

Gospel Meetings s.h.c.- 06 Who Is on the Lord's Side

by Stan Ford

The sermon challenges listeners to think about who is on the Lord's side and to make a personal decision to follow God.

Duration: 42:30

Scripture: Exodus 12:5, Exodus 14:13

Topics: "Personal Commitment", "Public Confession"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of making a personal decision to be on the Lord's side. He challenges the audience to think about their relationship with God and not rely on the faith of others. The speaker highlights the need for both emotional and practical commitment to Christ. He urges the audience to make a public confession of faith and receive Jesus as their Savior. The sermon concludes with an invitation for anyone who wants to accept Jesus into their heart to come forward and make that decision.

Transcript

I want to read, if I may this morning, from the Old Testament in the book of Exodus. In the book of Exodus, if we may please, away in the Pentateuch, and in chapter thirty-two, the thirty-second chapter of the book of Exodus. We will read the first six verses and then we will go further down the chapter for our text verse.

So if we may, Exodus, chapter thirty-two, of course I will be reading from the authorized version, and if you care to turn with me, please do so. And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us. For as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we want not what is become of him.

And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me. And all the people break off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and put them unto Aaron. And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf.

And they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation, and said, Tomorrow is a feast day to the Lord.

And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings. And the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to pray. We may please the verse which is verse twenty-six.

Our text verse for this morning. Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him.

May the Lord just add his blessing to the familiar portion of his own precious word. Just a word of prayer. We thank thee that thou didst never gloss over the sins of thy people.

Thou dost show them to us in all their ugliness, that learning we may flee from. But we ask that this morning, as we think a little of the portion that we have read, that we also may find ourselves as those willing to answer the call, Who is on the Lord's side? And grant that their making be those who will come to Christ today. For we ask it in his name.

Amen. Amen. I doubt if there is this morning a person with us, who at some time or another in their experience has not heard a sermon, and maybe a legion of sermons, from the text that I have quoted.

In the words of the lovely hymn that we sing, Who is on the Lord's side? Who will serve the King? Who will be his helpers, other lives to bring? Who will leave the world side? Who will face the foe? Who is on the Lord's side? Who for him will go? You and I have passed on to others the challenge of this verse. But this morning I want us to look at it rather carefully. Because it is so easy to quote, it is so easy to sing, and so difficult to obey.

The background surely we have read. The servant of the Lord, Moses, has brought the children of Israel out of Egypt. Of the classic story of the slaying of the lamb, of the sprinkling of the blood, of those that entered into that house, we are familiar.

And yet let's go back to it for a moment or two. Let us remind ourselves that God gave to Moses instruction. The angel of death was to hover over Egypt.

And Moses was instructed to take to himself, and the children of Israel were instructed to take for every family a lamb without spot and without blemish. They were instructed that that lamb had to be slain, and the blood had to be placed where they could shelter under it. And those that were found sheltering under the blood were redeemed, were delivered from death, were delivered from the punishment of sin.

It was not that they were any better than anyone else. It was just that they found their shelter where God told them to find their shelter. And I need not remind you that this morning there are in this service men and women who would say that they also have found their shelter where God has told them to.

For they have ganged upon a lamb without spot and without blemish. The one that John the Baptist dared to say was the Lamb of God who bore away the sin of the world and the crown in Christ and in his death, salvation. Moses instructed the folk thus, and they obeyed.

Of the glorious story of him bringing them then from Egypt and through this wilderness scene to Sinai mount, again we are familiar. You were taught it as children in Sunday school. You can all most see Moses as he leads the children of Israel out of Egypt until they come to the Red Sea.

No boats, no bridges, no opportunity of crossing it. And the people of Israel are definitely frightened. Oh, they realize that terror will come and slay them.

What shall we do? And some of them murmured and said, let's go back. And Moses said, stand still. But God said, go forward.

Go forward. And forward they went and God did what no one else could do. For as Moses and those with him stepped towards the Red Sea, a great wind blew and the waters were divided.

Oh, of God's providing for their need in that wilderness, I don't want to take time. What I've tried to emphasize, I know not whether I've done it, what I've tried to emphasize is this, that God and God's men, they were able for every need. You know that this morning I am going to liken Moses to a greater than Moses.

What the epistle to the Hebrews says was greater than Moses. I'm going to remind you that God has for every one of us salvation. In the death of his Son, he has the means of the forgiveness of sin, for Christ has died for us.

Of God's great grace and mercy in doing what no one else can do, I want to remind you that when he saves a man or a woman, when he indeed in his mercy shows them grace, he doesn't finish with them. But day by day as we move on life's journey, there may come our Red Sea, there may come our wilderness, but bless God he's able and willing to bless us. But now, though Moses has through God brought salvation to the people of Israel, though Moses through God has led them through the Red Sea, though Moses through God has led them through the wilderness, he's come to find the Ice Man and he's climbed the Mount.

He's in the presence of God. He's going to receive all that they may know how to live as a people. But while he's up in the Mount out of their sight, those people begin to murmur.

Oh my friend, I want you to know that I have a Saviour, dare I use the expression. He's gone back. He's in the presence of the Lord.

Prepare for that to be his name. Jesus shall reign wherever sun. All around us in this scene for which he has provided salvation, there are men and women who are saying, where is he gone? Where is he? We can't see him.

We can't hear him. But we want God. Just as those people long ago came to Aaron and taking the very earrings from their ears and the gold from their bodies, they presented it to Aaron that he might make them a golden cup that they might worship.

There are men and women who despite what God in Christ has provided for them are saying, we'll worship other gods. I don't think it needs a stretch of imagination to follow along what I've said this morning. But I do want to remind you of this, that while the Lord Jesus in the bodily form may not be found in this world today, the challenge still comes from him who is on the Lord's side.

What are you going to do? What are we going to do? I want if I may to say three very simple things. As you know I mostly have three things to say, don't I? But when you have a good dinner you have soup and middles and afters, so there we are, it makes a meal, so let's have a spiritual meal this morning. Let's say our three things again.

As I look at this story and this text, I suggest to you there is a challenge to think about. Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come unto me. If ever there were words that demanded our thought, those are the words.

Do you know the great problem I find is to get men and women to sit down for a moment or two and think? Now please, don't misunderstand me. I am concerned with your emotions. The person who says that emotions don't come into the Christian faith doesn't know what he's talking about.

But it is not just your emotion that I'm concerned with today. I'm concerned with your mind. You see I have a God who does not ask anyone to commit intellectual suicide when they trust the Lord.

My Bible tells me that I've not followed cunningly devised fables. And so there's a challenge to think. But if there's a challenge to think, there's a choice to make.

Who is on the Lord's side? Who is on the Lord's side? I've a choice to make. There's a golden card. There's a God who's provided salvation for me.

There's a choice to make. I want to remind you there's not only a challenge to think, there is not only a choice to make, but there's a call to answer. Let him come unto me.

Let him come unto me. First of all there's a challenge to think. I suppose all of us would agree as we read the story the first challenge to think is this.

Why was it that these people who had been blessed of God so much, why was it that they were on the wrong mind? Now please will you notice something about them that always intrigues me? They did not wish to be irreligious. When they had this golden calf made they said they wanted it made that they might worship it. They realised that as far as they were concerned there was something bigger than themselves.

They did not wish to be irreligious. They were prepared to worship. The tragedy was they worshipped the wrong thing.

Would you notice please that not only did they worship but we're told they worshipped at an altar. They have learned a lot more than many liberals have learned. They have learned that the approach to a God is the way of sacrifice.

It has been my joy, my honour, my privilege, call it what you will, over the past years to have served God in this and well over thirty other countries. And as I have travelled from place to place sometimes in different areas that are known as the mission field, if there is one thing I have found it is this, that in the most primitive of tribes there is a desire to worship and invariably there is a desire to worship through a sacrifice. These people knew that.

When I come to our modern society where maybe blood sacrifices are frowned upon, I still find that in the most liberal of places it is a desire to worship God through sacrifice. They tell us of course it must be the sacrifice of our money, the sacrifice of our efforts, the sacrifice of our lives, the sacrifice of our giving. But

that's the way to worship God through sacrifice.

These people believe that. They not only had an altar, they not only desired to worship, but please, they were those who desired in life to eat and to drink and they rose up to play. There were many things about these folk that you and I would say that is right.

The great difficulty with it all was this, their focus was in the wrong or on the wrong thing. We are called to worship, we are called to worship God. We are called to come by the way of a sacrifice and that sacrifice is the gift of God on Calvary's cross.

We are told to be those people who indeed will come that we might in life enjoy things with Christ. He has given us all things, richly to enjoy. The tragedy is that there are some things we have forgotten.

We have forgotten this, that on life's journey there are only two sides, God's side and Satan's side. You may gloss it over as much as you will, you may as we would say in my country, I know not whether you say it here, cover it with cellophane paper and make it look pretty, but if you seek to worship or serve anyone but God, you are not on God's side, you are on Satan's side. There are only two sides.

Again and again and again the Lord Jesus emphasized this in his ministry, didn't he? He spoke of two ways, the broad way and the narrow way. He spoke of two destinations, life, death, destruction. He spoke of two houses, one built upon the sand, one upon the rock.

He was continually reminding us that there are only two sides. May I ask this morning which side you are on? Then I believe we need to think of the fact that there are not only two sides, but that we can't be on both sides. I meet some folk who try and be on both sides.

You know they meet me and they say, how are you brother Ford? So nice to see you. And the next person they meet they say, I met that fellow Ford. I know what they say, because people have a habit of coming and telling me.

Oh, I wanted you to smile, because if you didn't, how tragic it would be. My friend, you cannot be in the middle. There is no place in the middle.

He that is not for me is against me. There are only two sides and you can't be on both sides. And of course the other thing you must think about is this, that if there are only two sides, and if you can't be on two sides, God's side is the right side.

God's side is the right side. For you see, I have a God who provides not only for time, he not only delivers us from Egypt, but hallelujah, he takes them on to the promised land. It is not only life, it's death and eternity that's in the balance.

And my fellow traveller to eternity, if there is one thing we learned as our friends came forward to celebrate their wedding anniversary. We've learned this, haven't we? If I could manage at the family round at dinner and he was there with his wife and family and the daughter was there with her husband and family and suddenly kept looking at me and I said, what's the matter son? He said, Dad, I've been thinking. But he said, Dad, I've been thinking.

Oh, what have you been thinking son? We're having conversations. But if you're not, tomorrow night preach on God. Don't come as you are.

Tuesday night I'm going to preach. What side are you on? God's side is the right side. But please, if there is a challenge to think, there is a choice to make.

It's a choice that's personal. Who is on the Lord's side? Well, I know that there came from the lips of Moses a challenge that was addressed to the whole of the people. Yet is it not remarkable that had to be answered by individuals.

I am saying this morning in this service, who is on the Lord's side? And yet it is addressed to individuals. I had a dear friend, he's home with the Lord now. But I had a dear friend who used to lean over the rostrum and say, I'm preaching to the person who sits behind the person in front of them.

So you work that out. And you'll see to whom this is addressed. Who is on the Lord's side? It calls for personal decision.

Now this is remarkable. You see, back in Egypt, it was the family that gathered under the shed blood. Back in Egypt, it was the Father that provided indeed for that Passover feast.

But here it is the individual. We are going to see the most awful thing happen. Never you forget, the law is being given.

And when the law was given, three thousand people were slain. That's the result of this. When the Holy Spirit was given, three thousand people were saved.

That's the result of coming to Christ. And here the challenge goes. Who is on the Lord's side? And it's a personal challenge.

I've tried to say this in the past evenings. Maybe I haven't said it too well, but I've tried to say it. That young people, just because your mother loves the Lord Jesus, your father loves the Lord Jesus, that doesn't mean to say you do.

You parents, just because your young folk have come home and said, Mom, Dad, we've trusted the Lord and are seeking to live a life which is for His glory and the blessing of others, that doesn't mean to say you've trusted the Lord Jesus. But trust the Lord Jesus, you must. You must answer the cry, Who is on the Lord's side? It calls for personal decision, a personal choice.

It calls for a practical decision. Now what have they done when they turned their back on God? They have had built this golden car. Now there's to be a change in their action.

Then they bowed down and worshipped it. Then they rose up to pray before it. But now, there's got to be a change in their action.

And I think it's essential for us to remember this, that repentance towards God, a change of our action is called for if we're going to be on the Lord's side. Thank God He forgives our sin. Thank God He gives us power to do that, which we could not do without His help.

But the eighth chapter of 2 Corinthians sums it in wonderful words. It says this, If there be first a willing heart, a willing mind, there has to be the desire to trust Jesus Christ. It calls for personal, it calls for practical, it calls for permanent decision.

It is not just saying today, Lord Jesus, I would like you to be my Saviour. Thank you very much. Amen.

I would not, you've heard me say a legion of times, I would not give you that much, not that much. For a man or a woman who tells me they're a Christian and doesn't show it in their home, doesn't show it in their business, doesn't show it in their school. If I trust Jesus Christ and He lives within me, it's going to be seen.

The apostle waiting for the church at Philippi says, work out your own salvation. With fear and trembling, you can't work out what you haven't got in. But if you've got Christ in your heart and life, it'll be worked out, it'll be seen.

And so it calls for permanent decision. No longer will I go back to the worship for that golden calf. I'm on the Lord's side.

And so there's a call to think and there's a call, a choice to make. But please, there's a call to be answered. Let Him come unto me.

With the realization that this is personal and practical and permanent, with that realization, the call comes. And I present it to you this morning as simply as I can. I know of no other way I can present it.

Sir, I can't wrap it up. I can't. This is the call.

Let Him come unto me. Moses is saying it. He's saying it to the children of Israel.

A greater than Moses is here. And He's saying it to you and me. Will you come to Christ? Will you come to the Lord Jesus? You will notice, to continue what I have already said about personal and practical and permanent, you will notice that what happened to them was this.

They responded. These sons of... not all the people, they were all given a chance. No one was excluded from the challenge.

Oh, never let us forget that. The vilest offender who truly believed that moment from Jesus of pardon receives. And the call went out to everyone.

To those that had sent to the very depths, come unto me. They didn't all come, but there were those who did respond. The sons of Levi, they stepped forward and said, we're on the Lord's side.

So it meant for them not only responding, it meant renouncing. Later, awful story. Awful story, and I'm not going to try and cover it up.

They were commanded to go in and slay even their families who refused to come. Don't you think trusting Jesus Christ is going to be easy? There are family ties. Oh, we all know those, don't we? I love my family.

I love it. There are family ties. But no family tie must keep a person from Jesus Christ.

The challenge is too great. And it may sometimes mean renouncing. Not renouncing our family, but seeking to win them for Christ.

But to say that Christ is going to have first place. Not only renouncing, but oh, hallelujah, rejoicing. For here were a people who came to Moses, and that joy that they had, which was but for a little while, gave way to knowing a God who would be constantly their companion, always with them.

A God who was able to meet their need. This morning, as I think of what Jesus Christ has done on Calvary's cross to be our Saviour, when I think of He who gave Himself for us, when I realize that not only has He given Himself to be our Saviour, but He is our Lord and willing to lead us to life through this wilderness scene until He takes us home to glory. May I ask you, who is on the Lord's side? Let Him come unto me.

Will you answer that challenge this morning? Will you say, by thy call of mercy, by thy grace divine, we are on the Lord's side. Saviour, we are thine. Could I help you make that choice? The last three evenings we have closed each service with the same hymn.

We're going to close it this morning. 221, I think it is. 221.

If you are tired of your load of your sin, let Jesus come into your heart. If you desire a new life to begin, will you make your choice? Will you let Jesus come into your heart? 221. If you are tired of the load of your sin, let Jesus come into your heart.

If you desire a new life to begin, will you make your choice? Will you let Jesus come into your heart? 221. If you desire a new life to begin, will you make your choice? Will you let Jesus come into your heart? 221. If you desire a new life to begin, will you make your choice? Will you make your choice?

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