

Among You Stands One You Do Not Know

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Date: 03 December 1989

Preacher: Harry Robinson

- [0 : 0 0] our hearts. In Christ's name, amen. I want to pick up one sentence from the passage that you've just heard.
- And it was a sentence which John the Baptist gave to those who gathered around him and were dissatisfied with what he had to say and the terrible authority with which he said it.
- And they just said to him, Who are you? He said, It doesn't matter who I am. Are you the prophet? No, I'm not. Are you the one who should come? No, I'm not.
- Are you Elijah? No, I'm not. That's what he said. But then he said this to them, There stands one among you, whom you know not.
- And I wonder how many, how many times that sermon could be preached over and over again. I wonder if John the Baptist had been in Tiananmen Square.
- [1 : 2 4] He could not have said, There stands one among you, whom you know not. I wonder if he could have been in Wenceslas Square in Prague and said, There stands one among you, whom you know not.
- And if it could have been in Wenceslas Square, And if at the surging back and forth across the Berlin Wall, the great crowds of them, it could be said, There stands one among you, whom you know not.
- And if it could be said to the whole of the city of Vancouver, There stands one among you, whom you know not. And if we as a congregation could not be addressed by John the Baptist in just those words, As there stands one among you, whom you know not.
- And I would like you to consider that possibility, that there stands one among us, whom we know not. And the very particular effort, which we as a congregation are making in that year, which begins on this first Sunday in Advent, is that we might find the one among us, whom by and large we know not.
- Because if you take all the music and all the candles and all the loveliness, of this service, and you leave here with a sense that there stood one among us, whom we know not.
- [3 : 1 3] Because I don't think anything else can deeply satisfy us till we find out who that is, that one is among us, whom we know not.
- Now there's a lovely story in the fourth chapter of John, which tells you why it is, that it's possible that there stands one among us, whom we know not.
- And this is the lovely story of one whom I come to regard as one of the most beautiful women in the whole of the New Testament. The woman of Samaria, who stood in the very presence of Jesus Christ at Jacob's well at Sychar, and though she stood there, she did not know him.
- How I wish that we could have that, in a sense, branded on our minds and hearts, that there stands one among us whom we know not, and that the very business of our life is to come to know him.
- And in order that you might know how difficult that is, or what the process is that's involved, let me remind you of the barriers that Jesus had to break down in the life of this woman in order that she would know who he is.

[4 : 50] And let me consider for you and with you the possibility that the same kind of barriers exist in our personal lives, in our corporate life, as a congregation, that the one who stands among us, we do not know.

And these are the problems, the barriers, that had to be broken down. And Jesus, with infinite graciousness, went about the process of breaking down the barriers so this woman could know who he was.

And the whole purpose of our mission in January is that for this community, the barriers that have been built up sometime over years and years and years, that those barriers might come tumbling down, and that many in this community and in this city might come to know the one who stands among us, whom at the moment we know not.

The first barrier. Jesus says to the woman, give me a drink. And the woman says, how come you, a Jew, ask of me, a Samaritan?

would be laboring the point to say any more, wouldn't it? The second barrier that had to be broken down was that she was ignorant.

[6 : 33] And she had to become aware of her ignorance. And we know what we know, but one of the things we don't know and need to know is that of which we are ignorant.

And he said, if you knew who it was that was asking you for a drink, you would ask me and you would receive living water.

She ignored her ignorance. Then they go on. She says, well, you couldn't do it anyway. Because the well is deep and you haven't got anything by which to draw water.

So, people look at the church of Jesus Christ and they see the depth of the problem of human nature.

He says, you can't touch it. You can't come near it. Just as she said to Jesus, you've nothing to draw with.

[7 : 44] And so, she was convinced that he had not the capacity or the technique to be able to do. And then, Jesus turned to her again and she said to him, are you greater than our father Jacob?

That's one of the most insidious barriers barriers. Because most people in our world think that the reality of God belongs to a far away history in the time of our father Jacob who dug this well.

And there was a time in a great and golden age that is centuries ago and lost in the mists of time that we can never get back to. In those days, people knew God.

you're not suggesting to me, she said, that you're greater than him, than Jacob, that this moment is a more significant moment than those which happened long ago.

And that was a real barrier for her too. The inability to see that right then and right there was a moment in history which far exceeded anything that happened in the time of Jacob.

[9 : 17] And then Jesus, with great delicacy, brought up the moral problem. And most of us have an enormous barrier against the one who stands among us whom we do not know because of a failure in our moral life, a failure of which we, for some reason, become acutely aware, one that we don't like to look at, that there is a profound failure in our moral life.

And we suppose that that disqualifies us from anything and everything. so Jesus said to her, go and call your husband, and she said, I have no husband.

And Jesus said to her, with wonderful grace, you told the truth. That's all that's required about our moral life, is that we tell the truth.

We acknowledge the truth of our predicament to the one who alone can meet us in our predicament. And so she told the truth.

And then to avoid the subject, she went on to the next barrier that existed for her. And she said, you say that on that mountain you should worship, and we say, you say that in Jerusalem you should worship.

[10 : 50] We, the Samaritans, say, on that mountain. the great religious questions of the world. Is this group true? Does this group have the truth? Does that group?

And we can endlessly ask questions of a religious and theological nature, which will prevent our ever having to come to the place where we know the one who stands among us.

Jesus again highlighted her ignorance and said, you just don't know. He said to her, woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.

You worship what you do not know. We worship what we know for salvation is from the Jews. Jews terrible exclusiveness of truth is an enormous barrier to people in our society.

The truth can't be of that nature. I have a right to my ignorance as much as anybody has a right to theirs. and the only way that we can defend our right to our religious ignorance is by affirming that there can be no truth anywhere.

[12 : 23] That provides a very substantial barrier indeed. when the woman has been addressed in that way she raises the question the kind of historical question kind of question that is perhaps at the heart of Advent and that is I know that when the Messiah comes then we will know that he hasn't come and we don't know.

And I guess that's what touches me most deeply when we come to celebrate the season of Advent again and to remember the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We make the mental reservation that we have this time to put in that when he comes he will show us the truth and so we excuse ourselves as we put up the final barrier as this woman supposed she had successfully done.

When he comes then we will know. In the meantime we continue in our cultivated ignorance we continue behind the barrier and the barriers protect us from the responsibility of knowing the God who stands among us whom we know not.

And for that woman when she had made that remark all the barriers came crashing down as Jesus turned to her and said I that speak to you am he and declared himself to be God.

[15 : 04] That's all. that process is the process of examining the barriers and gradually if we can tearing them down so that we may come to the place where we know the one who stands among us whom by all our human rationality by all our human technique by all our human understanding the one whom we don't know and the one whom one day we will know inevitably the one whom I hope in your heart you long to know will you as this service proceeds consider that that at the center of this service at the center of our city at the center of our world there stands one among us whom we don't know

God may grant to us a deep longing to know him and in knowing him to love him Amen service closing night meny■ that of Apply to Day,

Arielle Halle, externe historian, par Kenneth degree, Plus, abonnement juried, chardin Hamburgassa, Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Thank you.

[18 : 51] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. All the love and power, your words serve within us, the expectation of the coming of your Son.

[21 : 44] Accept all we offer you this time, and sustain us with your promise to be trivialized. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, Almighty.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. . . .

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[23 : 38] . . .

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. O to earth and contemplation by the Holy Ghost's King.

And the kingdom world take dearly war, in her loving arms received.

[25 : 06] Ever and evermore. Sing the heights of heaven is gracious, angels and the nations sing.

Where so many people may come, let your joy as darkness reign.

There we come, this love is gracious, angels and the nations sing. From whose voices are so free, evermore and evermore.

Jesus tells the parable of the five wise and the five foolish maidens, and exhorts us to be prepared for his promised return.

Then the kingdom of heaven shall be compared to ten maidens who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom.

[26 : 34] Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them. But the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps.

As the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. But at midnight there was a cry, Behold the bridegroom, come out to meet him.

Then all those maidens rose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.

But the wise replied, Perhaps there will not be enough for us and for you. Go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came.

And those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast. And the door was shut. Afterward, the other maidens came also, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

[27 : 45] But he replied, Truly, I say to you, I do not know you. Watch, therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

Thanks be to God. God.

Good. God. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[29 : 53] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[31 : 41] Thank you.

In your pew Bibles, page 192. Our scripture reading deals with death for a Christian, and it deals with living as a Christian in the light of Jesus' second coming.

That we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.

For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.

For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep.

[33 : 25] For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel's call, and with the sound of the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

And then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.

And so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words. But as to the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need to have anything written to you.

For you yourselves know well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When people say there is peace and security, then sudden destruction will come upon them as travail comes upon a woman with child, and there will be no escape.

But you are not in darkness, brethren, for that day to surprise you like a thief. For you are all sons of light and sons of the day.

[34 : 55] We are not of the night or of the darkness. So then, let us not sleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober.

For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet, the hope of salvation.

For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we wake or sleep, we might live with him.

Therefore, encourage one another, and build one another up, just as you are doing. Thanks be to God.

A God and yet a man, a maiden yet a mother, which wonders what we can conceive for the other.

[36 : 52] A God and yet a mother, baby, how come?

Leave and leave to wander. Leave to wander.

Judah and Jerusalem, fear not nor be dismayed. Stand ye still, and ye shall see the salvation of the Lord.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Tomorrow, glory be to the Lord. And the Lord be to the Lord.

Amen. Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Now in the time of this mortal life, in which your Son, Jesus Christ, came to us in great humility, that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

[38 : 56] Amen. God, for whom we wait, you have fed us with your word of eternal life.

Keep us ever watchful during this season of Advent, that we may be ready to stand before you. And the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be with you now and forevermore.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

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