

The Call of God

by David Clifford

The sermon emphasizes the importance of hearing God's voice and responding to His call, which is represented by the trumpet sound in the Bible.

Duration: 36:28

Scripture: Malachi 3:16, Luke 4:16, Hebrews 10:25

Topics: "Gods Call", "Spiritual Victory"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of moving forward in God's victory and rest. He references the story of the Israelites entering the promised land and how they experienced the Lord's presence, guidance, and blessings as they moved forward. The speaker also mentions the story of the four lepers who faced the enemy and were saved. He encourages Christians to respond to God's call and face their own temptations and challenges. The sermon concludes with an invitation for a person named Hobab to join Moses on their journey to the promised land.

Transcript

A beautiful couple we have here. Congratulations. Nicely.

What wonderful singing and a warm atmosphere. I think it's terrific. Mind you, I had to stop singing myself to hear you.

You don't believe that, do you? I make such a noise that I can't hear anybody else singing when I'm singing. I hope my accent doesn't put you off while I'm speaking. It's a good thing that I'm a bit noisy sometimes.

An old lady came to me recently, somewhere in some country or other, and she said, she said, Thank you very much, brother. First sermon I've heard for 35 years. I know you'll hear me.

I hope my accent doesn't put you off. Coming from Birmingham, Bromagem we call it, in England. I attempted to sing the solo years ago when Ernest Woodhouse and I used to work together.

And his voice gave out. So he said, you'll have to sing the solo, brother. So I sang a solo.

And I said to him, what did you think of my execution? He said, I'm in favour of it. No, he said, no, brother. He said, you've got a nice mellow voice.

Well, I was a bit suspicious about that. So I looked it up in the dictionary. It said, mellow, overripe or rotten.

I hope my voice or my noise doesn't put you off. But the fluid all of you will hear, the Lord's voice and the Lord's call. Because that's what we are talking about and reading about in God's words this morning.

I haven't yet made up my mind what I'm going to speak about during the week. By the end of the week, I should probably have made up my mind. I'm a little bit Irish, you know.

My grandfather was Irish. I think it's an Irish name. My grandmother was Welsh.

And it took the first month she was a Welsh woman. And that's why, being such a mix-up, I had to be born again. It's a good thing to come to the Lord and get a new life in Christ.

Now let us read the words together. From Numbers, chapter 10. The tenth chapter of the book of Numbers.

The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Make thee two trumpets of silver, for the whole east shalt thou make them. Thou mayst use them for the calling of the assembling, and for the journeyings of the camps. When they shall blow with them, all the assemblers shall assemble themselves to thee at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

And if they blow but with one trumpet, then the princes, which are the heads of the thousands of Israel, shall gather themselves unto thee. And when you blow an alarm, then the camps that lie on the east part shall go forward. When you blow an alarm a second time, then the camps that lie on the south side shall take their journey.

They shall blow an alarm for their journeys. And when the congregation is to be gathered together, you shall blow, but you shall not sound an alarm. Verse 9. If you go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresses you, then you shall blow an alarm with a trumpet, and ye shall be remembered before the Lord your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies.

Also in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace-offerings. They may be to you for a memorial before your God. I am the Lord your God.

Verse 29. And Moses said to Hoveth, the son of Raguel, the Midianite, Notice, father-in-law, we are journeying unto the place to which the Lord said, I will give it you. Come thou with us, and we will do thee good.

For the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel. And he said unto him, I will not do. Verse 33.

They departed from the mount of the Lord three days' journey, and the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them in the three days' journey, to search out a resting-place for them. And the cloud of the Lord was upon them by day when they went out of the camp. And he came to pass.

And when they asked it forward, it noticed him. Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered. Let them that hate thee flee before thee.

And when it rested, he said, Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel. To the Lord bless to us the readings from his holy word. Amen.

My Lord calls me. He calls me. To the thunder that trumpets sounds within my soul.

I ain't got long to stay here. So goes the song, spring low, sweet chariot, which I'm sure you all know so well. God has been calling his people through the years in different ways.

And very often he calls his own by a vision or a dream, by an appearance of the angel of the Lord, by the presence of the Lord without any appearance. As Jacob said, the Lord was in this place and I knew it not. It's a terrible thing when God is there and you don't realize it.

The present Christ, as though he were absent, is a terrible thing as well. There standeth one among you whom you know not. But through the years God has been calling his own in a general way with the trumpet sound as we were reading in the scripture portion just now.

The silver trumpet sounded. So that's what I'm talking about with the help of God's Holy Spirit this morning. The trumpet sound, the trumpet call, the call of God to his own.

Trumpet! Trumpet! Trumpet! And you know, some of you friends come from Scotland. One dear brother who was a bit deaf and I wasn't a preacher, but we had to do something about it, he brought a new little hearing aid, you know, it was a kind of little trumpet thing that he put into his ear. And the minister in the clerk hadn't seen one of these before.

And this brother was sitting on the front seat with his little thing on his lap, you know. And before the preacher gave his message he says, now be careful brother, I want to, you. Well that isn't the kind of trumpet we're talking about this morning.

It is the call of God. Well now, remember that when the Lord appeared to Gideon and said, go and this thy might hath not I sent for thee, Gideon got hold of his trumpet when he was quite sure it was the Lord who was calling him. And indeed he made very, very sure.

It was a good thing to make absolutely sure that the call is of God, and not of the flesh or of personal ambition. He knew the thing was of God, he got hold of his trumpet, he got on the hillside, and he blew the trumpet. And what do you think he blew? I don't know.

Now what do you think he blew? So sir, this is what he blew. Well he doesn't say so actually in the word, in the actual phraseology, but I'm quite sure this is what he blew. Who is on the Lord's side? Because it's only one of those, that is, that they had acknowledged defeat at the hands of the enemy, the Midianites.

They were hiding from the enemy, made themselves dens and caves in the earth, and they'd given up. But this man certainly was victorious in God, God appeared to him and called him to deliver his people from the hands of the enemy. And he blew with his trumpet and said, Who is on the Lord's side? And there was five over yonder in the valley that heard the call by the basher, and they gathered at Gideon.

And others heard the call of God, and they gathered. And there were many, many thousands who gathered with Gideon that day, ready to put the enemy to flight by the power of God and his truth. In the past God has called in certain ways, and today he is calling again.

Of course, his first call is to command. God now commanded all men everywhere to repent. And unless we obey that command, repent of our sins, and pick our sins, and turn to Christ for salvation, we shall never have our ears attuned to the call of God through life in its various forms and ways.

The word was here in verse 2 to Moses, Make thee two trumpets of silver. And silver always speaks in the word, or generally anyway, of redemption. And this was a call to those who were the redeemed of the law, who brought them out of Egypt with his strong hand and mighty arm, and set them on their way with trust into the promised land.

They were the redeemed of the law. And the silver trumpets were made so that God through them should call his own to do his will in various ways. And of course the unsaved, who know nothing of God's redemption great in Christ, will never hear the call of God to worship, or to fight the enemy, or to carry on victoriously to the promised land.

And sometimes the sounds of this world we hear, and they kill our ears. Visions of this world fill our minds, and we sometimes, who are the redeemed, fail to hear God's call. Now the call of God for the gathering of the congregation was the first trumpet sound.

Inversely, to hear the word of the Lord. You shall blow with these trumpets, or the assembly shall assemble themselves to the entrance door, the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. It was God's will that his people from time to time should gather together to hear the Lord, his holy word, his standards for his people, read out first publicly, so that they should make no mistakes.

And of course this has been God's purpose through the years. And although we hadn't come together this morning at a trumpet call, although I was in a conference in your country here some years ago, twenty-five years ago, and the conference director stood on the hillside every morning and awakened us with a trumpet call, one of the well-known hymns you know. And then last thing every night we put to sleep by singing a peaceful lullaby or some beautiful song in keeping with the message of the day.

But generally we don't come together now by the trumpet sound. I do hope and trust that we come together at the call of God. We hear his voice calling us from time to time to gather together with his people, as we do during this week of conference, to hear his word read to us, to know his laws and statutes and standards and his will for our individual lives.

Remember in the book of Malachi, although the general trend in those days was godlessness and lack of response to the love of God and the righteousness of God, there were a few who did respond, who feared the Lord, who accepted his salvation and grace. The first thing they did was to gather together around the Lord. The Lord himself was the centre of their gatherings.

They fought on his name and God was very pleased. They read his word, they fought to do his will and God looked down from heaven and said these people are my people and they shall be my people forever. And in the day of judgment I will not condemn them, I will spare them.

As a man spares his own son that serveth him. And he says I have a book made and the book shall be called the book of remembrance and I will remember them forever. God expects us to meet together and to read his word together.

You remember our Lord Jesus went into the synagogue and opened the scriptures of truth and read them publicly to the people there. And when in those days they had a letter, not only a prophecy from a prophet or a word from the Lord of Moses to be read publicly in the place of gathering in the Lord's name. But when they had a letter from an apostle, somebody used to stand up and say dearly beloved brethren we just had a very nice letter from our dear brother Peter or our dear brother Paul, the apostle Paul and we're

going to read it publicly.

Please take special note because our brother Paul or whoever it was as the case might be has we are quite sure been inspired by the Holy Spirit to write what he has written not only for our consumption but for all the churches around and when we've read it 15 times then we're going to send it to the church of Laodicea and they'll read it and then it's going on to the church of Hephæstus and then it's going round to the church of Lottery and this is what they did. These were accepted as words of God because holy men of old faith as they were moved, borne along, carried along by God's Holy Spirit. And God has always wanted his people to hear his word through his servant, his men of God his prophet and his apostle and God still does today.

But take not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is but exhorting one another and so much the more not the less, so much the more as you see the day approaching. Well there was not only the trumpet sound for the gathering together of the children of Israel to hear the word of the Lord read but there was another one in verse 4 the trumpet sound for the calling together of the princes, the leaders shall we say the elders of the tribes of Israel. It was very very important that the leaders, the elders should gather together to get some special instruction from the Lord to get some exhortation from the Lord's servant Moses or Aaron as the case might be.

And of course these elders from the various tribes gathered together. I like to see elders from various assemblies gathering together to discuss together the word and some perhaps unifying action without spoiling the principle of the autonomous local assembly. When the apostle Paul called together on his journey to Jerusalem in Acts chapter 20 it is recorded the elders of the church of Evers he exhorted them to see the flock of God over which the Holy Ghost had made them elders.

And you remember the words of Titus was the elders that are among you I exhort. And there is a word here from the trumpet sound not only for the general consumption of God's people to gather together like this but for the elders to come together and have times of spiritual exhortation and preparation together for his holy service. In verses 5 and 6 there was the trumpet sound the call of God to his own to journey forward.

And this was called an alarm. The trumpet sounded first of all and six tribes would move up and the ark of the covenant would come in the middle borne on the shoulders of the Levites and the Prophets and then there would be another trumpet sound and six more tribes would bring up the rear guard. That is how it happened.

So you notice it's called an alarm because you see sometimes it is a very dangerous thing to stay where you are. God wants to move us on. We must never be satisfied with our Christian experience.

The trumpet sound within our soul God wants us to move right forward onto the promised land and all that is for us in Christ. You've come to this now long enough speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward and God will move us onto the promised land. Now the promised land is not heaven that cannot possibly be a type of Canaan you know.

The promised land is Christ. Christ is the believer's land and we are to possess all that is in Christ for us even now. And we are to make Christ not only our Savior from hell but the Lord of our lives.

We are to possess him so that he is the life of our very lives. For you have died to the apostles I receive and your life is given with Christ in God and Christ is our life. We are to go on and possess the land and Christ is the believer's land.

Let us hear the alarms of that. It is dangerous to play trumpet in the Christian life. Indeed.

And should we go backwards if we attempt to do that then one of your American Christian cartoonists once drew the picture a very good cartoon it was of a young man sitting in a canoe with a ukulele and he was playing away and he was not bending to the oars and he was going down with the tide and there was a notice on the bank to the rapids and he was having a wonderful time but he was just doing nothing except going down towards the rapids you see and the title of the cartoon was What must I do to backslide? And the answer was nothing. And the call of the Lord is for us to move forward to go on and take the next step. So walk, says Romans chapter 6 and verse 4 So walk, so make progress in newness of life.

God wants to lead us on to possess all that there is in Christ for us, for in him is a full salvation and Christ is the believer and life and all in all. And you remember we were reading in chapter 29 in verse 29 of this same chapter that Moses gave an invitation to Chobab who was one of his in-laws to come along with him to the land that God had promised, Canaan. Interesting to notice by the way that he was on speaking terms with his in-laws in this particular cartoon.

And he said, come thou with us and we'll do thee good. We are journeying to the land of which the Lord says I will give it you. Come with us and we will do you good.

Now when he said we will do you good it didn't mean to say that he could be any blessing to anybody. He explained it. He said what goodness the Lord will do to us that will we do to thee.

And the Lord has promised to bless his throne because we're going God's way to God's land and we're getting God's blessing. God's blessing runs deep in the channel of his will. If you're alone and can't get there go in to possess Christ and all that he can be to you then of course you undoubtedly have God's blessing.

And so that's it now. I'll go my own way. I'll go to my own land.

And he was a fool. He refused God's blessing because he refused God's will and God's way and he didn't get to God's will. Self-will is an awful man.

And it only brings ruin at last. Anyway the call was for them to go on further to the land. And as we read in the end of the chapter as they went forward to the land that God had promised them that call of the trumpet sounded so the Lord made his presence known.

There was the Lord's victory and there was the Lord's rest. There was the Lord's presence and there was the Lord's guidance. And all these blessings and many more were theirs as they moved forward at the trumpet sound to possess the land that God had promised to them.

And God's call to us today is to go on in his victory to his rest. You remember as the ark went forward because on this occasion the ark went first. Not in the middle.

The usual procedure was for it to go in the middle. On this occasion it went forward because they didn't know the way and it proved to be their guide. You see they followed where it led.

It sought out a resting place for them every day. And every day on the way to the land of rest every day they found rest around the ark of the covenant in the presence of the Lord. And as they stepped forward following the ark of the covenant Moses prayed a morning prayer for the children of Israel.

And this was his morning prayer. Very brief. Perhaps a bit briefer than yours.

And it was like this. Rise up O Lord let thine enemies be scattered let them that hate thee flee before thee. Amen.

And so you see every day as they journeyed they entered into God's victory over their enemies. And of course that's the way it is. Pondering to the conflict course.

Going on to possess all that is in Christ for us. And enjoying Christ's victory to start with. Because every spiritual triumph since the cross-work of Christ has been through the cross-work of Christ.

And ever will be too. Because we read of some in the coming day in the Revelation 12 we read of them who are going to overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb. Their victory then is going to be through his victory of two thousand years ago through the blood of the Lamb.

It was a glorious triumph on the cross. Proved by his mighty resurrection on the third day and his ascendance in authority to God's right hand in the glory. And so the call was for them to go on and possess the Lamb.

And then of course in verse 9 there was another trumpet sound. And this was God's call to fight the enemy. If you go to war in your land against the enemy that hath threatened you then you shall be blown along with the trumpet and you shall be remembered before the Lord your God and you shall be saved from your enemy.

When the trumpet sounded they had to gather together and go out in the name of the Lord and face the enemy. It's always good for the child of God to do that feat. Because we're all tempted it's a very tactical thought Every Christian has temptation in one way or another.

The only thing for us to do is to respond to God's call and face the enemy. And when we do we shall find that his strength is made perfect in our weakness. Indeed that the victory of Christ over the enemy is our victory today.

And today we face the enemy in his strength. There were four leperous men at the entering in of the gate of Samaria you remember, when Samaria was being besieged by the Syrians. And they were dying starving.

But the people inside the city were besieged, they were all dying and had all the horses and the cats and the dogs and whatever was available. They'd even got so far that they'd begun to eat one another's cheese. They were just about at the point of death.

And these four lepers they said well why do we sit here at the gate of the city we shall die. So another one said well why go in there they're all dying in there. If we go there we shall die as well.

And a third one said that it's a chance that if we go and face the enemy we shall be taken as prisoners and they might keep us alive. That's our only chance, that we go and face the enemy. And when they went and faced the enemy they found that God had overcome the enemy.

And they entered into God's victory. Think of that. And my dear Christian friend if only you had faced the enemy, in the name of Christ you'll find that he's already overcome the enemy for you.

And his triumph at the cross is your triumph today. So shall you be saved if you obey the Pontiff's order. So shall you be saved from your enemies.

It's a great thing in Christian living to be saved from your enemies. I think some of you might have heard of some dear brother gone right under through an attack of Satan. Or some sister that has denied the faith through an attack of Satan.

Or some younger person whose life has been ruined and testimony has been ruined because of an attack of Satan. You know the one that you're thinking about now. And it happened to some that him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

Let us respond to the Pontiff's call. Let us respond to the call of God. And praise the enemy for rejoicing Christ's victory over the enemy.

And he by dying through death. And him that hath the power of death the devil to deliver us to a subject of bondage. And then of course in verse 10 there was the call of God in the day of gladness.

They had special days of rejoicing in those days and we still have days of rejoicing today. They had fellowships of joy. They had feasts of tabernacles and they dwelt in booths and they waved branches of palm trees and they danced around and praised the Lord.

They had fellowships of joy in those days and the Pontiff's call called them to them. We have fellowships of joy today. Isn't this one? This is the beginning of the third week of fellowships of joy.

You have an abundance of it here and I'm quite sure you make the most of it and God blesses you through it. And when God calls us to rejoice together in him then we should do just that. Now it's good to meet one another and have fellowship together.

As iron sharpeneth iron so the countenance of a man his fellow. We're pleased to see one another. Well if you're not pleased to see me I'm jolly pleased to see you.

And we are encouraged by one another's company. But the great thing is we meet the Lord where two or three are gathered together in my name. There am I said he in the midst of them.

This is the blessing. This is the blessing meeting him. And our fellowships of joy should not just be joy through fellowshiping together with one another.

We should really consciously meet to the Lord and the word is in his lips rejoice in the Lord and again I say rejoice and you cannot help but rejoice in your circumstances when you live at part of a palm or anywhere near and there's a bathing pool and a lake and there's palm trees and there's lovely food and there's fasting and blessing. You can't do anything else but rejoice in your circumstances but never let these drown the Lord himself from the eyes of your soul. May you see him and hear his voice in all the ministry and may you find your joy in him.

And they sounded the trumpet for fellowships of joy for days of gladness. You know when they had their fellowships in the catacombs under the city of Rome for fear of their lives they had no circumstances in which to rejoice. They had a very grim poor experience.

But they still had fellowships of joy because the Lord himself was their joy. And if you start every day with the Lord Jesus looking into his face. If you start every day listening to the Lord Jesus reading what he says to you from his word.

And if you go along every day walking in the light with the Lord Jesus and if you learn constant communion with him practicing the presence of the Lord Jesus all through the day and you end the day in conscious enjoyment of the presence of the Lord Jesus then your joy will be in the Lord and that will supersede any joy in any circumstance on God's beautiful earth. May the Lord himself be our fortune. At the dedication of the temple they had one hundred and twenty priests blowing with their trumpets for the festival of joy.

And when Nehemiah had built the wall of Jerusalem he told the priests to get the trumpets out and polish them up and hang them on the wall and blow and blow and blow so that the people would really rejoice in the Lord. And we read on that occasion this very interesting verse. And God made the people rejoice with great joy.

If they wanted to be miserable and physical and rumbling they just couldn't be. God eliminated all that nonsense and he made them rejoice perfectly and God made everybody happy. And as we come together at the contest then may God have his way with us and make us happy and rejoicing in him.

Well isn't time to conclude the message this morning just to say there was a call for worship by the trumpet sound. On the days of solemn assembly when they gathered together solemnly to remember the Lord their God and all the way the Lord had led them. This is what many of us did this morning.

Around the Lord's table we had a solemn assembly of worship and thanksgiving when we partook of a remembrance soup. And later on in verse 10 the trumpet sounded for the days of special renewal and when they were called upon at the beginning of certain months to rededicate themselves to the Lord and to his service they were to obey the trumpet sound and when they were called upon to make some sacrifice for God then the trumpet sounded again. Well God calls us similarly today and one of these days there's going to be a very very definite trumpet sound.

For God's trumpet shall sound and the dead in Christ shall be raised and the living in Christ shall be changed and that corruptible shall put on incorruption at the trumpet call of God this mortal shall put on immortality we shall meet them and we shall meet him we shall be gathered together with them in clouds and we shall live together with him in the clothes wherefore comfort one another with these words. We have looked at some of God's trumpet sounds to his own calling them to worship calling them to give to him his portion calling them to march forward in their godly lives to the land that God had promised them calling them to face the enemy. Thank God the last trumpet sound will be the best of all he'll gather us into his presence and we shall be with him and like him we go no more out of his presence forever.

What a day of rejoicing that will be when we all see Jesus, hear the trumpet sound and live with him eternally. So God we bow before thee now in the name of the Lord Jesus and thank thee that thou hast through the years been calling thy people in certain ways and we have heard the trumpet sound in the ears of our soul today for thou art calling us to thy son for a full life a life more abundant thou art calling us to go forward and possess all that there is in Christ for us thou art calling us to victory over our enemies

and thou art calling us to rejoice not in our circumstances so much as in our Lord Jesus our Saviour. Give us grace now in these moments to respond to thy call, to show our love to thee to do thy will by thy grace, to go with our Saviour always and may the grace of our Saviour and thy love our God, the fellowship and the enabling of the Holy Spirit be with us all this morning and always until the trumpet sounds.

Amen.

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