

Sir, come down ere my child die (Quality: Good)

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Preacher: Mercer, Seth (1930-2017)

- [0 : 00] The word of God that is with me to venture with, you will find in the Gospel of John, chapter 4, reading verse 49.
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- When I was returning during the day back from the Brighton Bethesda home, I was at one point listening to the news on the radio, and among other things there was an account of that which is going on at the Strangeways Jail in Manchester.
- And they gave a recording of a mother who was crying out as loud as she could, Come down, son, come down.
- [1 : 46] A mother of one of those that are in that which has been going on. And according to the news, there are just five of these prisoners that are on the part of the roof of that jail.
- But I cannot tell you how I felt. I really wept for a few moments before the Lord because of that heart-rending cry from a mother.
- And I am aware that this, as far as we could judge, would be in a natural way, a mother's love to her wayward son. But it was, Come down, son.
- Come down. Come down.
- And those of us here that have been given, as it were, some little understanding of what there is in our poor hearts, we know this, that the seed, at least I speak for myself for a moment, but we know this, that the seeds of every evil dwell within our hearts.
- [3 : 37] It's all there. We could have been left to any of the dreadful sins that there are. And I'm sure there are those of us here that have known what it is at times in our life to have murder in our hearts.
- And it's there, you see. And it's there, you see. Well, I just mentioned how my thoughts, as it were, commenced regarding this word.
- And for the rest of the journey home, I was just thinking of the word of God. And there are, if you look into it, you'll see that there are a number of scriptures that speak in this way, come down.
- Come down. Come down. Come down. And I can only hope that I have been in this way directed to this word.
- And my brethren that are here this evening in the ministry will well know this, that we go about, as it were, from day to day in the exercise of the ministry.
- [4 : 52] And as we have services before us, the burden is, Lord, oh, grant us thy word. We cannot go without it, Lord. We must be given it.
- Sometimes the Lord does this very clearly. Sometimes he brings us to those spots and places where all we can do is just venture. And yet, if it's true venturing faith, then the Lord, I believe, honors this.

Well, may the Lord then help us to look a little into this subject here. I am aware that this that is spoken of concerning the nobleman's son is that which concerned his body.

Because he was very ill. And as it says in an earlier verse, he went unto him and besought him that he would come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.

And I know that sometimes the Lord has used this word in a literal sense.

[6 : 19] I remember, dear friends, telling me years ago now how they had a child that was so ill. And the late Mr. Gascoigne was to preach that evening, I believe it was at Coventry.

And the Lord sent the dear man with his very word. Sir, come down ere my child die. And of course it met the case of those dear parents that were burdened for as they looked upon it as a dying child.

And if any of you here tonight, it's not something that one has walked in personally, in a true sense, but any of you that have walked in this, wherein perhaps you've had a dear child that's been very near to death, and the exercise that this brings upon the hearts of parents, especially regarding their never-dying soul.

Because surely it is this that will burden our hearts more than anything else concerning our children. It's their never-dying souls. I have known what it is to sit up with a child that, as far as I could judge, was very poorly, and truly wondered whether the child would live through the night.

But that was my own personal feelings in the matter. But any of you that have walked, as it were, in this literally, and have known what it is to perhaps expect such news that the child has died.

[8 : 06] And you will know how you felt about it. And you will understand in that particular way something of how this nobleman felt. And this is left on record.

He was indeed a nobleman. It is thought that he could have been a courtier in the palace, as it were, but whatever it was, he's spoken of as a nobleman, a man of some distinction and position in life.

But that here a man was brought, obviously brought, favoured in being brought, to believe that the Lord could heal his son. Well, I leave that part of the subject and seek to come to that which is spiritual.

Some of you, I believe, will remember that the subject on Sunday evening was that where we read concerning the Lord Jesus as he left the judgment hall to go to Calvary.

And there followed him a great company of people and of women, which also bewailed, and lamented him. But Jesus, turning unto them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.

[9 : 44] This then is really the burden that I have once more upon my heart. Although it is not something that I have thought of, but it is something that I have been burdened with.

And the burden really is one's concern regarding never-dying souls. Many of you here tonight have children.

And friends, it's with me to remind you that all your children, all my children, our children, they all have a never-dying soul. Does it concern us?

Is it something that weighs upon our hearts? It is indeed a great favour when parents, as they bring their children to the house of God from the very beginning, they may be favoured to have them with them right through to when they grow up.

And that in itself is a favour. Perhaps the Lord would have me remind you, dear parents that are here tonight, what a favour you have, even in this, that you are able, you are willing, you are concerned, to bring your children into the house of God.

[11 : 14] That is indeed a favour. We need to rightly think of this. The families that do come here, and all the while they do come, there is this that we think of, I being in the way, the Lord met with me.

And who can tell? And we trust that the Lord will. This is our only hope. Even while they're young, that the Lord might touch their hearts.

And so that they may be, in an early life, planted in the house of the Lord, never as it were to leave it, until they're taken to the heaven above.

And what a favour that is. And some of you here tonight, are favoured in this, that you still have your children with you.

Some here, in this you have your children, and they are grown up, and they themselves are married. And yet, to any that are favoured in this, to have their children with them.

[12 : 27] What a favour it is. What a mercy it is. Especially when, dear children are brought, by sovereign grace, as it were, to choose the better part, and want to be, in the house of God themselves.

And we would be truly thankful, whenever the Lord favours in this, and as he does bring, even children, to consider their ways, and to pray, from their young hearts.

And yet, I must perhaps remind you, dear friends, even in this, it is indeed a favour, to have our children with us, in the house of God.

But, that in itself, will never save their soul. Now, do not misunderstand me. That in itself, will never save their soul.

The grace of God, is not hereditary. It is not something, that we can pass on, to our children. If we were able, to do so, well of course we would.

[13 : 45] And yet, if we were able, to do so, we should be, lifted up with pride. I feel we would. And so, the Lord will teach us, that it can only be, through sovereign grace, or sin abounding.

The Lord alone, can change the heart, renew the will, and turn the feet, to Zion's hill. And some of you, here tonight, remember, such a time, in your life.

Perhaps, most of us, here tonight, were taken, into the house of God, from our very early days. Some of us, look back, over the years, and we remember, how irksome, it was to us.

We remember, our feelings, and how we, longed as it were, for the amen, so that we could be, released from it. And we have to say, do we not in this, and such were some of you.

But if, the Lord has, has reached, our hearts, and has brought us, to his dear feet, and we've been brought, as it were, to be turned, completely round, and then we began, to come into the house of God, so very differently.

[15 : 05] I remember, having a letter, from, a dear young person, a good many years ago now, and in the letter, among other things, they said this, they, were now coming, into the house of God, so very differently, and could say, this, but now, I have to pray, for myself, but now, I come, with the hope, that I shall, receive, a portion, for myself.

You see, the change, they knew, there had been a change, they were among, those that had been, favoured, from their childhood, they'd been brought, to chapel, but you see, the day came, when the Lord, changed their heart, renewed their will, and turned their feet, to Zion's hill, and then, they began, to come, so very differently.

The nobleman saith unto him, sir, come down, ere my child die. So, the, the exercise, then, is really regarding, the souls, of our children, the souls, of others.

I go a step, further here, but, friends, do we know, what it is? To be exercised, regarding the souls, of our children, but more than that, do we know, what it is, to be exercised, regarding the souls, of others?

What about, our neighbours? What about, those we come, into contact with, in our lives? Are we, concerned about them?

[16 : 57] If we think, of this town, of Eastbourne, people, and I do not know, what the figure is now, but it must be, something like, 70 to 80,000 people, live in this town alone, and every one of them, has a never dying soul.

Well, are we exercised, in these things? Some while ago, on one of our calendars, at home, there was this, verse, and it really, took hold of me, and it was this, oh, teach me, Saviour, teach me, the value, of a soul.

You know, friends, as I read this, it really, touched my heart, and yet, I had to say, Lord, have I ever really, known, anything about this?

Oh, teach me, Saviour, teach me, the value, of a soul. Do we know, anything about it? Are we exercised, in it?

You see, our children, and others, they have never dying souls. It's a very solemn matter, because after death, the soul, leaves the body at death, and it will either be, to enter into heaven, or into hell.

[18 : 24] And if we think, of the great day, of judgment, and the resurrection, and we do indeed, believe this, that the Lord's people, will be raised, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that we are told, concerning the body, that the Lord will give, his dear people, a body, like unto, his glorious body.

We cannot, conceive, what it will be, with our poor, finite minds, finite minds. But friends, do we believe it? Oh, I do believe, indeed, in the resurrection, of the dead, and that they will be, raised from death.

And in that, a solemn dream, that Mr. Patterson had, and I've been thinking, of it again today, and in that dream, you see, the Lord taught him, a very solemn lesson.

There were those, that he thought, as he looked upon, surely, they will go to heaven, but in that dream, they didn't. And there were also, those that, that people would have thought, would never go to heaven, but in his dream, he saw that they did.

And friends, this is what will happen, I'm sure, in that solemn day. But the thing, that matters with us, is this, surely, how will it be, with you and I?

[19 : 52] How will it be, with us? Because, we must come, to consider this, for a moment, that we believe, that every person, that has lived, in this world, their dust, will be raised, from death, and their souls, will be reunited, with, a body prepared, and it will either be, a body prepared, for heaven, or it will be, a body prepared, for hell.

Eternity. What poor preacher, can ever, ever convey, to his hearers, what eternity is? I cannot, convey it to you, may the Lord, even give us, just a glimpse, of what it means, tonight.

Because it means, this, a never, never, never ending, eternal state. It will go on, forever and ever. Our lives here, however long it might be, whether a few years, or many years, but if we think, of 100 years, what is that, compared, to eternity?

A never ending state, an eternal state, which every one of us, will enter into. every one of us here, who then, can begin, to really estimate, the value of our soul, and each one of us, has, a never dying soul.

It's this, that's with me. Think of our children, we cannot help, thinking of them. We think of other, those that we know, and love. You may have, brothers, sisters, you may have those, that as you view them today, they're right out, in the world.

[21 : 50] They're as far from God, as sheep can run. And if, if, if, who maketh thee, to differ? If it's different, with us, who has wrought this?

Who maketh thee, to differ? And what hast thou, that thou didst not receive? How is it, if we are different? How is it, that we are different? It is because, of sovereign grace.

It is because, of the work, of the Holy Ghost, within our soul, that our poor hearts, have been touched, and we've been brought, to tremble, before the majesty, of heaven.

We've been brought, to tremble as sinners, in the sight, of an holy God. I'm sure, there are those, here tonight, who in your measure, as I trust, it has been, with my own soul.

But have there, has there not been, occasions, when, the Lord has come, to you, and he said, thou art the man, and thou, art the woman.

[22 : 55] And you've really, felt this. You've known, as it were, what it is, to feel the sentence, of divine justice, in your soul. And you've been brought, to tremble, before the majesty, of heaven.

The nobleman, saith unto him, sir, come now, ere my child die. We think of it then, in a literal sense.

I remember, one morning, some years ago, when, one of our sons, had been, on a journey, and, we received, we received, a message, to say, that, there had been, an accident, and a friend, had seen, these machines, lying in the road, and of course, my heart, immediately, went to my son.

And oh, the feeling, that came over me, supposing, he's been taken. And as, as one viewed, this solemn matter, we could not feel, there was any hope.

You see friends, what I'm trying, to convey to you tonight, is something, that's very solemn. Because our children, our loved ones, others, we all, we each have, but in whatever way, we might think of it, there's this great, and solemn matter, the value of the soul.

[24 : 31] And the value of the soul, who can begin, to fathom it, or understand it? Because it is, you see, the soul, is, is, that which is, which lives forever.

Oh, it lives forever. The nobleman saith unto him, sir, come down, ere my child die. We think of it then, as we think of death itself.

But we think of it also, concerning eternity. And that state, that will never, never end. Well, the Lord knows, how we respond, to all this.

The Lord knows, how any of us, feel in this. But as we look, upon our loved ones, as we consider, these matters, and as we view them, in their lives, surely, it's, our cry is, as it was, with this nobleman, sir, come down, ere my child die.

What, then, must be, wrought, within the heart, for this, to be known? The Lord, help me, now, to try and convey, this to you.

[25 : 54] And I think of it, like this, the cry here is, sir, come down, ere my child die. But what we also, need in this, is that the Lord, will, fulfill, this, in the lives, of sinners, and that he will say, to them, come down.

I think again, of the dear mother, who cried out today, son, come down. What a cry it was.

The anguish, you could feel, the anguish, of her heart, for her son. And so, we need the Lord, to do this, in the hearts, of sinners, come down.

We have this, in the word of God. We have it, in more than one instance, but I think, as I do, from time to time, I just think, for a moment, of Zacchaeus.

Sir, come down, ere my child die. You see, the Lord, had a purpose of grace, towards Zacchaeus. And we, we do not know, what the Lord's purposes are, only as he, unfolds it.

[27 : 14] Again, I think of Sunday evening. There may be, those of you here, that have had, a promise, concerning a child. And if you have, had a promise, you will know, what it is, to carry that promise.

And that promise, so often, will be severely tested. You may, have seen, a son, or a daughter, to whom the Lord, has given you, some hope, regarding them.

And yet, you may see them today. They may be, as far from God, as sheep can run. They may be, right out in the world. And if you've, had a promise, concerning any one of them, you will know, what it is, at times, to be brought, very low, on account of this.

promise. And your promise, will be severely tested. You'll know, what it is, to walk in temptation, with it. Did the Lord, really give me this?

And how you'll, watch as it were, in your life, you'll watch, to see, if, there are any, signs, of the Lord, fulfilling his word.

[28 : 26] You'll watch, in these things. You'll wait, before the Lord, in these things. I was speaking, to a mother, recently, an aged mother, not one of our friends, here, I feel free, just to say this, but the exercise, of an aged mother, for a son, and her concern, in communicating, and trying, as it were, to speak to him, in a way, that she felt, the Lord, had laid in her heart.

The nobleman, saith unto him, Sir, come down, ere my child die. Well, only the Lord, can do this.

Dear friend, you know, that this is true. If you're helped, to think of your own case, for a moment, what is it, that has brought, a change in your heart?

What is it, that has brought you, to chapel this evening? Surely, you must say, it's sovereign grace, or sin abounding. You'll have to say, it's the Lord, that has brought this, for me.

But then, you see, there's this concern, for others. There may also, be those here, that are concerned, for loved ones, or others, that you feel, are in a false profession.

[29 : 48] And in one sense, that is even worse. The Bible speaks, of a false profession, and it says this, being twice dead, plucked up by the roots.

You may have those, that you feel, are in a false profession. You see them, as it were, going on in it. And oh, the anguish, the exercise, that you carry, before the Lord, in all this.

And you'll say, sir, come down, ere my child die. Oh Lord, appear for me. Do Lord, appear in this case. Well, just for a little while, we just seek, to bring God's word, before you.

The Lord knew, where Zacchaeus was, in the sycamore tree. And that is, an encouragement, isn't it, to think like this.

Wherever, our loved ones are, this very evening, the Lord knows, where they are. And friends, none of them, are beyond the limits, of his love.

[30 : 59] Now that is, our mercy. And we hope, to close with, that beautiful hymn, that comes in, like this. The appointed time, rolls on a pace, not to propose, but call by grace, to change the heart, renew the will, and turn the feet, to Zion's hill.

Oh, are we looking, for that day? Are we burdened, for that day? Do we wait, for it? Have you ever, known what it is, to have perhaps, the Lord, raise up hope, in your heart, and you may have, looked to see, if your son, or daughter, would come, into the house of God.

You may have, waited for them, to come. And yet, you haven't seen them yet. But friends, the issue, is with the Lord. Now, thinking of Zacchaeus, then, for a moment.

The Lord, knew where he was. And the Lord, knows where, our loved ones are. He knows where they are, this very evening. He knows, what they're doing. And that is our mercy, the Lord knows.

And when the Lord, came to the place, and isn't this what, we need to still pray for? Think of it, the Lord came, to that sycamore tree.

[32 : 22] Zacchaeus, had climbed up into it, out of curiosity. But the Lord knew, it was going to be, that very sycamore tree. And friends, the Lord knows, where it's going to be, in our lives, as it were, or in the lives of others.

The Lord knows, where they will be. What did Jesus say to him? You see, it's the same words. When Jesus came, to that spot, he looked up.

He looked up. We read this on Sunday morning. And I just turned to him. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree, to see him.

For he was to pass that way. You see, the wonder is, the Lord is not confined, to means or places. But he can reach, the hearts of sinners, wherever they are.

Why, I'm sure, there have been those, called by grace, in a public house, in a theatre, cinema, dance hall, whatever you might name.

[33 : 31] And if the Lord, has a purpose of grace, he'll find them there. Sir, come down, ere my child die. But these, this I feel, is very wondrous language.

And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree, to see him. For he was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down.

Make haste, and come down. What wondrous words these are. He, the Lord, he looked up, and saw him.

And friends, our Jesus, is the same today. All power is given unto me, both in heaven, and in earth. And I firmly believe this, that not one soul, whose name is written in the Lamb's book of life, will ever be lost.

They cannot be lost. And when the Lord's time does come, he will call them, by his grace. He looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down.

[35 : 00] For today, I must abide at thy house. And then what do we read? And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

Well, what a change was wrought in this man's heart. If we have known, effectual calling in our poor hearts, we shall know that it wrought a change within us.

As it wrought a change in the heart and life of Zacchaeus. You see, the Lord looked up, he saw him, and he said, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down.

For today, I must abide at thy house. Zacchaeus, may the Lord just help me, to try to convey, what I feel in this.

Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down. For today, I must abide at thy house. Now, you see, there was this, Zacchaeus could stay, in that tree, no longer.

[36 : 14] And friends, when the Lord calls a poor sinner, by his grace, they can stay, as it were, in the world, no longer. They cannot stay, in the things, that they once loved, any longer.

I'm sure, there are those here tonight, who in reflection, you will think of this. And no doubt, in our earlier days, we all had, the things that we pursue.

You may remember, going to the cinema, the theatre, the dance hall, the football field, the cricket field, whatever it was. And yet, if the Lord has called you, by his grace, he's brought you away, from all that.

You've had to give, all this up. It may not have happened, as it were, in five minutes. But it has happened. And now, these very things, that once so, attracted your heart, they mean nothing to you.

And, through the grace of God, you want no more, to do with them. And now, your cry is, Jesus, save me, or I die.

[37 : 28] And so, the words then, tonight, are these. Two words, really, come down. The nobleman's cry, sir, come down, ere my child die.

Oh, it was as though, he was saying to the Lord, Lord, do come. Are you saying that, tonight, in your heart, regarding some poor sinner?

Have you been praying, for them today? Perhaps, you've seen them, as it were, going from bad to worse. You've seen them, going further, and further, into the world.

They did come, to chapel, but now, they no longer come. And, oh, the burden, that you have, for them. And so, you know what it is, to say, come down.

There, my child die. Now, I must soon close. But, if we try, to think of this, a little further.

[38 : 28] Think of the dear woman, that we've been reading of. The Lord found her. He must needs go through Samaria. You see, he had a purpose of grace to her.

And the Lord must needs go through Samaria, to find her. She had already had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast, is not thy husband.

What a character she must have been. What a character she must have been. Friends, one thing that's with me. You see, yes, the very worst of sinners, who upon his grace rely, shall of endless bliss be winners.

They shall live beyond the sky. You see, none are too black, or too vile, or too far off, if the Lord comes to them, and he says to them, come down.

Really, that is what he said to her, come down. He brought her to his feet. And then he revealed himself to her. And then we just also think, for a moment, of Saul of Tarsus.

[39 : 39] He thought that he was doing God's service. He was very religious, a Pharisee of the Pharisees. He tells us this. And yet, when the Lord met with him on the Damascus road, really, he said to Saul of Tarsus, come down.

And he did come down. He fell to the earth. He fell to the earth. You see, he came down. And this is what takes place in the lives of everyone whom the Lord meets with.

He says to them, come down. And they do come down. And through his sovereign mercy and grace, he keeps them down.

And he'll keep them down right through to the end. And they will then very feelingly say, why was I made to hear his voice? And enter whilst there's room, while thousands make a wretched choice, and rather starve than come.

Lord, why? Why me? Why such a wretch as me, who must forever lie in hell, were not salvation free? Now the Lord did hear his cry.

[40 : 57] Oh, I would feel thankful, though I may never be told, but I would feel thankful if any person went home from this service tonight with a little God-given hope that the Lord will appear for you.

And that the day is coming when the Lord will call your son, your daughter, by his grace. In spite of your sins as parents, in spite of all the obstacles, and yet, you see, when the Lord does call by grace, nothing in this world can prevent it.

They must and shall be born again. And then the Lord gave him this answer, and there I leave it. The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down, ere my child die.

Lord, before it's too late, come down, ere my child die. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way, thy son liveth.

And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. Oh, what a wonderful thing it would be if any of you should go home like this tonight.

[42 : 16] Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way, thy son liveth. Perhaps he will say to some poor trembling soul, Thy son, thy daughter, will live.

The day will come when I will call them by my grace. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.

And so will you. You will believe if the Lord favours you, gives you faith in believing, you will believe that it will be so. You will believe.

And then just finally, when he arrived home, his servants met him and told him, saying, Thy son liveth.

Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth.

[43 : 18] And himself believed in his whole house. Well, a last thought here. Who can tell whether in this very evening somewhere the Lord may call a poor sinner by his grace?

Who can tell whether this very evening the Lord will do it, friends? That somewhere he will call a poor sinner by his grace this very evening.

And I hope I say this rightly, but we could see them in chapel on Sunday if it was the Lord's will. You see, these things can happen. Oh, I think of the words that are spoken regarding Jesus.

He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief. May the Lord deliver us from that awful sin. For who can tell whether the Lord will be gracious?

Whenever the Lord gives to his people precious faith in believing, whatever his will is, he will honour the faith that he gives.

[44 : 29] Amen. Amen. May we help to conclude with hymn 76.

There is a period known to God when all his sheep, redeemed by blood, shall leave the hateful ways of sin, turn to the fold, and enter in.

Hymn number 76. Hymn number 76. Hymn number 76. Hymn number 76.

Hymn number 76.

Hymn number 76. Hymn number 76. Hymn number 76. ■■■■■■. HERT CHOIR SINGS

[46 : 57] CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS Thank you.

Thank you.