

Faith and Freedom

Series One:

“Storms”

Preaching in An Age of
Lying Tongues and
Itching Ears

162 Page (17) Power Point
Evidenced-based Hermeneutic and
Homiletic Sound

e-Sermon Manuscripts for the
Busy Pastor and Teacher
(2 Timothy 4:1-4)

[4 MONTH PULPIT SUPPLY]

By

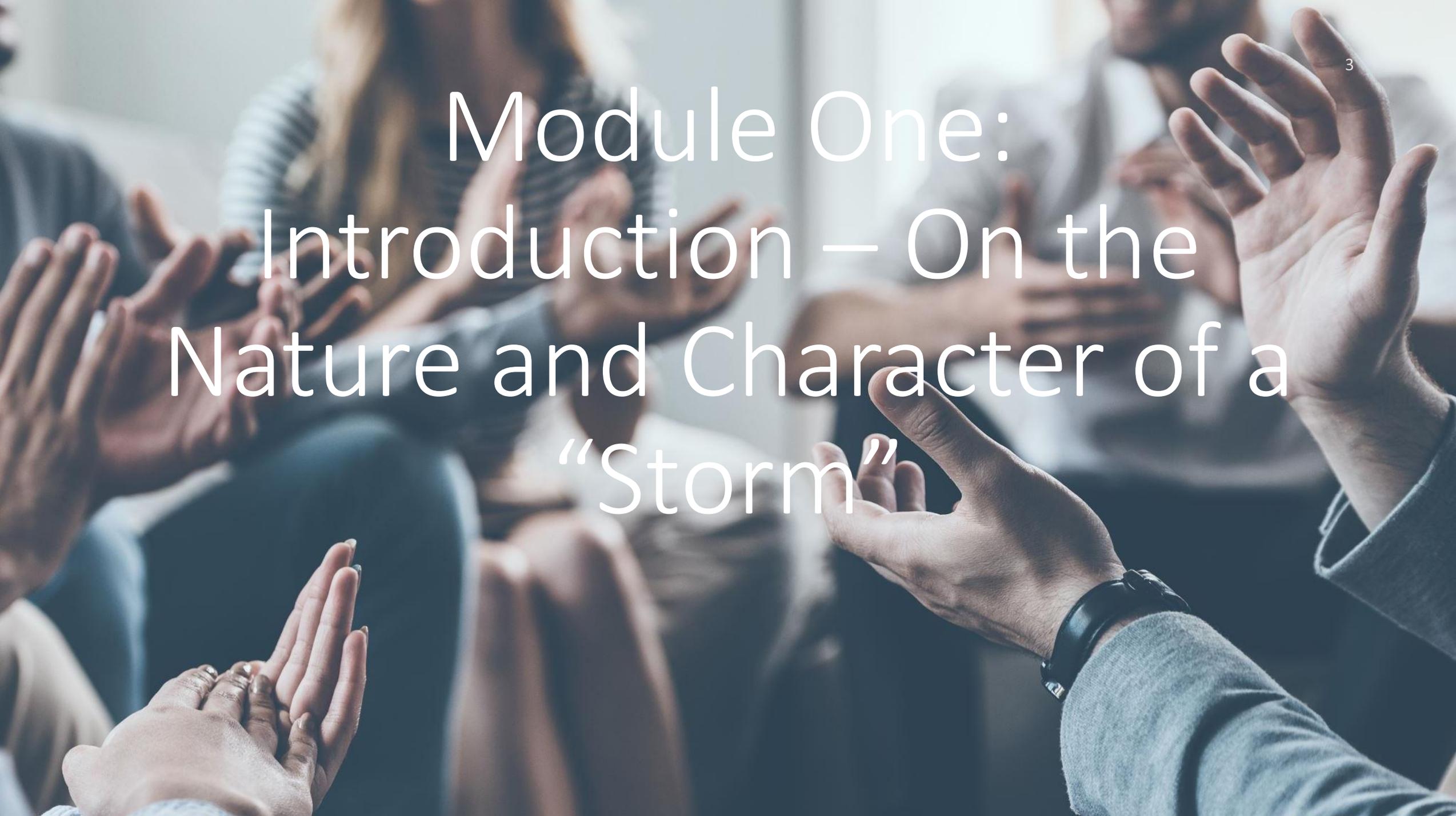
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A group of people, mostly men, are shown from the chest up, with their hands raised in a gesture of support or agreement. The background is blurred, suggesting an indoor setting like a meeting or a workshop. The lighting is soft and natural, coming from the side. The overall mood is positive and collaborative.

Module One: Introduction – On the Nature and Character of a “Storm”

Module One: Introduction - “On the Nature and Character of a Storm”

Psalms 107:23-30

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“Some went down to the sea in ships,
Doing business on the mighty waters.
They saw the deeds of the LORD,
His wondrous works in the deep.
For he commanded and raised the stormy wind,
Which lifted the waves of the sea.
They mounted up to heaven; they went down to the depths.
Their courage melted away in their calamity.
They reeled and staggered like drunkards,
And were at their wit’s end.
Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
And he brought them out of their distress.
He made the storm be still,
And the waves of the sea were hushed.
Then they were glad because they had quiet,
And he brought them to their desired haven.”---ESV

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introduction

These sermon manuscripts are designed to inspire, encourage, and remind busy pastors and teachers that it is within this time of challenges, conspiracies, contradictions, cults, and controversies that requires the preaching enterprise to be forthright, provocative, and prophetic as it presents the gospel message of Jesus the Christ with all urgency, clarity and correctness. The Apostle Paul charged and urged his preacher in his time then, and his inspired words speak relevantly to us now. *“Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths”* (2 Timothy 4:1-4). This urgency and charge is presented through seventeen (17) modules or manuscripts of evidence-based sermons prepared with excellent hermeneutic and homiletic precision and preached by the author over a 50-year ministry and 40 years as a pastor that addresses real time challenges, conflicts contradictions, controversies, and celebrations of victory in the congregations he served. These well-prepared sermon manuscripts provide spiritual direction for busy pastors who sometimes must preach through “storms” within their churches faced with the stress and strain of their multi-faceted ministry in the church and leadership in the community. This approach to that prophetic word which meets people where they are is understood to be and manifested in three (3) distinct but interconnected and interrelated stages of prophetic and priestly preaching—that is, preaching while heading “to a storm,” preaching while “in a storm,” and preaching coming “out of a storm” with celebration on the shore of deliverance by a God *“who is there, and he is not silent”*. Each sermon unapologetically leads the reader intentionally to the *Friday Cross of Suffering* where Jesus died for the redemption of humankind but especially to the *Sunday Resurrection of Power* when victorious living was made possible for those who believe.

- Hicks, H. Beecher, Jr. *Preaching Through a Storm*, Grand Rapids, MI: Ministry Resources Library, an imprint of Zondervan Publishing House, 1987.
- Schaeffer, Francis A. *He Is There and He Is Not Silent*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1972. Also see Old Testament Book of Exodus 3:7-10.



Module Four: COMING OUT OF A STORM!

Sermon Fifteen - “Somebody Ought to Say Something”

Text: Luke 19:37-40

“As he was drawing near---already on the way down the Mount of Olives---the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, ‘Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest.’ And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, ‘Teacher, rebuke your disciples.’ He answered, ‘I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.’”---ESV

There is an undeniable cruel conspiracy between terrible, avoidable, and unnecessary suffering, and incredible, indifferent, and dispassionate silence. Somebody ought to say something about the Covid-19 pandemic in America and the unnecessary and avoidable suffering and death of too many people. Much of this pain and anxiety is due to the failure of our Federal government to provide a timely national plan and commitment to ensure the health and wholeness for all its citizens. Somebody ought to say something about mob crowds that have embraced falsehood, error, and conspiracy theories which only lead to chaos and illegal domestic terrorism and insurrection of our nation’s capital. Somebody ought to say something about the disparity and inequity of law enforcement application when used against peaceful protestors of color and unfearingly mob crowds and insurrectionists who attempt to overthrow our democracy. Somebody ought to say something about the glamorization of TV violence depicting thousands of acts of violence in a day. Somebody ought to say something about the cold grip of poverty, hunger, violence, and despair in many communities today. Somebody ought to say something about infants who are dying in hunger. About African American men having the highest mortality rates and continue to die at higher rates from preventable diseases. About the unemployed, underemployed and the unemployable. About millions of working families in precarious financial circumstances.

Somebody ought to say something about children running wild in the streets of our cities. About youth gone astray, teenage stress and suicides. About one million youth dropping out of high school every year. About children you cannot hurt because they have never been hugged. About children you cannot develop because they have never been disciplined. About children you cannot hate because they have never been loved. About children you cannot punish because they have never been praised. About over one million cases of child abuse each year. About children who are the unwitting victims of drugs. Narcotics have wrecked and devastated our communities. It is a multi-billion-dollar business. Yet our children are spaced out on drugs and we are silent. Our cities are being destroyed and we are silent. Our neighborhoods are deteriorating, and we are silent. Many people are afraid of the hoodlums, homeless, addicts, and even some of our own children. Too many people are captive to their own fears. Somebody ought to say something about the political stalemate in the United States Congress that is generated and perpetuated by anger, conspiracy theories, falsehood, error, hate, and disdain and offers no positive solutions to the economic, healthcare, and social programs for all Americans. Somebody ought to say something about those in the United States Congress and in high places who are attempting to cut down and cut back and cut off so many things necessary to sustain a quality of life for the underserved and underprivileged in our communities. This political stalemate is dividing people by appealing to their worst and lowest instincts. They are insulting the very meaning and character of justice and fairness. And born-again Christians have nothing to say! Many are abandoning their social obligation to duty and moral responsibility. Students more and more are studying religion and becoming born again Christians. Record numbers are attending expensive private schools. What kind of new birth or religion is it? What kind of Christianity do we have when nobody will say anything while the world is being destroyed?

History has taught us that Adolph Hitler and his German regime were responsible for killing 6 million Jews during World War 2.

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As a result, Jews have determined to never stop telling their story and to secure their futures so that such murder of their people will never happen again. They have produced movies such Sophie's Choice and Schindler's List to remind the world never again will they be subject to such cruelty and attempts at genocide of their people. In contrast, African Americans and the world must be constantly reminded that at least 9 million Africans died just in route from Africa to the shores of America to be enslaved inhumanly. Somebody ought to say something. Our world is being destroyed by lies and falsehoods and we are silent. Our children are being messed up and we are silent. Our schools are unsafe and need enormous financial funding to meet the needs to operate in a pandemic and abnormal reality, and many are silent. Our churches are being destroyed by internal conflict. Our prisons are filled with people of color, and we are silent. There are currently 1.6 million prisoners in state and federal prisons and 39% are black men (5.4% of nation). The survival of African American families and communities are at stake due to the disparities within the criminal justice system and subsequent mass incarceration of so many of any one people! When good people say nothing evil will triumph in the world. Wickedness and evil are mounting on every side. The powers of evil appear to be overrunning the powers of good, and somebody ought to say something. Somebody ought *to do something* about the terrible evil of these challenging, dangerous, and trying times. We must not simply have a negative campaign to defeat evil, but a positive campaign to advance goodness, promote justice, and glorify God. We must not only curse the darkness but must light candles of hope. The people of God must say something good, uplifting, positive, instructive, and encouraging. Most people already know how to get into hell, what they want to know is how to get out of hell! Unfortunately, there is no exit from hell. The only way out of hell is never to get in.

One must adopt as part of one's lifestyle *a way of avoidance* of that which brings death and destruction as the Psalmist recommends in his first psalm. Cf., Psalms 1:1-2

“Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law, he meditates day and night.”---ESV

On the other hand, the bible not only curses the darkness of sin and evil but provides a light of grace and hope. It presents the way for a person not only to avoid hell but to receive the promise of eternal life and glory in the presence of God and all the saints of the ages. (Cf., Romans 10:9, 10,

“If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart, one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.”---ESV

Oh, my brothers and my sisters, people must learn to pay our tribute, give our flowers, and show our gratitude while people are alive and not after they are dead. For example, Joseph of Arimathea who went to Pilate for the crucified body of Jesus. There is no indication that he showed any real concern or support for Jesus while he was alive. Oftentimes we treat folk better in death than we do in life. We spend hundreds of dollars flying across the country to attend funerals while we will not send a cheap get-well card while they are alive. We buy expensive caskets and lavish graves. We read long resolutions and cry great tears over the dead. Everybody wants to be on the funeral program. Yet some will not go by their bedsides and hold their feverish hands while they are alive! It is rumored that a woman brought a large hot pot of soup to a man's funeral and placed it on top of the closed casket. Everyone in the church was shocked and members of the deceased family were outraged. The widow of the deceased stood up and said, “You know Harry is dead and can't eat that soup!” The other woman who brought the soup replied to the congregation, “If Harry can smell all of them flowers, then Harry can eat this soup!”

The point is that if we treat folk right while they are alive, then we do not have to put on a floor show when they are gone. Somebody¹¹ ought to say something good! The gospel is good news! It liberates. It celebrates. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is *descriptive*. Our salvation history is followed and described throughout Jesus' birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and return. It describes God's love for humankind through justification, regeneration, sanctification, redemption, grace, and forgiveness. The Gospel of Jesus the Christ is also *prescriptive*. It prescribes a victorious way of life for Christ's believers. It prescribes how to deal with and handle worry and anxiety, anger and frustration, knowledge and wisdom, and loneliness and isolation as well as meaningful and lasting relations. The Gospel of Jesus the Christ is also *convictive* for salvation is of the Lord by and through his saving work and not of works of sinners lest we boast. It comes through repentance of sins and faith in Jesus the Christ, the Son of the Living God. The Gospel of Jesus the Christ is also *prophetic*. It proclaims that our God is a liberator who is committed to equity and fairness and is concerned about the total life of his people be it past, present, and future. Cf., Jesus' proclamation in Luke 4:18,19,

"The Spirit of the LORD is upon me because, he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."---ESV

Oh, my brothers and my sisters, you must tell somebody that God is still on the throne and is in the blessing business. Tell the oppressed and the afflicted that Jesus can lift oppression's lid and chase all grief away. Tell somebody that the wages of sin are death, but the gift of God is eternal life. Tell the wretched of the earth that God loves them and cares what happens to them. Tell the helpless, homeless, and hopeless that help is on the way. Tell the disappointed, disillusioned, disinherited, and disenfranchised that there is a way out of their despair.

However, the existential fact is that there are pockets of silence in every crowd. Everybody cannot say something; everybody cannot be¹² a witness. One of the senior saints in the church was heard saying in her testimony that there are some people who must be silent because “they have not seen nothing, have not heard nothing, have not felt nothing, and have not got nothing.” But thank God some genuine believers can say, “I have seen the lightening flashing, I have heard the thunder roll, I have felt sins breakers dashing trying to conquer my soul.” Everybody cannot say “Amazing Grace” because they do not know if they have been washed in the blood of the lamb. Everybody cannot say “Amen” which means “let it be”; it is a supportive confirmation; it is a collaborating testimony; and an affirmative witness to the truth. Everybody cannot say “hallelujah” or “praise the Lord.”

According to our text of Luke 19, it was a great day. It was Palm Sunday that marked the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. The mood of that moment required that somebody must say something. There was an exciting messianic consciousness! It was time for revival. It was a time of hope. It was a time of expectation. It was a time of anticipation. A new day had come in which the last shall be first and the first shall be last. It was a time to remember the prophecy of Isaiah that was proclaimed hundreds of years before the coming of Jesus the Christ. Cf., Isaiah 9:6,7,

“Unto us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.”---ESV

In verses 37-38 of our text, the whole multitude of disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen. One's sanctified imagination would allow that the great crowd of witnesses who followed Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem to attest his authenticity as the Son of God, included certain prominent beneficiaries of Jesus' message, ministry, and miracle. The woman with an issue of blood, or blood disease, could have been praising God for her healing after twelve long years of pain and suffering and declared, "I have something to say!" (Luke 8:43). The woman from the City of Nain whose dead son Jesus raised from the dead could have been in that crowd and declared, "I have something to say!" The woman of Samaria whom Jesus met at Jacob's well and changed her life forever could have been in that crowd and declared, "I have something to say!" Blind Bartimaeus could have been in that crowd and declared, "I have something to say!" Lazarus of Bethany, the brother of Mary and Martha, could have been in that crowd and declared, "If anybody ought to say something, I surely have something to say!" "I was dead and in my grave when I heard the voice of Jesus calling me to come back home. Surely, he is the resurrection and the life!"

In verse 39 of our text the religious leaders amid the great crowd said, "Master rebuke your disciples!" The Pharisees' attitude meant that they were a dignified society and that it doesn't take all of that shouting and praising to show one's appreciation." The religious leaders could not grasp the level of thanks and appreciation expressed by the crowd. Blind eyes had been open. Bodies had been healed. Families had been comforted. Communities had been given hope. The dead had been raised. And somebody is going to say something. Unfortunately, like there were some doubting and skeptical Pharisees in that crowd, there are some in the church today. Some people with a similar attitude toward worship and praise also say in effect that it does not take all of that shouting and praise in the church because we are a dignified middle-class community.

Jesus in verse 40 makes the issue all the plainer when he says, “I tell you, if these [people] were silent, the very stones [rocks] will cry out.” What Jesus meant was that creation itself would cry out. Birds would sing “Just think of his Goodness to you”! The rivers would proclaim “King Jesus will roll all burdens away.” The mountains would whistle “On Christ the Solid Rock I stand all other ground is sinking sand.” In other words, there will be a witness in this city; there will be a testimony in this town! Jesus’ meaning of the “Rocks will cry out” is realized in that it is impossible to keep believers from giving God the praise! You can lock them up, but you can’t shut them up, because like Paul Bunyan, their minds will march through prison bars and etch upon the pages history a Pilgrim’s progress. You can strike them blind, but like John Milton they will still see and write a “Paradise Lost.” You can take away their hearing, but like Beethoven they will still hear heavenly echoes and write a 9th symphony. You can take away their good health, but like John Handel, they will snatch a “Hallelujah Chorus” off the clouds and send it bouncing thru the centuries on the wings of praise. You can destroy the physical body, you can strike them down, you can hose them down, you can shoot them down, but they will still sing till heaven opens doors of deliverance and restoration. When heaven moves earth must respond. You cannot stop it; it is too hot to hold. You cannot keep it to yourself. If you know God; if the Holy Spirit has come; if the Kingdom is present; if God is amid Zion; then you cannot keep that to yourself! Something has happened; barriers have been broken; and the Glory of the Lord is being revealed! Goodness has been cut loose. Mercy is streaming. Salvation is real. A new day has come. Sickness has been healed. Problems have been solved. Enemies have been defeated. Death has been destroyed. Doors have been opened. Burdens have been lifted. Hearts have been changed. And somebody is going to say something! Jesus said if these hold their peace.....If they get too sophisticated to say Amen. If they get too educated to say Hosanna. If they get too opinionated to say thank you Jesus. If they get too assimilated to say Hallelujah. If they get too acclimated to say Praise the Lord. If they get too dignified to say Glory. The very stones will cry out! Oh, my brothers and my sisters, somebody say something. Do not sit quiet and do not be indifferent. Do not be dead, cold, silent, and still; somebody say something!

“Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever! Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he has redeemed from trouble.” (Psalms 107:1,2)---ESV

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so!
If you have been saved by grace, say so.
If you have been washed in the blood, say so.
If you have been healed from sickness, say so.
If you have been lifted by love, say so.
If you know God is real, say so.
If you have got the Holy Ghost, say so.
If God has been good to you, say so.
If God woke you up this morning, say so.
If he made a way out of no way, say so.
If you got a trumpet, blow it!
If you got a story, tell it.
If you got a song, sing it.
If you got hope, declare it.
If you got salvation, shout it.
If you got a light, let it shine.
If you feel the fire, let it burn.
Somebody say Something!

Every now and then in the context of praise and worship you cannot hold your peace. There are those that want me to be quiet, to preach quiet and act like a seminary man, but I've got to say something. I went to God before I went to seminary. I studied the teachings of Peter, James, and John before I studied the theology of Barth, Bultmann, and Bonhoeffer. God has been good to me!

HIS EYE IS ON THE SPARROW

Why should I feel discouraged?

Why should the shadows come,

Why should my heart be lonely

And long for heaven and home,

When Jesus is my portion?

My constant Friend is He:

His eye is on the sparrow,

And I know he watches me

I sing because I am happy,

I sing because I am free,

For His eye is on the sparrow,

And I know he watches me.

- Mrs. C.D. Martin, "*His Eye Is on The Sparrow*,"(No 60) in the New National Baptist Hymnal, 21st Century Edition (Nashville: National Baptist Publishing Board, 2001).