

Three Ways a Sovereign God Saves

by Rolfe Barnard

A sovereign God saves people through conviction, witnessing, and prayer, and Christians must be willing to be witnesses and pray for the salvation of others.

Duration: 47:30

Scripture: Matthew 7:7-8, Matthew 16:19, Matthew 18:20, Matthew 28:18-20, Luke 11:9-10, Acts 16:23, Acts 16:30-31

Topics: "Prayer Ministry", "Salvation Witnessing"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher tells a story about a man named Sandworld who is seeking salvation. Sandworld meets two Christian men who guide him in prayer and witnessing. Through their prayers, an earthquake occurs and Christian doors are unlocked. The preacher emphasizes the importance of praying and witnessing to bring people to salvation. He also highlights the authority of Jesus Christ as the head of the church.

Transcript

This morning we talk to you about the three different ways that the Sovereign God goes about bringing people to a saving knowledge of Himself through Christ. In a very quiet way, He opened a merchant for the name of Lydia's heart to the extent that she listened to the Word of God. People cannot perceive except by hearing the Word of God.

Now, it is definitely true that God requires belief in the Lord Jesus Christ. But, unless God gives you that faith, you can't do what God demands that you do. Faith is both your act and it's a gift of God.

It's foolish to go out there and tell sinners, who are not in the shape of the one we're going to have before us tonight and this morning, and it's criminal, you're all told a trembling sinner, a seeking sinner. He told them to do that. Alright, let's go out there and say, now, just believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you'll have the Savior.

Well, if you don't, you just don't. But we're sending people to hell because we're not paying attention to the Bible. And I've met this before.

But all a sinner can do is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, but he can't do that unless God enables him to as he listens to God's Word. Is that right? Faith cometh, it has to come to him, and God brings it to him as he hears his Word. That's what the Scripture plainly teaches, alright? And so God came along and

opened this woman's heart.

You know, anybody that wants to hear what God's got to say to Jesus, if you've learned faith, they don't want it. They're not interested in it. God is a saving God, though.

And we had the story this morning of the young fallen sireless men of David, saying, these are the servants of the Most High God, which do show unto us the way of salvation. He did that for many days until finally he fell dead. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, on his authority, he commanded the demons to go out.

I wish that you'd take me seriously. You've got power around here to command demons to go out. If you was a church, you would have.

Huh? Huh? You mean to tell me that demons are not all over this community, in the home? You mean to tell me there's not a lot of people in the reach of this little building that are demon possessed? Sure there are. These boys that drive hundreds of miles an hour on the highway, you mean to tell me they did that? No. These folks that killed somebody, they don't want to team over men.

They just did it. Demons, brother, demons are all around. And the Lord taught God's church.

He said he's going to build a city. He's going to give it power and whatever it bounds. He considered it bound in heaven.

Do you find the devil around you? We're bragging about being a church, unless you know how, on your knees and with the word of God. That's fine, see. I'm telling you, you ought not claim to be a church, unless you are representing the Christ who said, my church will have power to bind and power to loose.

Amen? That's Bible. And old Paul had it for God to help us if we don't, if we don't have it. And then we had the story about a man who apparently, just like that, got under conviction.

We're not told a thing about this jailer until we find him in verse 23, when they laid many stripes upon the jailer. They whipped him and then they cast him in the prison and charged this gentleman to keep him. And so when they told him what to do, verse 24, he took them and put them in the inn of prison and made their feet fast in the stalks.

And now the scripture for the evening. And at midnight, Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God. And the prisoners heard them praying and singing.

And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's bands were loosed. And the keeper of the prisoner, waking out of his sleep and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword and would have killed himself.

Supposing that the prisoners had been fled, but Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm, for we are all here. Now watch it. Then this jailer called for a light and sprang in and came trembling and fell down before Paul and Silas.

And then he brought them out and then he said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they answered him. Because he meant business, folks. He meant business.

Know where they were. Now listen to Brother Barney. Do like the Bereans and go on and search the scripture.

Huh? All right. Know where in the Old Testament or in the New Testament did anybody ever do personal work like this generation of Baptists have been doing? Do we go out and try to get people to say they'll accept Jesus? They've been taught to do them. Huh? But they didn't do it in the Bible? No, sir.

No, sir. The only time anybody was ever told what to do to be saved is when they came to somebody and asked them. You see? And the word came.

If you want to hang around, the word preaching to lost people is seek the Lord. You see? You know anybody seeking the Lord? You see, I charge that this generation of Baptists, it is some miracle if any of you saved. But you had to get saved in spite of what you've been taught.

Because nobody will ever be saved until they desire the Lord Jesus Christ with all of their hearts. Not for what he can do for them, but for just what he is more than anything else in the world. Nobody will ever be saved until he becomes a seeker.

And nobody such a seeker as your mom and your papa and everybody put together can't get him to stop. He said, I'm going to find the Lord or die trying. Now, your mom was embarrassed with understanding.

But most of you are so young, I don't expect you to. But that's been in the Bible all the time. You know when you're going to get saved? The Bible says, in the day when thou shalt seek me with all thine heart, I shall surely be found in thee.

And what I'm trying to get churches to do is pay a little attention to the Bible. I told you young pastor, he was 24 years old, get him a tape recorder, if he ever gets the money, listen to himself preach and correct himself while he's young. Lord, I will need some churches.

That is, people make up churches and public preachers. There is so a lot we've been passing down away. And we'll begin to study this book.

I believe the methods that Jesus used are good enough for us. And I believe the methods that Paul used are good enough for us. I know we think we've improved on them, but I think we've made a mess of them.

And I'm telling you now, what needs to happen is a breath of revival. And I won't tell you what revival is. I don't like the term.

I believe the New Testament would call it the disturbing presence of Christ. Well, if Jesus Christ would find that so it wouldn't make him become the friend of Satan, and he would make his presence known in this little village, he'd disturb everything in this town. For a demon would disturb when Christ was present here.

The earth was disturbed. He left nothing undisturbed. And what we call revival, if you get that from the New Testament, I call the disturbing presence of Jesus Christ.

I looked him in the face and told him, you better quit quoting that scripture where two or three are gathered together unless you put in there in my name. That means to do business under his authority in my presence here. He was quoting that little pious verse of the Lord's Prayer.

He had been around to disturb him twenty years, I doubt it. You mean to tell me he comes to the churches today, no sir. He'd have to wear sin if he did.

But two or three are gathered together in his name. That's the key to it, brother. Under his authority, preaching his message, using his name.

God bless your heart, then he'll come. Ladies and gentlemen, you better listen to me. There's just one power between heaven and earth that can bring conviction to lost men and women, and that's the presence and power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

You talk about two lives, look at who are alive people, see Jesus in you, that's a bunch of sassafras. There's just one person. When men are confronted with the Holy Christ and his presence is manifesting, all hell is disturbed.

Now that's what I call alive. Amen. Is that what you want? God knows what we need.

And I'm here to tell you, bless your little hand for a while, but I'm here to tell you that if you're going to pay some attention to the fact that you've got the mind and the head, be under his authority. Hear me? Under his authority. If you're going to have his presence.

If you're going to have his presence. And when Jesus Christ, if he ever decides that he wouldn't be violating the holiness of God, for he said, I'll be sanctifying them to draw near to me. He ain't fixing to come around to an institution called a secular church, unless that institution's filled with people who panic, hunger, and thirst for holiness, for he's a holy God.

We've got to face these things. We've been running our churches for two generations without the presence of Jesus Christ. What we desperately need now, and we've got to have it, or we won't be able to keep going much longer.

We have to shut up. But Jesus Christ finding it so that he would please, Hey, it's in the order of the Bible. There's no way around it.

He can fix it soon. He's got to show up. But if he doesn't take to show up at the non-services, tomorrow's going to be worse than it is today.

As sure as I'm preaching right now. What I'm here to tell you, the congregation that have paid much attention to that little expression, where two or three have gathered to do business under the authority and direction of the living Christ. He's the boss, he's the head of the church.

Amen. And does anybody want to be pleased to say, a church that's situated a half an inch from the deep and jaws of hell, in experience of the disturbing presence of Jesus Christ in its midst, and all hell up and crashing around. And the recipe for his appearance is in this passage of scripture tonight.

There are just three things that I see in this passage of scripture as quickly as I can. I'll leave them with you. Hell, witnessing, faith and Christians.

Now folks, there are not any other kind. There are not any other kind of Christians except Christians who are witnesses. And there are not any other kind of Christians except Christians who live lives of prayer.

If you do not live and see heaven, you are not saved, you know that. If you do not live in a state, S-T-A-P-E, state of continual prayer, you're not a Christian. For prayer is the very breath of Christian life.

Prayer is something that you do not say all the way, but it's a reaching out continually in your soul after God. You pray while you're washing dishes. You pray while you're engaging in conversations.

If you're a Christian, that's right, folks. If you're a Christian. The mark of spiritual death.

If somebody calls you a Christian, you live in faith in such a wonderful way that you'll never be satisfied with everybody else. The experience of the wonder and power of the Christ that he comes to know. That's right, folks.

If you keep your mouth shut from writing on Jesus, you are not saved, and you know that. You know that. And with your life in one breath, out breath, continually, in the psalms early in the morning, you're not saved.

If the first thing you think about when you wake up in the morning, the last thing you think about if you sleep at night, it is not him who's there to use and love the children of God. If you're not saved, then you know it. You know you're not saved.

Christ will not share a second place in anybody's heart. He doesn't need more than you. And if they are put together, your children, your family, everybody else, you don't know all of them.

That's all. But we believe in this day, where there have been some miscalls, and we're all here talking against this, and 10,000 obstacles out there, and you're not in the battle. What I'm praying for is for our people who know the law, and I'm taking for granted that somebody in this congregation, I believe, will really save people.

And I'm preaching to you, for I say the whole day, to stand in between this town and hell, only humans pass out. We give unto God's people. I'm not asking unsaved church members if I'm speaking to anybody like that.

I'm not asking you to witness the rose and the bad, no, see, it's a game. You just keep your mouth shut, and go to hell as fast as possible. But it's not optional whether I'll be a witness, if God saves me, doesn't say, I hope you'll be my witness.

He says, you are my witness, and so on. It's not optional whether a Christian will be the light of the world. He doesn't say, I hope you'll be alive.

He says, you are the light of the world. Isn't that a responsibility? It's not optional whether we are here to save others. God bless your heart.

You can't possibly live to do anything else if you've ever been rescued from the fiery clay yourself. Isn't that right? What I'm pleading for is congregations of saved men, women, boys, and girls. I say that every town and every city ought to have one institution that's called a church, that as a church is representing the Lord with its lips of praise and with its intercession and prayer.

There are only two references God's given His people to accomplish what He's given us to do. That's the proclamation by Archimedes with the book of the blessed story of the cross of Jesus Christ and an intercession of prayer. If you've got one without the other, it's no good.

If you haven't got either, it's no good. You've got to have them together. It's not just enough that this church preaches the truth unless it's soaked with the tears of the membership of prayer.

It will not be what God sends it to do. Paul preaches the daybreak on Mr. Sturgeon, but he never preached the sermon of the midway church in London that underneath the great high pulpit stand where he stood down in the basement 300 of the choicest men of his church never heard him preach. They're down there on their knees praying while he is preaching.

God bless you folks. I'm telling you what's fact that we're going to keep on butchering soul all the time to call folks into accepting Jesus or we're going to face the fact that when Jesus Christ is around and men are confronted with him some are going to curse him but others will begin to scream like this old sinner Is there any hope for me? What must I do? I was very smart at that but I always couldn't stand this other stuff. Where I go, I say Lord maybe I'll see it again.

I'll see some old sinner trembling and say do you reckon a holy God would save a sinner like me? How'd you like to get people talking? That's where we used to talk when we threw the Bible away and began to repeat what we've been told. Your daddies and mothers used to pray God bless you. Our 50 years grown their heads attracted me and now if we're preaching they have more time than we do better punch a page, Papa.

I understand that. But somewhere or another if our churches don't fix it so they can wait in some time to meet together all on their faces like they used to. The men were not there and prayed for an hour and the women were not there and prayed for an hour and the seekers came for the more of us things.

You never seen them like that, did you? That's the way they used to be. And the men left their prayers and the women left their prayers and the royal people the royalty were saying they were deaf and they'd come in and they'd stand on their side and smoke or talk or something like that. They'd come for the more of us things.

And when time for me the preachers said, oh brethren now let's start and the seekers will go back to their secrets. I would cease and I would take care for the more of us things. In a way it's quite so right for me.

But I'd sure love to see some people seeking the Lord. I sure would. Well, God bless your heart.

Witnessing, praying Christians. Let's be honest. If there ain't but two of you can I'll tell you what you can do.

You can get the air of a God who sends earthquakes and shakes things. If you tell me that's not so I'll never go over to another meeting. I know it is so.

God bless your heart. Paul and Silas had to get in jail for showing people the way of salvation. Amen.

What'd they do after they got in jail? They prayed and sang praises unto God. Amen. What'd God do? God sent an earthquake.

That's what we need now. And if that's not what you want I'd appreciate it if you'd tell me. My back's hurting.

I'd love to go home. If that's not what you want God ain't gonna worship Paul for me. If you wanna go along going out here trying to get somebody to take Jesus if you don't want him don't feel the need of him,

do you? Huh? Ain't you full of excuses? Why, when you eat and go out here and invite somebody to come to what's called church they'll leave you with the promise that they'll try to come one night before the meeting's closed to get rid of you, won't they? You know, how many of you people know some sinners around here that's screaming and begging God to save them?

Do you?

There's a man who's trembling but he didn't tremble apart from the witnessing and the praying of these two Christian men Paul and Silas two witnesses two people of real salvation and they get praying that only God can send an earthquake only God can unlock those prison doors only God could set those men free Listen to me, I'm going to tell you again the so-called gospel that's been 60 years in the mirror has produced people who believe that God can't, that God doesn't save sinners that sinners save themselves I believe you can't have any praying in our churches I believe you folks will come and visit for preaching time but when I talked to them about the church on its stage I said, I'll lose you you have to believe what they call the gospel that poor little God has done all he can do and

now he's just got his hands folded and can't make a move of it and he has to wait for men to make their move go around and wave at this place and that I believe in a God who sent a messenger that will follow you with Jacob and that messenger wrestled with Jacob all night long and old Jacob fought as hard as he could and you better listen to Brother Barnum now are one of you people ever going to get saved if you can help me now you better listen you'll never get saved if you can help me if God almighty don't break your old stubborn will and your old black heart and you beg your life and cry to leave it up to you you'll never get saved and old Jacob said, I'm going to surrender not me and finally the messenger smote him and cried to him and then old Jacob came to his senses and God never

saved the sinner yet and he didn't cry to him for a sinner don't want to be saved he don't want to go to hell he don't want to be united to the Lord Jesus Christ and then the sinner in this town that wants to die and go to hell but they don't want to live a holy life for you is that right? and if you could let them say, seek prayer they say, ok brother that's for me seek prayer they say, that's for me seek prayer they say, that's for me but I say, seek God and he said, no, no, no not me not me I thank God that I wouldn't waste my life going up and down, being raised in my family most of the time for 28 years preaching to little old people of God like that God I preach is the same God you send a messenger and cripple Jacob and when Jacob's crippled he has some sense first time and when

Jacob was crippled and the messenger started to lead him he and Jacob called him his propitial and he said, you can't lead a messenger until you're blessed and I believe in the God who in the fear of the soul and conscience he's going down the road to Damascus to kill some old Christians and Jesus Christ met him right square down in the road and revealed himself to him saved him by his grace and because I believe in that I believe if we had some churches for the people who believe that God's still doing business and don't believe this family of a liar that preaches all over this country that God's done his part now he's waiting to see what the sinner will do God's done some but he ain't through yet brother he still has Christ we don't believe that, but do we? we put jolly on about the

good old days and in fact he was saved now and the stars make this a place of prayer looking up into the face of God the same God who stifled old Jacob to grow and caused him to seek it the same God who blinded sore apostles and saved them the same God that if a mother believed in him she'd look into the face of God and say oh God, there's my boy he won't listen to me he won't listen to his daddy he won't

listen to his preacher he won't listen to anybody oh God, do something and I believe that God's still alive and if you did this would become a prayer in church and you move forward I don't know anybody that can save sinners except God they've been getting saved for a long time without God it's time we face that amen Paul and Silas witness you'll save, you'll witness Paul and Silas prayed

they prayed together and God did the same thing Hallelujah and folks we're just about to face it we've used every trick and every device known to man has run out every last one of them has failed we just got one thing left close our doors we'll get on our faces and say oh God this generation jazz crazy crazy mad money crazy sex crazy dress crazy this religious culture in general is a bit too much for us will God interfere? if you think there's one weapon left that's the one weapon we've been doing it out for so long weapon of God since the earthquake when the earthquake came amen this is a better old day life knew he was in the presence of God this church is a place where God almighty manifests himself through you do not be convicted if you're not convicted you're a malice to the Lord if

you don't speak to the Lord on that that bird that started that story about Christians on the work for Jesus on the oil and the oil there's nothing you can do for Jesus but if he ever gets saved he'd do us a favor through you he doesn't ask you to do him no harm nothing on earth that he can do for you but if he saves you he saves you at any moment through you he may manifest himself it's his presence that men tremble at isn't that right? that's what I'm pleading with you and when this earthquake came that old Jesus said this is God this is God he comes out and says sir what must I do to be saved the fellow in that seat isn't it wonderful that you can preach the gospel believe on the Lord Jesus Christ they tell a story down in Georgia during this time they had slaves old Sambo he was the

colored star waltz of the plantation and the colored people had their annual revival meeting they got a picture to come in preach for them they took out at night all the colored people went to their meeting and the man who owned the plantation the white cross he sat down one night to see if they were behaving themselves and he stood out in the fringe of the crowd he saw all the people standing all around the white cross stood out there and first thing he knew the men were listening the old Negro preacher and he kept on listening and that's why the service is over and the next day the white cross rang in the Sambo cross in the plantation and he said Sambo sit down to your meeting last night Sambo said yes sir boss I'll sleep with you down the night he said you got a good preacher he said

yes sir boss he declared the Lord's counsel is done he said you know Sambo I've got come here to listen to what he's talking about and Sambo said praise the Lord he said Sambo according to what that man preaches if I die I'll be right straight to hell he said Sambo said that's exactly where you want to go well he said Sambo he said I don't want to go to hell and old Sambo said no Sambo I'd rather hear you say that else you're going to pay and you get some sense in your head and he said Sambo he said I ain't got no time for thought I've been thinking about where I'd live if I die I've been really busy making money making this plantation I ain't sleep so good last night that's going on for me he said Sambo would you tell me how to get straight Sambo said boss you should really want me to he

said sure do Sambo well Sambo said boss I want to tell you he said you know that there are horsemen out there that are out on the street he said you girls have got that horse in you and you climbed over that rail of fence and stood over in the northern corner where the horse have got their muzzle and you get down on your knees right in the middle of that horse muzzle and close your eyes and then start to have mercy on yourselves and he's like hey and the boss man gave a curse and he said oh Sambo he said I'm serious I didn't want you to do Sambo said he didn't care about anyone's soul and they parted and that night his

friends went up he decided he better go down and see if the colored people had any sort of behavior and he got down there and listened to that old colored preacher preach

he didn't know much but he knew his soul and he preached him and the next day the white boss looked over to Sambo and he said Sambo Sambo got back down and listened to the preacher last night Sambo said yes sir boss so glad to see you well it stayed a while after the preaching we asked God did you get no rest did you go to sleep you couldn't sleep nor eat did you begin to call on God for his mercy well he said something's sure I said I didn't sleep a wink last night I said I'm scared Sambo I don't want to go to jail he said Sambo don't joke me like you did yesterday if you tell me how to be saved Sambo said yes sir boss in case you really want to know well he said I sure do he said well I tell you boss you go to the left back there and you find where the red fence and you get over in the

northeast corner where the house is right there in the middle you get out right in the middle of it when you leave you close your eyes lift up your face and ask God to have mercy on you because he's going to do it and the boss man gave him a curse he said I... you're just joking I meant business and you're joking but that night he went down and he had to preach again and he went along walked the floor got out on his knees tried to pray he didn't know how got out of his Bible it was all weak to him he never had it open before and he walked the floor and left the bed he tossed and tumbled and finally about three o'clock in the morning he got up put on his clothes got around headed out towards the plantation house of Sambo the straw-colored boss ran with him knocked on the door let go

sleeper eyes Sambo came to the door opened his eyes opened again and said Lord have mercy bless my heart I'm a man he said Sambo don't joke around he said I can't sleep he said I feel like I'm dropping ice straight into the hill he said Sambo please tell me God please get God to save me Sambo said boss do you really want me to he said I sure do Sambo said boss I want to he said you better let that hope in and you climb over the railing fence and get over that northeast corner where the horse got their milk you get down on your knees close your eyes and ask God to have mercy on you he said he's going to do it boss man just turned around landed low and headed for the offbeat old Sambo watched him fall at him dreadful boss man got up there and started climbing over the railing fence old

Sambo watched him he straddled the fence started climbing down along the road side had one more run to go Sambo said one more one more and boss man hung by one foot in the air and held on to the rail and Sambo said boss did you actually plan to do that well he said Sambo I don't think that in a sense in that I don't understand why a man got to get over in that mud hole to grab and save him well he said I want to be saved and that's the only way he can tell me to do it that's what I'm going to do and he straddled and got one foot in the mud and Sambo said hey boss he said you don't have to actually do that you just got to be willing to you see when a man is willing to be saved on God's terms then telling God how to do it no matter how foolish they are it's foolish foolish that God would

save you the only person to keep you out of hell is that person and that's the only person to keep you out of hell that's the only person to keep you out of hell only person to keep you out of hell that's the only person to keep you out of hell that's the only person to keep you out of hell that's the only person you out of hell that's the only person to keep you out of hell that's the only person to keep you out of hell that's the to keep you out that's the to keep you out of hell that's the only person to keep you out of hell that's the only person to keep you out of hell that's the only person to keep to keep you out of hell that's the only person to keep

way.

You died on the cross, and because it did, you put him on his home, and he reigned there. You gave him the reins of the government and the hearts of the kings. You turned all things over to him.

We commit this congregation that you pray that God's Son may get glory out of this time we've spent here together tonight for his dear name's sake we pray to you. Amen. Amen.

God bless you. See you tomorrow night. Amen.

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