell us, approximately three billion people, floating in death on the top of this world.

And Peter was excited, and God told us, some of you better get excited. For it's Christ! For it's the God of the Almighty God. The Bible cannot be softened or improved on, or the middle part it's forgiveness, or to learn what it means to fall.

That's except when I'm calling more on earth. It'll have been acting more challenger to a new direction, whatever good it did. But I tell you right now, I can't live.

I can't stand it. I don't know about you. I can't live.

Oh, God knows I don't want to live without warning, without pleading. Oh, my soul. Ladies and gentlemen, I looked in the back of the book.

I found out the answer. Judgment's coming. I know it's coming! It's on the way! Sinners are going to fall into the hands of God, which I knew how good it was.

Sinners! Sinners! Sinners! Save yourself! This is a matter between you and God. It can't be done by proxy, or by absentee valeting. It's a matter you must address yourself to.

Save yourself. Save yourself. I'll never forget how I wept.

I wish I had that tenderness now. I'm not proud of my hard heart. I flew in on a plane to Western Salem years ago and found a telegram waiting there for me.

It came from the community where I closed the meeting. The telegram beeped, the plane coming back. The man in that community down in South Texas owned the biggest saloon in town.

He had a winsomeness about him that he attracted young people, and he had his finger on the young people of that little town of just a few thousand people. I remember when I landed there, the whole meeting, father and the little Baptist church, the pastor, after we'd had one service at night, he told me the next day he came and asked my advice. I was older, and he was courteous.

He said, Brother Barnwell, you tell me what you think about this. He said Dutch owns the biggest saloon in town, and he got the young people of this town the whole outfit of them. They think he's somebody.

He takes them on picnics. Oh, he's a gentleman, and he did things for them, and he's nice and all that. And they said we can't reach the young people ten foot tall, and we can't reach him.

And he said, Brother Barnett, we have decided, our congregation decided to do two things. We're going to have somebody's little church building, some different people, twenty-four hours a day, and every hour on the hour two different people are going together and go to his saloon and witness to it. He's going to keep it up.

He said, What do you think about that? I said, Well, now wait just a minute. Do you believe God's leading you to do that? He said, We sure do. And he asked me about it then.

I said, I heard my name wasn't God. That's a little boring. Something like that would happen if you do something like that.

And I wouldn't do it unless I had a conviction, and I was willing to stand by it, that that was what sovereign God was saying for us to do. He said, We know we're right, but we believe, well, I believe that's the leading of the Lord. I said, Tear out.

Sure. And brother, they did. And it wasn't long, we'd take a loudspeaker, they'd let us preach on the streets, and it wasn't long until nearly every church member in town was cursing that little gang of Baptists up there and the preachers for embarrassing that poor man.

Boy, they were embarrassing him. They were making it hard for him. Now, if you'd like somebody to come into your place of being, especially if it's a saloon, every hour and try to talk to you about the Lord.

And how'd you like for it to get out on you that they're having a round-the-clock prayer meeting going on up at the little church, praying for you to be saved? He was already a church member, having you understand. And that kind of got him embarrassed, and they got the way through to what Rockneige, and that's why there's more that is harder than Rockneige. We didn't have much time, and I got scurried, but people kept on, and it got harder and harder.

And we came to the last afternoon of my visit there, I was supposed to meet them that night, and the pastor said, Brother Barnum, he said, I want you to go with me and witness and preach at that church. He said, everything we've done just made him mad, I can understand that. Now, I don't know whether it did right or not, I ain't that smart, I'm telling you what you did, not what they ought to have done.

And it got pretty hard, and he got pretty hard. And so I said, Well, preacher, you really want me to go? And he said, Yes, I really do. He said he hadn't listened to a word we said, and I want him to hear you.

I said, Well, if you have deep conviction about it, I'll go with you, and we went. I never got to say a word. We walked in, the young preacher introduced us, Dutch, yes, Brother Barnum, he's been preaching for an hour and then preached for a little while.

Dutch came out with a big oath, he'd been holding in as long as he could. And he'd tell me that in the hell, I've seen it in the faces of too many people, in their eyes back there, he gave out a big oath. He looked daggers at that preacher, he said, Preacher, I don't want to listen to her, I don't want to listen to you, and I

don't want a one of you people to ever speak to me again.

I want you to get out of here and leave me alone. That little preacher had a lot of spunk. He said, You don't want to talk to her about Jesus? He said, I've heard about Jesus till I've heard a word I ever expect to listen to about him.

I want you to leave me alone. Well, that about claims it enough, wasn't anything else to do. And we left, and we closed the meeting that night, we took me to Westminster, and I rested a few hours, waited for a plane, got into Winston-Salem, about nine o'clock the next morning, got there, telegram had already been delivered to the house, ate it, about seven o'clock, 7.15 I think it was.

Monday morning, we closed on Sunday night, Sunday afternoon, and we tried to talk to Dutch, and the pastor's telephone rang, the nurse at the hospital said, Brother So-and-so, come quickly, Dutch is dying, and he's calling for you. And the pastor skedaddled over there as fast as he could, but when he got up and entered the door into the room where Dutch lay, Dutch had already taken a trip, and one light smacked down into a living gut, and found out it's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of Satan himself. How can it be done? I just wept like a baby.

That old boy didn't want to hear it anymore. He didn't leave me alone. But the scriptures teach one thing.

I know that every one of us is going to run right smack dab in the almighty God just across the river. I believe that. We're all professors.

God set us on fire. With Roe Wilson, when he was president, walking down the street, just get a little air in his lungs, and he looked over, and there was a pile of smoke coming out of him. He quickened his pace, and went over and knocked on the door.

And the lady recognizes, Well, my, Mr. President, come in and have a cup of tea. He said, I didn't come for a cup of tea. Come tell your house on fire.

For my own heart and for yours, I pray God, the God who gives second chances, the God who lets us make a new start. Oh, God, break up the fountains of our hearts. I don't believe lost men will ever get excited, though we do, do you? Until the old know that education and testimony with a heart that cries out, comes back to us, where with a note of alarm, tears and concern, we can absorb.

Run for your life, son. Boats on fire, hills are popping, sun's getting mighty low. Times are wasting, save yourself.

Ain't no way to do it. There's one way. When Noah did his preaching, there's one place of safety, and there's just one now.

That's to be baptized to the Spirit of God in the Christ. There's no safety anywhere else. Oh, not believe something, but be enjoined to somebody.

Get in the ark. Break the door down. Don't think you'll have to.

In God's name, become attentive for the salvation. That's only in Christ, but thank God it's in him. And hold on to him.

Hold on to him. I shall never forget, take another minute, first time I went to New York City to hold a meeting. I was scared out of my wits.

I'd hear and tell about that place, and I didn't think I'd get a corporate guardian and a priest. But I was amazed that in the very beginning that their pastor would get up and say, Now, none of you people will be permitted to come back to the next service. Give somebody else a chance to hear.

And I tried all during the meeting. It was in Brooklyn, too. And I remember when they had young people tonight, and nobody but the young people, eighteen to twenty-three.

I forget just exactly the ages. Nobody but ten, but young people. And at the service, some of them wanted us to go down to the drugstore to get a Coca-Cola or something, and I went.

And I asked a nice, clean-cut young man this question. I don't understand it. I'm a country preacher from down south.

I don't understand. Of course, there are millions of people here. I'm not touching topside or bottom, but at least I won't allow you to come but once a week so somebody else can get there.

I said, Can you explain that? How come so many people are coming? Why, he said, That's easy, brother Barnard. In New York City, there are just two places to go. To hell or to God's hell.

Almost. There are just two places to be now, brother. It's in Christ, or it's to be in for hell.

So he said, At least become a seeker. Start knocking on the door, crying, O thou son of David, have mercy. Will you bow your heads for a word of prayer? While brother John comes and we open the book, we're going to sing Just As I Am.

Without one plea, but that thy blood was shed for me. And that thou bidst me come to thee, O Lamb of God, I come. We're going to stay and sing.

Just As I Am. Seeing this generation butchered, we so want to be involved. The old line, draw people to thyself.

Please, dear Lord, it was yours. In the once safe place, the way to put that identification, that this goes through everything else. Hit it! Save yourself.

And do it right now. O God, I come. I come.

I come.

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