

Parish Retreat 2018 Session 4 (Sunday Service)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 28 October 2018

Preacher: Fr. Bryan Bywater

[0:00] I believe this is a church that deeply expects in miracles.

! I saw the recorder turned on as if I'm expected to stay still here. Praise you.

Lord, who are we that we should have heard your call? We're very thankful that we heard your voice because you spoke it.

And Holy Spirit, please fall afresh today. Would you be kind enough, Lord, to wreck us for your glory?

Because you're worth it. And we're thankful. In Jesus' name. Amen. So I'm going to see if I can do this miraculous thing of staying still.

[1:25] And I'm doing another miraculous thing. And there was like an old joke. You know what it means when a preacher takes his watch off and puts it next to his Bible? Absolutely nothing. But I'm going to do it because last night, the bishop was just saying, we first met at the synod.

And he had asked me to speak about church army. And he gave me five minutes to do so. And he was so impressed that I did it in four minutes and 37 seconds. And he thought it might be a safe bet to invite me here once again.

So I'll do my best. But I want to really start from the get-go. How is it possible to speak of all the glorious riches of Christ Jesus in such a short time?

Amen. When we ponder what the Lord has done and understand who he is, where we were, and the depth and the width of the chasm that the glory of God crossed to claim us, how can we be silent?

Amen. I started to process in, and I'm walking out front, for those of you who are listening here.

[2:34] I've got my, my, my, my, my, my patch. It's like my old baseball jacket. I was like, okay, my old patches on my preaching store. And my friend in back was like, you look like Natar.

Right? I'm like, maybe I am. I'm on a race to glory. Amen? There's a good Christian movie. He's talking about little baby Jesus. Right? So there's, repent. You've watched that movie. It was okay. So here's the bit of a story about me. I started off as a wretched sinner apart from Jesus. And he found me literally dead under a tree one day. And sent me on a path for his glory.

And I started off in a part of the Episcopal Church. And we know a great deal of that story. And the Lord called me out of that before this ACNA wanted to inform. And he sent me off to East Africa in Tanzania underneath a beautiful bishop of mine, Sadek Makaia.

I had gone there and went to preach. And the Holy Spirit found me and he said, would you please come back and preach through my diagnosis? And I'm like, oh sure. I'd like to do that. I'd love to talk about the Lord. How many churches do you have?

[3:37] And he said, I have 133. I'm like, oh my goodness. That might take a while. I have to ask my wife. So I had gone back and this led to that. And all of a sudden I found myself, the Lord said, Brian, I want to send you off because I've set you free.

And I wanted to go and just release the captives and proclaim restored sight to the blind. So I did. And I went from this one over to this one. That was my seminary down over here to the Anglican Church of North America.

And I serve in the Anglican Diocese in New England. I'm a faithful man of God. Bishop Bill Burdock, who is retiring very soon, a friend of yours, a godly man. And I say thank you. And I honestly, you say you're just David when you're here.

But I'm thankful I get to stand on your shoulders. And I'm very grateful. And the Lord had me pastor a church. But I've got a gift of street evangelism and a gift of proclamation.

So I went to this one. This is Church Army USA. And I'll be very brief about this. Because I've already used up two minutes and 57 seconds. About 100 years or so ago, a crazy man who was

seized by the great affection, as it were, where Wilson Carlisle had a broken heart for things that broke God.

[4:54] And he had the spiritual gift of preaching. He was a brilliant man that made an awful lot of money in business. And he played the trombone, which is a very good instrument to having a praise band.

So he took his trombone. And like a foolish man who believed in the reality of the resurrection of Jesus, marched off into the worst areas of England, playing a trombone as a herald of Jesus Christ. Saying, the good news has come. The kingdom of God has come and dwelt among us. And they have seen his glory. And when he preached the good news, hearts tend to hear it. Right? We're only going where he's already gone.

God is sovereign. God is. So he launched off. And he ended up being the evangelist for the Church of England. At the same time, the Salvation Army was picking up.

Church Army was picking up as well. The big difference is, they were a church denomination-esque, as it were. Church Army was raised up as the evangelistic arm for the Anglican Church.

[5:54] Right? And then it came over the seas in America. They used to have great big training centers. This was the Anglican Church. The Episcopal Church. And people would be trained up in the ways of evangelism.

And they would literally march from city to city. With banners to claiming God. Can you imagine that? What's that noise? It was Canaan marching down the street. Here they come again.

Quick, lock the door, Sonny. They had to preach the gospel. And they would go there. And they would preach the gospel. In my homes, I live in Hartford. I live in West Hartford. By Hartford, Connecticut. And the cathedral in downtown Hartford.

As early as the 50s, they used to have church army that was there. And in the basement of the cathedral, people would come and spend their lives being trained in the heritage of the good news. And they would bring banners saying, God is love.

And this guy had a ukulele. Only slightly more efficient than a trombone. And he would march out to the businessman in Hartford. At times, a thriving city. During a new day prayer.

[6:52] And he would open air, preach the gospel. That God is love. And Christ has come to save you. And people on the street would stop. Turn in to the cathedral. And join people for new day prayer.

And give their lives to Jesus Christ. Can you believe it? And then they would go down to a bushel of heart. And they would have open air preaching. And they would give testimony. And testify to the goodness of God.

The Anglican Church. It's not that funny. You remember the guy who wrote our book that burned it to save for his faith. Amen? We are a church of martyrs.

We are a church of witnesses. That's the great news of Jesus. I have to. Five minutes and 47 seconds. If you want to know more about church army. You have to talk to me. And I'm going to walk back over here.

And I'm going to share a little bit where I'm from right now. So I was part of a church. The Lord called me out. He said, look, Brian. I want you to plant a church. Actually, four churches. Three among people in nursing homes.

[7:49] Right? And then one among the street people of downtown Hartford. The nursing homes for me was a no-brainer. The Lord said, true religion is this. To care for the widows and orphans. Amen? I'd like to remind you, church.

In North America, when we think of an orphan, we think of a non-white somewhere over there.

Amen? So we send lots of money to people that run orphanages for non-whites over theirs. Amen? An orphan is somebody who has no? Let's hear it again. Who has no? Parents. How many people are in assisted living facilities with their parents? They've been orphaned.

Amen? Amen. And then a widow. Do I have to explain that one? No, I don't. You know, we say over in Africa, if someone's a widow and they profess faith in Christ, and if they come to faith and if they have nothing, their lives are in mortal danger.

A woman in East Africa that has no property has no life. Amen? That's true. But you know, a woman or a man in America who has been widowed has no life or recourse either. It's true.

[8:52] I don't want to get political about it, but folks can't afford the medication. Folks can't afford life. It's really hard to grow old in America. Amen? Billy Graham's last book.

I mean, it's the deal. He said, I spent my whole life preaching about what happens when you die, but I never spoke about how hard it is while you are. So I planted churches over there. Then I planted another one on the streets of Hartford in the front steps of City Hall. The Lord asked me to. I've got a very fancy church. It's a folding table I bought at Costco for \$60. And I have a chalice and a patent. And I have the presence of Jesus Christ. What else do we need? So every Saturday, my friends and I, when I'm not there, we rotate through, gather on the front steps of City Hall.

We have a fine PA system. And we open air preach the gospel. I have the best baptismal font in the city of Hartford. It's the public fountain.

[9:49] We have people that come out of addiction to heroin and profess faith in Jesus. We baptize them in the fountain. We give them communion. We grab our telephones. We call 911.

The ambulance comes. They go off to rehab. And they come back right in their sober mind. These things are happening. So when I read the scripture we have today in Mark 10, it's really potent to me.

It's a very powerful scripture. If you've spent time in the gospel of Mark, he's a brilliant man. Remember, the gospels are historical biographies. And historical biographies to convention don't follow a linear pattern, a time pattern.

They're more concerned about expressing the character of the person they're writing about. This is true, right? I have to watch out. Because you're in the show today. I was training. I want to make sure I'm fulfilling everything properly.

Amen? Amen. Thank you very much. So Mark is brilliant. From the get-go, Mark is always going like this. Immediately, immediately, immediately. There's a sense of urgency in Mark.

[10:49] And I believe that's a word for the church. We need to recover a sense of urgency. None of us know the days and hours of our time. I pray daily the Lord comes back. I'm supposed to have a four-hour drive today when I leave here.

I pray I don't. I hope Jesus returns before I get home. Amen? I'm going to miss my kids. But we're going to beat the great banqueting table. That's going to be better than my house, right? We've got more room. My house is teeny.

So here's Mark going immediately. And Mark talks about a couple of big themes. In-groups and out-groups. We all know what in-groups and out-groups are no matter where you are. It's an old boys, old girls club, and everybody else.

With the in-group and the out-group, Mark's talking about, there's two distinct groups in that as well. The church people, those who were waiting. Now, there's this beautiful phrase they would talk about, especially with these women of prayer in the Old Testament.

It says they were waiting for the consolation of Israel. Isn't that a beautiful term? Waiting for the consolation of Israel. Waiting for those who were God's people, called by the Lord, and then experienced all this hardship.

[11:50] It's like all of us when we wake up and say, I never expected life to be like this. Amen? Unless you've got a great life. And thank you, Jesus. Invite me for dinner. I want to come.

But you know, none of us woke up and wanted to have hard times. Some of us have gone through painful marriages. Some of us have gone through horrific trauma in our lives, in our family lives. We're waiting for the consummation, the consolation of Christ to return, to make a new heaven and new earth, and to restore all things, to make all things new.

Amen? And in the midst of that, Mark again, with the in-group and the out-group, has these people that were thinking he was the one. And if you go back up a little bit in chapter 10, you see Jesus is going off towards Jerusalem, right?

Jericho, rather, with his people. And just before that, in verse 35, we have James and John. Now, they were waiting for the consolation of Israel that they might cash in their 401k.

[12:49] They had hedged their bets. They were like the people that are now rooting for the Red Sox that hated them last week. And if that's you, repent. There is but one team in the coming glory of Jesus.

And they have a Bostonian accent. Amen, church? So here they are saying, Jesus, do me a favor. I know you're the one. I'm seeing you do these miraculous things. You're raising the dead. You're

giving sight to the blind.

I've been waiting for the consolation of Israel. I've walked away from all things. I'm following you. So when you win the World Series, I'm going to bandwagon and get on with you. Amen? That's what they really felt.

Even though they were the ones closest to them. James and John. John, we're going to see later on. The disciple whom Jesus loved. Who buried his head in Jesus' breast.

He was the one who deep in his heart still was driven by his own agenda. Because he hadn't quite received the full understanding of who Jesus was.

[13:48] I'm pretty excited. If that's loud on this, I apologize. Amen? And as they're going off to Jericho. And as they're fighting and saying, look, when you get there, I want to be on these hands.

And if you don't remember, Jesus' reply was, you know, I can't tell you who's going to sit here, who's going to sit there. And when Jesus was elevated, asking for the right and the left hand, those were seats of power and position.

Now, I see this an awful lot in some countries where I've traveled within the church. There are some people who have the understanding, once I've elevated to a position of pastor on due rights.

Jesus knew that. Jesus spoke about that. Beware of those who walk around wearing fancy robes, devouring widows' houses. Watch out for people who take positions within the church to leverage for authority.

Be careful of them. Because we don't always know. Sheep in wolves' clothing. I know that's not here. But Jesus is asking us to be very clear about that. And these two people were trying to ask that.

[14:50] And Jesus just said, look, can you drink from that which I can drink from? And full of bravado. They're like, oh yeah? They had no idea.

You know, my brother back here is a chaplain in the military. I'm very excited about that. I've got a very good friend of mine I work with in downtown Hartford. He and his platoon took down Saddam Hussein's brother's palace.

Right? He's one of my heroes. And he's the guy that works now at the Hartford Police Department that's supposed to put the fear of people into them. He makes grown people cry so they can understand stress and duress when they're actually out there.

And he talks about so often when these new recruits come in. And he is one big intimidating man. And we're funny because he's like bald and huge and black. And I'm short and bald and hairy and white.

And like we are just the funniest couple but we're having a blast together. And he talks about those who come in thinking they're prepared for the task. And when reality hits them they break down. It's true.

[15:50] And it doesn't happen just with them. If you've never heard this, it's an incredible story. I read when the Pope goes on to vest. In the antechamber before he walks into the new place. There's a room.

Actually they call it the room of tears. Right? And it's there where they choose out all the symbols of their office. And they leave their old name, their old identity. Put on these new offices. And after that they step through and they greet the crowd.

And their old life is gone. And it says the weight of who they are and what's going to happen hits them like a ton of bricks. And they all break down in the room of tears. And that's what Jesus was saying.

If you follow after me there's a weight you can't. But don't worry. I'm going to bear that weight. I'm going to be crushed so that you won't be broken. So then they're walking down there. These really churchy people in Jesus.

Through Jericho. And they come across a beggar. Now I know beggars well. They're in my church. My church is full of people with the signs. I have prostitutes in my church.

[16:46] I have heroin addicts in my church. I have people who come and help that even have really good jobs. Corner offices with so many letters after their names. I can't even tell what it is.

It's worse than the Anglican Soup Church. Amen. They're all over there. And then here's this. Listen to this. Here's this disciple. And these really fancy church people are walking by. And they pass him by on the roadside.

Because beggars. You know we don't know what's going on with these guys. But the beggar knew where to be. Right. Like all those guys on the corner. Now again I was sharing yesterday. Watch out.

Most of it's just a scam. But they knew where to go. This guy knew where to be. And all of a sudden what he didn't expect walked by. He went there looking to get some cash for the day. And Jesus walked by.

And the Holy Spirit worked in his heart. Because he cried out to him. As if he were Jesus. David. The son of David. And he begged people to come. And all the fancy church people wanted to shut him up.

[17 : 45] Stop it. You're just. No. We're the super holy ones. We're going to be on the right and the left hand. You can't. We don't want to give you anything. You just keep on driving.

And the more he pushed him down. The more men convicted of the reality of who Jesus was. Screamed out all the more. And when we come to those things. When the hard times come to us. When people tell us to shut up.

We need to get on the rooftops all the more. Amen. No one can tell us to stop talking about Jesus. Nobody. I need on the front steps of City Hall.

I plaster the sidewalk. That the mayor walks into. Every Saturday was scripture. And the truths and reality of God. And people ask me all the time.

How do you get to be there. With the separation of church and state. And I tell them simply. God never got the memo. No. And they say no really. How? And I say the power of the Holy Ghost.

[18 : 46] Church what the world needs to see now. Desperately now. Is people who are convicted. And convinced of the reality of the gospel. And are willing to do things like that.

We might seem foolish. That man was being shut up. Because he was being an embarrassment. People thought. And we have to remind ourselves. That the foolishness of God. Is to confound the wisdom of the world.

When Jesus though being equal with God. Left everything. And the equality he had with the father. Came down and dwelt among us. That was foolish. He had everything.

He was made fun of and mocked. Jesus if you really were a prophet. You would know who that woman was. You wouldn't let her in your house. She's got cooties. If you really knew who this person was.

You wouldn't allow that person in your church. That's just not the way it is. But church. We need to allow the broken to come in. That they might be healed. And sent out whole. Amen. So here was this man calling up.

[19 : 45] And he got up and he sprang. And you guys wouldn't really catch this piece. But when a beggar somewhere. When we see these folks. What did he do with his cloak? Take a peek. Verse 49.

Sorry. Verse 50. And what? Throwing off his cloak. Now I've got friends. All they own is one coat. This beggar in a crowd got up. Threw off the only thing he had. And ran to Jesus. He didn't safely lock it away somewhere. He didn't fold it and give it to somebody.

I believe if the Lord meant to say that. He would have done that. But the original hearers would have gotten this. So this man jumped up. Left what he had. And chased after Jesus.

And he asked us all to do that. Are you willing to leave. All that we have. For the glory of God. Are we willing to do that? The Lord might call some of us to do it.

[20 : 46] He might not call all of us. But are we willing to do that? And when we do that. And run after him. The Lord knows that we mean business. Yesterday. We had a team of 35 people in the rain.

On the front steps of City Hall. We had folks texting us. We have a group from Campus Crusade from Christ. That come down from Yukon. And help us out. The blessed school.

Where all the women walk on water. And shoot baskets. That can't stop. It's an amazing thing. And they all showed up in the rain. And I got a text after all of that happened.

That my friend David. I shared about him yesterday. Who came to me two weeks ago. Trying to get into a bed. To have healing from a heroin addiction. But couldn't get in. Because he didn't have a photo ID.

Well they said yesterday David came by. And David had his ID. And yesterday David got a bed in rehab. And David is in detox. And his message was tell Brian I made it.

[21:43] My friend's alive. Because 35 of my friends. Believed. That suffering for the sake of the gospel. Was worth it. And then this man came to Jesus.

And he asked a very simple question. And I asked this of you. And I asked this of all the people. That come to our church. He said. Jesus to him. What would you like me to do?

Now we know. That God uses. Scripture. And stories. And sandwich techniques. And all kinds of fancy things. You learn in seminary. Right? God uses stuff like that.

Here are the church people. Demanding on him. You give me this. And here is this. Wretch of a man.

Who recognized who Jesus was. And Jesus said to him. What is it you would like? He didn't respond. As the people of power.

[22:44] I want left and right hands. No. All he wanted was sight. He just wanted to see. And when we hear that in scripture. There's two things. It's physical sight.

Because this man was really blind. And Jesus really healed blind people. Jesus really helps heroin addicts. Get off heroin. He really makes dead people. Come back to life. And he said this.

And it was to the church. I want to see God. For who he is. And Jesus said. You got it baby. And the church got woke.

And the church spread. Because of prostitutes. And beggars. Even some lawyers. And fishermen. And tax guys. And because they woke up.

And received the gift of the spirit. This church exists. Here in Syracuse. And right now. Brothers and sisters. I'm saying. God's waking up his church again.

[23:42] Amen. I get to travel around. And see it. First hand. The church is waking up. The Barna Institute came to us.

A couple of months ago. Because our little thing of. Of people that are gathered. It's this white hot cauldron of flame. That's just bursting forth. And that's what God's doing in his churches. Little small pockets of people.

Being faithful to God. And collectively. There's this heat. That the world desperately needs. And you're one of them. I can't get enough of what I've seen.

And felt and heard. When I've been here. I just. It's the overwhelming presence. Of the glory of God. Pouring out of you. And all I want to do is. You know. I come here. I'm not the. The big fancy guy. To just.

Speak about this. And tell us what to do. I'm just. I'm just some guy. That got woken up. By the great affection of God. And I'm just. Want to fan into flame. What's been going on here. And preached here. And believed here.

[24:38] And the spirit spoken here. I'm just a bellows. A blowhard. For the glory of God. That's all I am. And I want to ask you. If you guys would join me.

Would you find the next spark. And blow on it. Would you join me. In finding the beggars. On the side of the road. Desperately looking for Jesus. They're not coming in. Would you find the outcast. The lonely. The widow. The orphan. The addict. The prostitute. The divorced person. The broken person. The one who just lost his job. And just sit with them. Where they are.

Long enough. That they might understand. Indeed. That there is a place for me. In the kingdom of God. And would you join me. In seeking after him. In seeking first. His kingdom. And his glory. And just worry. More about ourselves. And more about them. That we might walk. Into the darkness. Because the darkness. Is only dark. If the light never shows up. And would you join me. In being inconvenienced.

[25:36] For the advancement. Of the kingdom of God. Would you be inconvenienced. For his glory. And offer him. The one thing. That we can never take back. Time. We can get more money.

We can earn more money. We can buy more socks. We can buy more underwear. But only the Lord. Can redeem our days. And when we show up. And give our time.

For people. They mean business. And the Lord knows. That we do. It's a holy. Glorious waste of time. For the glory of God. And that's kind of. A funny statement.

Because we as Christians. We aren't bound by time. We're immortal beings. We're not giving up anything. We're going to be. In the presence of God.

And all the saints. The white robe martyrs. For all of eternity. We're not giving up a thing. And so this day. Would you join me. And saying Lord.

[26:31] I would like to go. Lord. I would like to be. A conduit of your mercy. Of your peace. Jesus. I praise you. And thank you. For a holy.

Trinity church. I thank you Lord God. For the. The original embers. That just received. The spark of the Holy Spirit. And faithfully stayed. As a. A spark underground.

Covered yet. The smoldering. When the winds of the spirit. Blow back on it. And Father. Lord. We pray. For a glorious. Crown fire. Throughout all of Syracuse. We won't settle for orange men. We want. Men and women ablaze. With a fire of God. And Lord. It's just. Really interesting too. As. As you gave us our scripture.

Today. In Isaiah. It talks about. Those who've received the gift. The anointing of the spirit. They can't be fanned. Back into flame. And. And. My brother was sharing. The other day. Syracuse was a salt city.

[27:28] And God. You can raise the dead. You can make salt. Salty again. And for those. Who have received the gift. Those. Here. Who today are tired. Those here today. Have. Have been waiting.

And haven't gotten. The answer of God. I'd say to you. You are loved. Redeemed. God's eye is on you. He cannot forget you. He says. You are like a. A child. At a nursing mother's breast. You can't be neglected.

He is with you. He is for you. And just to hang on a little longer. And to weep with those around you. For right now. There is a holy roar. Rising up in this nation.

And it's small little choirs. Collectively singing the praise. Of the only one worthy to receive it. Jesus. The name above all names.

Blessed Redeemer. Emmanuel. Oh Jesus. We love you. And we thank you.

[28:31] And to you be all honor. And all glory. In your name. Amen. Amen. Amen.