

Do Men Have Choice of Accepting or Rejecting Christ?

by Rolfe Barnard

The Bible teaches that men do not have a choice to accept or reject Christ, but rather have a God-given and God-commanded duty to submit to him in utter faith.

Duration: 57:32

Scripture: Matthew 3:2, Matthew 4:17, Matthew 27:22-23, John 6:37, John 17:2, Acts 17:30, Romans 10:13, Ephesians 2:8-9, Hebrews 5:9, 1 John 3:23

Topics: "Christ", "Salvation", "Sovereignty Of God"

Description

Rolfe Barnard addresses the question of whether men have the choice to accept or reject Christ, emphasizing that salvation is not a matter of chance but a command from God. He argues that the popular belief that God owes salvation to everyone is blasphemous, as it undermines the grace of God and the purpose of Christ's sacrifice. Barnard insists that men are not given a choice but are commanded to repent and believe the gospel, highlighting the necessity of divine intervention for true repentance. He warns against the perversion of the gospel that suggests individuals can save themselves, asserting that salvation is solely a work of God's grace. Ultimately, he calls for a return to the biblical truth that emphasizes God's sovereignty in salvation and the responsibility of individuals to respond to His command.

Transcript

...types of messages that we usually bring in a short visit with a group of people, and we have been dealing with some of the stumps that have wounded the Holy Spirit and caused us to come to the period of terrible spiritual drowse that is well around. We thank God that there is an earnestness and a sincerity about God's people today such as we in our little ministry have never seen. I believe there are more godly pastors who are lying in bed at night wondering what's the matter with our message and our method that has got us into the sourest state that we're in today.

And I think, what little that amounts to, that that's an awfully good thing. As I understand the scriptures, God comes on the scene when men come to the end of their ropes. There is a saying going about that God helps them who save themselves.

That's a nice saying, just not so. He helps us, he comes to the rescue of a person when they've reached bottom, can't help themselves, quit trying to help themselves, and look only to him. There's always been help in him, but we will not look to him as long as we think we can make it ourselves.

So the happiest thing about the present day is that in multitudes of churches, not only in America but the world around, God's people are coming to a seriousness that I have not experienced in the years that I've been a preacher. We believe that it's going to continue that way for while we think the scriptures teach that things are going to get terribly worse, religiously speaking. We believe that in the meantime, God's going to be separating his people and calling them together.

And that's good. While Satan working in the spirit of antichrist seems to be everywhere, the Holy Spirit is drawing his people in a way that we've not seen him in our little ministry. There's a young preacher in Birmingham, Alabama.

Some years since, he was a student in Howard College, the Baptist College in the state of Alabama, and had a church on the outskirts, in the city limits, but on the outskirts of Birmingham. And he was teaching the Bible on the night we call prayer meeting. That's a terrible thing, to think that we take prayer meeting night to teach the Bible, but we can't have prayer meetings, so we think it may be the next best thing.

Maybe that's all right. And the young fellow started on 1 Peter, and I give you this by way of illustration to introduce my subject tonight and tomorrow night. Tomorrow night, God willing, I want to preach on the subject, What Must I Do To Be Saved? What Must I Do To Be Saved? And tonight we're facing the question, and this is one of the big enemies of souls, and the big enemy of preaching the gospel, the perversion of what men are able to do about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Tonight we are speaking, as we announced on the subject, do men have a choice of accepting or rejecting Jesus Christ? Now, to introduce that, to tell you what I want to try to do tonight, this is a plain teaching message, or that's what we're up against now. We are hung up on what the Bible teaches. Hung up on what the Bible teaches.

Sunday morning we brought the message on the straight gate. Sunday night, the narrow way. I haven't seen multitudes of church members since.

I don't know what there was about those two messages, but there was something. And I guess we'll have to widen the gate and make the road narrower. But hopefully we'll do that.

But those are the teachings of the Lord. This young preacher innocently opened the Bible, as it announced on prayer meeting night in Birmingham, 17 years ago it was. And we were going to study through the first epistle of Peter.

So the people came to the land for a moment tonight in a Southern Baptist convention church that was founded by people who believed the Bible and believed the old doctrines of the Word and didn't make fun of them. And lo and behold, he said, now we'll just read the scripture and we'll comment on it as we go along and ask questions. And he began to read with 1 Peter 1. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, he led according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.

This happened before I ever met him. I met him two years later when we put on the first conference around the great doctrine of God's sovereign grace ever held, I suppose, in the Southland. We have one

every year now in different sections of the country expounding these truths to preachers.

And this young preacher told me about it after he met me and I met him. And he said, I read that first phrase in the second verse, and he said, wait a minute, folks, I never did see this before. Wonder what on earth this means.

And it set him off. It set him off. And he lost nearly every member of his church over it.

But now he's in the scene of the greatest ingathering of souls I think that's going on in America. It got so big that he's had to split his church and go clear across the city and start another one. Right now he's preaching to two churches.

And big businessmen, college professors in Birmingham are getting saved. And it all started over this one little verse. He'd never seen it, and he didn't have the slightest idea what it meant.

But he said, we'd better stop and see what this is talking about. A young preacher in Winston-Salem where I live, he was telling me about how his church was split. He said they were teaching the Bible on prayer meeting night and decided to teach through the book of Acts.

And so they got over to the second chapter and they were getting along just fine. And they came on Wednesday night to the 37th verse of Acts chapter 2. And they had custom, they'd read a few verses of scripture. And then he'd discuss it, the people would discuss it and ask questions.

And that's certainly good, isn't it? And so he read verse 37 of Acts chapter 2. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. The promise, there's a promise now, is unto you. God made this promise.

And to your children and to all that are far off, and as for many, as the Lord our God shall call. And he told me that, he said, wait a minute folks, what in the world does this mean? He'd never seen it. And it split his church.

Acts and Deacons and about a third of his people, oh they got through with it. They said, we ain't going to believe no such damnable stuff as that. But the trouble about it is, it's in the book.

And it split his church. See I'm taking the position that we've got to challenge all of this spirit, that in the name of being believers in Christ, just plainly, say there are great portions of the word of God that we will not accept. And that's going on all over the country.

He told me, he said, well Bob, it's split the church. It's split it over as many as the Lord our God shall call. Shall call.

You see, that church was made up of people whose fathers and mothers, they tried to believe what the book said. But a generation has come on us now, where we thought we could gain converts if we sacrificed the truth of the word of God. But we haven't gained, we've just made people two-fold more children of hell, by getting them to make a profession apart from the truth of Christ.

Now, your pastor's trying to bring to this church some of these old rock-bottom truths. His association with me is having a little to do with it. He heard me some three years ago, and we've been friends ever since.

And I make no apology for it. And there is much opposition. And so I challenge every Christian to be in the times when the word is taught.

For instance, he tells me next Wednesday night, you've been in the book of Romans on Wednesday night. In the book of Romans, he read it and said, now next Wednesday night, the lesson will be on Romans chapter 8. Well, for years, Baptists, ignorant Baptists, people who will not study their Bible, have been skipping Romans 8, 9, 10, and 11, but it's still in the book. And it'd be a happy opportunity for all you people on Wednesday evening, if that's still the time when the Bible is expounded by your pastor, to be there and just take it verse for verse.

Don't get you some scissors and cut out that that you don't like. But remember that no Christian will book God's truth. If he's ignorant, just let him keep his mouth shut and say, Lord, teach me.

But when he's faced with truth, he'll reveal whether he's a Christian or not. For God's people will listen to God's word. Now that's right.

And we need that desperately. You see, now that wasn't often the subject. For I'm coming tonight to tackle something that has been taught and preached all around.

And I know of nothing that has contributed to the awful, almost death-like quality of what we call spiritual life and what we're facing here tonight. I'm not here to try to be smart. I'm here to try to give you a little help in answering these awful, awful denials of truth and perversions of the gospel that are so popular today, especially as preached by most radio preachers.

Now, do the scriptures teach that a man ought to have a chance to be saved? Do they? If they do, then the scriptures teach that Christ ought to have been crucified. Now think that through. I run into this people, oh my, and they get quite mad about it and they gnash their teeth.

And they say, I believe that every man ought to have a chance to be saved. Have you ever heard that? Well, if that's so, then God Almighty owes sinners the death of His Son. And that's the most blasphemous thing that any human being could ever think of.

Now you think that through, and yet that's the popular gospel. There's a real grave in this election, but the Bible teaches it, you see. And when you say you don't believe in it, you're saying, we don't care if you do believe it, God, we don't.

See what I mean? For if you deny the teaching of the Word of God about His choosing men for salvation, then you have to preach that God chose everybody for salvation. If He chose everybody for salvation, then there's no better use to preach the gospel. Because He's already settled it, everybody's going to be saved and live in glory, and live like the devils that want down here.

But the Bible teaches that He chose people. And it either teaches that He chose some or everybody. You have to believe one another.

And if you believe what the brethren say, they believe. That everybody ought to have a chance to be saved. And they believe, they'll tell you, that they believe that a man ought to have a chance, ought to have the right to decide whether he'll accept or reject the Lord Jesus Christ.

If that's so now, then God Almighty owes the world the death of His Son. And if God's that kind of a monster, nobody would love Him. If He's a monster that would hang His Son on a cross to pay a debt He owes you, He's a monster.

That's right. We do not think of the awful blasphemy of the heart of what's called gospel proclamation today. All of this terrible, blasphemous, damnable stuff, putting the wills of men and making men more important than God and saying what we believe.

And you know we've been letting it go and nobody says to challenge it. But in the name of God it must be challenged. God doesn't owe anybody anything.

God doesn't owe any man a chance to be saved. Salvation is not God paying off a debt that He owes to sinful men, because He don't owe sinful men anything. Salvation is the blessed product of the God of all grace.

Not the God who's trying to pay off a debt. No, no. I was down in South Carolina and the young pastor came to me after I'd been preaching a week and said, Brother Barnard, we've come to love you in spite of your heart preaching, but he said, my people are just torn all to pieces.

He said, you've just torn us all to pieces. I said, well, is that good or bad? He said, I believe it's good. God knows we need to be torn up.

Well, I said, what's going on? He said, we wonder if Sunday afternoon, if we would fill the house, if we want to. He said, we'll be there if you'll meet us at two-third in the afternoon. Not interfere with the services.

If you'll be there and let us ask you some questions. And I said, now, are the sins still questions? You don't want to argue about anything? No, sir. He said, we want.

He said, you've got us torn up. We don't know which way. Sir! He said, you said this is wrong, that's wrong, that's wrong, that's wrong, that's wrong.

And old Booger Barry will come in and complain about everything, you know. And I said, yes, you mean business. If I'm answering your questions, I'll let you know.

And so we met. And we never did get to but one question. The young pastor got up and he said, Brother Barnard, we want to ask you this question.

Don't everybody have a chance to be saved? Don't everybody have a chance to be saved? And I answered him, it's false. Salvation is not by chance. What people mean when they say, now, I think a fellow ought to have a chance to be saved, is that God's under obligation to save him.

In the second place, they mean a man ought to have a chance to save himself. And then, of course, I asked them this question. Do you believe that God's under obligation to give a man salvation or a chance at it in that floor? Because if you answer that question, yes, sir, I believe every man ought to have a chance to be saved, you are really saying that God Almighty owes salvation to every man.

So you've got to throw the whole Bible away, Brother Dibble. There just ain't none of it left. Because it's grace, grace, grace all the way through.

A man walked up to me one night this week. He hadn't been booking the meeting. He was trying to learn and he said, thank you.

He said, I've been wanting to know how to answer all the talk that's going on. I don't know how. Well, this blasphemous talk must be challenged.

It must be challenged. And for this reason that is striking at the greatest teaching of the word of God. You're saved by grace, not by chance, not by God owing you something.

But the man's saved. All the fault of it is in God. Amen.

And I know that we must quit parading stuff like I'm talking about tonight. It's Bible truth because it strikes at the very heart of God. Does a man have a chance to be saved? Does he have a right? Do men have a right to be saved? If they do, then God Almighty is a monster if you don't give him the right.

But if men have a right to be saved, then God owes the death of the Son of God. But the Bible says, I know one thing, I know I know this. That the Bible says the reason God hung his son on the cross is because he so loved the world.

Not that he is in debt to us. But that wonder of wonder, grace upon grace, mercy upon mercy, he so loved. That's the reason he gave the son.

Not because he is in debt. Not because men deserve salvation. Not because men had a right to a chance to be saved.

But because he loved. Because he loved. Now closely akin to what we've been talking about is our question tonight.

People say to me, and I hear it everywhere I go, and I'm determined to the grace of God because it strikes at the heart of salvation. And because it's contributed to this generation of church members who have no hunger and thirst for righteousness and give not the slightest evidence that the Lord Jesus lives inside of them. I'm determined to tackle it.

Do men have a choice? Do men have a choice of accepting or rejecting Christ? One of the members of the church, prominent since I've been here, has taken issue. I believe that a person ought to have a choice of accepting or rejecting Christ. But what does the Bible say about it? Let us read several scriptures.

Would you listen to the scripture? This is going on all over the country. My, how they preach it. I've been listening to the radio preachers since I've been here.

They preach enough blasphemous, damnable stuff to damn all the state of Tennessee. And they do it in the name of fundamentals. They do it.

Boy, they do it. They do it. I know what I'm talking about.

And you listen to a lot of it. I'm just reporting statements and approaches that are going to wipe the gospel off the face of the earth. If we don't raise up some churches that will open our Bible and dare to begin to teach it and to stand by it.

In the 27th chapter of Matthew, at verse 22, is where all this business of men having the choice of presenting Christ to men and telling them that they can't be neutral. I've heard sermons on this. You can't be neutral, my friend.

You must accept or reject Jesus Christ. I've heard sermons on that. But it's not so.

It's not so. Here in the 22nd verse of the 27th chapter of Matthew, the Lord Jesus Christ in the days of his flesh has been brought before Pilate, the Roman governor of Palestine. And as the custom was, on the day of the feast, he'd release two notable prisoners.

And he brings before the mob two people. One's a fellow by the name of Barabbas, and the other's a fellow by the name of Jesus. And he says, Now here they are.

Which one of them shall I release? And they cried out, Well, we want you to turn old Barabbas loose. Pilate said, All right. Then Pilate said unto them, Well, since you want me to turn Barabbas loose, what shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ? And they said unto him, Let him be crucified.

Now, this is where this whole business got started. And they say here's a man that had a choice. He had to make up his mind what he was going to do with Jesus.

Above is a white horse of different color. This was the Roman governor. He had the power, humanly speaking, of life and death.

But Jesus had been brought to his court, just like down here at the county court or whatever kind of court you have in the state of Tennessee. And Pilate was the judge. He was the one to decide whether they were going to turn him loose or do something with him.

That's a long way from coming over into the spiritual realm and presenting Jesus Christ to the faith or unbelief of men and women, and saying, Now he's in your hands. What are you going to do with him? In the 19th chapter of the Gospel of John, the same record is given. And Pilate said to Jesus, Don't you know that I've got power over you? I can have you put to death.

And Jesus said to him, Thou couldst do nothing except the Father gave you the power. And so people say, Well, that thing in the Bible says, So what can I do with Jesus? Well, the answer from the Word of God comes not as quickly. There's just one thing for you to do with Jesus.

That's to submit to him in utter faith. That's the choice men have, and men enjoy that. Ladies and gentlemen, God Almighty did not send his son to be born of a virgin in a cave in Bethlehem, to live on this earth approximately 33 years, to wind up on a Roman gibbet outside the holy city of Jerusalem, to be buried in another man's grave, to be raised and put on a throne.

God didn't send his son to go through all that to give you a choice. He sent his son not to condemn the world, but to save it. And nowhere in the scripture is there the slightest hint that you have a choice about it.

Christ is not up for your acceptance or rejection. He's presented for your acceptance. For your acceptance.

That's 10 million times more solemn than the popular preaching. You see it? Men are faced not with a choice, but with a God-given and God-commanded duty. A duty.

Christ was not sent so men could decide what they'd do about him. Christ didn't die so you could make up your mind whether you'd accept him or reject him. The gospel's not preached so that you can decide whether you believe it or not believe it.

Christ is to be accepted. Not accepted or rejected, but accepted. Let's see how serious this is.

In the book of Matthew, at chapter 3, right after the Lord Jesus Christ had been baptized and filled the spirit, in the last verse of the third chapter of Matthew, when Jesus came up out of the water, the Spirit of God descended on him like a dove, and something took place. I tried to read the Bible a little bit in the last 39 years, and I give it to you for what it's worth. What I'm going to read now is either so or it isn't.

There's no ifs and ands and buts about it. This either is a fact or it's not. And lo, a voice from heaven.

Not Ralph Barnett's poor voice, but lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Now, I suggest to you just one or two things. Cut this verse out of the Bible, but there's many more like it.

I'll read them in a minute. Throw your whole Bible away, or camp there a little bit. This is what God says about this.

This is God splitting the heavens. This is a miracle, young brother Soarer. But you can take it or leave it, do whatever you want.

I'm hearing it saying, except just taking it for granted. God Almighty split the heavens and spoke. And a deity from heaven again now, if the Bible so.

And behold, a voice out of the clouds which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him. I've been telling you, you can't have Christ as your Savior unless you have Him as your teacher.

And I've got good authority. My Lord said, You listen to my Son. You listen to my Son.

This is my Son, I'm well pleased in Him. Hear Him. Hear Him.

And brother Linton, the first thing my Lord did, when He entered His public ministry as God's teacher and God's prophet, you know what He did? Then began He to say unto them, Repent and believe the gospel. Didn't He? Mark 4, Matthew 4, verse 17. It was the first message of this one.

The Father said, This is my Son. You listen to Him. And He got up to bring His first message from Him.

This well-pleasing to the Father is the Son who is well-pleasing to the Father. The one that God Almighty split the clouds and said, Hear Him. What did He say? He said, I wish you folks would think it over carefully and make up your mind what you're going to do with my Son.

No, sir. He said, Repent and believe the gospel. You know what He said? There ain't no choice there, honey.

See, when you get to hell, you're going to have to suffer in hell for not paying attention and obeying my Lord's command. That's the command. This is serious.

It's not just a little matter that you ought to take care of sometime at your convenience. This is the command of heaven. Repent ye.

Who said that? The one the Father said, My Son. The one I'm well-pleased with. The one the Father said you'd listen to.

Listen to. These little jack-of-all-trades churchmen going around here and popping off all over the country and getting on the radio and in the sunscreen classes and holding meetings and making power of the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ. There's no need to be challenged.

There's no Christianity in that. And we're in a holy war. My Lord said, All that the Father giveth unto me shall come to me, and him that cometh unto me I'll in no wise cast out.

Jesus said that, brother. You're about to say you don't believe it. Well, Jesus does.

They get up on the radio and make fun of this, but Jesus said it. As thou hast given him authority over all flesh. I'm quoting John 17 and 2, quoting from the lips of the Lord.

As thou hast given him authority over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given thee. In fact, this preacher said, Tell me that damnable stuff. Well, the author of that damnable stuff is the Lord Jesus Christ.

You see what I mean? This ain't serious. Members of this church. Oh, man.

Somebody called up and said, Lord, do something. That terrible stuff's creeping in. Well, we got it from Jesus, Brutally.

I don't know whether that's terrible or not. Maybe we'd better quit accusing Jesus of teaching damnable stuff. You see? You see, the war is on, brother Copeland.

It dead sure is. The enemies of the gospel are growing everywhere. Calling Jesus a liar.

Calling things that we got from his lips. Recording in this book. Calling them damnable things.

Now, the Lord said, Listen here. Amen. Amen.

My Lord said, This is the will of him that sent me. John chapter 6. I think the verse is 46. I'm not certain about that.

This is the will of him that sent me. That of all that the Father giveth me, I should lose not a one. And shall raise them up at the last day.

And yet to get on the radio. And down on the streets. And in Sunscrow classes.

And revival campaigns. And say we don't believe that damnable stuff. But Jesus taught it.

You see, we're in a war. And we, if we're going to show our colors, honey. If we don't, if we continue.

Then we don't want to hurt anybody's feelings. We'll just call Jesus a liar. But keep the unsaved church people in a good humor.

See what I'm talking about? You see, this war is pretty serious. And back of it all. Back of it all.

Is the terrible, insidious, kind of the devil. Who does not want men and women faced with trouble. He'd rather they be faced with perversion.

Back of it safe. That's all in the subject. Ladies and gentlemen.

Either God owes salvation to everybody. Or he don't. If he owes salvation to everybody.

Then he owes the death of Christ to everybody. If he owes salvation to anybody. Then he owes the death of Christ to that anybody.

That makes a monster out of God. Christ Jesus our Lord. Is presented to men.

Not for their making a choice of him. But he's presented. God says repent and believe.

In 1 John chapter 3 verse 23. This is his commandment. That we should believe.

This is his commandment. That we should make up our mind what we're going to do with Jesus. No sir.

That we should believe on the name of his Son. Jesus Christ. In Acts.

In Acts. You know that scripture. By heart.

In Acts chapter 17. And the times of this ignorance God overlooked. But now tells men.

That he wants them to make up their minds. And he's going to give them a chance to decide what they'll do with Jesus Christ. No sir.

Now God commanded all men. Everywhere to repent. There's no choice here.

There's a command. There's a command. He commands how many? All men.

Everywhere to decide what they'll do with Jesus. No sir. That's God's command.

In the book of Romans chapter 16. You can't turn to them this quickly. I read you this verse.

These words. Now to him that is a power to establish you according to my gospel. And the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery.

Which was kept secret since the world began. But is now made manifest. And by the scriptures of the prophets.

According to the commandment of the everlasting God. Made known to all nations. Father watch.

The obedience of faith. My Lord said repent and believe the gospel. Repent and believe the gospel.

Don't decide what you're going to do about it. Here's what God says. Repent and believe.

The gospel is preached for the obedience of faith. Every time Peter makes any reference to me and what God requires of him in the gospel. It's obedience.

He's the author of eternal life. The book of Hebrews says to them who obey him. What's the command of the gospel? Repent and believe.

Repent. Not decide whether you will or not. But the command is.

You're in the army. The colonel didn't say now corporal. If it's convenient sometime in the next three, four months.

Wish you'd make up your mind whether to sweep that floor or not. He didn't talk that way. He said you sweep the floor.

He gave commands. Amen. Amen.

My daddy didn't say now Ralph if it's convenient. Wish you'd go out and plow the field. He said son go plow the field.

There wasn't any choice about it. It was a command. It was a command.

You see? This is ten times tighter than the stuff they call giving everybody a chance. No, I'm giving nobody a chance. It's facing you with a command.

Facing with your command. Facing you with a command. For men are confronted in the gospel with God's holy command and with God's demand.

And you know, every time God through one of his preachers in the New Testament or in the Old, tells men to repent, he does it in the imperative mood. Now, instead of having a choice, men are faced with a duty. And men are not blank pages.

Men are not machines. Men are responsible creatures. They're responsible to Almighty God.

And they're responsible to obey his command. I don't know the fate of what we call the healer. I've said this much as I know how.

I've read books, listened to good men making a step at it. But I just don't know. I don't know how to do with a man that's lived in Africa all his life and never been faced with a command of God in the gospel, the terms the gospel lays down, or repentance and faith in that life.

I don't know. I had my own ideas about it, but they ain't worth much. And I wouldn't waste your time.

But I know what the Bible teaches about anybody that's ever been confronted with the Lord Jesus Christ in the gospel. I know there ain't but one thing for you to do. That's to bow your wicked heart and lay yourself in the hands of Jesus Christ.

You're not given a choice. You are commanded to do it. Your money? Suppose you owe a man \$10 and you haven't got any money to pay it.

Does that discharge the debt? No, no. You still owe it. Suppose a fellow shows up down to the glass plant tomorrow, they work tomorrow dead drunk.

He can't put in eight hours. Does that discharge his obligation to do a good day's work for his employer? Not at all. If a dog can love his master, a man ought to love God.

And you have a duty to obey Him and to love Him with all your heart, no matter what your condition is. Now, folks, I tell you this seriously. How can we expect people to have the slightest idea that they really

need Christ Jesus as Savior and Lord until they're faced with this terrible, not invitation to make up their mind, but this stringent command and telling men and women, listen to Brother Barnum, telling men and women that God commands them to do what they cannot do.

No man can repent. No man can believe. And yet if he don't, he's going to hell.

And we've just got to tear up the Bible or we've got to face this fact that God Almighty, according to the teaching of the Bible, He commands all men to repent. Ain't no way to get around that is, Acts 17 and verse. And yet a man cannot tear himself off the throne and enthrone Christ.

A man cannot hate his nature and abhor himself. Now, a man can quit drinking liquor or chewing tobacco or doing things like that, but a man cannot give himself another nature. And a man just can't love God with all of his heart.

But if he don't, he's going to split hell wide open. You see, people are not lost today. The members of this church, the Sunday morning people, they don't feel any need of sins forgiven and a Lord to rule over them.

How could they? They've never been faced with the fact that this is how lost people are. That they're so lost they can't do what God commands them to do. Now, if a man can repent without the Holy Spirit, if a man can believe the gospel without the miracle of the Holy Spirit, then a man may be in pretty bad shape, but he ain't lost.

If a man's lost in the forest and he's getting off of God and he knows the way out and he can find it himself, he ain't lost. If a man's a big sinner and he's on his way to hell, but he's got the right and the privilege and the ability some of these days, as men tell men. If he's telling the truth, he's in bad shape, but he ain't come lost.

I'm screaming up and down, America! Most times I get a hearing. I thank God for it. I haven't missed time.

But that's not the way it is most places. God's working all over this country. Hear me.

I'm trying my damn little best to heal my man up to the truth. But he's in the ditch and he can't get out. If the Lord don't come and deal with him where he is, he can't get up out of that ditch and get to the hospital and get well.

He's in that ditch and his legs are broken and his eyes are punched out and he can't hear thunder and his ribs are caved in and he's in no condition to get up and walk ten miles to a hospital. I'm fighting this stuff they call the gospel, that God's done all he can do to save a sinner, and now, sinner, it's up to you. Old sinners can't.

He's down there in the ditch and he can't walk and he can't see and he can't hear. How's he going to get to the hospital? According to what they call the gospel now, I think the man ought to have the ability, he ought to let him decide about this. Well, what good to do that, old boy? Both his legs are broken.

He can't get to God. Tell him he'll do his part. Well, just what part can he do? The only thing on God's earth he can do is there in that ditch until he's unable to get out, is to look up.

He can't make it himself. But there's life in the look. There's life in the look, you hear me? There's life, there's always been a life in the look.

Look at me! Well, I'll make it! Some of these days, preacher, I'm going to be saved! You're going to do it. No? No salvation, something the Lord does. The Lord does.

Well, you say, Brother Barney, if I can't repent, if I can't believe, I just have to go to hell. Yes, if you want to. Maybe you want to spite God, go on to hell.

I don't think it'll hurt him so much, but if you don't want to, I'll tell you what you can do. Do what the scriptures say. Become a seeker.

Become a caller. That old boy in the ditch with his legs broken, he could start looking. Oh, somebody come and help him get out of the ditch.

He could start calling. Start calling! Start calling! Oh, God! Work thou within me! Make me able, make me willing! Do thou for me what I cannot do for myself. That's all on earth a man can do, but thank God he can do that.

He can do that. He can do that. Faced with the fact that hell is the portion of all who die impenitent.

If you don't repent, you're going to hell. The rich man went to hell in the reading he did, said, I didn't repent. Said, if you could talk to my brothers, maybe they'd repent.

But said, Brother Barney, you just got through saying the Bible says I can't. Yep. But if you don't, you'll go to hell.

If you can't do it yourself, you've become a call-wrong God. And the Scriptures talk, bless God, about somebody who's been raised from the grave for the express purpose of granting repentance and the forgiveness of sins. In the fifth chapter of the book of Acts, the God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.

Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a savior. For to do what? For to give repentance to Israel and the forgiveness of sins. You could ask the Lord to become a call-wrong.

Oh, God, here I am. Come thou, if it be thy will. Come on.

And the Scriptures still teach, whosoever, isn't it wonderful, whosoever shall call, call, call, call on the name of the Lord and shall receive. That's how men are able to repent. They become seekers and callers on the Lord.

And he grants to them the ability to do what they can't do in themselves, calling on the Lord. Men and women are in God's death row. Waiting the time of execution.

They're locked up in the cell. The door to the cell is locked. And the key is not in it.

And there's just one person that's got the key. God gave it to him. He put him on the throne.

Made him a prince and a savior to grant repentance, to grant forgiveness. A sinner, fazed with God's command, as the Lord Jesus Christ walks by in the gospel. The vilest old sinner out of hell can do this.

He can say, pass me not. Don't go by my cell door. While you're unlocking the door for others.

Pass me not. God commands people. Doesn't give us a choice.

Faces us with a duty. But you say, Brother Barnard, this word not true. I know it preached long, but this is solemn.

You can laugh at it, but I'm trying to help you meet the awful blasphemy that's going on around you. Listen. You say, Brother Barnard, men don't repent.

God commands them to. You say, God don't give men a choice. What do you do with Christ? Because the day is coming when every knee shall.

The day is coming when every tongue shall. Not decide what they'll do with Jesus, but bow to him. You don't have a choice what you're going to do with Christ.

You're going to bow to him. Wouldn't it be wonderful if you'd become a Coran and get to where you could bow to him now. When the blessed reward of submission to him now.

To be brought into his sweet kingdom and made his dear child. That's grace. But young man, you don't.

Don't. Don't worry. God's not making people bow now, but he will one day.

God commands you to bow now. The day is coming when he'll make you. The day is coming when he'll make you.

Too late for salvation, but not too late for the glory of God. This is a solemn thing. This is a solemn thing.

We're going to stand and sing a verse or two of our song. Locked up in jail with no key. Jesus passes by.

The sinner can cry to him. He can call on him. He can look to him.

Can cast all his dependence on him. Oh, thou son of David, have mercy on me. If thou will, Lord.

I know you can. I know you can. Oh, if thou will, have mercy on me.

Have mercy on me. So let's sing a verse or two of 230. Pass me not, O gentle Savior.

Hear my humble cry. While on earth as I was.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/30/SID30755.mp3>

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