

Four R's of the Gospel: Ruin

by E.A. Johnston

The sermon emphasizes the importance of preaching the full counsel of God, including the great doctrines of ruin, redemption, repentance, and regeneration, in order to truly bring people to salvation and prevent them from going to hell.

Duration: 21:07

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 9:12, Ezekiel 3:18, Colossians 1:28

Topics: "Gospel"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of understanding the four key doctrines of Ruin, Redemption, Repentance, and Regeneration in the proper order. He highlights the fact that man is not an innocent victim, but a guilty rebel, born with a ruined and depraved nature due to Adam's sin in the Garden of Eden. The preacher emphasizes the need for repentance and the recognition of one's sinful nature before experiencing redemption through Jesus Christ. He warns against a partial gospel that only focuses on external behavior without a true heart transformation. The preacher encourages a return to the teachings of old-time preachers who fearfully proclaimed the truth of sin, the cross, and the need for a Savior.

Transcript

Old country preachers spoke much on the blood and the cross, and they called hell hot and sin black, and they preached the law before grace, where they showed a man his need of a Savior before they offered him one. They preached up the four R's of the gospel, which are Ruin, Redemption, Repentance, and Regeneration, and they preached the gospel in its purity and proper order. Those old-time preachers weren't afraid of man, but they sure feared the Almighty.

Today, we have forgotten much of what those old boys preached. We've misplaced the proper order of the gospel. Those preachers knew that man had a poison in his blood, that man is morally corrupt and spiritually dead, and because man was a subject of Ruin and had a depraved nature, and he had an inclination towards sin.

Those old boys told the truth about the kind of people we are, sinners who needed a remedy for sin, and that remedy was a Christ who was our sin substitute and who hung on a gory cross and shed his blood for sinful man. The trouble with much of the preaching today is the fact that we don't want to offend anyone, so we've left out certain doctrines of the gospel to make it more palatable to what we call the unchurched.

That's a new name for a lost sinner.

It is not uncommon to sit in many Sunday morning services in America and hear about the death of Christ. You will hear about Christ's death on a cross, but you'll be hard-pressed to find some preaching on Rune, repentance, and regeneration. But you see, friends, these four R's must all go together to form the true gospel of the Son of God, because if you leave out one or two or more of these doctrines, you don't have much of a gospel left, and if you don't preach the gospel in its purity and proper order, you may get results, but you'll have few true conversions.

I read something about Billy Sunday. That kind of stuck with me. Homer Rodeheaver, Sunday's song leader, made a comment about Billy Sunday's lack of effectiveness towards the end of his ministry.

He said that the audiences still loved coming to a Billy Sunday meeting, but by the late 1920s, Rodeheaver was complaining that Billy Sunday's invitations had become so general, they were meaningless. That's the wages of success. When I read that, I thought about today's general gospel invitations.

We have desired success so much, we've made it almost meaningless to where everybody will accept it, as you would hand out free tickets to the movies. But the gospel of the Bible is a stumbling stone, a scandal, an offense. Paul spoke of the offense of the cross.

When Jesus preached, we see in the gospel of John, and many of them said, he hath a devil and is mad, why hear ye him? But we don't want to be called a devil or mad, we want acceptance, so we preach an acceptable gospel where we just ask folks to accept Jesus, and that's what's happened in America for the last 40 years. We took the offense out of the gospel by dropping a few of the R's that the old time preachers would preach, so we would be more acceptable to our hearers, and that our hearers would accept everything we said, and they did. And they joined the churches, and many today are products of a partial gospel, and are partially converted.

They've just cleaned up some old bad habits on the outside to be more acceptable to man, but their hearts have not been changed through a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Well friends, I would like to preach up those four great doctrines of Rune, Redemption, Repentance, and Regeneration, and our series will be that for the next four times we get together. You see friends, you can't preach on redemption if you leave out the reason for the need of redemption, which is Rune.

We are born with a Rune nature, and you cannot preach regeneration without preaching the doctrine of repentance, because when you do that, you fill our churches with unrepentant, hell-bound church members. There'll be no rebels in heaven, and a man who's never repented of his sins is a rebel against the Holy God. Well, let's take these four doctrines one at a time.

We'll look at them both individually and collectively in regard to the gospel message. Let's begin today with our message on the first R of the gospel, which is Rune. You see, the gospel of our day claims that man is an innocent victim, but listen friends, the Bible declares that man is a guilty rebel.

Man is born with a Rune, depraved nature. When Adam fell, he just didn't skin his knee, he fell completely over. When Adam sinned against God, Rune fell upon mankind, and Adam is our federal head.

So every human being since that day has entered this world with a Rune sin nature, a nature that is inclined to sin, a nature that is a rebellion to a Holy God. You see, that's what happened in the Garden of

Eden. God put a stake in the ground and said, don't eat of the fruit of that tree.

And Adam disregarded that command, disobeyed God, and demonstrated his rebellion to that Holy God. That is why Satan was cast from heaven. Because of hope and rebellion, Satan wished to ascend up to God and be God.

The I will ascends of Isaiah speak of this. It's rebellion. Sin is rebellion.

And if we fail to preach up the fact that man enters this world with a Rune nature, we're doing great harm to souls. Because if a man thinks he's all right, then he believes he has no need to repent of anything, because he's a good man. He isn't as bad as the murderer or the thief.

He can compare himself to others and always find someone more of a devil than he is. But I repeat, man is born with a Rune nature, and because that condition he's in, he is born spiritually dead. Ephesians chapter 2 states, And you, hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins? Because we enter the world in a state of spiritual Rune, we are dead in our sins and stand under the condemnation of a Holy God who hates sin and must punish it.

Listen to the next two verses of Ephesians chapter 2. Wherein, in time past, ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, among whom also we had our conversation in times past, in the lust of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Did you hear that last statement, friends? That we were by nature the children of wrath. Every person on this planet who is outside of Christ savingly is by nature an object of God's wrath because of who you are, not because of what you've done.

You're born guilty because of the fall of Adam. If you'd been there in the Garden of Eden, you would have reached up there and tried to yank out off the throne and sit there yourself. You drink iniquity like it's water because that's the kind of people we are.

George Whitefield, the great British evangelist, was preaching in the open air in London at a place called Moorfields. He was describing to the gathered crowd how unsaved man is half devil and half beast. One of his hearers climbed a nearby tree and removed his pants and exposed himself to the assembly.

Upon seeing him, Whitefield blushed. Then Whitefield pointed to the naked man and cried out, Here is an example of which I speak. And that's true.

A man with a depraved nature has a beast within. But the trouble today with much of the preaching today is we don't tell people how bad they really are. We aren't honest with them because we don't want to offend them.

So we are not honest with them. We don't tell them the truth about themselves. Instead, we tell them they are nice little people.

They don't need to repent of anything to be saved. All they need to do is accept Jesus as their personal Savior and they will go to heaven. And I say hogwash.

All you're doing with that kind of preaching is washing a hog. You don't change him. He may get cleaned up and sit on the front row of the church and he may even rise to be the chairman of the good deacons.

But he's still a hog. He's never been regenerated because he's never felt the need to repent of his dirty rotten sins. People today just don't think they're sinners because we don't tell them anymore that they are.

We call them the unchurched and then we get them to agree to a nice little message and a soft invitation that anybody will accept because everybody wants to go to heaven. So we give them an insurance ticket against the fires of hell, pat them on the back and welcome them into our assembly. And they never know they are sinners because they've never killed anybody or robbed a bank like others have.

But the best definition of sin I can find in my Bible is found in Isaiah 53.6 and it states, all we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way. And that's the shortest definition of sin in the Bible.

Listen friends, sin is going our way when we know it isn't God's way. That's what sin is. Rebellion, pure rebellion, our way over God's way.

Adam and Eve had it their way over God's way and they were cast out of Eden. We sin because we want to. We sit on the throne of our lives.

But true salvation is a dethroning of ourselves and an enthroning of another Jesus Christ. It doesn't take much to go to hell friends. Just stay on the broad road with most everybody else and you will eventually get there.

I was playing golf with a man years back and this man had a filthy mouth. I could barely get through the round of golf with him. All he did the whole time was cuss and curse and take the name of God in vain.

Finally I said to him, I'd like to ask you a question. He said, ask away. I said, how was your relationship with God? He roared back at me, great, I have a great relationship with God.

I leave him alone and he leaves me alone. And when he said that, I believed him. I believe God has left that man alone.

All God has to do to send a man to hell is to leave him alone. Man is already under the condemnation of a holy God because of who man is. Man's a rebel with a rude nature who hates all things holy and all things spiritual and all things good attached to the attributes of a holy God.

I love verse 4 in Ephesians chapter 2 which says, But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us. Oh the mercy of God friends. The apostle Paul never made the comment that he had accepted Christ as his Savior.

No sir, he said that he had received mercy. There's a difference friends. He had received mercy.

He was the recipient of the mercy of God and salvation, rich in mercy. That's the kind of God I serve. But if we preach a gospel that does not let a man know how bad off he really is without Christ, he will see no need of Christ.

He's alright where he is, like my golfing companion. God leaves him alone and he is fine with that because in his mind he is alright. If a man is not awakened to the fact that he is a ruined sinner who stands on the wrong side of God and who is an object of his wrath, if he remains outside of Christ, there's no hope for him as long as he believes he's alright.

He will drop into hell that way and then realize in hell he was all wrong. It'll be too late. There's no exits in hell.

And a man standing on the wrong side of God is standing in a perilous position. He can be suddenly cut off and dropped down to hell. He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

Listen to Psalm 711 which states, God is angry with the wicked every day. Any moment we can die from a car wreck or a heart attack or a gunman's bullet. And if we die in the state we are in, which is a ruined state outside of Christ, we will slip into hell and suffer its torments forever and ever.

God is the giver of life. He is the sustainer of life, and he can take it from us without any notice, friends. To me belong a vengeance and recompense.

Their foot shall slide in due time, for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places. Thou cast them down into destruction, how they are brought into desolation, as in a moment they are utterly consumed with terrors.

Today, in America, we live in a nation of sudden death. Death can cut you down any moment without warning. You can't guarantee yourself you will make it safe to your bed tonight.

Listen to what the Bible says. For man also knoweth not his time, as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare, so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them. If we preach to men who are outside of Christ, and if we fail to show them by the word of God that they are ruined and on the wrong side of God because of not for what they've done, but because of who they are, man is a sinner because he sins.

Man sins because he's a big sinner if we fail to warn them, and if we fail to warn them, we fail to do what the gospel requires. As the Apostle Paul declares in Colossians 128, whom we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Paul was honest with folks.

He warned them. He showed them how man was ruined, dead in trespasses and sins, and he needed to be reconciled to an offended creator. To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us. We pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. Well, friends, if we fail to tell men the truth, that they are in a ruined condition, and because of that ruined condition, they stand on the wrong side of God, and hell awaits them if they fail to be reconciled to that offended God.

And the only way to be reconciled is to exercise repentance towards God and faith in Jesus Christ, to be under his blood, because we are ruined, and we have blood poisoning, a ruined nature that has spiritually poisoned our blood, and the only remedy for that is Jesus Christ and his blood. There has to be a remission of blood to cover the sins. Listen, dear ones, let me give all preachers and all gospel workers a good reason to preach and present the full counsel of God.

It's found in the book of Ezekiel. Allow me to read you this passage from Ezekiel chapter 3 verses 18 through 20. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor

speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life.

The same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet, if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul. Again, when a righteous man doth not turn from his righteousness and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die, because thou hast not given him warning.

He shall die in his sin, and his righteousness, which he hath done, shall not be remembered, but his blood will I require at thine hand. This is serious business, friends. Eternity is at stake if we fail to warn men because we wish not to offend them.

We do them greater harm by damning them, and we will have their blood on our hands. At the judgment they will stand and accuse us for our great omission of the great truths of the gospel. If we present and preach a partial gospel, we present a partial Savior who can't save anybody.

When we preach the Christ of the Bible with all his demands, and when we preach the full counsel of God, the gospel which speaks of the great doctrines of ruin, redemption, repentance, and regeneration, we do good to the souls of men, and our hands are free from their blood should they reject the Christ of the gospel and die in their sins. When we get together again next time, we will speak on the next R of the gospel, which is redemption. Until then.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/24/SID24533.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ea-johnston/four-rs-of-the-gospel-ruin/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net