

Sunday Night Meditations 31 Message and Song - 1950's

by Welcome Detweiler

The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking a strong and wise guide in life, which can only be found in Christ, and warns of the consequences of ignoring God's offer of salvation.

Duration: 30:03

Scripture: Daniel 5:5-6, Daniel 5:25-28, Matthew 11:28-30, John 3:16, Acts 4:12, Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23

Topics: "Godly Fear", "Repentance"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the story of Belshazzar, the last king of Babylon, and his downfall. Belshazzar was a pleasure-loving king who dismissed all fear and indulged in revelry, even as the Persians besieged Babylon. However, his arrogance and disregard for God led to his downfall. During a great feast, a mysterious hand appeared and wrote on the wall, causing Belshazzar to fear and seek interpretation. None of his wise men could decipher the message, and ultimately, Belshazzar's fate was sealed. The sermon emphasizes the importance of not playing with sin and the need to meet God in grace while salvation is still offered.

Transcript

To our radio friends, we are grateful to God for the privilege of proclaiming the gospel of his grace. Today our program opens by the girls trio singing, Why Was He There. Why, tell me, why was he there? Jesus the help, Jesus the... Today I want to share with you a message that fell from the lips of Lieutenant General W.G.S. Dobby, who is known as the heroic defender of the island of Malta.

As I recall, the island was bombed some 2,000 times during World War II. Here is a message that General Dobby delivered to the men of the Canadian Army. Pacing life is a necessity at all times, but the expression has a peculiar significance in wartime, and especially to the members of the fighting forces.

I therefore venture to send a message to my comrades of the services, giving my experience of this problem during a long service in the Army, in hopes that it may be of help to others, and especially to those who are at the threshold of their service career. We all, in our weakness, helplessness, and foolishness, need someone who is strong and wise, and who will help us and guide us in the varied and complex problems which arise. Some of us seek to find such a person in some earthly friend whom we greatly admire and love, but that solution is at best an incomplete one, because the earthly friends cannot

give us the strength we need, or the peace for which we long.

Others of us try to find satisfaction in an association with some organization. There again, the solution is incomplete, since an organization, however excellent, lacks the personal touch for which we crave. The only real, lasting, and entirely satisfactory solution I know of is found in Christ, and it is He whom I desire to commend to you, with all the earnestness of which I am capable.

I came to know Him, as we all must get to know Him, as my Savior. He showed me that I was a sinner, and as such unable to stand before God. This knowledge became a heavy burden to me until He further showed me that by His death He had paid the penalty of my sins, and therefore I might go free.

When this dawned upon me, the burden disappeared, and from that day to this I have known and rejoiced in the fact that my many sins have once and for all been carried by His atoning blood, and that the whole of the past has been forgiven and forgotten. Having thus accepted Him as my Savior, I then accepted Him as my Lord. That is to say, I placed myself under His orders and offered Him my service.

It was the least I could do in view of what He had done for me, but I am ashamed to say that often I have been unfaithful to Him and have let Him down. He has, however, been consistently faithful to me and has never let me down. I have also found Him to be a wonderful companion who is with me at all times and in all circumstances.

No earthly friend can do that, but He can and does. He also is a wonderful helper. I have for many years made it a practice to ask His help in all my problems, great and small, professional and private.

The help He gives is very real. I can assure you that it is a very practical and real thing to seek His help in Army life. Remember, He is almighty and all-wise, and in addition, He loves us with a love which proved itself at Calvary.

What a difference He must make to our present life in the service. Can you contemplate facing life without Him? I could not, and I hope you will not. Remember, He is anxious to come into your life, to settle the question of your past, to be with you for the present, and to assure for you the future.

No wonder I wish to commend Him to you, since for many years He has been and still is my Savior, Lord, Companion, Guide, Helper, and Friend, and will continue so for all eternity. Signed, W. G. S. Daubey, Lieutenant General. Such a clear and concise testimony is very refreshing, especially when it comes from the lips of one who can speak from experience, one who has proved the Lord in the everyday problems of life.

In this address, General Daubey asks only one question. Can you contemplate facing life without Him? And he immediately confesses, I could not. It may be that all your problems and difficulties are related to this one great mistake.

Perhaps you are attempting to do the impossible, that is, to face life without receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. Such a dreadful mistake can only lead to an empty life, surrounded with fear and anxiety. You are not big enough to face the daily problems of life without a Savior, for if you do, your history will be a life of blunders.

Perhaps it is already. If so, it's high time to stop and allow Christ to come in and fill the remainder of your days with peace and with joy. It's not too late, for God is daily picking up lost, guilty sinners who express

their desire to be saved.

And He is making new creatures out of them, giving them new desires and new ambitions. What He has done for others, He can and He will do for you if you will allow Him that opportunity. Do you feel that the rest of your days should be spent in the same manner as those of the past? Or are you keenly conscious of the fact that something very vital is lacking? General Darby points out that no earthly friend can fill the bill, nor can an organization.

By that he means it is possible to be a member of a good, healthy organization, a church member, but that will not bring peace, that will not bring the satisfaction that you need. No one or no organization can take the place of the Lord Jesus Christ. To personally know Him spells peace, and He is far more anxious to save you and make you His own than you are to be saved.

He gave His life's blood on Calvary's cross to prove that He loves you. He bore your sins to procure your pardon. Because of His voluntary sacrifice, God can offer to whosoever will a new life of peace and joy.

He offers it freely. He compels no one to take it. Every wise man or woman will receive the offer.

Every foolish man or woman will pass by and ignore the blood-bought offer of salvation. You will never be able to produce a salvation of your own that will pass God's inspection. So you had better receive the one He freely offers, for He said, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

No man cometh unto the Father but by Me. I commend this wonderful Savior to you, and I ask you to receive Him. He will do all that He has promised to do.

He will bring peace and joy and satisfaction into your life. Life will not be worthwhile until you come to know Him as your Lord and Savior. I trust you'll do it this very day.

Greetings to our radio friends. Today our gospel program opens by the Gospel Center Choir singing Love Divine. I trust you are found in circumstances so that you will be able to listen to the entire program.

I am thinking today of an incident that occurred in Babylon some 2,500 years ago. It's concerning the great feast of Belshazzar in the palace of Babylon. A thousand princes and nobles plus his many wives were invited to celebrate a heathen festival.

Belshazzar was one of those self-made men who ignored God and actually showed his defiance by using the gold and silver vessels which were taken from the temple by his ungodly grandfather Nebuchadnezzar. As the festivities continued they praised the gods of gold and silver and so on. Perhaps I should read a portion of this interesting yet tragic story as it's recorded in Daniel chapter 5. Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords and drank wine before the thousand.

Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the gold and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem that the king and his princesses, and his wives and his concubines, might drink therein. Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem, and the king and his princesses and his wives and his concubines drank in them. They drank wine and praised the gods of gold and of silver and of brass, of iron, of wood and of stone.

In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace, and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed and his thoughts troubled him so that the joints of his loins were loosed and his knees smote one against another. The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans and the soothsayers, and the king spake and said to the wise men of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing and show me the interpretation thereof shall be clothed with scarlet and shall have a chain of gold about his neck and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.

As a rule, when the lives of great people are recorded, the births and the leading events throughout the life are mentioned, but God in his word is very brief when he gives the life story of a foolish man. In the case of Belshazzar, the last king of Babylon, the record is confined to one night, Belshazzar's last night on earth. For two years the Persians besieged Babylon, but Belshazzar tried to convince himself that no enemy could reach him.

The walls of the city were 300 feet high and wide enough for six chariots to be driven abreast upon its top, perhaps 75 feet wide. Huge powers guarded the 100 massive bronze gates of the city. Behind such fortifications, the pleasure-loving king dismissed all fear and indulged in every form of revelry.

He is dressed in gorgeous robes with a wine cup in his hand. He is the master of ceremonies and the center of all eyes at a great feast in the banquet hall. One thousand lords and nobles and many ladies form that gay party.

The motto of that party was, eat, drink, and be merry. Bring in the sacred cups of the temple. We have no superstitions.

We have no God but pleasure. Just then, the God of heaven looked down and seemed to say, it is enough. And God brought that gay party to a sudden end.

Suddenly, the noise of revelry ended. There is an awesome hush. Fingers of a man's hand are seen writing on the wall.

It can be clearly seen in the light of the candlestick. The king's face changes. His knees knock together.

Forgetting his dignity, he calls aloud for his wise men. There are promised gifts and promotion if they can interpret the four strange words on the wall. Belshazzar fears that he is now in difficulty and his fears are multiplied when he learns that all of his aides are simply baffled at the handwriting on the wall.

News of a strange handwriting spreads rapidly through the palace and soon the queen mother heard about it. She came to the banqueting hall where Belshazzar sat trembling and she said, O king, there is in this city a very wise man whom you have quite forgotten. In the days of Nebuchadnezzar the king, this man was master of all the king's wise men for the spirit of the gods dwelt in him.

Now send for him and he will tell you the meaning of the strange handwriting. Belshazzar sent in haste for Daniel, the man whom the queen suggested. Daniel was now an old man and did not care for the gifts and the honors that were offered.

First he reminded Belshazzar of the great punishment that God had sent upon Nebuchadnezzar because of his wickedness and pride. Belshazzar knew all this but he ignored all the warnings thinking that somehow he would get by. Daniel told him the meaning of the words on the wall.

God has numbered your kingdom and finished it. You are weighed in the balances and found wanting. Your kingdom is divided and is given to the Medes and the Persians.

And that very night Belshazzar was slain and Babylon was destroyed. A gay party at the beginning of the evening with no thoughts of God or eternity but the party ended with the weird shrieks of the dying passing out into an eternal hell. Every foolish man and woman has his or her fateful night and I fear that I may have a few foolish Belshazzars in my listening audience tonight who are saying, Who cares about God? Let's have a good time.

It may be before the sunrise you will be hurled into eternity. God may say to you as he did to Belshazzar, That's enough. I'm told that there are species of eagles who are bold enough to attack seals.

They swoop down and suddenly fix their claws into the flesh and pull their dinner ashore. Sometimes the seal is too strong for the eagle and not being able to let go the eagle is dragged down into the water and drowned. Belshazzar, like the eagle, laid hold of revelry and pleasure and they dragged him beneath the waves of an awful and sudden death.

It may be that you have your claws in something that will drag you down to hell. The things of God may mean nothing to you now. You may be very bold and proud about the fact that God means nothing to you.

You are too busy to think about eternity. Your companions think you are smart because you have no fear of God. Your name ought to be Belshazzar for his history fits you exactly.

And the important part of his history is found in Daniel chapter 5 and verse 30. In that night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, slain. His history can be summed up in a few words.

From a palace of pleasure to hell all in one night. He is not the only man nor is he the last man whose end came unexpectedly. It doesn't take God very long to finish a man who thinks he can flirt with sin and get by.

Belshazzar began his evening of gaiety strutting around like a peacock. But he couldn't keep those knees from hitting each other when he came face to face with eternity. The history of Belshazzar is given to us to illustrate what happens to a man who ignores God's offer of salvation and goes on in his own willful way.

I trust that none of my hearers will ever be so foolish. I ask you to read the details of Daniel chapter 5 and I trust that as you read these details you'll be awakened and you'll be made to realize that I cannot beat God. I cannot play with sin.

There must come a day when I shall meet God. It would be wonderful if you could see the wisdom of meeting Him in grace right now while He is offering salvation to you. Isn't it marvelous and wonderful of God that even though you don't care for Him He still cares for you? He loves you.

He proved that love by sending His Son into the world. His Son went to Calvary's cross and stretched out His arms on that cross and died for your sins in order that He might procure your redemption. That's love.

That's real love. That's divine love. And because the Son of God hung in your place as your substitute on Calvary's cross God is offering salvation, forgiveness, justification to every person who wants it.

I wonder if you want it. Would you like to be saved so that when you come to the end of your life you will have heaven's gate opened to you and you will have a welcome there knowing that you're in God's family

that you have received the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. That's wonderful.

But how horrible, how dreadful the prospect that one of these days I must meet God and I must meet Him in my sins. Oh my friend, be wise and learn from this foolish man a lesson that will bring you to your knees and make you to realize I don't want to be like Belshazzar. I want to be a wise man.

I don't want to play with sin. I want to think seriously of my soul's deep need. And if God is offering me salvation I'm ready right now to receive it.

If in simple faith you will open your heart's door acknowledge your sinnership receive the Lord Jesus as your Savior we have this guarantee from God's precious word whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. May God bless you as you consider this all-important matter this very moment. After the pleasures of life are After the trumpet call Poor lost soul What then?

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