

Lost

by William Blackburn

The sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing one's spiritual state and the consequences of being lost, but also offers hope for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

Duration: 24:34

Scripture: Exodus 20:8, Exodus 20:12-13, Matthew 5:27-28, Luke 19:10, Hebrews 9:27, Revelation 20:12

Topics: "Lost Souls"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a tragic story of two brothers trying to rescue a young girl trapped in a car accident. Unfortunately, the older brother unknowingly ignites a fire when he lights a cigarette near the gasoline spill from the car. Despite their efforts, the flames become too intense, and the girl's body is consumed by the fire. The preacher uses this story to emphasize the importance of making a decision to choose life or death, heaven or hell. He urges the listeners to repent, give their hearts to Christ, and be saved, as this decision is the most crucial one they will ever make. The sermon also highlights the consequences of being lost from God and the urgency to seek salvation before facing death.

Transcript

The Los Angeles County Chief of Transportation reports that each year in the County of Los Angeles, more than 50,000 articles are left behind on public transportation vehicles. These 50,000 articles are never claimed by their owners again. These articles are lost.

A few years ago, two of these articles left behind were little babies. Little babies left behind on city buses, never claimed by their parents again. These little babies were lost.

Oh my friend, the saddest word in all the world is this word, lost. It is the saddest word in all the Bible. When you say the word lost, it brings to mind an unspeakable sadness, an awful loneliness.

When you say the word lost, there's just an emptiness to that word. There's just an echo to that sound. To be lost means to be abandoned, to be forgotten, never to be heard from again.

It is without a doubt the saddest word that Jesus ever spoke. You see my friends, as sad as that word is, that is exactly the word that God uses to describe many people today. You see my friends, if I were to describe many of you watching right now from God's point of view, I would have to use this awful word, lost, to describe you.

Because that's exactly the word God uses to describe every single person who has not repented of sin and come to Christ and been born again. Now, you may have walked down an aisle in a church, you may have prayed a prayer, you may have been baptized, sprinkled, or confirmed, but if you have not been born again by the Spirit of God, then God uses this awful, awful word, lost, to describe you. And dear friends, when God says you're lost, He's talking about your soul being lost.

Now, you can lose a lot of things. You can lose your money, you can lose your job, you can lose your home, you can even lose your life. But nothing is as bad as losing your soul.

You see, your soul is the real you. Now, this old flesh and bone body that you walk around with, that's not the real you. Now, some of you would say, well, praise God for that.

No, the real you is inside that body. It's called your soul. It is comprised of your will, your intellect, your emotions.

That soul is the part of you that's going to live forever. Now, one day, this old body is going to die. But when your body dies, your soul will leave that body and go on living somewhere else, either in a place called heaven or a place called hell.

So, friend, when you lose your soul, you lose the real you. You lose the God part of you. You lose the eternal part of you.

And yet, my friends, that's where some of you are right now. In the eyes of God, your soul is lost. What does it mean for a soul to be lost from God? Well, the Bible says it means to be condemned already.

The Bible says he that believes not is condemned already. Now, that word condemned is a legal word. It's a courtroom word.

The word condemned paints the picture of a man who's already had a trial and been found guilty for his crime. Have you ever seen a man on trial for his life? Joe Henry Hankins did. Joe Henry Hankins, the former pastor of First Baptist Church in Little Rock, Arkansas, and later became a very famous evangelist, Joe Henry Hankins told the true story of when he was a boy growing up in Texas, they had a man in his town, a young man who was on trial for murder.

And Joe Henry Hankins and his friends went to the trial every day. They watched as the evidence was presented. They were there the day the jury went out to deliberate the fate of this young man.

When the jury came back into the courtroom, Joe Henry Hankins said he could tell by the expression on everybody's face that something awful was about to happen. The foreman of the jury had a little piece of paper with a verdict written on it. And that little piece of paper began to shake like a leaf blowing in the wind.

When the judge asked the foreman, have you reached a verdict yet? The foreman said, yes, your honor, we have. We find the defendant guilty as charged. A holy hush went across the crowd because the judge had already told everybody if the verdict comes back as guilty, what this means is this young man is going to die for his crime.

Over at the defense table, the mother and the sister of the young man were sitting. When they heard the verdict, the mother stood to her feet and gasped for breath and literally fainted and fell to the floor. The

sister got up and she screamed and she ran out of the courtroom.

As she was leaving the courtroom, she was screaming, my God, my God, condemned. The sheriff came and put the handcuffs on that young man's wrist. And as those iron bracelets clicked around his wrist, Joe Henry Hankins said it sent a death chill down his back.

And he would say years later, you know, if it's that bad to see a man condemned to a physical death on earth, how bad is it going to be to see a man condemned to an eternal death for all eternity without God? And yet that's what God is saying. God is saying when you're lost, you are condemned already. What that means is in the eyes of God, God sees you as a man who's already had a trial.

In the eyes of God, you sit here watching this program. God sees you exactly as a man who's already been convicted of his crime. The jury has already deliberated your fate.

They found you guilty. The judge has already sentenced you to die. In the eyes of God at this very moment, you are exactly like a man who's on death row, one heartbeat away from hell.

That's what God means when he says you are lost. You are condemned already. You say, William, why would God see me in such a horrible condition? Why would God see me as a condemned criminal? Well, my dear friends, a man is lost for two reasons.

Number one, a man is lost because of what he has done to God. Well, what have we all done to God? Well, the Bible says we have all sinned against God. The Bible says for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

The Bible says there's none that doeth good. No, not one. Now, here's the problem.

Most folks don't see themselves the way God sees them. Most people don't understand what sin is. What does God classify as sin? The Bible says that sin is transgressing the law of God.

You see, when God created you and I, he created a standard by which we're to live our lives. That law of God we know as the Ten Commandments. And when we break one of those laws of God, what we're really doing is we're saying, God, you're not going to make rules for me.

You're not going to tell me what to do. I'll do what I want to do when I get good and ready. So when you break the laws of God, you're really rebelling against God.

And the Bible says all of us have sinned against God. What are the Ten Commandments? Well, Commandment number one says you shall have no other gods before me. What that means is if there's ever been a day in your life when you had one thing in your life that was more important to you than God, then you have broken that very first commandment.

In fact, Jesus said you must love God with all of your heart, your mind, your soul, your strength. If you haven't loved God with every ounce of your being, the Bible says you have sinned against God. Why? None of us have loved God like that.

The second great commandment is this. You shall not make for yourself a graven image of God. Now, modern day man does not make a graven image of God with his hands, but he makes a graven image of God in his mind.

What that means is if your attitude about God and your picture of God does not match the Bible, then you've made a graven image of God, and that's a sin. I had a lady one time tell me, she said, William, my God is a God of love. He'd never send somebody to hell.

And I said, well, ma'am, you're exactly right. Your God would never send anybody to hell. He can't.

He doesn't exist. He's a figment of your imagination. See, the God of the Bible kills people.

The God of the Bible is angry with the wicked every day. The God of the Bible has said it is a fearful thing to fall in the hands of the living God. And, my friend, if your picture of God does not line up with the Bible, then you've made a graven image of God, and that is a sin.

The next commandment is you shall not take God's name in vain. Oh, what a wicked thing to use God's name as a curse word. But, dear friend, you don't have to put the word down after God's name to be taking God's name in vain.

Just to say the name God or Jesus or Lord or Christ, say it in any way that's not bringing reverence and honor to God is to take God's name in vain. When you hear a person say, oh, my God, Jesus Christ, good Lord, you're hearing somebody blaspheme God. And the Bible says those that take God's name in vain will not be innocent on the day of judgment.

My friend, if you have ever taken God's name in vain one time, then you have sinned against God. The next commandment is this, you remember the Sabbath and keep it holy. What that means is one day out of every week you must set aside to do nothing but honor God with your life.

If you've ever gone one week without honoring God, my friend, then you have sinned against God. The Bible says honor your father and your mother. If there's ever been one day in your life when you did not honor your father and your mother, then you have sinned against God.

The Bible says you shall not murder. But Jesus said if you even hate somebody in your heart, you're guilty of murder. The Bible says you shall not commit adultery.

What's adultery? That's when married people have sexual relations with somebody they're not married to. But, dear friend, you don't have to have sexual intercourse to commit adultery. Jesus said if you just lust in your heart for somebody you're not married to, you've committed adultery in your heart.

That's why pornography is such a wicked sin. It produces adultery in the heart. The Bible says you shall not lie.

The Bible says you shall not steal. The Bible says you shall not covet things God has not provided. Oh, my dear friends, the truth is that each one of us have broken the laws of God into a thousand pieces.

And the Bible says the wages of sin is death. So men are lost because they have knowingly and willingly broken the laws of God. They have knowingly and willingly rebelled against God.

They have sinned against God. And the Bible says that makes them condemned already in the eyes of God. So men are lost because of what they've done.

They have sinned against God. But men are lost, number two, because of what they have not done. And that is they have not believed on the Lord Jesus Christ.

See, the Bible says, yes, we have sinned against God. And the wages of sin is death. That means we are all condemned to hell and we cannot save ourselves.

But the Bible says God had mercy on us. And God sent his son Jesus to save us. And Jesus took our sins.

And he went to a cross. And on that cross he died to pay our sin debt. He was buried in a tomb.

And after three days God raised him from the dead. He's alive today. And one day he's coming back.

And the Bible says if we will believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, God will forgive us and save us. But here's the problem. There's two kinds of belief.

There's belief with your head. There's belief with your heart. To believe with your head means you believe facts about Jesus.

You believe Jesus is God. You believe he died on the cross for the sins of the world. You believe he was buried in a tomb and raised from the dead.

You believe he's alive today and one day he's coming back. But the Bible says the devil believes in Jesus that way. To believe with your heart means you have seen yourself the way God sees you.

You know that you're a sinner. You have repented and turned away from your sin. You have taken Jesus as your Lord and Savior.

How can you tell if you have believed with your heart? Well, the Bible says the proof that a man is truly a believer in Christ, you can see the fruit in his life. See, you can know if you're a true believer by how you live your life. If a man is a true believer, he obeys God.

He serves God. He loves God above all things. My friend, you may believe with your head, but if you have not believed with your heart, if you have not committed your life to Christ, then the Bible classifies you lost.

Oh, my friend, listen to me. Men are lost because they knowingly and willingly break the laws of God. Men are lost because they will not repent and receive Christ as Lord and Savior.

Men are lost because they refuse the grace of God. They refuse to be saved. What about you, friend? Are you lost? Have you ever come to a point where you know that you have sinned against God? Have you come to a point where you understand that you have broken all the commandments of God? Have you ever felt that conviction of the Holy Spirit? Have you ever yielded yourself to Christ in faith? Have you been born again? Have you been changed by God? Do you love Him and serve Him with all your heart? Men are lost because they are sinners against God.

Men are lost because they have not repented and believed with their heart and been born again by the Spirit of God. What's the result of all this? What's the result of men being lost from God? Well, the Bible says, first of all, if you are lost from God, you are lost in this life. The Bible says, for what shall it profit a man to gain the whole world and yet lose his own soul? God says your soul is so valuable, so precious, that if you were to gain all the gold and silver and real estate, but you lost your soul, you'd be making a very bad bargain because your soul is the real you.

And when you are lost from God, you are lost in this life. See, God has a plan for your life, but your life has not counted for God. Oh, you go through the motions, you eat and drink and go to work and sleep, but you

have no power with God.

You can't pray and get answers for prayer. You can't win your lost loved ones to Christ because you are lost in this life. But one day, you're going to be lost in death.

The Bible says it is appointed unto men who wants to die. One day, you're going to die. See yourself there.

One day, you're going to lie on your deathbed. There'll be a doctor at your side taking your pulse. Somebody in the distance will ask the question, is he dead yet? You'll try to lift your head, but you can't move.

You'll try to make a sound, but the words won't come because death has put his hand on your heart and you began to die. And in those brief few moments of life, you remember. You remember every sermon about Jesus that was ever preached.

You remember every song about Jesus that was ever sung. You remember how you were going to get saved. You were going to give your life to Christ, but you kept putting it off.

And you die a lost soul. And then you'll be lost at the judgment. The Bible says it is appointed unto men who wants to die.

And after this, the judgment. Do you realize that one day you're going to stand before God? Oh, you may have fooled your husband, you may have fooled your wife, you may have fooled yourself. But friend, there's coming a day when all the fooling's over with because one day God is going to judge the world.

See yourself there. Oh, you'll be standing in a multitude of people. God will call your name.

There'll be no place to hide, no place to run. You'll have to step out from the crowd and stand before God for yourself. See yourself there.

You stand before a holy God. The Bible says the books are opened. And every aspect of your life is recorded in the books.

But there's another book, a single book, a solitary book. It's called the Book of Life. And written in that one book is the name of every true believer, every person who has believed with their heart and been born again by the Spirit of God.

And the angel will go and look for your name, line by line, column by column, page by page. But your name won't be there because you've never gotten serious with God. You've never seen yourself as a rebel.

You've never repented and turned away from your sin. You've never given your life to Christ and been born again. And God will classify you lost.

And then you'll be lost for eternity. Lost in the plan of God, the protection of God, the provisions of God, just lost. That's where some of you are right now.

But praise God for Luke 19, verse 10. The Bible says, For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. Oh, my dear friend, you may be lost, but you don't have to stay lost because God has

done everything necessary to save you.

You see, today you stand at the crossroads of your life. Today you can choose life or you can choose death. You can choose heaven or you can choose hell.

You can choose to come to Jesus and be born again, saved, or you can choose to hang on to your sin and stay lost. A few years ago, there was a revival at a small country church. The evangelist was talking about being saved and being lost.

In the back of the church, there were a group of teenagers that were talking and joking and passing notes. The leader of the group was a young 16-year-old girl. Her daddy was the chairman of the deacons, but she didn't want to be in church that night.

Her daddy had made her come. The evangelist told the crowd, he said, you know, you stand at the crossroads of your life. He said, you can choose life or you can choose death.

You can choose heaven or you can choose hell. He said, you can choose to repent and give your heart to Christ and be saved, or you can choose to remain lost. He said, what's your decision going to be? That young girl in the back of the church, she picked up a small, big ballpoint pen.

She opened one of the hymn books, and she wrote on the front of that hymn book, I choose to stay lost. When the service was over, she took her very best friend home that night. Then she continued to drive to her home, to a little farmhouse down a little dirt road.

About halfway home, she came face to face with two brothers from her high school who had been out drinking all Sunday afternoon. Their old pickup truck was weaving on both sides of the road. She slowed down.

At the last moment, to avoid an accident, she pulled quickly off the side of the road. The car went down a little embankment. It rolled over on the top.

She wasn't hurt, but she was pinned inside. Two brothers stopped the truck, and they came back to help. The older brother got on his hands and knees, and he said, are you okay? She said, yeah, I'm fine, but I'm stuck.

Can you help get me out? The younger brother went back to the truck to get a winch-type device called a come-along. They were going to attach it to her car and turn it right side up. The older brother was standing there talking to her.

He reached in his pocket. He pulled out a pack of cigarettes. He put a cigarette in his mouth.

He struck a match. He lit that cigarette. What he didn't know was this.

Even though the young girl was not hurt, when the car rolled over, the gasoline tank had ruptured. Gasoline was all over the ground. He lit that cigarette.

He dropped that match to the grass. The grass exploded in fire. Flame was everywhere.

The two brothers rushed the car time and time again to rescue the young girl, but the flames were too intense. Finally, the flames began to invade that car, and the flames began to consume that young girl's

body. She began to scream, somebody save me.

I'm lost. Somebody save me. I'm lost.

Oh, please, somebody save me. I'm lost. When the deputy sheriff arrived on the scene that night, the older brother told him this.

He said, I thought when somebody burned to death that they would die quickly, but he said it seemed like her screams went on forever. Somebody save me. I'm lost.

Oh, my dear friends, today you too stand at the crossroads of your life. See, you can choose life or you can choose death. You can choose heaven or you can choose hell.

You can choose to repent and give your heart to Christ and be saved, or you can choose to stay lost. But I promise you this, it is without a doubt the most important decision you will ever make. My friend, are you lost? Are you lost from God? Do you know for sure if you were to die today that you'd go to heaven? You say, William, I don't know for sure.

I don't know for sure, William, if I died today I'd go to heaven, but I'll tell you this, I don't want to be lost from God. I don't want to spend an eternity in hell, and I don't want to stand before the judgment of God one day and find out that I've never truly believed with my heart. You see, the whole story of the Bible is, yes, we are sinners.

We have broken the laws of God. We deserve to go to hell. But God has mercy on us.

But God must keep his word. He must punish our sin. So what God did was, my friend, he sent his only son, Jesus Christ.

And Jesus came and took all of our sins, our lying and our cheating and our adultery at heart, he took it all upon himself, and he said, Father, I'll take their place. You can punish me for what they've done. So Jesus took our sins and he went to a cross, and on that cross he took our place.

He died that we might live. He suffered hell that we might enjoy heaven. He died, he was buried in a tomb, and after three days God raised him from the dead.

He's alive today, and one day he's coming back. And the way you get the blood of Jesus applied to your life, the way you get forgiveness of sin, the way you become born again so that you can know you're going to heaven, it requires two things. Number one, you must repent.

The word repent means you must change your mind about sin. The first thing about repentance is you've got to see yourself in truth. You've got to agree with God.

God, you're right and I'm wrong. You've got to admit that you've broken the laws of God. You've got to see that when you break the laws of God, that's rebellion against God.

You've got to change your mind and see what sin really is. Then you've got to change your heart. You've got to stop loving that sin, because as long as you love that sin, you'll practice that sin.

But when you begin to hate that sin, you'll turn away from that sin. You must repent. And then you must believe.

That word believe is the Greek word pisteuo. It means to commit your life to Christ, surrender your will to Christ, to become one with Jesus. And you can do that right now.

Right where you are. If you'll get on your knees and you'll just get honest with God. You'll say, God, I agree, I am a sinner.

I've broken those laws a thousand times. But God, I'm just tired of it. I want to change my mind.

I want to turn away from my rebellion. And I want to give my life to Christ. He'll come into your heart.

He'll save you right where you are right now. It truly is the opportunity of a lifetime. And I pray that you won't miss it.

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