

Sunday Night Meditations 35 Message and Song - 1950's

by Welcome Detweiler

The sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing one's lost condition and receiving the Savior as the only hope for eternity.

Duration: 31:38

Scripture: John 8:1

Topics: "Repentance And Mercy", "Salvation Through Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of facing our issues in the presence of Christ and telling the truth. He acknowledges that we are all guilty and helpless, but there is hope in the form of God's mercy. The preacher highlights the need for repentance and belief in the gospel message of salvation through Jesus Christ. He urges those who are burdened by their sins to come to the Savior and receive forgiveness and transformation. The sermon also explores the profound moral problem of reconciling justice and mercy, and how Christ provides the answer through his sacrifice on the cross.

Transcript

Greetings to our radio friends. Our Gospel program today opens by David Stallings and Alice Jones, singing, Resting in His Love. O God has shown his loving from his throne in heaven above, and I find myself in the shelter, resting in the shade.

I am resting in his love. Oh, if you were not in love, I am resting in his love. The story is told of a Christian nurse who was trying to cheer one of her patients who was rather discouraged by his slow recovery.

The conversation drifted into the spiritual realm, and the discouraged patient said, Maybe my time has come to die. The nurse assured him that there was no such indication, but added, It is nice to be prepared for death, if and when it does happen. The man agreed, and said, I have always tried to do what is right, and I have never done anything wrong in my life.

The nurse astonished him by saying, I am very sorry to hear that, for according to my Bible, if what you say is true, you don't have a chance in this world of going to heaven. The Lord Jesus himself said, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repent. And according to your testimony, you are righteous, and God has nothing to offer to you, not even heaven.

If you are not a sinner, you cannot be saved. After quoting a number of scriptures, the patient finally admitted that he was a sinner, and that his plea of doing no harm or wrong was untrue. Like many others, this man had somehow been under the impression that if he did not commit any glaring sins, he would be eligible for heaven.

A reasonable question that will arise in our minds regarding the sin question is, how many sins can a person commit and still go to heaven? Where does God draw the line? The Bible answers our question by drawing the line between one and zero. The Lord Jesus was and is the perfect, sinless, spotless Son of God, and therefore had a perfect right to ascend into heaven. But a sinner having just one sin to his record has no right and cannot claim to be eligible for heaven.

Whether great or small, that one sin will bar the gates of heaven until a reconciliation satisfactory to heaven has been made. It is the devil who has propagated the famous idea that God overlooks small, petty sins, but will not tolerate the big ones. And it is this propaganda that causes people to build their hopes for heaven on the fact that they have never done anything wrong.

And so, a host of sincere people are pretending to be on the way to heaven simply because they have never been in jail or never committed a great crime. Would to God that we had more Christian nurses who could boldly tell their deceived people that if they are unwilling to take their place as lost sinners, there is no possibility of ever being saved. Heaven will be filled with sinners saved by grace, and self-righteous people who are depending upon their goodness will never be permitted to enter heaven.

Romans 3.20 Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight. The redeemed in heaven never sing about their own goodness, but rather ascribe all praise and worship to the Lord Jesus who shed his blood on Calvary to cancel sins. You will never read of big and little sins in the Bible.

It is man who has classified them according to his conscience. He has labeled some insignificant, not worth mentioning. Others he has classed as unpardonable.

According to man's theories, sin will keep a man out of heaven, certain sins, and others will not. But God has concluded all under sin, and all needing salvation. The fact that you have lived an honest, moral Christian life will never fit you for heaven.

Surely we must appreciate those who are honest and upright and moral. And it would be wonderful if we had a greater percentage who would claim such a commendation. But there is a grave danger in this class missing God's wonderful salvation by being self-satisfied, and never seeing the need of taking the lost sinner's place and being saved by his matchless grace.

No one can ever be good enough to merit heaven. Let me repeat that. No one can ever be good enough to merit heaven.

If you are depending upon your good life to gain an entrance into heaven, you will be sadly disappointed, for you have the wrong password. Only those who are depending entirely on the blood of Jesus will enter heaven. And for this very reason, it seems to be more difficult for religious people to be saved than for those who have gone deep into sin and tasted the bitter dregs of a Christless life.

I have a deep concern over the many clean, moral, respectable people who will miss heaven, because they are under the impression that only the gross sins will keep a soul out of heaven. If such an one is listening, I must be faithful to you and to God's word. Regardless of how few sins you have committed,

these few must be cancelled to God's satisfaction before you can enter heaven.

The only means of forgiveness that will satisfy God's holy throne is pleading the value of Christ's substitutionary death and resurrection. If you are resting on anything but the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ that cancelled your few or many sins, you are wrong, and you will miss heaven. I ask you to be sincere about the matter, lest you shall find out too late that your ideas of meriting heaven will not pass God's inspection.

It's wonderful to rest on a solid foundation, having God's approval and guarantee, but it's a dangerous thing to rest on a supposition that does not have God's approval. Those who are resting on Christ and His finished work have God's approval, and shall never perish. If salvation could be inherited from godly parents, how blessed would be your memories of the ancestors who left such a priceless heritage! Those who could not and could not save themselves could never transmit salvation to others, and your hopes of heaven fade out completely when you consider redemption as an inheritance.

If we desire a possession that wealth cannot buy, that cannot be inherited, earned, or received as a reward for good conduct, how else can we hope to achieve it? There is only one way, and that is to receive it as a gift. If this is the good news, that God wants to give and pardon and give peace to all as a gift, then why will men not believe it? Because they are traveling the wrong way, and they are reluctant to turn around. You have to abandon your own road and destination, and reverse the direction of your supposed progress, and walk God's way in His road according to His direction, and no man will voluntarily give up his own way of life and accept another unless he is first convinced that his way is wrong and a new way is better.

For this reason, the Bible says, Repent! You must come to a mental attitude of regret for your wrong way of living and thinking. You must be sorry for the offenses you have committed to God. You must accept the fact that if you continue on a road away from heaven, you will have to be satisfied with the ultimate destination, and you will find that it will be in a lost eternity.

When you decide to do something to reverse your urge and change your direction, that mental attitude is repentance. Adam was created with his face toward heaven and the marvelous eternal destiny, and Satan turned him around and headed him the other way. With our back to the light, we struggle and grope and search for light, plunging deeper and deeper into darkness, and harder and harder every day that we keep on this wrong road.

We are lost. We have only the vaguest idea in which direction home lies, the home for which we were created. Nor do we have any idea or clear idea as to how we can find our way back.

When a person is convinced that God's word is true, and convinced from God's word that he is wrong in his thinking, he is usually ready to listen to God. The gift of God is eternal life, and I trust that you are ready to extend the empty hand of faith in order to receive the full and free salvation that Christ is offering to Christ and through his atoning sacrifice. If God does not approve what you are resting upon, you have no salvation, and I remind you again that God will never accept your good living as a basis of salvation.

Listen again to these texts. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. And after you have changed your mind, after you have come to repentance, the next step is believe the gospel.

Believe the message that Christ Jesus came into the world to save you. He is the only one that can save you. Apart from the Lord Jesus Christ, you will never see the pearly gates, and you will never walk on the streets of gold.

But thank God that he saw our need, and he sent the Lord Jesus Christ to meet that deep, deep need. Christ died for you. Christ paid the price for your sins.

They may be forgiven by simple faith in him if you will turn away from everything that you have been trying to do to earn salvation, and simply receive the Lord Jesus Christ as a gift. I commend to you this wonderful Savior who has been saving sinners for many centuries, and he's waiting and ready to save you. Don't miss it.

It's the best thing in all the world. I came not to call righteous, but sinners, to repentance. I trust you'll change your mind, and you'll come in repentance to him this very hour and receive him as your Lord and Savior.

Greetings to our radio friends. It is appropriate that we should set aside time regularly to think upon the great God of the universe, to be relaxed in his presence, to think of his goodness and his kindness and his grace and mercy to us. I trust that you'll enjoy this gospel program in which we seek to turn your thoughts to our loving God.

I'm reading from John's Gospel, chapter 8, And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him, and he sat down and taught them. And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery, and when they had set her in the midst, they said unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us that she should be stoned, but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him.

But Jesus stooped down and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast the stone at her. And again he stooped down and wrote on the ground, and they which heard it being convicted by their own conscience went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last.

And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee.

Go, and sin no more. In the seventh chapter of John's Gospel we have the record of the chief priests and Pharisees sending officers to arrest Christ. But the officers returned without carrying out their mission.

When they were asked, Why have ye not brought him? They replied, Never man spake like this man. It is almost evident from this that even in our Lord's day the policemen came to know the Savior. However, the cold-blooded religionists were no doubt enraged because their scheme fell through.

So they hit on a new scheme by bringing before him a woman taken in adultery. They brought this woman to Christ not because they were shocked at her conduct, still less because they were grieved that God's holy law had been broken. Their object was to use this woman to further their own evil design.

They were anxious to discredit the Lord Jesus before the people. They did not wait until they could ask him in private, but interrupting as he was teaching the people, they rudely challenged him to solve what must have seemed to them an unsolvable problem. They were certain that they could accuse him by whatever answer he would give.

The woman had been taken in adultery, and the act of adultery required, the law rather required, that she should be stoned. But what sayest thou? Had he said, Let her go, they would accuse him of being an enemy of the law. And they had heard him testify, Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets.

I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. On the other hand, if he would give command to stone her, they would have ridiculed the fact that he claimed to be the friend of publicans and sinners. No doubt they were satisfied that they had him completely cornered, for it was evidently a question that even the Sanhedrin could not agree upon, some leaning to the lenient side and others to the legal carrying out of the law of Moses.

So far as human reasoning is concerned, it was the profoundest moral problem how justice and mercy could be harmonized. The law of righteousness demands the punishment of its transgressors. God's holy character cannot allow that which is defiled to enter his presence.

What then is to become of the poor sinner? He is a transgressor of the law, and his moral pollution is manifest. His only hope lies in mercy. His salvation is only possible by grace.

But how can grace and mercy flow to the sinner without slighting God's holy character? Human wisdom could never have found an answer to this question, but Christ is about to demonstrate the answer. First he stooped down with his finger roped on the ground. I suppose that his religious enemies thought he was stalling for time and mistook his silence for embarrassment.

They continued to press their question upon him, until the searching reply came, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast the stone at her. Here we have the lawgiver himself turning the searching light on these men who pretended to have a high regard for the law of Moses. Even today you will find a cunning subtlety about those who profess to keep the law as a means of salvation.

They take the liberty to interpret the law of Moses to suit themselves and their legalistic religious setup. In this incident, Christ upheld the law by adding all of the details that accompany it. God's law is holy, and none but a holy hand can enforce the law's sentence.

The law required two witnesses before its sentence could be executed, and those witnesses must assist in the carrying out of the sentence. In this case, there was no one left to testify against the woman, and so the law was powerless to touch her. This paved the way for Christ to act in grace.

The law and the gospel of grace work hand in hand to bring the sinner to Christ. The law cannot save. It cannot even help save.

That is not the purpose of the law. The law can only bring a sinner to his wits' end, where he will stand helpless at mercy's gate, and God will never save a sinner until he is conscious of guilt and owns his undone condition. If you are still unsaved and think that you are pretty good, it is evidence that you have never looked at yourself in the sight of God's inflexible law.

Face it, and you will change your mind and become conscious that the best thing that can be said about you is that you are a lost, guilty, hell-deserving sinner because you stand guilty before God's perfect law. I wonder if you have carefully noticed that there is no promise made to the person who partly keeps the law, and he who claims to keep the law, the whole law without offending in one point, is not telling the truth. We must give credit where credit is due, and at least the enemies of Christ were faithful to their conscience, and beginning at the eldest, even to the last, they went out one by one.

The searching rays of divine truth turned the heat on them. The Lord was still writing on the ground, and that of the last accuser had left the woman had a chance to slip away also. But we have here a picture of a convicted religionist leaving the Savior, and a convicted confessed sinner staying in his presence.

There are many people who have been convicted of their sins, and instead of coming to the Savior for eternal life, they are running away from the only one who can meet their need. Let me press it home to your heart and conscience. How long have you been trying to run away from the Lord? How long have you been trying to cover and hide your sin? I want to speak to some of you religious people pretending that you are saved when, down deep in your heart, you know that you are not saved at all.

Where do you get the nerve to tell people that you are saved when your faithful conscience thunders you are as lost as anyone can be? That's what I call running away from God. It's a wonder that you're not perfectly miserable. I don't know of any better way to be guaranteed misery than to dodge the voice of conscience.

Do you know what happens to a person who has been awakened to see his lost condition, who runs away from God? I'll tell you. If he keeps on running long enough, he'll run right into hell. He's going in that direction, and he can't miss it.

There's only one alternative, and it is a blessed one. Do what the condemned woman did. Face the issue in the presence of Christ.

Tell the truth. I'm guilty. I'm helpless.

I'm lost. I stand at mercy's gate. Mercy, what hast thou to offer? Mercy will reply, I have a loving Savior to offer who took your place in judgment and died for all of your sins on Calvary's cross.

Justice has been satisfied. You may only be forgiven when you receive that Savior as your only hope for eternity. Besides washing you from the penalty of all your sins, this Savior will give to you a power that will enable you to live a life pleasing to God, whose constraining love will deliver you from the bondage of sin.

Some who abuse the Scriptures by taking verses out of the context and strut their own fancies will tell us when Christ said to the woman, Go and sin no more, he taught sinless perfection. But the rest of the Scriptures will not permit such abuse of interpretation. Remember the context.

Christ was put on the spot by his enemy, and they expected him to condone the woman's sin and thus accuse him of being unrighteous. In the two statements, Neither do I condemn thee, Go and sin no more, he handled the situation in a very artful manner by offering pardon to the guilty and at the same time expressing his disapproval of her sin. Am I speaking to an unsafe person tonight? Your sins must be a tremendous burden.

You're carrying the load of your sin day after day. You should do the wise thing. Come to that same Savior who is able and willing to save guilty sinners.

He's not going to condone your sin, but he loves you, and he is able to save you and deliver you from a life of sin to change your life completely. This very hour you may be saved if you will turn away from yourself and all of your doing and all of your trying to save yourself and turn to the open arms of a Savior who is waiting to help you, waiting to save you, and that for all eternity. Amen.

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