

Three Unscriptural Expectations

by Rolfe Barnard

The sermon challenges the audience to re-examine three unscriptural expectations that have led to a dead and lifeless Christianity.

Duration: 1:03:56

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Evangelism"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the urgency of the current time and the need to lose ourselves in order to find ourselves. He references the story of David and Goliath, encouraging listeners to tackle the obstacles that hinder the plan of God. The preacher urges believers to stand up against those who mock God and to take action. He uses the story of a man in hell who only had one good deed to his name, giving a carrot to a donkey, to illustrate the futility of holding onto selfish desires. The sermon concludes with a call to preach the gospel to sinners and a reminder that true Christianity requires speaking the truth in love.

Transcript

If you'd like to follow in the word, we'll open the Bible to the twelfth chapter of John, John's gospel at chapter twelve. And I begin reading at verse twelve of John's gospel, chapter twelve. On the next day, much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palms, trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna, blessed is the King of Israel, that cometh in the name of the Lord.

And Jesus, when he found the young ass sat there on, as it is written, fear not, daughter of Zion, and behold thy king cometh, sitting on an ass's coat. These things understood not his disciples at the first. But when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they done these things unto him.

And then skipping to verse twenty, there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast. The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew, and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.

And Jesus answered them, saying, Thou art come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it.

He that hateth his life in this age of this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me. Where I am, there also shall my servant be.

If any man serve me, him will my father honor. I wish to speak tonight on three unscriptural expectations, and I do not know whether I'm being honest with the congregation or not, as what I wish to talk about comes so close to where I live. What we've been hearing in this conference causes us to rejoice, thank God, and take courage.

Surely no people ever live in an hour that challenges us to find out what it means to serve God and our own generation. I used to talk about what Calvin did, but he served God and his generation. God gathered him to sleep with his fathers.

He's not coming back. I used to talk about the awakening under Jonathan Edwards, and we thank God for these trophies of God's grace that have given us some guidelines to try to walk by in our day. But I'm haunted by a statement somebody made that fits us today as public preachers and as individual members of the Lord's body.

I think I've quoted it to this congregation, and I'll quote it again tonight. The centuries have made us imitators instead of prophets. The answer is not to quote what some man who got mightily used some time ago is.

The answer is for us to speak what God's saying to us today, if we can hear his voice. Today, if you will, if you haven't already arrived and are defending a position that you've already arrived at and thus you're dead, today, if you will, hear my voice. What's God got to say to us today? We preachers are in a bad way.

The preacher no longer disturbs anybody. I do not know of a voice in America, maybe you do, that's disturbing anybody much. I know many voices of conformity join up with us.

We're all haunted by the fact that we're seeking to preach in our day, and however we're tempted, as I know under God I am, to conform, to join up with some group, to have somebody pat me on the back and say, we'll stay with you, we'll open doors for you, we'll swing our influence behind you, provided you won't speak to anybody in any other group or have any fellowship with them. I'm haunted by the fact that we're preaching to a generation that in all honesty has been led to look for certain things, and they've found rest in their look, and they are not scriptural, and they can at best leave people with a hollow echo instead of a rock-like faith. You know, nobody would think of trying to silence any of us preachers tonight, since we're speaking to the wind, and our voices feed her away.

No one would think of removing the preacher's sword, for in our hands the sword of the Holy Ghost has become a toy to entertain this generation on its road to hell. And our preaching does not even frighten children. Someone says that a problem of the ministry of God's Church today is a problem of semantics.

Now, I use that word to show you I've been screwed. It means the meaning of words. Words have lost their meaning.

Words have lost their vitality. We are living in a generation that tactics and unfelt proves how guilty we are. Of all the people on the earth, we make much of the sovereign grace of God.

I do not know that we need to put the adjective there. There ain't any other kind. Grace in the hands of a sovereign, we make much of that, sir.

By what manner of men we would be if it ever little of the meaning of it leaked in in our hearts. What it means to be foolish is the God of all grace. With my great swelling words, without knowing what to mean, we remind ourselves of the water fountain out in the park.

The water is always bubbling out. Nobody ever gets a taste of it. We're like beggars debating on the merits of a pocketbook when we haven't got a dime to put in it.

The mutilation of great words and the mutilation of great truth that we've seen set and vitiated as to their meaning. That's the generation we live in. I have people tell me, and I preach, I know I'm lost.

But if a man ever really believed he had lost, he'd break up foundations of hell screaming for help. Praise God, I'm saved! Oh, my. If somebody could start a rescue mission for great words until one sundine, it could dawn on us the glory of that word.

Bishop Ryle, you read his book on holiness and so forth, if you haven't, you must, spoke prophetically many years since when he said, there's nothing that will dampen the ardor of the Christian crusade more than engaging in unscriptural expectations. I wish, use that as a springboard to bring before you three expectations upon which Christendom, Christianity as we know it, has been built in our day. Each of them without scriptural warrant, the three of them combined to have him this up to the awful deadness of the hour.

The three of them taken together, I think, ought to challenge us as the people of God to spit on our hands, roll up our sleeves, cry to God day and night to a broken heart, that we might speak the truth in love and do what has to be done. If we speak from God today, rip in two with broken hearts, with a sense of urgency, and tear down so-called Christianity, religion if you please. For as we heard this morning, we are trying to preach a gospel to sinners, and there ain't enough.

That French evangelist who said, came over here from Paris to Chicago, and he stood up to speak the first night, and he said, Oh, if in all the city of Chicago I could find a sinner, I've got such good news for a sinner. And this whole religious situation, as I'm able to see it, this would make it so. It was built on three false expectations, and we got there by listening to what we've heard.

My heart unto God. Sometimes I'd weep in my heart for this generation, how it's been sinned again. I pass church buildings now, and I ought to rejoice.

Instead of all those shutters, I picture the pastor standing guard on the outside, seeing to it that the truth of God shall not be brought there. And I don't want to become an old fogey or bitter. I'm a hard shell, therefore I'm hoping tomorrow God's love will split the skies with hellfire and damnation, and the Holy Ghost revival will break out.

I remember dear old Brother Mews used to say to me, Brother Barney, the way you go, you get in a fight. And he'd say sometimes I think I'll just throw truth out the window and get me an outline, tell three stories, and call morning and go home. That way I wouldn't get in any trouble.

And I don't want to speak about some expectations people have, and they're pretty well satisfied in them. They've been taught, knowingly or not, deliberately or not, to build all their hope in them. And I know a little about what I'm talking about, for thirty of my thirty-seven years of the ministry, I've been trying to be what they call a hitchhiker evangelist, subject to the call of pastors and the goodwill of men.

Hundreds of times in my ministry wondering whether I'll ever get to preach again or not, walking the floor at night, my mistakes crawling over one another's backs, making up my mind that I'm going to conform, maybe do a little good without having so much hail and so much controversy. I'm preaching to a generation and you are too, and witnessing to a generation that's already been preached to and already been witnessed to. Somebody got that first, and they have peace.

Why not? Somebody who ran when he wasn't sent, bound up their wounds too quickly, spoke peace where there was no peace. And so now people have not only forsaken God, but they've dug their own wells, and they're drinking and saying it tastes mighty good. Somebody says, you know the Philistines came and put poison in the wells of these religious people, and there's just two things you can do when you've got a poisoned well.

You can clean it out, or you can dig another one. Either job calls for sweat, which direction the Sovereign Spirit's going to lead in your day and mine, I'm not smart enough to know. God's going to have to raise up people and preachers, standing up to let them repeat with the preacher.

Grab teeth, spit out our hands, beg God for another chance, claim the ministry he's put upon us with apologizing, and start cleaning out the wells from which people are drinking now. If that don't work, then God's going to have to dig some new ones. What are these expectations? I suggest this evening that the whole so-called Christian church, the whole so-called Christian movement, has been prostrate, because we've been taught to expect peace without victory.

And victory, the only place there's ever been victory was at St. Douglas's Hill. Peace apart from the blood of the cross. Peace without having entered into that which Jesus accomplished.

Peace. It is General MacArthur who's going to phrase in war, there's no substitute for victory. And in the realm of spiritual warfare, there's no substitute for victory.

And any man whose peace is not built on that which was wrought out in the agony of God's Son's life laid down, is under the condemnation of God, and is certain to experience the time when a man's peace will leave him naked up Salt Creek without a paddle. Too late, too late about all there is to so-called Christianity today, is efforts to affect the peace apart from the victory of the cross. We seek the way of least resistance.

God's professing people are working their fool selves to death, supporting nice programs, everlasting in one of them, trying to bypass the fact that apart from the blood of Christ, there can be no peace. Abraham's children, who were alive on the earth when the Lord was here in the day of his flesh, fell into the trap of not reading history rightly. They come crying Hosanna to the King.

King, cometh. Blessed. Hosanna.

They come, dressed in their crowns. They come, but when the word, we would say, Jesus, is expressed, and the Lord seems to abruptly turn to another subject, but he speaks to the subject, Now is the Son of God glorified, except the grain of corn died? That wasn't the answer they was looking for. Abraham's children, who cried Hosanna and so forth, they read the eternal purposes of God wrong.

Let me see if I can illustrate what I'm talking about. Take the case of Saul, the case of David, all who in Old Testament times, opponents of the God of all purpose, dared to stand in God's path, bestride God's people, shake their fists at God, and stop the program of the God of all purpose. Saul would have been a

wonderful preacher and church member today, for Saul was dedicated to the proposition that human nature can be improved.

That's what's at the heart of democracy, not knowing that in days when the splendor of God's self is not recognized, democracy becomes terribly dangerous. All the movements of this hour have for their purpose the achieving of peace, but they're going to achieve it by subscribing to the doctrine of the improbability of human nature, instead of facing the fact that on the cross, God spoke the doom of human nature and brought it all into judgment. Anybody that's investing in the securities on the market of the goodness or the improbability of human nature, better get out of the market.

It's going down, and your day and mine, quote, are all ill-popping from these nice people, who'd be nicer if we just could improve them a little bit. And so Saul, instead of killing all of the flock, all of the sheep, and all of the cattle, and so forth, he said, now God's program is a little too drastic, and he saved them. And the Malachites stood for the flesh, the flesh, your flesh, your nice little dignified flesh, your little so-called sanctified flesh.

It still stinks. There's still no hope for it. Not a bit on God's earth.

It must be brought to the face of judgment. God never had death, but his flesh, and all little kind of flesh is doomed. It's doomed.

That's the message of the cross. But one day a fellow by the name of Goliath, bless God, he's over nine feet tall, and he had a suit of fighting armor that wouldn't quit. And he dared to stand astride the purpose of a holy God.

And Saul was the king of Israel, and Jonathan his son. And they were in the tent, scared half out of their wits. And a little boy by the name of David.

Saul was the people's choice, and David was God's anointed. He told his sheep goodbye one day, and came up, and his big brothers bawled him out and said, what do you leave the sheep for? What are you doing here? And David said, what have I done now? Is there not a cause? Is there not a cause? Isn't there something to lose oneself in? Isn't there something now that'll make life worth living? There's the enemy. By God, I've wanted God to build a fire under us so-called believers in God's grace, and give us a cause that's bigger than ourselves, that we can't rest until we have a hearing and speak with authority.

And the battlements of hell begin to tremble, and I'm so tired of our little truth being off in a little peckerwood corner where nobody knows about it. Is there not a cause? I think the day will come when us grace people will feel the need of hanging together, or we're going to all hang separately. Oh, my soul, is there not a cause? There's this big Goliath that's raising old Billy Hill and Jonathan and Saul sitting over there in the tent, about to scare the hell out of their boots.

Whoa! We get out there, we'll either get shot, either get shot. Yeah, little old David comes up and says, is there not a cause? I said, I'll tackle him. I'll tackle him.

Bless God. And you know the story. He did tackle him.

He said, what's all this about? What's involved in it? I don't know what's involved in it. If somebody--you better listen to me--if somebody living in that day don't quit quoting from John Calvin and getting in the swims and tackle that Goliath, that'll stop the plan of God. It'll stop, brother.

If somebody in our day don't say, bless God, I'm sick and tired of that big old guy out there making fun of my God, I'm going to do something about it. Do something about it. And you know the story.

He marches up the big old Goliath. He's all sweating and everybody's scared to death. He's that little old slingshot.

Glory to taking about 500 years to do chemistry or whatever it is to fix some pebbles there. Just exactly right. And he picked them.

And there wasn't but one place to shoot. Old Saul was perfectly protected except for one little place. Right dead center.

Little David went up and that old guy said, well, am I a dog? What you doing around here, boy? Am I a dog? But old David, you know, he remembered when the Philistines had taken the ark. But in that dome of Shire, the great God's dagger had fallen and broken his arms and his neck. And old David said, I know about your little God.

Said, I caught in the name. Those Hebrew words, I can't pronounce them. They mean in the Greek.

I caught in the name of the enough, the adequate God. He's bigger than you are any day. And he aimed and he got him dead center.

Bless God. Old David said, I ain't scared of you. I don't represent myself.

I'm in a coat. And I'm speaking for the adequate God. He said, I've had a little experience.

Bigger they are, the harder they fall. Said, you know, I've tended my father's sheep. I've had a few battles with the bears and the lions.

Sometimes the devil persecutes you. He hasn't been doing much of that lately. And then again, like a bear, the devil will hug you today.

Bless your heart, he's been doing a lot of hugging nowadays. Flatter you today. Somebody wrote a little quip.

Alja went a-walking. Alja met a bear. The bear was bulging.

The bulge was Alja. And the old bear is bulging today. And the bulge has got people.

Ain't that hopeless today? David said, I'm in the name. God help us. Is there not a cause? He cut that old boy's head off, took it down there to the tent where Jonathan and Saul were.

Shoot, they couldn't fight him. They were just too scared. They didn't have God's armor.

Brothers, they didn't have what it takes. My soul, I know communism raging. I know materialism has shown up the difference between claiming to believe in Christ and being joined to him.

I know the Goliaths don't ever have it in the QN generation to pieces. But the one thing we must be concerned with and about is to be the people in God's power speaking in his name from hill to high water. Praise the Lord.

Praise the Lord. Years ago in the park, I can still hear pastors in this town screaming on Sunday morning, Ralph Barnard's a liar. You can't have Jesus as Savior without having him as Lord.

That's one time I was right. Oh my soul, the whole religious act that we got to broken hearts under. God, this ain't no time to be defending positions.

This the time to be turning the ground under. This false stuff that people have been taught. They swallowed hook, line, and sinker and they're going to wake up in hell without ever being warned.

That they built on a foundation of sinking sand. A man can't be in the kingdom of God apart from the King being in there. Only the Holy Spirit can do that.

I've been reading Johnson Edwards, reading E. W. Johnson's tape letters, and as long as he sends me tape, I'll have something to preach. I'm glad to sit at his feet. I've been trying to preach, get somebody to become a seeker after the Lord.

My God, if only the Holy Spirit can invade my personality and put Jesus Christ in there in the very heart of Ralph Barnard. Well, if we could ever get that over, maybe somebody'd say, I ain't going to trust no act of mine. I'm just going to bow down here and stay.

So help me God, till God Almighty prints a chunk of dynamite in my soul and starts the glory ways to boiling until he's in here. He's in here. What does it mean to be a Christian? To be inhabited, shall I say it? I hope to speak on it tomorrow night.

To be inhabited by God. Isn't that wonderful? It means to have a mind that's God-taught, emotions that are God-saturated, wills that are God-directed. It means to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit's not a substance. He's not a liquid. What does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit? I believe with all my heart it means that we've entered into a loving dependency, a vital relationship with Jesus Christ whereby our lives are filled with him.

For I long to be saved from sin. We heard about this morning, I was preaching time down in Virginia not long ago and came home one night and a young pastor said, well Barney, we never heard about the Lordship of Christ. Is he your Lord? What kind of answer can I give? Yes, he's my Lord.

My response to him, I must brag about. Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole. I don't perform marriage ceremonies often now, but you pastors, very seldom does a young man or woman come, you tired enough, she goes out one door and gets in the car and goes down that way and he gets in the car and goes down that way.

God help us. That's what we're called Christian today. Come and take Jesus.

We go that way. He goes that way. No, no.

Got to be a marriage performed. Reality. There can be no manifestation of the kingdom of God without the king inside.

God speed the day when he'll put on the armor and crush rebellion in his church. But I speak briefly now of the third expectation upon which so-called Christianity has been built. Peace without the blood of the cross being applied.

Peace without entering into the victory. Peace for standing the far off and believing some facts about it. Kingdom, being in the kingdom of God without the king inside.

No conscience about the claims of Christ Lordship. Praising about being saved by grace and bringing his grace unto disgrace. I speak in the last place about this generation's been led to expect they can serve God without learning the meaning of sacrifice.

I do not know, but I ought to quit preaching and get on the mourner's bench. How in the name of God can we learn that in our day? We live like kings, the poorest of us. My Lord said, except the grain of corn die.

That's the last day. Ain't no way for Ralph Garner to live in his day. To live one day outside the service of the most high king would be terrible.

It's in the will of God's eyes I can get in on this. Not apart from this. Christ could have been our great example without dying.

But he couldn't have reproduced himself without dying. Neither can you. God help us.

I'm under conviction here. How on earth can you support a family on present day skills now, keep them out of the poorhouse and spend your time trying to tear down this stuff in all of our lives that's turned us into Sunday morning worshipers instead of men and women who've learned that the only way to serve God is to declare and be so I'm a dead man. I'm a dead man.

I don't know nothing about my subject now. Knows God don't bring something explode this nice little going to church business leaving us concerned with ourselves. Oh God bless me and my wife's son John and his wife, us four and no more.

Hallelujah I'm saved. Where has all the milk of human concern gone? My God when did your heart and mine get as hard as it is now? Who gave us the right to think we can serve him who in order to serve died apart death house now. You know my Lord when he was here was absolutely totally unrelentingly dependent on the father.

He couldn't speak any word unless the father gave him some. Couldn't do a thing went down and prayed. The emphasis in the new testament is that God raised him.

When Christ I said humbly hit bottom the power of God was released. I'm a dead man. My total dependence is upon God.

If I want to save my life I must find some way to lose it. If I don't want to get up in the morning, eat breakfast, go to work, come home, eat supper, look at television, go to bed and go to hell. I must lose my life.

Is there not a cause to take any action apart from the positive absolute attitude of total dependence on almighty God is SI in sin. Never shall there or can there be any true service unless God works in us. There is where this generation has rejected the gospel.

I wonder if we have stories told of how Saul deeply resented the victory David achieved and thus what he had a right to expect. In the 18th chapter 1 Samuel it's told that the soul of Jonathan was met to David. One man says nobody on earth gonna get inside of my personality and rule.

I don't want anybody to be king in my kingdom. I'll chart my own course. I'll live my own life.

But the story that's told about Jonathan he came down and stripped himself, laid everything at the feet of David. He is a prince but he took off his robe, laid it at David's feet, took off his garments. He took off his sword, his only means of defense, laid it at the feet of David.

He took his bow, his influence, laid it at the feet of Jesus. He took his diary, pocketbook where he carried his valuables, laid them at the feet of David. He took himself, prostrated himself there.

There can be no service without the giving of self. The rules of the kingdom are scrap your plans, come under authority to Christ and then and then only will we have authority. You have just as much authority in your witnessing I have it in my preaching and that ought to bring us to the mourner's bench as we're under the authority of Jesus Christ.

Does anything God knows preachers and people ought to be praying for now is to tell the apostle Paul to move over. And every time you see a Christian say you got a little time will you pray for me that God would grant unto me utterance that I might with boldness declare the mystery of the gospel. Utterance, oh God give us utterance.

Well that may mean authority. Oh God wrestle us down till we can't sleep so good at night unless we have utterance. Utterance.

It is said that one of the great contributions John Knox made to the reformation in Scotland came to that what is St. Giles I think it is cathedral five thousand people packed in waited for an hour the preacher never came out to the pulpit stand finally did when he came he stood and said we'll stand receive the benediction I have no utterance he didn't have anything from God wasn't any use for him to talk oh God nobody but God can cut the head off of the communist conspiracy but ladies and gentlemen in every generation up to now God found somebody that spoke for him with authority they usually crucify him and build a monument to him a hundred years later God give us to know before we die all of us put together the joy of sacrifice that we know nothing about the stories told in our clothes of a man died and went to hell and in hell he was very uncomfortable and he cried out somebody get me out I want out and as the story goes God said by your honor what good thing did you do for somebody else the man racked his memory and he said oh yes one time I gave a carrot to a donkey that to that evidence of the nobility of human nature God has said to said all right because you gave a carrot to a donkey I'm going to lower a carrot on a rope carrot on a rope down where you are and we're going to lift it up so the carrot was lifted down into hell and the man took hold of it but a lot of other people as many as could they were dissatisfied and uncomfortable too and when they saw this way of escape they tried to hang on to the carrot too and as it started to be dragged up the man who first made the request began to shout get off this is my carrot and in the struggle to hold on to his carrot his grip was loosened and he fell back into hell where he belonged ladies and gentlemen there's ain't no time to hold on to your carrot this is the time this is the time to lose ourselves that we may find ourselves to take the five temples of little David and serve our generation in our time trust God I can hear my savior calling me will you stand and sing it I can hear my savior calling me me oh oh where he leads oh

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