

THE CALL OF GRACE

LUKE 19:5-6 • TV153A

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By
HENRY T. MAHAN

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Luke 19:5-6

“And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.”

I’m going to be speaking to you today from the book of **Luke**. I would like for you to take your Bible and open it with me to the **19th** chapter of the book of **Luke**.

Here’s my subject: **“THE CALL OF GRACE.”**

I will get to that message in just a moment but I am going to make some opening comments that I think need to be made. These are fundamental facts that need to be said.

Now, there are several reasons for preaching; this is a preaching program. This is not a program to entertain sinners on their road to hell. This is not a program to raise money or to promote a cause, it is a preaching time; it is a time to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now, there are three reasons for preaching the Gospel, three basic reasons; as I said, there are many reasons to preach it but there are three basic reasons for preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ:

First of all: We preach for the glory of God!

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That is what Paul said, *“whatever you do in word or deed, do it for the glory of Jesus Christ, whether we eat or whether we drink, do it for the glory of God Almighty.”*

This must be our motive, whether we pray, whether we sing, whether we testify or teach or whether we preach or whatever we do, let it be done for the glory of God Almighty. If I cannot preach for the glory of God (and let that be my motive, the glory of God Almighty), then I need not preach at all.

I do trust that that’s the reason that I am coming to you through this television ministry, for the glory of God Almighty.

Secondly: We preach for the conversion of God’s elect, for the calling of God’s sheep!

Out there somewhere the Lord has some people; He has some sheep; He has an elect people. Paul said that in **2nd Timothy chapter 2:10**; *“Therefore, I endure all things.”* He meant by that persecution, mocking, and hatred. He was put in prison, he was beaten, he was stoned, and he was shipwrecked. He suffered many things even from false brethren and false teachers.

Paul said, *“I endure these things for the elect’s sake; (now listen to him), that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Jesus Christ with eternal glory.”* Paul says; *“That’s why I preach, I am seeking God’s sheep; I am on the trail of God’s sheep.”*

He was violently opposed in one city and took refuge in the house of a man called Justus. The people opposed him and the mob gathered outside. He took refuge in the house of this man Justus.

The Scripture says, in **Acts 18: 9 through 10**, *“Then the Lord spake to Paul that night in a vision, and said to him, don’t be afraid, but speak; I am with you. No man shall hurt you for I have much people in this city.”*

Christ said, *“My sheep will hear my voice.”* One day, a Pharisee said to Him; *“If you be the Christ; tell us plainly.”* He said, *“I told you but you didn’t believe me.”*

“You didn’t believe me because you are not of my sheep; my sheep hear my voice and they follow me and I give them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all and no man can pluck them out of my Father’s hand.”

So, I am preaching for the conversion of God’s elect, for the finding of God’s sheep. Not only that but for their comfort. Our Lord said, *“Comfort ye my people.”*

He said to His prophet; *“Comfort my people.”* We are not to comfort men in a false peace and a false hope but we are to comfort God’s people.

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Then, I am preaching for their growth also *“that they may grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.”*

In **Ephesians chapter 4:11**, when our Lord ascended back to glory it says that He left on the earth *“apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for their growth, for their maturity, for they all come to a knowledge of the gospel of Jesus Christ.”*

So, that is two basic reasons for preaching. As I said, there are many reasons but first we preach for the glory of God, not for the entertainment of sinners, not for the pleasure of ourselves, not to promote our own causes but for the glory of God Almighty. We preach for the conversion of his people.

Thirdly: We preach to fulfill our obligation to all men! Paul said in **Romans Chapter 1:14**: *“I am a debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise.”*

He said, *“I am ready to preach the gospel to in Rome, because I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”*

Our Lord told His disciples *“to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”* Again, He said: *“go ye therefore and teach all nations.”*

So, we preach to fulfill our obligation to all men. Our Lord said to Ezekiel; *“I have made you a watchman; I’ve sent you to warn. If you warn men and they die in their sins you have delivered your soul but if I send you and you don’t warn them and they die in their sins I will require their blood at your hand.”*

Remember that Paul dealt with this subject one time when he left the elders at Ephesus. He said, *“I am free from the blood of all men for I have not ceased to warn you and to preach to you, even with tears day and night, from house to house.”*

So, we preach, basically for three reasons. I am motivated by three things: The glory of God, the conversion of His elect and to fulfill a debt, a responsibility, an obligation that I owe to every person that will hear my voice.

Now then; here is another thing that I feel like needs to be said, and perhaps there are preachers listening to me today; preachers need to hear preaching; they need to be preached to. There are three basic truths.

Now, the Bible is full of truths and they are truths upon truth upon truth. But, there are three basic truths which ought to be included in all of our messages, I mean all of them, not just some of them, but all of them.

Roland Hill once said this; “A sermon which does not contain the three R’s; (that’s what I am talking about, these three basic truths, the three R’s), a sermon which does not contain the three

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R's is poorly prepared and certainly poorly preached." Spurgeon added to that, "It ought not to even be preached."

What are these three R's? You listen to my messages each Sunday and see if my messages contain the three R's. I'm not talking about reading, writing, and arithmetic either; I am talking about the three R's of this message of salvation and the three R's of the Gospel. Here they are and you listen to them.

Every message preached ought to contain these three basic truths; I do in preparing messages for our congregation. I look back over the message; do I preach these three R's, these three basic facts and truths that men need to hear. Here they are:

First of all: Ruined by the fall! My friends; what happened in the Garden of Eden? You might say, "Is that important?" Well, is this important? There is no way that a man can understand the Gospel, no way, unless he has some understanding of what happened in the Garden; there's no way.

A man cannot understand the Gospel, let alone preach the Gospel, unless he has some understanding of ruined by the fall (what happened in the Garden). The Scripture says, "*In Adam all died.*" That's a pretty eventful happening, "*all died.*"

When a man dies that's quite an eventful happening isn't it? That's quite a traumatic experience. So, if I died in the Garden of Eden then I ought to find out something about it. What does that mean; what is included; what took place?

In Adam everybody died. What happened? The Scripture says, "*By one man's sin, death and judgment passed upon all men,*" judgment and condemnation passed upon all men.

When Adam fell, when Adam sinned, death, judgment and condemnation, eternal death, eternal judgment, eternal condemnation passed upon all men. Then the Scripture says in **Romans 5:** "*By the disobedience of one many were made sinners.*"

My friends; sin is not just an act; sin is an act; it is a transgression of God's law; it's an offense against a holy God. Sin is more than an act; sin is a nature, a nature.

That's why men need to be born again. Our Lord said; "*That which is born of the flesh is flesh. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*"

Sin is more than just an act. I know that most people define sin to an act. If they could not act in certain ways then they would figure that they were not sinners.

Sin is a nature; it is a nature. It is called in Scripture "*a body of sin, a nature of sin, the reign and rule of sin.*" **Isaiah 1:** describes it in this way: "*The whole head is sick; the whole heart is faint. From the soul of the feet to the top of the head; there is no soundness.*"

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Paul described it in **Romans 3**; this way: *“There’s none good, no not one. There’s none that understandeth. There’s none that seeketh after God. They have all gone out of the way.”* So sin is a nature.

David said, *“I was shapen in iniquity. I was conceived in sin. I was brought forth from the womb speaking lies,”* the inward part; that’s where the problem is.

What is a sinner, according to the Bible definition? You know, our Lord said, *“he came to save sinners. He came to call sinners, not the righteous but sinners to repentance.”* What is a sinner according to the Bible definition?

Well, it’s three-fold:

First of all: A sinner is a son of Adam, *“In Adam all die.”* A sinner is a descendant of Adam, *“as we bear the likeness of the earthy;”* that is the first Adam. So, first, a sinner is a son of Adam.

Secondly: A sinner is a transgressor of God’s law, not man’s law especially, but God’s law!

Man may make unjust laws; God’s laws are always just and righteous and holy as God is. A sinner is a transgressor of God’s law. The Scripture says; *“What the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law that every mouth may be stopped and all the world become guilty before God.”*

Thirdly: What is the Bible definition of a sinner?

He is a son of Adam; he’s a transgressor of the law, and he’s one who knows it; he is one who knows it. The Publican stood in the temple and said; *“God be merciful to me the sinner.”*

A man who is a sinner in a Bible definition, a Bible description of the term is a man who is a son of Adam, a descendent of a fallen father. He is a transgressor of God’s law and he knows it and he mourns over it and grieves over it and seeks deliverance from it.

That’s the first basic truth that needs to be included in all of our messages and in our preaching, what happened in the Garden? What is man, what is sin?

You are not going to be able to deal with the problem if you don’t understand the problem. You are not going to be able to understand the Gospel that reconciles sinners to God if we don’t know what a sinner is, what he is charged with, the difficulty of salvation, the difficulty.

“How can God be just and justify the ungodly? How can he be clean that is born of a woman? How can we be pure in God’s sight; even the heavens are not pure in God’s sight. The sun and the moon and stars are not pure in God’s sight.” So; sin is ruined by the fall!

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Secondly: The truth that has to be preached and that is redemption by the blood, redemption by the blood of Christ.

This is what the Scriptures are all about, redemption by the blood. Christ died for our sin *“according to the scriptures.”*

Paul said to the church at Corinth in **1 Corinthians 15**: *“I preached to you the gospel and you received that gospel and you believe that gospel and you stand in that gospel and you are saved by that gospel.”*

That Gospel is that Christ died for our sins *“according to the scriptures that he was buried and rose again according to the scriptures.”* That’s what the scriptures are all about.

The Bible is not just a love story. The Bible is not just a book of science. The Bible is not just a book of history unless you want to change that to read, “His Story.” The Bible is a book of redemption; it is about redemption by the blood. It is about redemption through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Listen to **Luke 24:45**: It says, *“Then opened he their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures.”* Do you understand the Scriptures? Here, our Lord opened the understanding of His apostles, that the apostles *“might understand the scriptures.”*

What did He say, *“That they might understand the scriptures?”* And then He said; *“thus is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to die and to rise again the third day that repentance and remission of sins might be preached in his name to all nations.”*

That’s what it is all about, *“without the shedding of blood there is no remission.”* From the shedding of the first blood; do you know the first blood that was shed on this earth? Well, you say: “Cain killed Abel.”

No sir! There was blood shed before then. There was blood shed in the Garden of Eden before Adam and Eve ever left there. God slew an animal and covered the nakedness of His fallen children.

God took an innocent victim and shed the blood of that animal and took its skin and covered the nakedness of these fallen creatures. That is a picture of Christ. From the very beginning, in the **Book of Genesis**, God begins the message of redemption with the shedding of blood.

All the way from the shedding of that first blood to the cross of Calvary there is one message set forth in this Book; God will be reconciled to sinners only through a suitable sin-offering, a suitable sacrifice, and that only suitable, sufficient, effectual sacrifice and sin-offering, is the death of His Son.

In the Old Testament Christ is promised; Christ is prophesied; Christ is pictured all the way through the Scriptures. In the New Testament He came in person.

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My friends, as one old timer said years ago; “Our Gospel may be summed up in two words and those words are substitution and satisfaction; *“Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.”*

“He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was laid upon him and by his stripes we are healed.”

“The just died for the unjust. The one who knew no sin was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, (our substitute).”

The other word is satisfaction. God’s holy law which man had broken must be satisfied. God’s holy justice which man has violated must be honored.

So, the second word is satisfaction. *“And by one offering he, (Jesus Christ), hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.”*

So, a message that does not contain this truth and this Gospel is certainly not a Scriptural message. You say; “I wasn’t preaching on the cross.” Then you ought too!

Somebody said one time; “Every verse in the Bible points to Calvary and when a preacher reads a passage of Scripture he ought to find the road to Calvary from that verse and get there as quickly as he can.”

Paul said that, he said *“I’m determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified. God forbid that I should glory except in the cross.”*

This man Paul; he had some things in which he could glory. *“Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.”*

In his day he was a man who founded churches and was a man who saw the Lord, *“one born out of due time,”* supernaturally called, and supernaturally endowed; a man gifted above all men in his day.

But, he said; *“I glory in nothing but the cross of Jesus Christ by which the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world.”* He loved redemption by the blood of Christ.

Our messages must contain ruined by the fall. Men will not flee to Christ unless they are shut up to faith, unless they know their need, unless they are made to feel, to weep over, mourn over, grieve over, agonize over, and repent of their sins, unless they see the depth of it, the double-dyed stain of it, the depravity of it, the death of it, the awful condemnation because of it, the wrath of the God against it, the sin from the Garden of Eden.

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God is angry with this world. God is angry with the wicked. “*God hateth the workers of iniquity.*” That is what the Scripture says. God cannot look upon sin. He cannot fellowship with sin. We have that nature, that evil, awful, guilty, nature.

It is only Christ’s blood satisfies God’s justice. He reconciles us unto God. “*Christ’s blood cleanseth and putteth away all our sin.*”

Thirdly: What must be preached is regeneration by the Holy Spirit!

The effectual call of the Spirit of God; that is what I am talking about; that effectual, invincible, irresistible, result-getting-call of the Holy Spirit of God, whereby men hear, not with these ears only, but with ears of the heart.

Hereby men see, not with the natural eye but the eye of faith, whereby men understand the beauty of Christ, the glory of Christ, the sufficiency of Christ, the necessity of Christ, whereby they understand how God can be just and justify, whereby men hear the Gospel, believe it and embrace it with their very souls, hearts, and minds.

God said in **Psalm 110:3**: “*Thy people shall be willing; thy people shall be willing,*” willing to turn from sin, willing to repent of sin, willing to receive Christ, willing to embrace him, willing to trust him.

When, “*in the day of thy power;*” that’s when! Our Lord said: “*No man can come to me except my Father which sent me draw him.*” No man, whatever his natural ability “*can come to me,*” whatever his natural wisdom, “*except my Father which sent me draw him.*”

We must be taught of God. It’s a supernatural revelation; it is a mystery revealed. Salvation is more than a mere, moral, reformation. A lot of people quit drinking and cursing and they call it salvation.

A lot of people join the church and call it salvation. Salvation is more than just church membership, more than moral reformation, more than acceptance of Bible facts. It’s more than ceremonial, ritualistic, activity.

Salvation is a call of God; that is exactly what it is! It’s a birth, a new birth. It is a call of God. Christ said, “*He that heareth my word and believeth on me hath everlasting life.*”

He said to them one day; “*Who do men say that I am?*” They said, “*Some say that you are John the Baptist, some say that you are Elijah, some say that you are one of the prophets.*” He said, “*Who do you say that I am?*”

Peter spoke up and said, “*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*” Our Lord said, “*Blessed are you Simon; flesh and blood didn’t reveal that to you; (you didn’t learn that from a man; you weren’t taught that in school. You didn’t discover that by natural inclination or wisdom); but my father revealed that to you.*”

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They asked Him one day, they said: *“Why do you speak to the multitude in parables?”* He said, *“Because they have ears but they don’t hear. They have eyes but they don’t see. They have hearts but they don’t understand.”*

“Blessed are your eyes; they see and your ears they hear.” Have you heard? I have heard preaching all my life but have you ever heard God speak? Have you ever heard the Holy Spirit speak through the Word?

Have you ever heard Christ speak through his Word? Has the Word ever become anything but a word? Has it become life and truth and beauty? Has it lived for you? Has it been able become the words of life or just words?

Salvation is a call of God; *“He that heareth my word.”* We are the called of Christ Jesus. *“He has saved us and called us with a holy calling: Not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”*

I will tell you something else; this call of God, this regeneration, this effectual work of the Holy Spirit is not just a general call and general invitation. It’s not just a general warning but it is an effectual and personal call.

One day our Lord came through the city of Jericho, a wicked, bad, city. There was a man there by the name of Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus was a short man, a man of short stature, a very small man. He kept trying to see and all the people were standing in front of him.

He ran ahead; he knew the route that the Lord Jesus would take and ran ahead. He climbed up in a tree. I want you to think about this; here is a Publican, a prominent man, a rich man, a very rich man, probably up in years that climbed up in a tree to see who Christ was.

When Christ came that way, He looked up in that sycamore tree and He said, *“Zacchaeus; make haste and come down for today I must abide at your house.”*

He made haste and came down. *“He received him joyfully;”* do you see that in **Luke chapter 19:5?** *“And when they saw it, when the people saw it they murmured saying that he was gone to be the guest of a man that was a sinner.”*

Zacchaeus said, *“Lord; behold, half of my goods I give to feed the poor and if I have taken from any man by false accusation, I will restore him fourfold.”*

Jesus said unto him; *“Zacchaeus this day is salvation come to this house. For as much as he also is a son of Abraham for the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”*

This is the call of grace. This is the divine calling. Do you see our call illustrated in the call of this man?

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Let me give you just briefly as I close, four or five ways in which our call, this effectual, divine and supernatural call of God, whereby He reveals to us himself, like He revealed Himself to Zacchaeus, whereby He calls us to Himself. Let me show you how it is illustrated:

First of all: The call

“Amazing grace

How sweet the sound of Zacchaeus was a gracious call!

I suppose that if you were considering the people of Jericho as possible candidates for salvation, old Zacchaeus would have been at the bottom of the list. He was a bad man from a bad city and a bad business. He was a crook; he was a man who made his fortune off of other people's misery.

That's the kind of folks our Lord is pleased to save, sinners. Are you a sinner? Have you ever been a sinner? Christ died for sinners. He said, *“He didn't come to call the righteous.”*

There are a lot of people who are too good to be saved, but there is no one too evil to be saved. No one is too bad to be saved.

“That saved a wretch like me.”

Secondly: His call was a personal call!

“Zacchaeus;” he was the only one there by that name. Our Lord called him by name. There were a lot of people there. There was no doubt about whom He called; there was no mistake at all.

You know; men don't come to Christ by nations. I hear people talking about converting American; they will never do it. You will never come to Christ by groups or families but personally. *“If thou confess with thy mouth Jesus to be Lord and believe in thine heart that God has raised him from the dead, thy shall be saved.”*

Thirdly: His call was an imminent call!

You say, “What does that mean?” It means right now, right now. *“Make haste; Zacchaeus, make haste.”* God's call is never for tomorrow, never for tomorrow. *“Boast not thyself of tomorrow.”*

A general call may be. You may say, “Tomorrow.” You haven't heard His voice yet. When you hear His voice you will be confronted with the power of the Holy Spirit and you will come.

Fourthly: His call was a humbling call!

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He said, “*Zacchaeus come down, come down.*” There’s never been a call to come up until the man has heard the call, come down. God always strips before He clothes. He always slays a sinner before He raises him. He always speaks in judgment before He speaks in mercy.

Fifthly: His call was an affectionate call and it was an effectual call!

Zacchaeus heard His voice and he responded. It says “*He received him joyfully.*” He embraced Him and he received Him!