

They Cry Peace When There Is No Peace

By Henry Mahan

Bible Text: Jeremiah 6:14

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Let me make just a few comments in introducing this message.

First of all, the greatest blessing that God can give to a people, what is the greatest blessing that God can give to a people? It is to send them a faithful, regenerated, Christ honoring, gospel preaching, truthful minister of the gospel. That is the greatest blessing that God can possibly give to a people.

It is good to have a strong and capable and able president, governor, mayor, city commission. It is wonderful to have godly, wonderful, dedicated school teachers. But if you ask what is the greatest blessing that God can give to a people, you would have to say that it is to send them one of his prophets, to send them one of his servants, a true, faithful minister of the gospel. That has to be God's greatest gift other than Christ.

And the greatest curse, the greatest curse that can possibly fall on a church, on a congregation, on a community, on a nation, is for God to permit them to have to sit under a blind, unregenerate, unfaithful preacher. It has to be the greatest curse that God can permit to fall on a people. And in every age there have been these false preachers, these false ministers. Christ called them wolves in sheep's clothing, the men who give false hope and false peace to hearers.

Let's look at a few verses. First of all, now you have got your Bible open to Jeremiah six. Look just above the sixth chapter at chapter five, verse 30, chapter five, Jeremiah, verse 30. Look at this Scripture. "A wonderful," and that is not speaking in the term of blessed, "But a wonderful, an unusual and horrible thing is committed in the land. The prophets prophesy falsely and the priests bear rule by their means and my people love to have it so."

What the prophet Jeremiah is saying here is that there are false prophets gone out into the land and they are lying on God. They are not telling the truth. They are not preaching the Word. They are not true to the Word of God. And the people like it. An unusual and horrible thing is happening. Men are standing in the pulpit who are not preaching the gospel of God's grace, who are not preaching Christ, who are not being true to the Word of God and the people know they are not and the people like it. And God said, "That is an unusual and that is a horrible situation.

But didn't our Lord say that also in the New Testament? "Having itching ears they heaped to themselves teachers having itching ears." They both, the people and the preacher, complement one another .

Turn to Jeremiah 23. let's look over there a moment . In the 23rd chapter of Jeremiah, verse one, Jeremiah 23, verse one. "Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture,' saith the Lord. Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people. 'You scattered my flock. You have driven them away. You...and have not visited them. Behold I will visit upon you the evil of your doings saith the Lord.'"

Turn to Matthew chapter seven. In the seventh chapter of Matthew, verse 14, our Lord said this, Matthew 7:15. "Beware of these false preachers. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."

Turn to Romans 16. In the 16th chapter of Romans, verse 17 and 18, the subject is dealt with again. Romans 16, verse 17 and 18. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you have learned and avoid them for they are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."

Turn to 1 Timothy, the fourth chapter, 1 Timothy four, verse one through three. Listen to this. "Now, the spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their consciences seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, commanding to abstain from meat which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth."

Now, 2 Peter chapter two. 2 Peter chapter two, verse one. "But there were false prophets also among the people even as there shall be false teachers among you who privily shall bring in damnable heresies even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of and through, "Watch this word here now, we are coming to it. "And through covetousness shall they with fain words make merchandise of you. They are religious hucksters. You are just so much merchandise like a man in a hardware store dealing with hammers and nails and tools and like a person in a department store dealing with bolts of cloth. That is all you are to these false teachers and preachers. You are just so many numbers and so much merchandise whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not and their damnation slumbereth not."

In every age there have been false teachers. And Jeremiah charges them with several crimes, three to be exact. Jeremiah six, look at verse 13. Jeremiah says, as Peter does, that they are given to covetousness. That is their first great crime. They are given to covetousness. What do they covet? What do these false prophets and false preachers who do not preach the Word of God? What do they covet?

Well, first of all, they covet the praise of men. They covet the praise of men. In John chapter 12, verse 42 and 43 it talks about that. They covet the praise of men. John 12:42, “Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also many believed on him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him lest they should be put out of the synagogue for they love the praise of men, more than the praise of God.”

That is the first one. Paul said, “If I please men I am not the servant of Christ. I can’t please men and please Christ.”

And these false preachers covet the praise of men. And then, secondly, they covet money and possessions. They are interested in money. They are interested in filthy lucre. They are interested in the possessions of this world. Peter writes about true ministers of the gospel and says in 1 Peter verse five, verse two, “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly and not for filthy lucre.”

Ministers who are in the ministry for money and for possessions and for material gain are false prophets.

And then they covet titles and they covet honor.

Look at Matthew 23., verse six through 10, Matthew 23, verse six through 10. Our Lord says, “They love the uppermost rooms at the feast and the chief seats in the synagogues. They love the greetings in the markets. They like to be called of men ‘Rabbi, rabbi,’ or ‘master.’ But ye not called rabbi for one is your master even Christ and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth for one is your father which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters for one is your master, even Christ.”

Jeremiah charges these men with covetousness. They covet the praise of men. They covet material possessions. They covet money and they covet titles and they covet honors.

And then he charges them in verse 13 with dealing falsely with the people. He says they are given to covetousness and every one of them dealeth falsely. Now, my friends, how does God deal with his people? He deals with them through the Word. That is how God deals with his people through the Word. He convicts through the Word. He reveals his glory through the Word. He reveals his purposes, his covenants through the Word. That is how God deals with people.

Scripture says, “Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his ways? By taking heed to the Word of God.”

Scripture says, “Desire the sincere milk of the Word that you may grow thereby.”

The Scripture says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness that the man of God might be mature."

The Scripture says, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God."

Paul said, "I have kept back nothing profitable unto you. I have not shunned to declare unto you the Word of God."

Paul exhorted young Timothy, "Preach the Word."

Now, how do these false ministers deal falsely with the people? They do not preach the Word. It is the Word of God that our Lord has promised to bless. He said, "My Word shall not return unto me void. It shall accomplish that where unto I have sent it."

You go to the average church today, and I say this with tears and a broken heart, not being critical. You go to the average church today and the minister will use maybe one verse of Scripture, at the most two or three. The ministers are not preaching the Word of God. They are preaching civil rights and civil wrongs. They are preaching social ills and social evils. But they are not preaching God's Word. And they are dealing falsely with the people. That is how they deal falsely. They do not minister the Word.

The only thing you are going to take away from this service this morning that will be of any eternal benefit to you is what God says, not what I say, not what Don says, what God says. He has promised to bless his Word.

And then he charges them with a third crime. He says they are covetous. They are covetous. They want to please men because they want the praise of men. They want money. They want material possessions. They want material comfort, physical comfort. They like titles. They like to be called Reverend. They like to be called Father. They like to be called Bishop. They like to be called Archbishop. They like to be called priests. They like to be called Doctor. They want titles. They want the uppermost seats. They like to be before the people. And they deal falsely with my people. They have not dealt with them on the Word.

And then, thirdly, he says they heal the hurt. They heal the hurt. Verse 14. "They have healed the hurt crying peace."

What does this mean? Let me give you an example. In 1951 when brother Rolfe Barnard was here in Ashland preaching under the big tent in central park, I was leading the singing. Barnard was preaching. People were coming from everywhere. God was blessing. The wholly Spirit was convicting men of sin. Church members were being saved. Religious people were confessing their sins and coming to Christ. God was moving in a mighty way, the first real revival I had ever been in. And one night after the service a young man came down to the front, about 18, 19, 20 years of age. He had been

a church member since he was a lad. And he said to brother Barnard, weeping, "I am lost. I am lost. I have never been saved."

And Barnard said something to him about Christ, "God saves sinners. If you are lost look to Christ. He came to save the lost."

Well, a young friend of his about the same age who had surrendered even to preach, very religious, made a profession of faith when he was a child in church all his life, walked up to this young man under conviction and put his arm across his shoulder and he said, "You're not lost. You're not lost. You're just disturbed. You're saved. You believe on Jesus, don't you?"

"Yeah."

"Well, you're not lost. You are just disturbed."

And brother Barnard, wise man that he was overheard this conversation and he looked into the eyes of the young man who was doing the comforting and he said, "Listen. The only person who will try to convince a lost man that he is saved, is another lost man."

Now, you think about that. The only person that will try to convince a lost man that he is saved, the only person that will cry peace, peace to a human being in trouble and under God's convicting power is a man who does not have peace himself. He is lost. And that is what he is saying right here.

These false preachers, they come to the people and the Word of God...if the Word of God ever gets to the people it troubles them. And these false preachers pour oil on that troubled water. If the Word of God and the Holy Spirit and the gospel ever gets to a religious sinner, a religious lost person, it will trouble him. He will lie on his bed at night and weep and cry. His sins will trouble him. His sins will bother him. They will grieve him. They will cause him to mourn. And he comes to the preacher and the preacher says, "You are not lost. You believe in Jesus, don't you?"

"Yes, I believe in..."

"Do you believe the Bible?"

"Yes I believe the Bible."

"Do you believe in heaven?"

"Yeah, I believe in heaven."

"You are doing the best you can."

"Well, I am trying."

“You are attending church, aren’t you?”

“Yeah.”

“You are a deacon down at our church, aren’t you?”

“Yeah, I’m a deacon.”

“You are a Sunday school teacher.”

“Yes, sir. I have been teaching Sunday school.”

“You sing in the choir. You are not lost. Peace, peace.”

They have healed the hurt. All men desire peace. And they are either going to receive it from God or from men. I am not going to give it to them. Only the Holy Spirit can give real peace. Christ said, “My peace I give unto you. You come to me. I will give you peace.” The preacher can’t give peace. The Sunday school teacher can’t give peace. The preacher is a preacher is a preacher. He is not a comforter. He is a preacher. Paul said, “I am free from the blood of all men. I am pure from the blood of all men. I have not ceased to what? Warn you. Warn you.”

The preacher cannot give peace. The preacher cannot...if you go to a preacher and say, “I want to tell you my experience and you tell me whether or not I’m saved.”

My friend, the only one who can give you assurance is God almighty through his Holy Spirit using his Word. And if you find assurance, if you find confidence, if you find peace anywhere else it is a false peace.

Oh, yes. They are covetous. They are filled with covetousness. They are looking for a bigger church. They are looking for a finer parsonage. They are looking for a bigger salary. They are looking for a finer car. They are looking for the praise of men. They are looking for the adoration of the multitude. They are looking for titles and credentials and education and honor and the upper most seats. And they have withheld the Word of God. They have dared not preach it. And when people get disturbed under the gospel, under the Word of God they say, “Now, you are all right. You never come to prayer meeting, but you are all right. You never read the Word of God, but you are all right. You don’t love your brother, but you are all right. You hate nationalities and races, but you are all right. You don’t love the gospel, but you are all right. You have no heart that pants after holiness, but you are all right. Everybody is all right in this day. Peace. Peace.” There is no peace. But the preachers are crying, “Peace.”

I want to show you from the Scriptures God’s way of giving peace. I want to show you... I said the preacher can’t speak peace, only the Holy Spirit can. And I am going to show you how the Holy Spirit speaks peace to the sinner’s heart. Now, I take for granted that you know a work of grace is a work in the heart. And, secondly, I take for granted that

you know that God, by no means, confines himself to one way of dealing with a sinner. There are degrees of conviction. There are degrees of repentance. There are degrees of faith. There are degrees of revelation. But before any man can speak, "Peace, peace, it is well with my soul, I am at peace with God. My heart condemns me not." Before any man can speak peace to his heart he must, he must be made to feel and to see and to acknowledge and to weep over his sins. A man that has never been lost has never been found.

Now the law of God demands perfect obedience in ever jot and tittle. The law of God demands that we do not some things, but all things. It says, "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things that are written in the law to do them." We are not to obey in deed only, but in thought, in attitude, in motive, in imagination, in word. And whosoever shall keep the whole law of God and offend in one point, he is guilty of the whole law. Have you ever or do you now feel that you are a guilty sinner? Have you ever seen your wicked heart? Have you ever been made to honestly grieve over and weep over and mourn over your sins? S-I-N-S, sins.

Have you ever been where David was when he said, "Oh, God, my sins are ever before me?"

Have you ever been where Job was when he cried, "Oh, God, I hate myself?"

Have you ever been where Isaiah was when he cried, "Oh, woe is me? I am a man of unclean lips."

Have you ever been where Paul was when he cried, "Oh wretched man that I am? Oh, wretched, ungodly man that I am. Who shall deliver me from this body of death?"

I say that no man will ever be able to speak peace to his heart if he has never been made to mourn over it, to weep over it, to grieve over and to acknowledge before God that he is a sinner and to acknowledge that if God sent him to hell he would get just exactly what he deserved.

Do you believe that? If you have never seen that I guarantee you one thing. You had better quit saying, "Peace," because there is no peace. There is no mercy except for guilty people. That is what the Bible says. Our Lord Jesus Christ said, "I came to seek and to save the lost." The Son of Man is come to seek and to save the lost. Christ died for the ungodly.

I know who he died for. He died for the ungodly. That is who he died for. I know why he came into the world. He came into the world to save sinners. And he demonstrated it when he was here on this earth. That bunch of religious goody, goody, high, pious, holier than thou bunch up in the church, they said, "Look at him. He has gone to be the guest of a man that is a sinner. What in the world is he doing running around with that fellow?"

And that proud Pharisee sitting up there in his seat of honor, the right reverend Dr. Sounding Brass looked down where that harlot was washing his feet and drying them with the hair of her head. He said, "Now, if that fellow was a prophet he would know that woman was a sinner."

He knew she was a sinner. But he loves sinners. And he came to save sinners. And that is the people for whom he died. And that was one of his sheep down there washing his feet.

Have you ever been there?

Secondly, quickly, before any man can speak "peace, peace," to his heart, he has got to feel his sins and, secondly, he has got to feel and he will feel and God will reveal it to him, the foundation of all sin. Do you know what it is? It is original sin. A man who truly repents, repents not only for what he has done, but for what he is. Think with me, now. If any man say he hath no sins, he has not sinned...If any man say that he has no sin—S-I-N—he is deceived and the truth is not in him.

Look at the world about you, the storms, the floods, what we call catastrophes, the ice and sleet and snow, the earthquake just wiped out 7000 people. The dead grass out there and the dead trees and the thorns and the weeds that eat your garden up, the rocks and the droughts and the wild beasts and the insects and the mosquitoes and the ants and the disease and the suffering and the sorrow. It wasn't created that way. That's not the way God made this world. What happened? Something happened.

Turn to Genesis three and I will show you what happened, Genesis chapter three. Listen to this. Genesis 3:17. And if you have never seen this you look at it and you get you a Berkley translation or an Amplified translation or some other translation that some...makes a few verses a little clearer than the King James and you read this. In Genesis 3:17, "And God said to Adam, 'Because you have hearkened to the voice of your wife and you have eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee saying, "Thou shalt not eat of it," cursed is the ground because of you, because of you. Cursed is the ground.'"

What happened to this world? Man fell. That is what happened to this world. And when man fell the beautiful garden of God was turned into a wilderness, into a desert.

Look at man. Look at your body. Some of you are getting old. I am getting old. We are weak. We smile about it. But let's face it. Man...men are born emotionally, spiritually, mentally diseased. There is a disease that is eating away in everyone of us. We are the dad and the dying. We are the old and the infirm.

Adam was perfect. But here I am and in a few more years I am going to be a dead and dying man. What happened? What happened? Something happened back yonder in the garden that had an effect on this world. Some thing happened in the garden that had an effect on my body. I am susceptible to colds and fever and disease. And some day my body is going to die and go back to the dust. What happened?

It happened back yonder in the garden.

All right. Look in your heart. Take the most godly man here, the most godly woman here, the one that wants to serve God and to know Christ. And if you will be honest I will ask you this morning, “Do you always do the things that you would do?”

“No, sir.”

“Do you always do not the things that you would not do?”

“No, sir.”

“What’s wrong with you? What happened to you?”

Why is it that men love darkness and hate light? It wasn’t that way in the beginning. Why is it that the bitter is sweet and the sweet is bitter? Why is it that stolen fruit is so precious? Why is it. What happened?

I’ll tell you what happened. Something happened back yonder that affected this world and that affected our bodies and that affected our minds and our motions and our affections and our will, that twisted us and warped us. You see babies born into this world with club feet and with enlarged heads and with eyes crossed and with brains damaged. What happened?

Back yonder in the Garden of Eden man rebelled against God and when did death and judgment and condemnation come upon all flesh. And, brother, I tell you before a man can speak peace to his heart he is going to go back there in his mind and in his thoughts and he is going to identify himself with that catastrophe and he said, “God, I was shapen in iniquity. I was conceived in sin. I was brought forth speaking lies. God, don’t only do something for my hands. Do something for my heart. Don’t only do something for my feet. Do something for my will. Don’t only do something for my outward flesh, but do something for my inward emotions. I got to be straightened out on the inside.”

And you are not going to speak peace to your heart until God almighty reveals to you that you have sinned and that you also are a sinner.

And then, thirdly, and you get a good grip on that pew you are sitting on because this is going to knock you out on the floor if you are not...if you don’t get a real good grip, but it is so. I challenge any human being to question this statement. Before any man can speak peace to his heart...I am not talking peace in the eyes of this world. There is a peace the world giveth. It is temporary. It is phony. These false preachers here they said, “Peace.” They healed the hurt. But it wasn’t a permanent healing. It was a temporary thing. They poured a little balm there in the wound and it rotted on the inside and they finally died from it. But it is just like giving Novocain when a man has pain. You don’t do a thing in the world about the source of pain, you just make him comfortable. And that is what you

do when you give false assurance to a convicted sinner. You make him comfortable for a little while, but you don't do anything about his cancer.

Before a man can speak peace to his heart he has not only go to see his sin and his sins, but he is going to have to realize that even his best duties and his best performances, religious and otherwise are evil in the sight of God.

Now, the Word of God deals with our hatred, doesn't it? We know that. The Word of God deals with our malice. The Word of God deals with our lust. The Word of God deals with our envy and our blasphemy. The Word of God deals with our actions. And when the Word of God shows us these things what do we do? We do the same thing Adam did when we discover our nakedness we run right quick and make us an apron. And we make that apron out of our good deeds and our good works and our fig leaf aprons of righteousness are carefully woven to balance the account.

That is what Adam did. When he saw he was naked he ran and he made him a fig leaf apron and hid behind it. A real knowledge of God's holiness will expose my so called holiness. A real knowledge of God's law will reveal to me that God can justly damn me for the best prayer I ever prayed.

Isaiah 64, verse six, says this. "We all do fade as the leaf. Our iniquities have driven us away. Our righteousnesses are filthy rags."

When our Lord came to the earth these religious Pharisees were moral men. They were so called righteous men. They were religious men. They were serving, they said, God. And our Lord said, "If your righteousness doesn't exceed theirs, you are not going to enter the kingdom of God."

Brethren, I never preach, but that I sin. I never pray without sin. I never help a beggar. I never help a lame man unless I sin. Did you know that? Our best duties are nothing but splendid sins. That is what this book says. For it declares, "In the flesh no man can please God." The Bible declares, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Now you tell me that you have perfect faith. I tell you, you don't. And whatsoever is not of faith, absolute faith, perfect faith, confident faith, it is sin. Even my repentance needs to be repented of. Even my tears need to be washed in the blood of Jesus Christ. I must worship, but I wish I could worship God like he deserves to be worshipped, don't you? Come on, now. You have been here this morning. This is the hour of worship. Have you worshipped God in a way that is fitting for God to be worshipped? I haven't. I wish I could. Under God I wish I could. I wish I could praise him like the angels praise him. I wish I could praise him like the cherubims and seraphims praise him. But I am flesh. And this little bit of praise I try to give him and this little attitude of worship I try to cultivate, if it wasn't for Christ God would send me to hell for the way that I have acted here right here in this building.

That's right. People don't see that. I know they don't see that. You can't make a blind man see anything. You can't make a deaf man appreciate a concert either, but it is so whether we appreciate it or whether we believe it. it is so.

Can you pray? Let me ask you this. We had a little prayer this morning. Did you talk to God? Was it a godly prayer? Was it that sweet, third heaven communion with the living God? Was it a prayer that was totally empty of self, no self in it, no human glory in it, no flesh in it? Huh?

"Well, no. I can't say that, preacher."

Then you sinned. Then you sinned.

You gave your offering this morning. Was it given cheerfully, hilariously? Was it a sacrificial gift? Did you take from yourself something that you needed and gave it to someone else who needed it more?

"Well, no I can't hardly say that."

Well, you sinned.

Do you really love my children as much as you love yours? We come here in a fellowship of love. This is a fellowship of love. Love the brethren. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

"Well, I can't say that. I am wrapped up in my own."

Then you sinned. Then you sinned.

And I say a man can never speak peace to his heart until he has been made to mourn over and to weep over his adultery, but also his worship, worship. He has been made to weep over and to mourn over his thoughts of sin, but not only that, weep over his prayer. God I wish I could pray. I wish I could worship. I wish I could be alone with God. Don't you?

Oh, we play church. If it wasn't for Christ God would send us to hell for every song we sin, every sermon we preach and every prayer we pray. That's right. We need him. He makes it holy. He makes it holy.

Oh, ye of little faith. You say you believe? Christ said you could move that mountain if you really believe, if you really believe.

Fourthly, quickly. Before any man can speak peace to his heart he has got to be troubled over one particular sin, one particular sin. Do you know what it is? It is the sin of unbelief. He that believeth not on the Son shall not see life. They could not enter in, not because they danced around that calf. They could not enter in not because they

murmured against the light bread. They could not enter in because of unbelief. Take heed, brethren. Paul said, "Brethren, lest there be found in you an evil heart of unbelief."

Oh, there is a type of faith that most men have. James called it the faith of devils. Don't mistake an historical faith for true faith. It is not. Do you believe there is one God? The devil believes there is one God. John called it a faith in miracles or a faith in the supernatural. Many believed on him because of the miracles they saw. But listen to me now. Saving faith is a confidence and a committal and an experience and a union with Christ wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit that brings a man to love Christ, to live for Christ, to receive Christ for the glory of God. And it is evidenced by his acting on that faith.

Let me ask you this. How long...how long have you believed in Jesus Christ?

"Well, preacher, I have always believed on Jesus Christ. I have always believed in him."

That is not so. You have had all your life an historical faith, a faith of devils. All your life you have believed there is a person called Christ who did what mother and daddy and the Sunday school teacher and the preacher and the Bible said he did. But all who believe on Christ know there is a time when they didn't believe on Christ. All who have trusted him and received him and believed on him and committed themselves to him, they know there was a time when they didn't trust him. They knew he was such a person, but they didn't trust him. They knew that such a person existed, but they didn't receive him.

Do you see what I am saying?

How long have you loved God?

"Well, I can't remember...I can't remember ever not loving God."

Then you never have loved God. Everybody who loves God knows there is a time when he loved himself and not God, when he sought his own will and not God's, when he couldn't say, "Though he slay me, yet I will trust him."

There was a time he didn't love God.

How long have you believed the Bible?

"Well, I have always believed the Bible."

That is not so. All who believe the Bible know there was a time when they came to realize that they didn't really believe the Bible, that the Bible spoke against them, that the Bible condemned them, that the Bible condemned their ways and their thoughts and their attitude and it made them angry. That's right.

Before a man can speak peace to his heart that man has got to be convicted of the sin of unbelief, unbelief.

And last of all—and I close with this—before a man can speak peace to his heart, he has got to savingly lay hold on Jesus Christ, his righteousness and his sacrifice, personally, intelligently, willingly, lovingly, continually.

Now, listen to the Scripture. “Come unto me. I will give you rest.” There is rest provided. But I must come to him to receive it. Isn’t that what it said.

“To as many as receive him to them gave he the right to become the children of God.”

Oh, there are some folks going to be children of God. But I have got to receive him.

“Ho everyone that thirsteth. Come to the water and out of your belly shall flow rivers of living water and you shall never thirst.”

Rivers of living water provided, but I have got to come. I have got to lay hold on Christ. I have got to reach out.

Romans chapter 2:22 says there is a righteousness. God provided, God applied, God accepted, a righteousness of God. I want it. Where is it? It is for all who believe on Jesus.

There is a justification whereby God can be just and justify the ungodly. It is provided, God provided.

But who is it for? All who believe on Jesus.

Have you believed? Have you reached out? Have you received him? I like what the centurion said. This boy was sick, cast about on the ground with epilepsy, he thought dying. He asked the Lord to heal him. He said, “Lord, can you do anything for him?”

And the Lord said, “Yeah. Yeah, I can. All things are possible to them that believe.” Do you believe?”

And that man cried, “Oh, Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief.”

And come on, now, friends. Let’s quit playing Church. Let’s quit trying to act religious. Let’s quit trying to act like we are going to heaven in order to appease people and influence people and impress people. Let’s quit trying to act religious and let’s get down here between me and God, now and let’s face the issue.

I am not going to say, “Peace, peace,” for myself when there is no peace. And I am not going to say it for you. And I am not going to say it to the people to whom I preach. I am going to let God say it and the only way God will say it and the only way God will

say it and I assure you of this and you think it over. No man is going to speak peace to his heart who has not acknowledged his sins. And no man is going to speak peace to his heart who has not faced the start of sin, the origin of sin, the beginning of sin, the source of sin, original sin, the nature of sin.

Why am I like I am? I fell. Why do I think like I think? Born a sinner. And no man is going to speak peace to his heart who is trying to appease God with his good deeds, who is running around acting religious and believing he is balancing the account, who is running around trying to show off his piety to appease his heart.

You better find out your prayers are full of sin. Your confessions are full of sin. Your tears are full of sin. Your religion is full of sin. Your worship falls so far short of spiritual worship that God could send you to hell for coming into his presence with a strange thought. That's right. And we are going to be persuaded of unbelief. God help my unbelief.

I wish I had faith, don't you? I mean, real faith. I believe Christ died for my sins. I rest in him, but, boy, I would like to have the faith...that God commended the Syrophenician woman for, "Great is thy faith." And no man is going to speak peace to his heart until he lays hold on Christ. Sink or swim I go to him.