

# Rebellion Reconciliation and Regeneration

by Sean Reece

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*The sermon emphasizes the necessity of recognizing our rebellion against God and the incredible grace offered through the saving work of Jesus Christ for reconciliation.*

**Duration:** 40:57

**Scripture:** John 3:1-8, John 19

**Topics:** "Rebellion Against God", "Gospel Reconciliation"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher reflects on the rejection of Jesus by the crowd in John 19 and ponders how a holy God should respond to such rebellion. He expresses amazement that the human race still exists, given the sinful nature of the human heart. The preacher highlights how people often choose to serve anything but God, even though it ultimately destroys their lives. Despite his passion for missions, the preacher focuses on the saving work of Jesus Christ and the gospel as his favorite subject. He shares how he felt compelled to preach this message and expresses gratitude for the opportunity to do so.

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## Transcript

What a privilege. What an incredible privilege to stand before you tonight and to preach on my favorite subject. Now, those of you who know a little something about why I'm here and knowing my desire to go to Africa, you may expect me to say I'm going to preach on missions.

No, that's my second favorite subject. And if I'm ever allowed up here again after tonight, if I'm ever allowed to do this again, there's a pretty good chance I'll preach on missions. But the passion of my heart that I want to share with you tonight is on the saving work of Jesus Christ, the gospel.

Actually, it's kind of interesting. I've been studying, meditating on these things for several months. And one day, a few weeks ago, I just woke up and these thoughts would not get off of my mind.

I couldn't think of anything else, couldn't focus on anything else. So I came into my heart cry office, sat down and typed out this message. And when I was done, I said, Lord, I've got to preach this.

God, please, it's a fire burning within me. If it would please you, would you just give me a chance to preach? I don't care where, I don't care when, just let me. A little more than a week later, Brother Jeff came by and invited me to preach tonight.

I didn't have to wonder what I was supposed to preach tonight, which is a great relief for a preacher. But even knowing that there's a little bit of sadness tonight, knowing I will not preach the glory of Christ or the horror of our sin as I ought. And so let's pray and ask God's help before we look at our text tonight.

Father, how amazing it is that you would take a nobody and put him behind this pulpit where these precious people hear your word preached so powerfully, so beautifully week after week. And you would let me try to preach the mysteries of your grace. Lord, I can't do it.

It's beyond me. I thank you that the blood of your son already covers my failures. And I thank you that your spirit will somehow use this time tonight to glorify your son and to edify his church.

And Lord, I thank you so much for this gift of this moment to preach. And with trembling hands, I offered to give back to you and I say, Father, glorify yourself. Oh, Lord, I don't want to preach just for this moment.

I want this moment to count for eternity. So I ask, please, would would the gospel preached tonight be the power of God and to salvation for someone here? And God, if I would ask for one soul, could I be so bold as to ask for another or another? Lord, I ask this for the sake of your son and in his name. Amen.

Would you turn with me to John chapter 19 tonight, please? John 19, the first 22 verses, John chapter 19, beginning in verse one. Then Pilate therefore took Jesus and scourged him. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe.

And they began to come up to him and say, Hail King of the Jews, and to give him blows in the face. And Pilate came out again and said to them, Behold, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him. Jesus therefore came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, and Pilate said to them, Behold, the man.

When therefore the chief priest and the officer saw him, they cried out saying, Crucify, crucify. Pilate said to them, Take in yourselves and crucify for I find no guilt in him. The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by that law he ought to die because he made himself out to be the son of God.

When Pilate therefore heard this statement, he was more afraid and he entered into the praetorium again and said to Jesus, Where are you from? But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, You do not speak to me. Do you not know that I have authority to release you and I have authority to crucify you? And Jesus answered, You would have no authority over me unless it had been given you from above.

For this reason, he who delivered me up to you has the greater sin. As a result of this, Pilate made efforts to release him, but the Jews cried out saying, If you release this man, you are no friend of Caesar. Everyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes Caesar.

When Pilate therefore heard these words, he brought Jesus out, sat down on the pavement, seated a place called the pavement on the judgment seat at a place called the pavement. But in Hebrew, now it was the day of preparation for the Passover. It was about the sixth hour, and he said to the Jews, Behold your king, and they therefore cried out away with him, away with him, crucify him.

Pilate said to them, Shall I crucify your king? And the chief priest answered, We have no king but Caesar. So he then delivered him to them to be crucified. They took Jesus, therefore, and he went out bearing his own cross to the place called the place of the skull, which is in Hebrew, Golgotha.

And there they crucified him and with him two other men, one on either side and Jesus in between. And Pilate wrote an inscription also, and he put it on the cross, and it was written, Jesus the Nazarene, the king of the Jews. Therefore, this inscription, many of the Jews read for the place where Jesus was crucified, was near the city, and it was written in Hebrew, Latin and in Greek.

And so the chief priest of the Jews were saying to Pilate, Do not write the king of the Jews, but that he said, I am the king of the Jews. And Pilate answered, What I have written, I have written. Where would you place yourself in this story? Let me broaden that question.

Who do you identify with in this crucifixion story? Some might identify with John as he grieves watching his beloved Messiah killed. Some mothers here may identify with Mary and her heart wrenching agony as her son is unjustly killed. Some of us out of guilt over some recent sin might identify with Peter and his cowardly denial.

Do you know who I identify with? Do you know who you should identify with tonight? I'll tell you where you and I are in this crucifixion story. Right there in the crowd, we are here in the crowd, red in the face, fist clenched, screaming, crucify him, crucify him. Does it offend you that I would put you in the crowd? Screaming to kill the son of God.

Believe me, folks, it's not pleasant for me to see myself in the crowd, but the longer I study scripture and theology, the more I realize where I belong in this story. And until you see yourself in this crowd, until you see your heart full of irrational hate screaming, crucify him, you will never appreciate the death of Christ as you want. John Stott writes in his book, *The Cross of Christ*, before we can begin to see the cross as something done for us, we must see it as something done by us.

Stott does a masterful job of revealing our sin in the actions of every principal player in Christ's death. For example, Judas, ambitious, greedy Judas. And when it became obvious to him, Jesus would not set up his earthly kingdom at that time.

He made the best of a busted plan. He settled for whatever he could get out of the deal. Have we ever tried to use God, played church, done our religious duty, and when God didn't march to our drumbeat, we're out of here.

Or the Jewish leaders, so cold and calculating. I mean, man, they were it. They were the king of their religious mountain until God interfered.

And then they cruelly plotted a perfect man's destruction. Have you had a perfect plan for your life and resent a God who interferes? Have you been the king of your little dream world and you resent a God who would demand your worship and your obedience? Has God disturbed your peace, upset your status quo, crushed your illusion of self-determination or self-righteousness? And have you cruelly plotted to keep him out of your life? Then we have pilot weak, pragmatic pilot who would kill an innocent man to appease the Jews and stay out of trouble with the emperor. And sure, it seems to him there's something special about this Jesus, but everything he's worked so hard for is at stake.

Have you ever felt the uniqueness of Christ and tried to weasel out of a decision about him? Maybe you can just honor him as a great teacher and not worship him as Lord. Maybe you can remain safely uncommitted and let others make a choice. I mean, you don't want to look radical, do you? Just choose what's expedient over what's right.

Can you see it yet? Can you see yourself killing the son of God? We are right here. We are here in Pilate, in Judas, in the Jewish leaders. It's our greed and ambition and betrayal.

It's our pride and rebellion. It's our compromising pragmatism that put him on the cross. But to better understand why our faith belongs in this crowd, we need to look at why the crowd rejected Jesus.

Why did they call for his death? Did you notice John's theme as we read through this text? Let's go back to verse two, and he introduces it immediately. In John 19 too, and the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head and they read him in a purple robe and they began to come up to him and say, Hail King of the Jews and give him blows in the face. So immediately we have a crown.

We have a robe and we have people mocking him. Hail King of the Jews. Then in verse 10, we have a little confrontation on authority.

Pilate therefore said to Jesus, You do not speak to me. Do you not know that I have authority to release you and I have authority to crucify you? And Jesus answered, You would have no authority over me unless it had been given you from above. For this reason, he who delivered me up to you has the greater sin.

The pilot asserts his authority over Jesus and Jesus very quickly informs him who has greater authority in that room. And then verse 12. As a result of this, Pilate made efforts to release him, but the Jews cried out, saying, If you release this man, you are no friend of Caesar.

Everyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes Caesar. So what's the condemning accusation? He claims to be a king. Verse 13.

When Pilate, therefore, heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at the place called the pavement. But in Hebrew, Gabbatha. Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover, about the sixth hour, and he said to the Jews what behold your king.

So we have a crown of thorns, a purple robe, soldiers mocking him as king. Then we have this confrontation over authority. Then we have the accusation of him claiming to be king, and now Pilate mocks the Jews by calling Jesus their king, and then comes their final rejection.

And what is the issue? Verse 15. They therefore cried out away with him away with him, crucify him, and Pilate said to them, Shall I crucify your king? And the chief priest answered, We have no king but Caesar. And finally, Pilate's mocking continues even on the cross.

In verse 19, Pilate wrote an inscription also and put it on the cross, and it was written Jesus the Nazarene, the king of the Jews. Can John make it any clearer why Jesus was crucified from a human perspective? We'll get to the divine perspective in a moment, but the human reason for killing God's son, the human motivation behind the cross was this. We will not have Christ as king.

Crucify him. Why? In Pilate's own words, I find no guilt in him. Why kill him? Think about it.

Why would you not love Jesus? What is there to hate in this man? A man who freely healed the sick, a man who befriended the worst of sinners, a man full of compassion and kindness at every moment. What is there to hate in Jesus? Why would you not love him? A perfect, sinless man. What would he ever do to offend anyone? Well, here's what Jesus did.

He came from heaven to earth as God in a human body. He lived a perfect, sinless life and therefore condemned all the wickedness of our world. He taught God's perfect standard of righteousness without compromise, therefore condemning all the legalistic hypocrisy of religion in that day.

But then he went beyond that. He claimed the power to forgive sins and to judge the souls of all men. He commanded absolute love and loyalty and devotion and worship and obedience.

And that is why our proud, wicked, rebellious, self-centered, self-righteous human race killed him. The sin of Adam was carried through to completion at the cross. I will be my own boss.

I will make my own choices. I will control my own destiny and God will not rule over me. There's an excellent quote.

Unfortunately, I couldn't find it. I searched everywhere. I think it's Spurgeon.

Now, this is a preacher rule, right? When in doubt, you credit Spurgeon. But no, I really think it was him. And the quote was to the effect that men will accept Jesus as this innocent baby in the manger.

They will even accept Jesus as a good man dying on the cross, but they will never accept Jesus as God on the throne. And then he went on to say, if we could, every human heart would storm the gates of heaven, rip God from the throne and kill him. Does talking like that shock some of you? If it does, you've not come to grips with what the Bible says about the human heart.

I could take you to Romans one where Paul calls the lost God haters or Romans five, where Paul says the lost are God's enemies or Romans eight, where he says the lost mind is hostile to God and cannot submit to him. Do you know what? I don't need to go anywhere with this passage in John 19 to prove my point after thousands of years of preparation. Think about the patriarchs, the covenants, the law, the temple, all the prophecies.

And after all that preparation, God finally sends his Messiah who lives a perfect life, works countless miracles, teaches with flawless wisdom and what do they do? Kill him. Why? Because he claimed divine authority over their lives. Look at the insanity of their rejection in verse 14.

Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover, about the sixth hour, and he said to the Jews, behold your king. And they therefore cried out away with him, away with him, crucify him. And Pilate said to them, shall I crucify your king? And the chief priest answered, we have no king but Caesar.

These are the same people. A few chapters earlier in John 8 who boasted, we have never been enslaved by anyone. They hated the rule of Caesar to the point of irrationally denying it.

And yet, when they are faced with the absolute lordship of Jesus, what do they do? They swear loyalty to a pagan king who, by the way, claimed to be a God. Caesar's empire despised the Jews, persecuted them, abused them every chance they got. And what did Jesus do to the Jews? Well, he loved them.

He served them. Sure, he confronted their sin, but only to deliver them from it. And yet they chose Caesar over Christ.

And 40 years later, Caesar leveled their city to the ground. And folks, I get so tired of watching life after life make that same choice. The human heart would rather serve anything but God, anything that doesn't claim absolute lordship over them.

People will serve the ruthless tyrant of drugs or alcohol, and it destroys everything in their life, their family, their finances, their reputation. And yet they'll lie to themselves and others. Well, it doesn't control me.

Well, I can quit anytime I want. And in their heart, they defiantly mutter, At least God doesn't control me. Where people serve the backstabbing seduction of sexual immorality, husbands and wives caught up in these adulterous relationships that absolutely shatter their lives and their families.

Teenagers giving themselves away, feeling cheap and dirty afterwards, and yet all the time, clenching their fist and saying, At least God isn't telling me what to do. At least God isn't ruining my fun. People putting their faith in political systems that repeatedly disappoint them.

Corporations in which they are nothing but a number. And yet they reassure themselves, Well, at least I'm not at the mercy of some sovereign God. It's true, isn't it? That's the human heart.

That's us. We'll serve anything, no matter how disappointing or destructive it is, as long as it's not God over us. We'll deny his existence and we'll ignore him and we'll reject his authority.

And if he invades our delusional world and tries to interfere, we'll kill him. I realize tonight I'm speaking mostly to believers here. But do you realize that apart from the work of God's grace in your heart, that's you.

That's me. Do you see your face in the crowd yet? If you don't, maybe the words of this hymn by Horatius Bonar will help. It was I that shed the sacred blood.

I nailed him to the tree. I crucified the Christ of God. I joined the mockery of all that shouting multitude.

I feel that I am one. And in that den of voices rude, I recognize my own around the cross, the throng I see mocking the sufferers grown, yet still my voice, it seems to be. As if I'm mocked alone.

Do you see it now? Do you see your face in the crowd? Can you pick out your voice calling for his death? Well, if you see your face in the crowd tonight and it grieves you, let me tell you how you can escape the crowd. And if praise God, you know you were once in that crowd, but you can now rejoice you are there no longer. Let me remind you why, as we witness the wicked rebellion of this crowd in John 19, I face a terrifying question.

How should a holy God who is infinitely worthy of worship respond to this rejection? How should a holy God infinitely worthy of obedience respond to this rebellion? When we see the human heart here for what it really is, how can you not be amazed that the human race still exists, that we were allowed to continue one more day? That we saw daylight today, that we smelled and tasted good food, that we enjoyed love and friendship. Are you not amazed that your heart still beats and you draw another breath? And then we read these incredible words in 2nd Corinthians, chapter five, verse 18. Now, all these things are from God who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them.

And he was committed and he has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ as though God were entreating through us. We beg you on behalf of Christ be reconciled to God.

He made him who knew no sin to be sent on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in him. We looked at the human reason for the cross, but now we see there was also a divine purpose in Christ's death. Now, I love the various aspects of the saving work of Jesus Christ.

We were accursed and under wrath. He was our atoning propitiation. We were enslaved to sin and Satan, and he redeemed us.

And here we were alienated and at war with God. And he reconciled us to reconcile is to restore a relationship between two people by removing the source of their conflict. What stood between us and God? What created the conflict? Two things on our part, our rebellion against God on his part, God's holy wrath against that rebellion.

Here's the amazing thing. We had no desire for reconciliation, perfectly content in our sin. So what is God's solution? He will reconcile us anyway.

He will restore the relationship anyway. He will not count our sin against us, but rather make his perfect son to be our sin. And to take our wrath.

So that we could become righteous and enter a relationship with holy God. What wondrous love is this? Oh, my soul. Oh, my soul.

And by the way, I'm all about God's glory and his saving work in my last church that I pastored. It was a standing joke at Wednesday night Bible study. If Brother Sean asked the question, just answer God's glory and it's the right answer.

OK, so I've got that reputation and God does everything for his glory, but he also sent his son to reconcile us in love. Oh, Romans five. Romans chapter five, I just can't go through this message without going here.

Romans five, verse eight. But God demonstrates his own love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us much more than having now been justified by his blood. We shall be saved from the wrath of God through him.

For if while we were enemies. We were reconciled to God through the death of his son, much more having been reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. Love motivated God to undo Adam's sin and restore relationship with us.

Think about it. The mighty king of creation, the ruler of time and matter and eternity, offers a full pardon to us wicked rebels, and he pleads with us. Just lay down your arms.

He could destroy the human race with one breath, with one word. He could end this universe and put us all in eternal torment. And yet he restrains his holy anger.

He delays his judgment. And in verse twenty of Second Corinthians five, it says he pleads with us. He pleads through us for sinners to stop their rebellion and be reconciled.

You know what? God didn't stop there. If he just stopped there, none of us would be here tonight in Christ. You see, the rebels will never surrender.

We will never surrender the hate for God runs too deep in our hearts. The fear of his judgment, the mistrust of him too strong, and so these rebels will fight until they are destroyed unless. Unless God

intervenes again.

You see, he must do more than make pardon available, must do more than make the relationship available. He must change the rebels heart to want that pardon and that relationship. And so how can I go to reconciliation without going to regeneration? So I've got to go to John three for a moment.

John chapter three. Now, obviously, I don't have time for a detailed discussion of this text. But I just want to read through some familiar verses with the perspective of John 19.

The depravity of that crowd, we will not have Christ to rule over us. John three. Verse one.

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to him by night and said to him, Rabbi, we know that you have come from God as a teacher, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him. Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Nicodemus said to him, How can a man be born when he's old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he? Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water in the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, you must be born again for the wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going.

So is everyone who is born of the spirit? Now, go down with me, please, to verse fourteen. As Moses lifted up the servant in the wilderness, even so much the son of man be lifted up that whoever believes may in him have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

For God did not send the son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through him. For he who believes in him is not judged. He who did not does not believe has been judged already because he is not believed in the name of the only begotten son of God, and this is the judgment that the light has come into the world, but men loved the darkness rather than the light for their deeds were evil.

For everyone who does evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the light that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God. Now, you will never fully understand this passage until you realize the kingdom of God is not heaven.

So many of wrongly taught John three, you must be born again in order to go to heaven. No, the kingdom of God is the realm that all believers live in right now. It is recognizing God's rule and submitting to that rule.

Now it is synonymous with John's use of eternal life. It is salvation, a relationship with God now. So notice verse three, Jesus answered and said to him, truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

New Testament scholars Leon Morris and FF Bruce both agree there's not a lot of difference between seeing the kingdom in verse three and entering the kingdom in verse five, but it is significant. Jesus says no one will even see the kingdom. They will not see the value of a relationship with Christ.

They will not see his saving work unless first born again. And then in verse five, Jesus answered, truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water in the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. How do you enter the kingdom? How do you enter salvation, a relationship with God? Scripture is clear.

You must repent and believe. And you can't even enter unless first born of the spirit. And why is that? Verse 19.

The answer is so clear. This is judgment that light has come into the world and men love the darkness rather than the light for their deeds were evil for everyone who does evil, hates the light and does not come to the light list. His deeds should be exposed.

Sinners love their evil deeds. Therefore, they love the darkness of the world. They hate God's light that exposes their evil and Jesus says they do not come to it.

Many Christians this past year were shocked and horrified by the film. The Golden Compass came out around Christmas time. Religious action groups all over the country calling for a boycott of this movie.

Why? Well, because in the third book of this trilogy, the heroes kill God. Why is the church all upset about that? I mean, we know, don't we? No one can ascend into heaven and kill God. So why was the church upset? Doctrinal ignorance? Because we somehow expect lost people to love God.

And it would shock people that somebody thought God ought to be killed. You know what? That movie didn't shock me one bit. In fact, I find the author and the director's honesty kind of refreshing.

They had the guts to say what most preachers in this nation won't say. Man hates God. And can I remind you, when we were given a chance, we did kill him.

Some of you still find it hard to believe sinners hate God. You might think I'm a bit harsh in my view of the human heart. I mean, men don't really hate God.

I'm just exaggerating what the Bible says, kind of like my fellow Southern Baptist pastor back in the Ozarks. And we were debating the doctrines of grace. And by the way, you could debate circles around me, OK? He was a way faster thinker and talker than me.

I am the world's worst debater. I have to mull things over, you know, stew on it for a while. And then an hour later, I'm thinking, oh, man, why didn't I say that? I know some of you can sympathize.

Well, I was trying to show again the need for regeneration first before we can be converted by showing the depravity of man. And when I quoted Ephesians 2, 1 and 5, that we are dead in trespasses and sins, but God made us alive. You know what he said? Said that I was reading too much into Paul's analogy of death, that he was not really saying a lost person is spiritually helpless to respond to God.

I must be missing something, but I thought that's exactly why Paul chose the analogy of death. I mean, if Paul didn't want to teach spiritual helplessness, weren't there other analogies he could have used? It's like Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, said, well, you know, I don't really want to say a lost person is spiritually helpless, but I'll use the word dead anyway. No, Paul used dead because he meant dead, not sick.

And when he says that a lost man is hostile to God and cannot submit to him, he meant it. And when he says in Romans 1 that lost men hate God, he meant it. And when Jesus said that the lost are slaves to sin

and children of the devil and hate the light, he meant it.

So please don't tell me I'm exaggerating scriptural analogies to say that sinful fallen men hate God. I think I'm just saying what Paul and Jesus said. The problem is so many people today don't believe it anymore, and it's hard to believe this truth because deceitful fallen hearts sitting in church pews have gotten very good at hiding their hatred.

I had a deacon who taught Sunday school, worked with the youth, was faithful in church work as faithful as anybody could be. But when I questioned if his daughter, who claimed to be a believer, should have an adulterous relationship and divorce her husband, that deacon transformed into a hateful, belligerent, irrational man verbally did everything he could to destroy me and the church in the community. Why? Because he was an idolater.

One idol was his family. The other idol was this false God that he could please with his spiritual service, a God who tolerated his worldly values, and he could hide that idolatry for a while under the cloak of church work. As long as God didn't interfere, just like those Jewish religious leaders.

But when the holiness of God confronted his idol, all hell broke loose. I just want to remind us tonight we get so used to our lost friends and family members talking nice about God and we forget they're talking about an idol. They're talking about a God of their own invention confront their sin with the holiness of God and watch what happens.

Confront their sovereignty in their own mind with the sovereignty of the true God and watch what happens. I can tell you what will happen. John 19:15 away with him away with him crucify him.

Shall I crucify your king? We have no king, but Caesar. And yet, folks, never forget, even in that moment, even in that moment of high treason against the king of creation, God was in Christ reconciling a rebellious world to himself. God, the father, was giving his beloved son to bear his wrath for our rebellion that we might be the righteousness of God.

And Jesus promised that his spirit would come as mysterious and unpredictable as the wind. And he would replace blindness with sight to see the horror of our sin and the beauty of Christ. He would give life to a dead heart that we might feel the hatred of sin and love for Christ.

And he would set an enslaved will free. To reject sin and come to Christ, oh, Christian, tonight. Do you remember that you were once in this crowd? Do you remember that your heart once hated God? Have you forgotten that your voice once screamed away with him? Crucify him.

I will not have him as my king. And yet God came in Christ to end your rebellion. And reconcile you to himself.

And one day you sent his spirit to change your rebel heart. And draw you to his glory in the face of his son. Have you gotten over it yet? I plead with you.

Think on the gospel often and be in awe. By grace, I've not gotten over it. Not only have I been reconciled, I've been given the ministry of reconciliation.

And so tonight, to those of you who have not yet repented, you've not yet put your faith in Christ. I plead with you on his behalf. Be reconciled to God.

Lay down your weapons and surrender. Why would you choose destruction? Lay down your arms. You cannot win this war against God.

You're fighting a losing battle. But if you surrender. He offers a full pardon with no punishment.

But more than that, he offers adoption as his son. And makes you a co-heir with Christ. Oh, repent of your sin and run to Jesus.

Trust his saving work for you. Receive his love, his grace, his forgiveness. Embrace Christ as your treasure.

And one day you will be part of another crowd. After these things, I looked and behold a great multitude, which no one could count from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues standing before the throne and before the lamb, clothed in white robes and palm branches were in their hands. And they cry out with a loud voice saying salvation to our God who sits on the throne and to the lamb.

And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. And they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God saying amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever. Amen.

Do you want to appreciate being in the crowd of Revelation seven? Then first see yourself in the crowd of John 19. So that no one should boast before God. But it is by his doing that you are in Christ Jesus.

Let him who boasts boast in the Lord. Let's stand, please.

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