

Sunday Night Meditations 37 Message and Song - 1950's

by Welcome Detweiler

The sermon explores the parable of the lost son to illustrate God's mercy and the importance of repentance and redemption through Christ's blood.

Duration: 30:50

Scripture: Luke 15:11, Hebrews 10:19

Topics: "Salvation Story", "Prodigal Son"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the parable of the prodigal son from Luke 15:11-32. The story revolves around a father and his two sons, with the younger son expressing a desire for his inheritance and wanting to live a life of indulgence. He goes to a far country and squanders all his wealth in reckless living. Eventually, a famine strikes, and he finds himself in need and working in a pig farm. The preacher emphasizes that this story represents the unregenerate man's pursuit of material possessions and worldly pleasures, while neglecting the importance of salvation and a relationship with God. The sermon also highlights the significance of the shedding of blood for salvation, as illustrated by a scarlet ribbon in a block-covered Bible.

Transcript

Greetings to our radio friends. Today I open the program by reading a very familiar portion of God's precious words, Luke chapter 15 and verse 11. And he said, A certain man had two sons, and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods the tallest to me.

And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land, and he began to be in want.

And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would faint have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat, but no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father have bread enough unto spare, and I perish with hunger? I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

Make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, the father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servant, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and bring hither the fatted calf, and fill it, and let her feed, and be merry. For this my son was dead, and is alive again.

He was lost, and is found, and they began to be married." The Lord Jesus Christ was the first one to relate the story, and, as always, it was told to illustrate truth. The story of the lost son forms the third part of a threefold parable. In the early portion of the program, I read the well-known story from Luke's Gospel, Chapter 15.

The first scene takes us to an eastern home, and introduces to us a father having two sons. A few words are said about the older son toward the end of the story, but the major interest is focused upon the younger of the two sons, who expresses the desire of the average unregenerate man. His interests are altogether in material things, in earthly goods.

In fact, he is not satisfied with his present possessions. His heart yearns for the things that would normally become his own at some future date, when his father divides his possessions and passes them on to his heirs. His one ambition is to have a good time, to throw off all restraint, but he is faced with a problem, for it takes money, gobs of money, to have a good time.

It doesn't seem reasonable that he should fall heir to possessions when he is older and slowed down. Why not have it now? A big, glittering world stretches out before him. His present home is entirely too slow and quiet.

Why should he waste his precious youth days sitting around while the gay world extends a beckoning hand? Youthful reasoning prompts him to say, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. His wish is granted, and in a very short time he is seen stepping out into the big gay world, into the far country. Now let's stop for a moment and make the proper application.

The young, light-hearted man is a picture of every unsaved person. He was interested in the blessing, but had no time for the blesser. Just so, unsaved ones are glad to receive God's tender mercies from day to day.

His sunshine and rain, his food and raiment, his protection and care, but they have very little or no time for the blesser himself. In the hour of need they cry, Give me! Give me! But when he says, Son, give me thine heart, they pay no attention to his kind and treaty. Their eyes are blinded, and the Christian world is entirely too small.

They love the vast, far country, away from all restraint, where nothing is wrong and everybody does it. But our story continues. In the far country he wasted his substance in riotous living, or living in debauchery.

Wasted his substance? Yes, that's exactly what every non-Christian is doing. Take, for instance, the health and strength that God has given to you. Who is getting the value of your health and strength? Face this solemn fact, my unsaved friend.

It is being wasted. Like many others, you may never realize it until God withholds this valuable possession. Living for self and for Satan is nothing short of wasting your strength.

God has given you strength that it might be used for his glory, but the devil puts in his bid, and you are the one who must decide who shall have it. Many are those who, late in years, begin to realize that they have wasted their substance in unprofitable or riotous living. Back to the story again.

Listen to this. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in the land, and he began to be in want. I've often wondered how long it took him to spend all.

Was it five years? Was it five months? Or five weeks? We are not told, so your guess is as good as mine. But I do know that it doesn't take a big shot very long to become a little shot. Didn't I read just recently of a couple of teenagers who grabbed a few thousand dollars beside the New Fishtail Cadillac and drove to the far country of Florida, living like politicians just before the election? And if I remember correctly, in less than one week they were broke.

If the prodigal in our story was true to nature, I like to guess that he was broke in less than two weeks of time. I wonder if you, my patient listener, know what I'm talking about. Some of you can say, for many days I lived without God.

All my interests were in having a big time. Then the day marked crisis came. It came too soon, but it didn't come without bringing blessings into my life.

The crash seemed unbearable, but it was necessary. It was a blessing in disguise. Some of my younger listeners may not have experienced this day of crisis.

You may still be riding the crest. Everything is going your way, and there may be indications that all will be well for many days. But I feel that I must warn you that every unsaved person must meet his or her crash day.

Of course, that day can be avoided if you will listen to God's voice and turn to Christ for salvation. It seems to be the common procedure that sinners will not stop on their spending tour until they get in the pinch, and sometimes that's too late, for despair stands ready to swallow them, and they go out into eternity lost forever. Our prodigal friend has found it necessary to seek employment feeding the unperfumed hogs.

I can almost see him leaning over the trough and watching the poor table manners of the swine. Perhaps they have just come from the early morning bath, both sides evenly plastered with mud. Is my imagination going too far when I say that he saw in those smelly pigs a picture of himself? That's me.

That's me. In fact, my condition is even worse. At least they have something to eat.

When a sinner is up against the wall, his misery is such that he would gladly exchange positions with one of the animal kingdom, for he knows that that animal will never be charged with deliberate disobedience. Look at that dog stretched out on the porch. He has no worries.

He has no guilty conscience. He hasn't heard God's call and turned it down, as have you. But let's go on with the parable.

We're coming to a brighter scene. When he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger. What does it mean, when he came to

himself? It's just another way of saying he saw himself in his true condition.

Before this time he was a big bluffer. It's grand to see sinners come to themselves so that they can see themselves in their true condition as lost, guilty, helpless, and hopeless. I must ask you a very personal question.

Have you ever confessed to God that you are a lost sinner on the broad road that leads to hell? If not, then you have never come to yourself. When you see yourself as God sees you, you will gladly lay aside all pretense and agree with God that you are lost and guilty in his sight. Now notice what follows.

The prodigal says, I will arise and go to my father and say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. Make me as one of thy hired servants. Being saved is a matter of the will, and he used it when he said, I will arise and go to my father.

He abused that will in earlier days by saying, I won't stay at home. I want my own way. All the whosoever wills will be saved, and all the whosoever won'ts will be lost.

The last scene in our story is very touching, yet full of meaning, for a loving father runs to meet him. Not an angry father who invites his son to come to the woodshed. In this, Christ is illustrating our Heavenly Father's interest in lost sinners.

He hates their sins, but he loves the sinner. He sent his only begotten son into the world that he might take the guilty sinner's place on Calvary's cross, and thus provide forgiveness for all who will trust him as Lord and Savior. If Christ had not died for us, there could be no forgiveness.

But since Christ died for us and rose again for our justification, a loving God extends mercy to the guilty one, and all who will trust Christ and his finished work are assured that they shall never perish but have everlasting life. Greetings to our radio listeners. Because some have never heard the gospel presented in simplicity, it's becoming that every Christian should grasp every opportunity of telling the story of God's grace.

Christ is a tried and proved Savior, and we speak from experience when we recommend him to all who are still unsaved. Our prayer is that this program may be a blessing to you. In Washington, Georgia, I have a friend who spends a great deal of his time in bringing the gospel message to the children, and to hold their interest, he very often uses some object lesson so that the children can see the gospel illustrated as they hear the message.

Some ten or more years ago, as I sat in on one of the children's meetings, he used for an object lesson a black-covered Bible through which he had drilled a hole and placed a scarlet ribbon through the hole. As he opened the Bible, you would see the scarlet ribbon. It made no difference whether he opened it in Genesis, or Matthew, or the last book, the Revelation.

The scarlet cord would be seen on every page. He was trying to impress upon the tender hearts of his listeners that important truth that the Bible presents that salvation is always by means of the shedding of blood. There is no truth portrayed more graphically throughout the pages of Scripture than that of the power of the blood.

As the human body is dead without the blood, for the life of the flesh is in the blood, so likewise the Bible, without the blood, has no life-giving principle. To every student of the Scriptures, it is clear that the

doctrine of the blood runs through the Bible like a scarlet thread from the book of Genesis through the book of the Revelation. When we turn to the third chapter of Genesis, we read the narrative of the fall of Adam and Eve, and how they sewed fig leaves together that they might have a covering after they sinned.

But that covering did not suffice, and the Lord God Himself made coats of skins and clothed them. This necessitated the shedding of blood. The Lord God sacrificed the animals that Adam and Eve might have an appropriate covering after the fall.

Doubtless at this point, God instructed Adam and Eve of the need of a blood sacrifice for sin. For in the following chapter we read that Abel brought an offering unto the Lord, the firstling of his flock, and God had respect upon Abel and his offering. But to Cain and his offering he had not respect, because Cain's offering was not the prescribed blood offering for sin.

Again in the eighth chapter of Genesis, we read where Noah, after the flood, built an altar and offered a blood offering, and the Lord God again accepted the blood sacrifice. Then over in Genesis chapter 22, we have the remarkable story of Abram and Isaac, where God desired to test Abram and ask Abram to offer up his son Isaac for a burnt offering. However, when the Lord saw Abram's willingness to obey, God stayed his hand and Isaac's life was spared.

A ram was caught in the thicket, and it was offered for a burnt offering instead of Isaac and his son. In the book of Exodus, we have the wonderful experience of the children of Israel recorded how that the Lord preserved them in the midst of Egypt when he brought judgment down upon the land of Egypt. But Israel as a nation was sheltered under the blood when the Lord God came through Egypt in judgment, for Israel had applied the blood on the lintel and two side posts of the door, as she was commanded to do by the Lord.

It was the power of the blood that saved Israel in Egypt that dreadful night, for the Lord said, When I see the blood, I will pass over you. There was protecting power in the blood. When we turn to the book of Leviticus, we learn that there is a great deal stated about the need of blood sacrifices.

In chapter 17 and verse 11, we have these words, For it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul. And the Lord God, through his prophets, commanded the nation of Israel to offer a blood offering as the only means of atonement for sin. Throughout the history of the nation of Israel, and back to the Garden of Eden, there runs the blood stream like a scarlet thread, all to prefigure and symbolize that one was to come, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

It is very clear from the Bible that the blood of bulls and goats that were slain on Jewish altars could not by any means put away sin, but they all pointed forward to God's true Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ. As Christ was about to go to the cross to die for our sins, he was led as a lamb to the slaughter. His blood was shed, and without the shedding of his precious blood there could be no remission.

Peter, in his first epistle, says, Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. In these extremely modern days, when the doctrine of redemption by blood is frowned upon and sneeringly called the gospel of the shambles, it is high time for every true Christian to underscore and emphasize that redemption is ever and only by the shedding of blood. Did you ever stop to consider just what would happen to the gospel message or to your Bible if you removed every mention of the blood? If you ever find time to undertake

such a task, you will have to write on the cover of your Bible, No blood, no remission.

For there is no scripture to offer remission of sins apart from the shed blood of Christ. You may keep on working till your life's last hour, but you'll never get to heaven that way. You may keep on praying till you can't pray more, but you'll never get to heaven that way.

You may keep on hoping, you may keep on weeping while your soul lies still in darkness, sleeping, but you'll never, never get to heaven that way. Without blood is no remission, thus the Lord proclaims from heaven. Blood must flow on this condition.

This alone is sin forgiven. Yes, a victim must be slain, else all hope of life is vain. But the victim, who shall bind it? Such an one as sinners need.

To the altar, who shall bind it? Who shall make the victim bleed? Such a victim as must die, all the world could not supply. God himself provides the victim. Jesus is the Lamb of God.

Heaven and earth and hell afflict him while he bears the sinner's load. Jesus' blood, his blood alone can pour human guilt atone. Joyful truth, he bore transgression in his body on the cross.

Through his blood there's full remission for the vilest, even for us. Jesus, for the sinner, bleeds. Nothing more the sinner needs.

Again, when you remove the doctrine of redemption by blood from the Bible, you must write on the cover, No blood, no peace. For in Colossians 1.20 I read, having made peace through the blood of his cross. This verse assures us that if the blood has no value, then there is no such thing as peace, and this is proved daily in human experience.

For those who are not trusting in Christ and his shed blood for salvation know nothing of soul peace. Remove the blood from your Bible, and you remove something else. Let me read it in Hebrews 10.19. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way.

Now you can write on the covers of your Bible, No blood, no access to God. How tragic is the thought of a soul without the possibility of approaching God. If such were the case, his prayers would be unheard and unanswered.

You wouldn't be able to sing, What a friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear. What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer. As we trace the theme of the blood of Christ through the Bible, we see that it extends even into the future, for the theme song in heaven will be unto him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

The redeemed of all ages will join in singing this song of redemption, and forever and ever we shall be reminded of our own unworthiness, and that our place in heaven was secured at the tremendous cost of his precious blood. The power of the blood of Christ is still the greatest force on earth, even though it is in competition with atomic and hydrogen power. No competitive power on earth can regenerate deep-dived sinners and transform them into new creatures in Christ Jesus, changing their whole outlook, their ambitions, and their habits.

The preaching of the simple and clear message of Christ and his atoning sacrifice must go forth, for it is this that is the only hope for this poor world. One by one, those who are sick and weary of living without Christ will turn to him and receive the glorious salvation that he offers as a free gift. I may be speaking to an earnest soul who is seeking for peace and satisfaction, you have no doubt tried many things already.

I ask you to turn to Christ, who has never lost the case. Believe that he died for you, and believe that his shed blood is the only hope for your salvation.

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