

The God of the Bible vs. the God of Today 1 of 2

by Rolfe Barnard

Rolfe Barnard's sermon contrasts the true nature of God as revealed in the Bible with the distorted perceptions of God prevalent in today's society.

Duration: 47:53

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Luke 5:8, John 17:1, Acts 4:12, Romans 1:16, Ephesians 2:8

Topics: "Human Sinfulness", "Spiritual Perseverance"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that people are not inherently good and are instead filled with self-will and self-love. He highlights that sin today is more prevalent than ever before and manifests as hostility towards God's rule. The preacher encourages the audience to be aware of those who may be in need of help and to be willing to assist them. He also shares a story about a man who persistently tried to bring someone to a gospel service, highlighting the importance of perseverance in reaching out to others. The sermon references the book of John, specifically chapter 17, and emphasizes the need for individuals to recognize their own sinfulness and seek God's help.

Transcript

I should turn tonight, if you will, to this book of John, for our first scripture at 17th chapter. Last evening things happened that pleased me very much. A number of the men who have to work the night shift came and told me the reason they wouldn't be present.

Isn't that lovely? It shows good spirit. That's good, but I never heard the fellow getting his boss to send him as far away as Los Angeles. It keeps me in the place in my life.

That's going to the extremes, it seems to me. I'll be one of God's hunting dogs. There are so many, so many who need help, and we trample over them in our zeal to be religious.

Just keep your eyes open. You never know when the Lord's going to let you cross the path of somebody he's dealing with, and they're wounded and they need help. Mr. Spurgeon had 300 hunting dogs, he called them.

They were constantly on the lookout for somebody whom the spirit had wounded, and they needed help. They do need help. It's a blessed privilege sometimes to be a helper.

Keep your eyes open, your heart warm. Go further than inviting people in these days to have elsewhere to go. I know a barber in High Point, North Carolina got under conviction about a man he's been trying to witness to him through the years, and he made up his mind he's going to run the fellow out of the county or get him into a gospel service.

And he'd go, and the man would have an alibi and excuse, and he'd just sit on his front step during the service. Next night he'd show up, the fellow would have another alibi, and he sat on his front step for 13 successive nights until he landed. Just keep on.

If we knew how desperately steeped in sin this generation is, and we would abandon our hop, skip, and junk methods and we'd stand between somebody, I wish we'd quit trying to win everybody and try to win somebody. That'd be a lot better, wouldn't it? Do your best, you're a gracious people. I want to give an illustration, if I can, to illustrate, to introduce my message tonight.

I want to try to preach tonight on the God of the Bible versus the God of today. I was in my hometown where I live now from here since, one of the big churches, and the big chairman of the board of deacons, he heard me one time and he decided he didn't like it. He was a fellow that the doctor told him to watch his stomach so he put it way out in front of him so he could keep his eyes on it.

And he didn't come back to the meeting. He thought he took out everybody else would, but God began to bring crowds and began to see. And so he decided, I learned all these things afterward, he decided maybe he better show up and see what's going on.

And he came down after he heard me preach the second time and very pompously said, young man, the God I worship won't do like you said your God does. And I said, I'm agreeable to that. Perhaps your God won't punish sin.

But the God of the Bible has set himself that senses the race between two sovereigns, him and sin, that he's going to win. You and I have been privileged or designed to live in the days when America has experienced the greatest revival of believing in God. The world's ever known a thing about, but there are many of us who are afraid that the God of today is the creature of our own warped desires.

And that once again, the days of the Apostle Paul are being repeated and that the God who's so popular now, the man upstairs, the one whom the little Hollywood actress said, he's a living dog, be the good Lord willing of author Godfrey. The God who has smiled upon a brand of Christianity that's turned the Lord's day into a Roman holiday. That's not the God of the Bible.

It has always been true that men are prone to create a God with whom they can be comfortable in their sin. And it seems to me that one of the great issues of this hour, a man would be a fool. Go up and down America now, crying aloud, have faith in God.

Everybody's already speak to it. They've got a God. All the movie actresses now are religious.

Jane Russell is either drunk or in a prayer meeting. This is true all the time. This is the day when everybody believes in God.

Tonight we want to look at the God of today, comparing with the God of the Bible. I believe it's Mr. Spurgeon who said that the best way to ascertain whether a stick was crooked was to lay it down on the ground or the floor and then take a perfectly straight stick and lay it beside the other. And the straight stick

will reveal the crookedness of the other.

Tonight I hope to say four things about the God of the Bible. When laid down beside the popular God of today, reveal the crookedness of the popular God of that monster called Christendom, that has more church members and more crime than any nation on the topside of God's earth. The straight stick is this God that the Lord Jesus Christ speaks of in John chapter 17.

As he is praying to the Father in verse 2, he's thanking the Father and he says, "...as thou hast given him," referring to himself, authority over all flesh, "...that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." And then the Lord Jesus Christ tells us what life eternal is. And here in this context, he's not talking about how long it lasts, but what it is while it lasts. This is life eternal.

"...that they might know thee, might know thee, might know thee." It's a solemn thing that all through the Old Testament, I'm sure I'm right on this, all through the Old Testament, the word know and knowledge and so forth is used in this context as one of obedience. You know as much truth as you are practicing. You're under its rule.

And to know God, to come under his rule and experience his rule in your own life. Another has put it, and I think rightly in these words, that the only way Christ can be known is in discipleship. For we need in these days especially to get back to those phrases that occur so frequently in the book of Acts, that Christianity in those days was called away.

It was not disassociated from a way of life. It was not some pie-in-the-sky thing walking around in the sky, but it was practical. And men when they became Christians were positionized into a certain way, and the people who made fun of the things of Christ called the people the people of the way, the people of the way.

And the Lord Jesus here in our text says this is life eternal. It comes from the hand of the exalted Lord. All life we are told by him is in him, and he gives life.

And he gives eternal life. And eternal life is to know thee, the only true God. To know by experience, to by discipleship, by obedience if you please, this is life eternal.

To know thee, the only true God. The only true God. The only true God.

That's the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. If we turn to the book of Romans chapter 1, we're introduced to the world of the Apostle Paul's days. And you'd think you're reading the front page of your daily newspaper once again to read the first chapter of the book of Romans.

In this sense it seems like history is repeating itself, and that we can pick up the book of Romans which describes the character of people and the condition of the world when Paul wrote and looked like he just penned it day before yesterday. And it's front page news and it's hot off the wire. And in this chapter the Apostle Paul speaks of man creating fashion in his own God.

And we'll begin reading with the 16th verse. For I'm not ashamed of the gospel of the Christ. And the reason I'm not ashamed of it, I'm not confused about it, it is, it is the power of God and the salvation to everyone that believes it, to the Jew first and also to the Greek, for therein this gospel is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith.

And while we're not teaching the study course tonight, it's well for us to pause a moment and remember that the righteousness of God is not so much an attribute of God, but the righteousness of God is the Lord Jesus Christ. And he it is who's revealed in the gospel. For the gospel is Christ and Christ is the gospel.

And they cannot be separated. And the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel. Christ is made real to men and women by the Holy Ghost in the old, old story from faith to faith as it is written that just shall live by faith.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold down, is the rendering there, they are active about it, they're not passive, they hold it down, they suppress the truth in unrighteousness. They hold down truth so they can be comfortable in their unrighteous, ungodly way of living. And they do that because that which may be known of God is manifest into them.

And they've got to have relief. Men are not going to split hell wide open because they're a bunch of dumbbells and ignoramuses. Unbelief isn't the absence of faith.

Unbelief isn't passive, it's active. Unbelief is the willful rejection of truth. And certainly we are facing that today.

Men and women who have been brought face to face with truth and they had to do something about it so they got them a sledgehammer and pounced it back into the earth. Lest their way of licentious living should have to go by way of the board. It is one of the most startling things that I've ever faced as a preacher.

I hope you'll not get shocked about it. That the fastest growing sin in America tonight is homosexuality. Did you know that one out of every ten people living in New York City is a male or a female homosexual? There are over 70,000 homosexual, male or female prostitutes walking the streets of New York City.

Are you aware of the fact, and I do not chase jackrabbits much but this is so solemn I mention it. Are you aware of the fact that the fashion industry is now controlled lock, stock and barrel by homosexuals? Are you aware of the fact, and I can name some but I won't lest I'd have to go to court to prove it that many of the more popular television programs no one can even work as a stagehand on those programs that isn't either a male or a female homosexual. We're at sodomy now.

We're down to sodomy and that's as low as you can go. That's as low as you can go. I wonder how we could stand on the street corners or get on television or somewhere and without doing harm I wish we'd wave the red flag to the womanhood of America and it breaks my heart that it's invaded church life now.

Did you know there have been marriages performed by so-called Christian ministers in the United States marrying males to males and females to females? Did you know the reason for the sloppy dress of womankind now? There is a desperate plot hatched out of hell to destroy the race by ruining the attractiveness of the female sex. Oh, I know we'll be thought crab apples but it's not merely that people have gone so bad in our day it's the fact that the times have come upon us of active suppression of the truth of righteousness and from every hand the very demons out of hell are controlling this world. I know it's a trite scene in the preacher's music there never was such a day but under God there never was such a day and the end of the ages apparently has come upon us.

Oh, when we know and I said all that to say that men who feel what I'm talking about now go so far as to say there is no salvation nor cure for people who've gone that far and when I tell you this I'm using the thought and the labor and the findings of men who deal with it and they tell me that the majority of the sodomites of today were raised in Christian atmosphere and were brought face to face with truth and they had to do something with it so they pressed it down held it down suppressed it and finally like a fullback plowed through the truth to get them a God with whom they could be comfortable in their sin and that's what the rest of the chapter talks about because that which may be known of God is manifest in them for God has showed it unto them for the invisible things of him from

the creation of the world are clearly seen being understood by the things that are made even his eternal power and Godhead so that they are without fix one of the paradoxes of the Bible that no man can explain is this if anybody gets saved it'll be God's fault if anybody's sent to hell it'll be his fault men are utterly without excuse all men are without excuse there has never lived a human being who did not finally like a bulldog deliberately pressed down what he knew about God and God's truth so that he could continue to be comfortable in his lawless life you'll never meet a man who has excuse all are without excuse why are they without excuse? well the next verse tells us because that when they knew God they glorified him not as God neither were thankful but became vain in their

imaginings and therefore their foolish heart was professing themselves to be wise they became fools and became such such fools as the next verses describe they were such fools that they changed the glory of the uncorruptible God they got their own little pocket knife and they whittled him out of God like the corruptible man but he is a little too holy and so they threw him aside and got their borrowed knife and whittled him of God like in the birds that's a little too tight so they got their knives and they whittled them God's like four-footed beasts and they wound up creating the gods after the image of creeping things wherefore God pushed them no no wherefore God took his hand off wherefore God who loves people more than you do wherefore God who desires the salvation of men more than

you do wherefore God also gave them up the deepening echo in the remaining part of this chapter God gave them up God gave them up that's courage when God throws up his hand I shall never get over many many years ago I went to the Bowery Mission in New York City it is at the tail end almost it is still a terrible depression and I preached the week in the Bowery Mission 2nd Avenue and the Bowery and those streets as near hell as I've ever been not safe for a woman to walk those streets in the daytime much less night and it's not safe for a man to walk them at night I spent the night with the superintendent some of them going around wee hours of the morning digging out drunks that had got them some smoke they could buy a half a pint for a dime and it put them out and they'd get a newspaper

put over their head and hunt them near a crack where they could lie down and snow would cover them up and people would go all over that section of New York City in the dead winter hours shovel them up with these dead that were taken to the morgue if they wanted to be taken to the mission out of uncoined I saw sin I'll never forget the first night I preached and the superintendent I went to school and then we were buddies and he said one hour off you bring a good gospel message tonight pour your heart out to these men and when you finish you turn the service over to me but I said Al that was his giving me maybe the Lord want me to invite them to repent oh he said you mustn't do that and I said what do you mean you going to martyr this on the honor he said when you get through preaching you

turn it over to me and I argued with him a little bit and he said now I know what I'm doing he said every one of those 800 men only didn't have more than 800 that's all he could pack and jam in there and they

preached to him before they fed him combed the lice out of him gave him a place to sleep and they were ex-doctors and ex-preachers and ex-bankers and ex-everything and the heart of the oppression comes bow, that's about as far as you can get on the road to hell in this country and he said every one of those 800 men won't be saved every last one of them maybe they don't understand what salvation means but they sure wish they weren't in the mess they're in and he said if you give what we know is a public invitation they'd kill each other to see who'd get out of there the quickest and

he said they'll do anything on God's earth you ask them to do you've ever preached to the negroes of the south I've preached to them any time they'll do anything on earth you ask them to do and don't mean a thing they keep right on the way they've been living and he said now and if they came down there you ask them you want them to save, yes sir ask them if they'll pray, they'll pray ask them if they'll receive the Lord, yes sir they'll do anything you ask them to do he said when they get through the service if you give one of them a dime he'd kill somebody to get out of there and go buy that drink that puts them out so they forget the hell they're in for a little while and then he said to me and you preacher brethren will understand what I'm saying he said I wish every preacher in the

United States would come spend a week or two here on the barrel and see what sin will do it'll bring men down so deep that this great big wheel we hear a lot about is completely sold out and they've got nothing within them to lay hold of I thought about it a lot the Bible talks something about that when a man starts downhill and he reaches the bottom and there he is apparently God's given us his will Go! everything he's got within him that could savingly respond apparently I say apparently because I'm not an authority I'm just hinting at something I've seen well that explains it now God gives people up God gives people up what kind of God do you worship? what kind of God do you worship? it's a solemn thing to remember that whether we like it or not men and women are not nice people if

people were hungry for holiness and searching for God and panting for righteousness and haters of iniquity and lovers of the rule of God that'd be one thing but the scriptures say that's not so sin today is perhaps never before manifested self as self will self love and thus this self will and self love shows up well you can get your hand on it in lawlessness if there's one word that characterizes people today it's a spirit of lawlessness it's breaking out everywhere in church in the hall in the school some of your northern cities the teachers hardly dare show up try to teach the kids will cut them or shoot them or something there and anything on earth that people don't like now they organize a parade to protest it's broken out everywhere and more and more will repeat the fruit of every

man to himself and the devil take the hindmost this is the lawlessness the lawlessness will not allow the policemen or God to interfere with our vaunted freedom and sure enough it's the old self will and the self love that's got the mayors and the presidents and everybody else in America cause one leading preacher of the day to predict that within five years in every village much less city we'll have lawless riots that'll make the Watts community in Los Angeles look like a Sunday school pitch I talked the other day with some people right in the middle of that thing out in Los Angeles oh, this lawlessness what is it? it's the self love and self will of man breaking loose and becoming man and lawlessness but go a deeper word than that we're not dealing with nice people we're dealing with

people of whom the scriptures say the hearts are seats of hostility to God years since I saw that verse Romans 8 and 7 I saw for what it meant and I'm still not able to understand it it's too tremendous for me it says in Romans chapter 8 verse 7 the carnal mind is enmity it doesn't say it's at enmity it is enmity and the deeper word I think that renders the original the carnal mind is hostility I have wanted one time before the

Lord comes or I die whichever it is here we are I'd love to preach one sermon and have enough of the anointing of the Holy Ghost to open that awful truth this mind and the mind in the New Testament the whole cute match it means that the thing that makes Ralph Barnard take apart from Christ is itself hostility and the thing that rouses the enmity of the hostility is

the law of almighty God our own nature is a seed it's a hotbed of hostility to God and the thing that arouses my enmity and hostility is the law of God it's not subject the verse continues to the law of God neither can what's the matter with man that they do a lot of things that's bad enough that they shake their fist at God that's bad enough that they trample every one of his commandments in the world under their penis that they blow the smoke of their unbelief in the holy nostrils of Jesus Christ that they do death spit to the Holy Ghost every day of the life that's bad enough we still haven't got to the depth of it they are themselves seeds of hostility to God on the throne and where I go there's one thing I hear there may be some difference in communities and some in peoples I do not

know but everywhere in America you can put your feet on solid ground and you talk to God's people and God's preachers you hear one thing Brother Barnard there's not much conviction of sin in our community no and that makes me want to go to the mourners bench because there hadn't been much honest to God opening of the real seed of the trouble and I can preach on chewing tobacco and a man will say well I guess that's pretty bad but I don't think it's any worse than doing something else down south if you preach on it they'll say well I don't think that's half as bad as pulling off all your clothes and going in with Nick bathing like you Yankees do or I can preach on something else and they will say I don't believe that's any worse than something else and there's no conviction but if somehow

another God Almighty would give an outpouring to His preachers one more time and with the anointing of the Holy Ghost we could take the surgeon knife of the truth of God and open up the vile hearts of men and let the snakes of hatred against holiness come out maybe somebody would say depart from me for I'm a sinful man nearly everything people can compare it now but the scriptures say that inside a hotbed of enmity and hostility to Almighty God as the lawgiver and the moral ruler of this universe men aren't just some people that do some bad things men are people who are themselves to the rule of God if we want to hear men screaming is there any hope for such a vile wretch as I am once again in America maybe we're going to have to throw alibis away and just camp right here a little bit oh

the hostility against the holiness of God is rampant today and by God's help I covet for myself and every preacher in America who stands to speak to and eternity bound men and women to roll up our sleeves and spit on our hands and seek to tell men the truth tell it in love but hey! the trouble with men and women is not what they do the trouble with men and women is what they are we'll never seek conviction much again we'll spend less time cutting sprouts and just keep shooting at the vile and hostile and inimical hearts and minds men and women who are sad in their hostility to the God of the Bible the God of the Bible is a holy God the popular God does not even frown on the frivolity of present day so called churchanity I am greatly alarmed I've studied history a little bit and I've read

the Bible a little to me the most alarming thing about America tonight is what's happening to the Lord today I'm an old fogey I believe the next step after doing away with God's holy day will be to do away with God I believe that with all my heart I'm too far removed from the old Puritans we could do with a little of their theology and a few of their convictions but I'm sent out too much from them to be, I guess, a Puritan oh God, I wish we could have a wave of convictions sweep over America that this is the Lord's day I think it is crystal clear that the next step after doing away with the Lord's day is to do away with God you're familiar

with the fact that the officials of France by picture and symbol took God to the borders of France and told Him never to come back and apparently He

hasn't you can go through city after city and village after village and village after village and city after city in France not any kind of a church service not any kind Catholic, Baptist name it, not any kind the next step for America after desecrating and profaning and snubbing God about this one day will be to leave God outside of our borders and forbid Him to come back I do not know your theology but I cannot accept all of this arguing about the Sabbath and we've done away with it now I understand those things but there's a principle as deep as the character of God needs to be resounded today about the first day of the week this is the Lord's day let us be glad Holy, Holy, Holy my old Hebrew profession the seminary used to write all my papers maybe in 30 years and now you'll be a

preacher boy keep on this Reformation audio track is a production of Stillwater's Revival Books SWRB makes thousands of classic Reformation resources available free and for sale in audio, video, and printed formats our many free resources as well as our complete mail order catalog contain thousands of classic and contemporary Puritan and Reformed books and videos at great discounts is on the web at www.swrb.com we can also be reached by email at swrb@swrb.com by phone at 780-450-3730 by fax at 780-468-1096 or by mail at 4710-37A Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6L 3T5 you may also request a free printed catalog and remember that John Calvin in defending the Reformation's regulative principle of worship or what is sometimes called the scriptural law of worship commenting on the words of God

which I commanded them not neither came into my heart from his commentary on Jeremiah 731 writes God here cuts off from men every occasion for making evasions since he condemns by this one phrase I have not commanded them whatever the Jews devised there is then no other argument needed to condemn superstitions than that they are not commanded by God for when men allow themselves to worship God according to their own fancies and attend not to his commands they pervert true religion and if this principle was adopted by the papists all those fictitious modes of worship in which they absurdly exercise themselves would fall to the ground it is indeed a horrible thing for the papists to seek to discharge their duties towards God by performing their own superstitions there is an immense number

of them as it is well known and as it manifestly appears were they to admit this principle that we cannot rightly worship God except by obeying his word they would be delivered from their deep abyss of error the prophet's words then are very important when he says that God had commanded no such thing and that it never came to his mind as though he had said that men assume too much wisdom when they devise what he never required nay, what he never knew

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