

(John the Baptist Comes to Town) - Part 2 Calling Men to Come Clean With God

by Rolfe Barnard

The sermon emphasizes the importance of repentance in salvation and warns against shallow preaching and conversions.

Duration: 25:19

Scripture: Isaiah 40:3, Matthew 3:1-2, Matthew 3:8, Matthew 3:10-12, Matthew 5:6-7

Topics: "John The Baptist"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher highlights the moral decay and violence that is prevalent in society, not just in New York City but throughout America. He emphasizes the need for true repentance and a complete surrender to God. The preacher draws a parallel between catching monkeys and the need for humans to let go of their sinful ways. He then introduces the topic of John the Baptist and encourages listeners to turn to the book of Matthew to read about his role as a voice of repentance. The sermon concludes with an offer to receive a book containing the messages on repentance.

Transcript

And good morning, friends of the radio. I bring to you the day, the second in the series of messages on the subject, John the Baptist Come to Town. And as we ask you now to turn in the word of God, those of you who have time and inclination to follow with us to the book of Matthew at the third chapter, I want to begin reading in just a moment and read the entire passage down through verse 12 still again.

And may I remind you that at the close of this message we'll bring again our offer and tell you that this month we are printing the messages as you hear them on the subject, John the Baptist Come to Town, and they are being printed, the four messages, in a little attractive book form, and they'll be yours for the asking. Stay with us until after the message, and we'll give you our mailing address and urge you to see to it that you become one of hundreds who will have these four messages on the general subject of repentance. God sending John the Baptist as a voice, and John the Baptist having the ministry of calling men to place themselves at the only place where God meets a sinner, at the place of repentance, and thus be prepared with open arms to receive Jesus Christ as their sovereign, as their despot, and as their Lord.

Last Lord's Day we dwelt upon the fact that the ministry of John the Baptist so sorely needed a repetition of it today at least. He dwelt on the matter of God laying the acts of his judgment at the very root and foundation of all things, and calling on all men everywhere to repent. And now let's read the scripture again in Matthew chapter 3 at verse 1. In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his path straight. And the saint John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins, and his meat was locusts and wild honey. Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of bipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance, and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham our father. For I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham, and now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear. He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire, whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner, but he will burn up the chaff with unfurl. John the Baptist called on all men everywhere to repent, religious people, all kinds of people.

Last Lord's day we showed you how the soldiers came unto the preaching of John the Baptist, and they said, according to what you say, we need to do something. What shall we do? And then the publicans, the tax collectors, they came, and then here came the Pharisees, the modernists, the Pharisees who were the modernists of their day, and the Sadducees who were the fundamentalists of their day, and they said, We won't get in on this too. And he said, No, sir, no, sir, you've got to bring forth fruit that prove that you are now in a state of repentance, casting yourself on the mercy of a sovereign God.

How desperately we need a revival today of preaching after the order of John the Baptist. If John the Baptist came to your town, what would he preach? He'd call on men everywhere to lay down their shotguns at Christ Jesus' feet, and surrender to his rule and sovereignty and reign in their lives. Dr. Harry Ironside, who's now gone to glory and blessed in his memory to those who love the gospel, wrote a book some years ago entitled Except Ye Repent, and in that book he makes this observation, shallow preaching that does not grapple with the terrible fact of man's sinfulness and guilt, calling on all men everywhere to repent.

That kind of preaching, says Mr. Ironside, results in shallow conversions. And so we have myriads of glib-tongued professors today who give no evidence of regeneration whatsoever. Preaching of salvation by grace, they manifest no grace in their lives.

Mr. Ironside was right. Oh, take a typical congregation nearly anywhere on the face of America, and they're preaching about, we're not under law, we're under grace, and how wonderful it is that we won't go to hell when we're dying. We're saved for time and eternity, and we can't be lost.

But how little of the fruit of the grace of God is manifest in their lives. Brother Maxwell, who wrote that tremendously blessed book, *Crowded to Christ*, tells the story of a young man who was the product of the Bible Institute of America. They've got it all fixed out, and they've got the smoothest gospel this side of hell.

And they're sending out young preachers by the multitudes to go around and deny the need of that utter groan and absolute transformation in a man's soul called repentance. And they're preaching a gospel of ease of believism. Just believe, just accept Jesus as your Savior.

They're preaching all over this country. And this young man, the product of one of these schools, went yonder to India and preached. And my, did he get a lot of converts.

And as time went on, all of those people who believed in Jesus according to the terms of his gospel, he found out that there was no fruit there. There was no evidence there of a work of God's transforming grace within the lives of the people who believed in Jesus. And he grappled with it.

He tried to put them under law and get them to do right because they're scared. He tried to do like Paul did and say, therefore, my beloved brethren. But all of his appeals and beseechments just went off of them like water off a duck's back.

And finally, the young man came to the recognition that he preached a half gospel, just a half gospel, for anybody that leaves out repentance in the command of Almighty God in the terms of saving grace is just preaching a half gospel. And this young man just did away with the church. He just tore up the roll.

And he said, nobody's a member here anymore. And then they started all over again. He began to demand that men and women produce fruit that showed that they'd been brought by the grace of God to the place of lifelong repentance in their hearts.

Oh, how we need that in America. Our fundamental, our evangelical, our soul gospel, so-called gospel-believing congregations everywhere are full of people who brag about being saved by grace, but do not show the work of grace in their lives and in their hearts. I come this morning to tell you that the preaching and the demanding of repentance is not contrary to the grace of God, but it is a preparation for God in grace to heal the wounds that he himself has inflicted and to bring that mourning, repentant sinner to the heaving of rest.

A lot of people in these days are mighty, mighty afraid that somebody's going to preach salvation by works and that we're going to give the sinner a little credit and let him have a little merit. And they say, if we preach repentance and tell the preachers that that's something they must do, that the sinner will take credit for the fact that he did something and thus make void the grace of God. But I warn you this morning, and I insist that it's no merit for a man to recognize his need.

The word of God says they, that b-w-h-o-l-e, need not a physician. What does that mean? It means the fellow's all right. He said, why, what are you talking about? I don't need any medicine.

Here's a fellow walking down the street, weighs 210 pounds, hasn't got an ounce of fat on him, just all muscle and bone, great determination and just health as he can be. And a doctor comes running around and said, please let me treat you. Please take these pills.

Please let me operate on you. The fellow said, what's the matter with you? I'm all right. I don't need a doctor.

And that's what the Lord says, men and women, walk the streets and teach our sons to school classes and preach from our pulpits and run our government, run our churches and run our schools and run everything. And they have no need of Jesus Christ to cleanse them and make them whole. He said, they, that b-w-h-o-l-e, need not a physician.

The fellow that needs a physician is the fellow that's sick. You find the fellow just feels like he's going to die in the next five minutes. And the doctor comes and says, here, you need a doctor.

He says, I sure do. He said, how about turning yourself over to me? Let me see if I can find out what's wrong with you. And then I'll prescribe a remedy.

Old boy says, what you waiting on, bud? Get going here. I'm about to die. That's what my Lord said.

Now, for a man who's sick to call for a doctor, that's no merit. For a man who's lost and undone and knows it and feels it, it's no merit for such a sinner to cast himself on the goodness of God. No merit for a sick man to call for a doctor.

The prodigal son, there wasn't any merit when he said, I sinned against my father, and I'm going back and say, Father, make me as one of your hired servants. He didn't merit any pardon. But when he went back and cast himself on the mercy of his old dad, it did put that old prodigal son in the place where he could be received and be received in the likeness of how God receives an old hell-bound sinner.

My dear friend, as certainly as no sinner was ever saved apart from the marvelous grace of God, no less certainly and surely can a sinner ever receive that grace who has not recognized his need. And that's mostly what repentance is. And dear ones, this is not contrary to the grace of God, and this is not limiting God's grace, but it is God's way of preparing men to receive his marvelous boon of grace.

And I tell you now in this day of lawlessness, how we do desperately need to sound forth the clarion call to all men everywhere. Repent! God-share! Get ready! This old earth has been visited by God in Christ Jesus. God walked this old earth, and you lay down your arms and make the center of all of your desire and ambition the pleasing of him who visited this old earth.

I don't have to prove to anybody, listen to the sound of my voice now, that this is a day of lawlessness. This is a day of shameless impetuosity. Oh, you walk the streets now.

You go into homes. You go into places of business. You attend our congregational services.

You listen to the radio. You look at the television. You read the pulp that calls themselves magazines today, and you'll see that this generation is thumbing its nose at almighty God and telling God to go to hell.

It will not pay any attention to his demands for holiness. This is a day of lawlessness. Impenitence walks the land.

Impenitence stalks the land. My friends, New York City is not the only city in America where a woman cannot walk the streets at night. New York City is not the only street, the state, or city in America where youngsters ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen are going like pack racks and gangs and stabbing and strangling and murdering and raping.

Oh, it looks like the moral fiber of this old world has literally rotted down to the very core, and there's no time now to pray about an easy gospel that a man can swallow and never know he's swallowed and lose it and never miss it. This is the time to rise up in the spirit of John the Baptist and demand that men and women bring forth evidence and fruit that they've repented, that they're in the state of utter mortification before a holy God, and ask him for mercy. How we do need old John the Baptist to be raised from the dead and go up and down this land and the fury of Sinai, thunders and terrors calling on men everywhere to repent.

But instead of that, we've got Bible teachers and fundamental preachers going up and down the land, and they are taking their way of dividing the scripture and they're pulling all the teeth out of the demands of almighty God. Yeah, we have on the one hand those people who tell us that Matthew chapter 5, 6 and 7 is for the millennial age, and there we have those tremendous commands in that word there, and it tells us of how we're to act as citizens of God's kingdom. And they tell us now that the demands of the Sermon on the Mount are too exalted for us, and that they could be more easily met in the millennium when the lion and the lamb shall lie down together, and the glory and the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

And where these demands are not now scouted, they're universally ignored, and we're plainly told that we need to expect to pay any attention to these awful demands in this life, that they're too high for us. You know, the ethical standards of Jesus Christ are too high. But I tell you now that the Sermon on the Mount is for the in the ethical standards Jesus laid down there are nothing on earth but evidence that a man has been transformed by the Spirit of God, washed in the blood of the Lamb.

And I say to you that those who run up and down the land and deny that God demands holiness now, and that he demands repentance now, and that he demands coming clean now, I tell you they're denying the very heart of the demands and commands of the Lord Jesus Christ. They say, well, these demands, they're just unacceptable. They're just too terrible.

And I warn you that all of Christ's teachings are meant to be unacceptable to the flesh. If you'll take up early church history, you'll find out that our early Christian fathers who became martyrs did not try to get away from the scandal of the cross. They followed these scriptures.

They could have muzzled their open confession of Christ until that command could have been more easily obeyed, but they didn't do it. And many of them died in the flesh and went on to glory because they wouldn't muzzle their open confession of the Lord Jesus Christ. John the Baptist came preaching and laid the axe at the roof.

And as we found out last Lord's day, he crossed men just where men lived in order that the one thing might bring him to the dust of death, the death of self. You know, my friends, a soldier came and said, what must we do? And he said, well, he crossed them at the point of his rebellion. He hit him at the sore spot.

The publicans came likewise, and the Pharisees and the Sadducees. It is true, my friends, that all the rebellion of a man is usually wrapped up, usually heads up in just one sin, just one sin. And that one sin is sort of like a boil coming to a head.

Man's willing to be forgiven and cleansed of every sin except that. Oh yeah, I want to know now, as my time rapidly drawing to close, where is your rebellion pointed up? Where is your sin headed up? What is it

that you just will not let go? I tell you, God never saves a sinner any other way. And he dealt with these Pharisees and these publicans and these soldiers.

He demanded that they drop their rebellion and throw down their arms and repent and turn from that very sore spot in their life where all of their rebellion was headed up against the rule of a sovereign God. My friend, whatever that is in your life, it's got to go. You can talk about you except to Jesus till you're blue in the face, but I tell you, that's got to go.

Have you ever heard the story of how they catch monkeys? Well, let me tell you that as my time draws to a close. You go out yonder to the zoo, you know, and you buy them a dime worth of peanuts. You could buy them for nickel.

Now you bend the dime, get a sack of peanuts, and you let your little children feed the monkeys and they'll watch them. Well, people in South America make a living catching monkeys to send around the world for the sport of people. You know how they catch monkeys? Well, it's not very, very hard.

A monkey catcher down in the jungles or wherever monkeys live in South America, they'll take a gallon jug, you know, like you use for sogger molasses or corn whiskey, and they'll take that gallon jug and put a nut, an acorn or a hickor nut or some kind of a nut that monkeys love, and they'll just drop it down in that gallon jug, and they'll take that jug with the nut in it and take it out to their heart where the monkeys live, and then the man will go on about his way. Just leave the jug with the open bunghole and the nut down in the bottom, and after the scent of man has gone, here'll come a little monkey, and he'll sniff, and he'll smell, and finally he'll locate that nut that he wants. He finds it, and then he comes right up and he finds right down the bottom of that jug, and he'll gnarl up his little bitty old paw, you know, and he'll ram it down that very, about an inch in there with the bunghole, you know, and yeah, his little arm will go down into the big part of the jug, and yeah, he'll find that nut, and he'll pick it up in his little paws and clasp it for dear life, and then he'll start to pull his hand and his arm out, but you know where this fist all balled up, it won't come out of that narrow bunghole, and the little old monkey, you know what he'll do? Well, sir, he'll pray, if monkeys pray, and he'll thrash, and he'll scream, and he'll dance, and there we're just having the time, and he can't get his hand out of the gallon jug without dropping the nut.

See, if he dropped the nut, then his little hand would be extended, and he could pull the hand out of the jug, just like you put it in, but never occurs to the little monkey to drop the nut, and he'll stay there, and pray, and scream, and thrash, but he'll hold on to the nut, and finally the monkey catcher will come, and there's a monkey, and he'll go up and grab the little monkey in his left arm of the body, and then he'll take his hand, and he'll squeeze the tendrils and veins of the hands of that little old monkey, he's got his hand down in that jug, and he'll make the poor little old monkey drop the nut after all, and then the monkey catcher will pull the extended hand out of the out of the jug. That's the way they catch monkeys in South America. Somebody says, well, it looked like the monkey had sense not coming out of the rain.

He wouldn't stay there and get caught. He'd drop that nut and pull his hand out of the jug. That's right, but how about you, sinner? Hell's a popping full of people that said they took Jesus as Savior, but they never did drop the nut that represents their pointed up, deep-seated rebellion against the law of holy God as expressed in Christ, and they'll pray, and they'll join the church, and they'll give the money, and they'll scream, and they'll do anything on earth they know to do, but they won't drop their rebellion.

You see it? And thus they die, holding on to that nut, and then when they die, they lose that awful thing to hell, and they gain eternal hell. I warn you, my dear brother. I warn you, sister.

I warn you, young man, young lady. It's drop the nut. It's surrender to Jesus Christ at the point where your rebellion heads up against him, or it's eternal hell.

Our Father, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the second message on the ministry of John the Baptist has now been heard by the people. Oh God, I pray for the work of the Spirit of God as the people are now getting ready to turn off this radio program and go about to something else. Lord God, thank you for the privilege of warning sinners, and I pray in radio land the Spirit of God shall use truth to cut to the quick and to bring men to realization of how they stand before a holy God, to awaken their condition, and if it finds them lost and undone, headed for hell.

I pray that the healing of this gospel may be applied by the Holy Ghost in Christ's name and for his sake. Amen. You've heard another of the second message in the series of messages on the subject, John the Baptist come to town.

Your speaker again has been Evangelist Rolf Barnard.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/16/SID16824.mp3>

Source:

<https://sermonindex.net/speakers/rolfe-barnard/john-the-baptist-comes-to-town-part-2-calling-men-to-come-clean-with-god/>

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