

Two Things God Promises to Do for His Church

by Rolfe Barnard

The main thrust of the gospel message is the emphasis on the need for salvation and the importance of being born again, and it is the main issue of the day because it is the doctrine of the devil.

Duration: 49:42

Scripture: Isaiah 55:11, Ezekiel 34:16, Matthew 6:33, Acts 1:8, Romans 1:16, 2 Corinthians 4:6, Ephesians 4:14

Topics: "Gods Promises", "Salvation Grace"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher tells a story about a little boy who disobeys his mother's warning and ventures into the woods outside their house. The boy gets lost and becomes scared as darkness falls. The preacher uses this story to illustrate how people can stray from God's path and become lost in sin. However, God promises to seek out and rescue those who are lost, and to heal and strengthen those who are broken. The preacher emphasizes the importance of holding onto the truth of God's word and relying on His grace for salvation.

Transcript

It's our real joy and delight to have Evangelist Barnard from Winston-Salem, North Carolina, with us. And usually when he's in this area, anywhere close by, we put him to work and we delight to have him minister God's word again this evening. Now before I come to read the text and bring the message, may I say thank you to some of you as individuals and to the congregation as such.

When I was ill, you came to my rescue financially, and it sure did help. And I say thank you both to those of you who sent individual gifts and the congregation. And also since coming here this morning, the treasurer informed me, I don't know whether it's letting the cat out of the bag or not, I don't know how you Yankees handle your finance.

I don't know whether just the deacons did this or everybody, but I was informed that a check was sent in the mail Friday for our paper, Redeemer's Witness, down to Florida. Some of you had the privilege of hearing Brother Kendall, who was here some month ago on such a matter. On Sunday evening he's the editor of the paper that we've published, and we've got in trouble.

It's growing fast, we can't finance it. So every time the deacons meet, I make the motion that you send us a check. I'm in favor of it.

And it's going far and near, and we give it away, and we didn't aim for it to get so many on the list that it's costing us a way of a lot of money now. And we appreciate it so very, very much. Now tonight, if you'll open the word, if you can't do, to the book of Ezekiel.

The book of Ezekiel, chapter 34. I delight to be in this presence with the guests of the Rieslingers up on the mountain somewhere. You go out 74, you run out of gas and turn to the right, and that's where you'll be there.

And you come out, bring some chicken and steak, and we'll have dinner. And we appreciate it. We intended to leave Thursday morning for home, we're still here.

And we hope we'll have a good time for the days we stay here. My wife's a little mad at me. We don't get to stay home much.

I don't get to stay home much with her. But she said she wasn't going to quit me this late, this October. I will have put up with her 38 long years.

I ought to have lots of stars in my crown for that. Now I want to read a passage of scripture. And you'll be kind to me tonight, recognizing the fact that I'm not in my element when I come in for a service like this.

The only way I know how to preach is in what we call evangelistic campaigns, where every night I preach tonight in order that I may preach tomorrow night. And then tomorrow night I preach a type of message that will enable me to preach another type the next night. And when I just have to single out a message, I'm hard put to get the mind of the Lord.

But that's sort of an alibi. I want to do the best I can. Your indulgence and I want to probe your consciences a little tonight.

And when I've read the text, I want to pose a question, suggest a remedy. And that will introduce us to my subject tonight. The whole of the 34th chapter of Ezekiel is devoted to the fact that God will do some things.

Nearly every verse in this blessed chapter pictures God saying, I will do thus and so. I will do it. But now we're not to be led to believe that he'll just do it without the use of means, for he does not work that way.

Nobody gets saved by God just blowing a whistle or something like that. He always works through means. I do not know that he has to, because I'm not qualified to enter into that.

But we're talking about how he does as the record is given in the word of God. And he's talking here in this chapter about how he will do thus and so. He calls on the shepherds of the flock to listen to him and hear his word and get soaked, or soak their own souls, if you will, in the greatest truth of the Bible, that the God of the Bible is not subject to conditions.

That if he sets out to do something, he can do it no matter what sort of conditions prevail. And that's our only hope. As I look at these empty seats tonight, I'd say everything must be a cemetery around here.

And if I were looking at you or myself or the conditions or the lethargy or the backslidings of people who call themselves children of God, I'd go crazy mad. But I'm not. I'm preaching about a God who up until now, in the most adverse circumstances, when there wasn't so much as a cloud the size of a man's hand, came to the rescue of his perishing people and did great and mighty works.

And that isn't fatalism, that's our only hope. That's our only hope, but thank God we have that hope. What I'm saying now will make a little sense in a moment or two.

I want to seize one verse of scripture out of this chapter that has to do with what God says he will do, and read verse 16 as just some words for us to think about tonight. Then I'll pose my question and bring the message. God says, I will seek that which was lost.

God says, I'll do this now. I will seek that which was lost. And I will bring again that which was driven away.

And I will bind up that which was broken. And I will strengthen that which was sick. But I will destroy the fat and the strong, and I will feed them with judgment.

There are two things that God promises that he will do. For certain types of people he'll come to the rescue. He'll seek them out, and he'll deal with them in mercy.

For another type of people, he will meet them on their own ground, for God always does that. He meets you on the ground you propose to hold. And if you take the position that you're strongly fortified, that you're fat, that you have needs of nothing, that you do not need his grace, that you do not need his mercy, that you do not need his succor, he'll meet you on your own terms and pass you by.

But if he comes across somebody that's in a ditch and can't get out, and admits that he's in the ditch and would like to be helped, he'll camp there and put his everlasting arms about you and bring you to himself. I do not know whether Grace Baptist Congregation is interested in what your young leader was saying in his prayer about this generation hearing from God. But if you're not, you're miserable, you're a disgrace to the name and profession of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Surely the longing in every heart that knows the comfort that comes from the feeling that your sins are forgiven, when you've been declared right with the God of the universe, surely the longing of your heart must be that this blinded religious generation, that going to hell so fast you can't catch it on a motorcycle, going to hell with its beliefs and its doctrines, but going to hell without praise, surely there beats within the heart of every child of God singly. And as you meet together as brothers and sisters, a desire that never leaves you, that this generation, before the sun goes down and hell opens up, shall be confronted one time with the message that God would have this generation faced with. If we are concerned with the movement of the Spirit of God in our day, we as preachers and as individuals and as assembled congregations, claiming to be representatives of the body of Christ which he purchased with his precious blood, if we are like that, we ought to be asking one question.

What aspect, follow me, what aspect, what thrust of the gospel message ought to be stressed in our day to the point of controversy, to the point of deep issue that we demand an answer for? What aspect, what thrust, what emphasis of the entire gospel message ought to be the main topic of our conversation, the main emphasis of our preaching and of our teaching and of our witnessing in this day? Because it is so that up until now, every visitation of God in truth to the world has been marked on the human side by emphasis on some particular part or phase or aspect or thrust of the entire gospel message. I know that

I've been told all the days of my ministry that what we're looking for is well-balanced preachers, but God be pleased to deliver us from them. We need some men and women that can get a hold of the truth that is the one truth that this generation needs to hear about and go plum crazy on that truth.

God delivers from being nice, well-balanced, well-proportioned Christians, because people like that never get anywhere. They're nice people and they wouldn't harm a flea, but the only time God's ever done anything remarkable in the history of the Christian church has been when a man or some men or congregations have been led of the spirit to find just that truth of the gospel that must be brought to the people and go plum crazy over that and never say anything about anything else. And so I'm asking you tonight to consider with me what I believe.

I don't know whether it's so or not. What I believe is the particular aspect or thrust of the entire message of the word of God that we need to camp on and just camp with it and don't be drawn aside and don't be brought down from the wall just keep pressing it and keep pressing it and keep preaching it and keep weeping it and keep praying it and keep witnessing it. For I believe under God that I know what I'm talking about when I say in a moment what this thrust is.

The thing that lends what I'm trying to lay down as a premise before you a great deal of importance to me and I trust to you as you share my interest in this awakening that I hope to see before I die. I'm honest with you. All the days of my ministry I've never seen God work much.

And I'm, is it selfish? I'm trying to preach to a generation that doesn't want to be preached to and has no need, sense of need. And that's been through all the days of my life. If I had to be in the shape you people are in and see these empty seats in every service and go through your services week after week, month after month and never see Jesus Christ much walking these aisles and camping in these pure pews and pricking men's hearts and tearing up their religious playhouses I don't think I could stand it.

So I have no word of rebuke, I have sympathy. Now and then I see God work. I'm just back from Texas where I never saw a deeper work of Holy Spirit drawing men to Christ.

And all the days of the ministry that I saw, I don't mean it was much but it's so much better than the ordinary that it enables me to hope that next week it will go elsewhere. That God will do it again. Now and then I do have my faith revived and I spit on my hands and tell the devil to go back to hell and dare to believe that in my days I may see God.

Visit this world again in power and in demonstration and tear up men's nice little religious refuges and cause men to become seekers after God. If you take that hope away from me, I'm not strong enough. I have to live and behold that this generation as I, if I could live six months when God was moving when souls were being torn all to pieces when hearts were being pierced when men were catching hold of coattails of men and women whom they think know God and say, Do you have a moment? Could you tell me, do you suppose that God would stoop and dare you to deal with a person as wicked as I am? Wouldn't you love to live in that sort of an atmosphere? You're walking down the streets of Parliament and everybody's talking about something but nobody's talking about the Lord.

And the conversation would be about him. People in their places of business would be seeking after him and the homes would be private places of mourning where every man mourns a part as the scripture tells us is yet to come. I live and behold that that day will come.

What is the main thrust? Since we cannot bring this to pass all we can do is to do what we find our hands to do and cry to God if it pleases him to do what only God can do, open hearts and stem the tide that's sweeping us to hell tonight and cause men to give an ear to the message that dares to say it comes from heaven. In every generation where God has been pleased to bless in unusual ways, somebody's got a hold of some truth. In the days of the Reformation, Martin Luther and later Calvin and other men got a hold of one truth and that's all it brings.

Just morning, breakfast, supper, dinner, sandwich, refreshment picnic, Lord's Day, Saturday, Friday Holy Monday, that's all it says. Men are not justified by going through the motions and paying their due impenance and paying the money to get the sins forgiven and going through the motions of doing good deeds. They just said one day, men are justified only and utterly and everlastingly by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

But when we preach that today, everybody will go to sleep on you. It's still true, but nobody cares. Nobody cares.

That isn't the message of this hour. Everybody agrees with you. In George Whitefield's days, the first sermon he preached when he was 21 years old, he's perhaps the greatest preacher who's lived since New Testament days.

First time he preached, soon after his faith 15 people went mad, absolutely insane as a result of the sermon. In all of my ministry, I've been preaching nearly 38 years I know of only two people who've gone crazy because they listen to me preach. I wish I could stand here and say that I had enough power of God and enough of the thrust of the truth in my message that this thing got so serious that multiplied thousands of people under my poor ministry that got so interested that they went off balancing their minds in their frenzy to get to God.

But everything's been put nice and quiet where I've preached and people have just slept quietly and waked up in hell and everybody's been happy for the most part. Mr. Whitefield preached in the first sermon 15 people went mad and he turned England upside down and had a part with Johnson Edwards in the great awakening of this country the only touch of revival America's ever known. And he just preached one thing you must be born again.

He preached it at 10 o'clock in the morning at 5 o'clock in the morning at 8 o'clock at night he preached it, preached it, preached it for 30 some odd years and never had the one message you must be born again. Everybody in England was a church member and going to hell they went through the motions and everybody was happy in their sleep of death and they had nothing inside and Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Wesley they fought over doctrine but they preached the same message and they said something needs to take place inside of a man he must be made a brand new creation in the sight of God you must have a birth in its aspect as your physical birth you must be delivered from one sphere into another you must be translated from the room of darkness into the precious room of God's dear Son you cannot you cannot get into God's kingdom you can't even see it said Mr.

Whitefield unless you experience this birth of the spirit we call the new birth but you preach it now everybody says I believe it even the Roman Catholic Church is giving great emphasis today to the necessity of their version of the new birth so you can preach the new birth today and everybody sleeps quietly on till they wake up in hell Johnson Edwards the greatest preacher America has ever had you've read of him and I like to read and encourage my heart that these days that once were God will do it again

he preached that salvation is a seeing of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ he did it to combat the awful unchecked so called free willism of his days that turned salvation over to the act of a man and he shut men up and all had preached he just preached it and preached it and

the two revivals that resulted first in his own community and two or three years later spread all over New England and America through one man's preaching and he just preached that salvation is when God God who commanded darkness to go away commanded the darkness I'm quoting scripture to shine to shine commanded light to shine in the darkness that same God had shined in our hearts said Paul to give the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ and God used that message to bring revival we preach it today and everybody sleeps on everybody sleeps on why is this? why is this? it's true for this reason Satan in his evil sarcastic has a citadel of error in different beliefs in different ages in other words the devil's smart he don't try to fight on forty fronts at one time he

concentrates his work he can't be everywhere at one time and what we're trying to find out tonight is where he's concentrated today what is the belief of sinful men and the doctrine of the devil that has got America in the sleep of spiritual death and we're quietly sleeping away I believe that if you brought an atomic bomb and exploded it in the average church nobody would wake up we are desperately desperately in trouble listen to me in every age Satan fortifies himself around an era that becomes a doctrine of Satan and becomes a belief of man when John the Baptist came to make a people ready for the Lord he'd done that very thing that pride in being physical descendants of Abraham Israelite Jews insulated them to the message of John the Baptist he came and said repent he

said what in the world are you talking about you don't seem to know to whom you're speaking and he called them generation of vipers and said think not to tell me that could be Abraham's death and he says God can take of those souls down there do better with them than he can you and John the Baptist shook some people when the Lord Jesus came in his earthly ministry Satan had concentrated all his guns on one error one doctrine it was wrong but it was his doctrine and it was the belief of the people and the error was concerned with the nature of the mission that the Lord Jesus came to carry out they said when Messiah comes he'll do big things and Christ met that error by saying I came not to build a big kingdom of this world but I came to die on a bloody wooden cross outside the city of

Jerusalem and thus he attacked the error of Satan and the belief of men and shook Samaria the apostle Paul had to deal with the Jews on one hand the Greeks on another as Satan concentrated in his days now come to what what's the belief of men today what's the doctrine of the devil today men believe an error and Satan is responsible for it and here's the error ladies and gentlemen now you better listen to me listen to me listen to me you dare now you better listen to this preacher you nice little people better listen to me one time you're the nicest people I ever saw you wouldn't harm a flea or win anybody to Christ listen to me listen to me you can get your doctrine all straight some objects sure are sound but that isn't the issue today there's just one issue today ain't no use to shoot

in 40 directions today the issue today it's the doctrine of the devil and it's the common belief of this generation the devil has got this generation believing and he did it through preachers that nobody needs to be saved you know anybody needs to be saved you know anybody that needs to be now I'm not talking about being a nice little church member and getting some nice little doctrine and defending it I'm talking about somebody needing to be saved I mean S-A-V-E-D I mean rescued from a terrible danger therein I mean delivered from terrible enemies I mean a snatching out a a salvation a sure enough not nice little something but a snatching in agony out of the very gaping jaws of that which would destroy the soul in

time and eternity now men don't believe the need to be saved and the devil

has that as his doctrine today now he doesn't fight people being church members or being nice or cleaning up the ways and believing their beliefs and doubting their doubts and cussing people out if they do what you don't like to do but you do things just as bad isn't it funny how inconsistent we all are it's amazing to this preacher I go from one section of America to another and you folks will just cuss out somebody for doing this but you do something worse and it's alright and down there they cuss you for doing what you do and they do something worse there's no such thing as consistency now is that too much but it's so you just can't find anybody now that you can look down your nose at cause you do something worse and you swear it's alright than they do listen to me you know anybody

that feels like they really need to be saved it's nice to be a nice Baptist or a Presbyterian and sing in the choir and teach some true class or be an evangelist or be a pastor and keep yourself from the worst of the sins but do you know anybody that's in such a desperate condition in the sight of a thrice holy God that they need to be rescued by a hand that's stronger than they and saved by the merits of the life laid down of somebody other than they I submit to you that if we don't put all of our guns right here we're giving comfort to the devil not being true to the souls of men hear me this unsaved generation looks at visible people like us in our churches and he says if that's Christianity I don't need it I'm as good as they are I'm as good as they are and the devil behind that in

his denial of the great truth that underlies the gospel of Christ has from pulpits all over America for 60 years preached by implication that all men are to be saved and that nobody stands or sits or sleeps or eats or works or drinks in dire danger of being sent to hell by a thrice holy God I believe with all of my heart you can get your doctrines straight but that isn't it and I do not sneer at it we'll be teaching but this is the issue of this hour and if you want to be a church or an individual or a preacher or a teacher or a witness that's not shooting 17 birds at one time but you're going right down the alley where the devil's entrenched now remember ladies and gentlemen that for 60 years they've made fun in the pulpits of America of the precious doctrine of God electing men to

salvation and because of that if you do not believe that you have to believe that nobody needs to be saved and the trouble is that the people have believed what the preachers have told them and Carlisle's sleeping its religious way to hell tonight believing its beliefs and accepting the devil's doctrine and nobody's screaming for mercy now that introduction is longer than the sermon God says I will seek that which was lost there are three truths that I leave before you right quickly God saves whom he will don't care how they make fun of it don't care of every preacher in the Southern Baptist Convention which I'm a member most of them laugh at it I don't care if the president swear they don't believe it anymore I don't care if the evangelists make fun of it and preach against it and

correct it to it I don't care if everybody in the world makes fun of it says it's terrible and we ought not to talk about it, it can't be so and I can't understand it and I can't believe it it's still true that the only God we have any written record of has faithfully told us that he's not under obligation to save anybody and that he saves whom he will and he further says that he saves that he will to save lost people it's blessedly true that in the sense in which the bible speaks of it every lost person is going to be saved, God says I'll seek that which was lost I'll seek that which was lost but he further says if I'm talking to somebody that's fat and strong and that's the generation we live in today they don't need to be saved they're alright why this country's been so down beloved

with the so called gospel that God's under obligation to give everybody a chance to be saved but salvation's not by chance despite God's unutterable grace and this country's been so down until it is the doctrine that people believe today, that God almighty must must send the spirit to deal with all mankind in the same way and if that's so then nobody's in danger then nobody needs to be saved yes it is not true what this bible says that only men and women who have been brought by the truth of God in the hands of the Holy Spirit to throw up their hands plead their guilt and scream out their helplessness and cry for somebody to come and get something they cannot do for themselves, if that's not so, well then everybody's alright, but this bible says that men are lost and they're so terribly

lost that they cannot get out of it themselves and if that's so men need a savior, men need somebody beside a friend, men need something beside a booth they need a savior somebody to do everything for them that God demands and they cannot do God saves whom he will, and I know that's hated, and I know the average evangelist makes fun of it and I know that for 30 years I've been supposed to be the only evangelist in the south that preaches the grace of God and God's kept me up, and I'm still going, and I appreciate friends like you, and I love you when I was sick people sent money from all over America to pay my bills and I was down 3 months, and I'm well now and I feel good and I thank God for it, and God hasn't left me alone, but I share it to the shame of this dust they've called the

gospel for 60 years, and for 30 years I've been the only nationally known evangelist in America that believes that God saves whom he will, but that's what the Bible says, now if that's so, that's pretty serious if that's so then it may be you need to come down off your high horse and become a beggar if that's so, it may be that you're not going to get anywhere telling God how to run his business it may be in the language of your pastor this morning that the safest place for you is to follow the Lord Jesus about and get as near to him as you know how and say, Lord if thou will if thou will if thou will I don't doubt that you can, if thou will thou can't thou can't, God saves lost people if God saves anybody he has to get them to admit their lost their lost I've preached sometime on how

lost is lost how lost is lost the gospel that has enabled Satan to entrench himself behind this implied universalism that's growing all over the world until nobody now feels the need of being cleansed by Christ's blood or empowered by Christ at his throne that gospel that has been preached everywhere every major denomination in Carlisle, Pennsylvania a hundred years ago had a sound gospel foundation that's on now so now we've improved on it until today men hear what to call the gospel that talks about men and women with both their legs broken with their eyes cooked out with their ribs caved in and the so called gospel comes to them and says get up big boy and on those broken legs with those blind eyes there's a hospital down the way and if you go to it they'll take care of it that's what

they call the gospel and I come along and thank God I'm not by myself now and I say no my friend a man's got both legs broken he's blind in his eyes and deaf in his heart his ribs are caved in he's down there in the cave in the ditch what you need brother is somebody to come where you are and fix you up in the awful wretched helpless condition you're in nothing short of that is the gospel of the grace of God it comes to the lowest wretch that ever arrived and wriggled on his way to hell comes to him brother Roger where he is he can't get out, he ought to but there he is and unless God finds a way to get to him he can't get out himself that's how lost people are that's how lost folks are if God could get you lost I mean where you'd admit it quit your wriggling if he can get all the wriggle

out of you he'll save you he can bring you to throw up your hands I can't make it he'll save you that's the gospel of my Lord a little boy lived on the outskirts of a village just three and a half years old and the

mother the mother and father built a picket fence completely around the little house and the little boy was allowed to play in the picket fence in the yard where the fence fenced him in and of course mother said now sonny don't you get out of the yard and don't you go into the woods for the house was on the outskirts of the little village in the deep wood out there and the mother cautioned the little boy don't you get out of the yard now don't you go out in the woods and of course you know if your mother and father little boy couldn't sleep at night for wanting to do what he

was told not to do and so one afternoon while mother's busy he got the latch on the gate open and here he went and he went for the first time out into what he thought was freedom and he entered the woods and he was having a good time chasing the birds and the butterflies and squirrels and rabbits and finally he lost all sense of time and darkness came and the little three and a half year old boy was scared when it got dark and he said I got to go home and he stopped and he said I know it's back that way and so he ran but it wasn't back that way and then he said well maybe, maybe, maybe it's over that way and he ran but it wasn't that way and then he said maybe it's that way and he ran but he couldn't get out of the woods and directly his strength was gone there's something in the

scripture when we were without what strength Christ died for us and when he was utterly without strength and without hope all he could do was just fall down and sob he was in the woods and he couldn't get out he couldn't get out in the meantime the search parties were on and all through the woods come people with their lighted torches and lanterns and one of them is his daddy and every once and so often the daddy will stop and cut his hands to his mouth and say Billy Billy where are you but Billy don't want to be found and he don't say here I am but Billy does want to be found he's lost he's prided he's gone that way and he didn't get out he's gone that way and he didn't get out he's gone that way and he didn't get out there's nothing for him to do now except there he is huddled in his

misery and he hears his daddy Billy where are you he says here comes daddy oh and picks him up and does for him what he cannot do for himself brings him to safety that's the gospel that's the truth that's what men need you don't need a boost you need somebody to rescue you to do for you what you cannot do for yourself and if in the good providence of God a man or woman or boy or girl is brought to the place where he ceases his running and ceases his striving and there he is just huddled up in his misery I'll tell you something I got good news for you there's abroad in the land what's called the gospel and it goes as God went after Adam where are you where are you there I am down in the ditch and I can't get out I got good news for you somebody will come after you it's him whose arms are

said to be everlasting and he'll pick you up and he'll take you to God praise is holy will you bow your heads as we have the prayer of dismissal and benediction right where you are right where you are is the only place you have right now to come to grips with the God of the gospel of grace right where you are if you need him to do what only he can do for sinners vile that could be a heart committal right there where you are a turning of yourself utterly into his hands that vital act of committal here I am Lord calling on you begin that life of calling on the Lord and cling to him that is called the life of Christianity may God feed you right where you sit to do business right now with the Christ of God and now our father as the spirit of God shall be pleased to deal with men and women

boys and girls we commit them unto thy loving hands and care and pray that even now they may be able by the help of the Holy Ghost to commit themselves lock stock and barrel to the Savior of sinners and the Lord of all we beg it for bloodstained Jesus sake and for souls sake in Jesus name amen may God bless you dismissed

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