

20-0802p Transcript

20-0802p - *Sons of Thunder*, Jim Lokenbauer

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Sons of Thunder

Transcript (0:02 - 33:31)

Transcript

Preacher: Jim Lokenbauer

(0:02) Good evening, everybody. (0:06) I think we have more people here tonight than we did this morning. (0:10) Praise God.

(0:13) Thank you, Roger. God bless Roger. (0:19) Amen.

(0:25) Ruth told me, if your throat gets dry, just go like this. (0:29) And she'd go get me something. (0:34) Roger's way ahead of us.

(0:41) Okay. In the past, you may have heard (0:45) Scott and myself and Kevin maybe jokingly (0:49) call each other Sons of Thunder. We have the spirit (0:53) of the Sons of Thunder.

And tongue in cheek, (0:57) at times, perhaps, we do, but (1:01) not in the true sense that it's used biblically. (1:06) Jesus, who is so (1:09) full of patience, look at the guys that he had (1:13) to work with. He had Simon the Zealot.

(1:17) A zealot is somebody with strong nationalist (1:21) feelings and passions, and yet he chose (1:24) Simon to be one of his disciples. (1:31) And, you know, (1:34) also he had Judas (1:36) Iscariot, a guy of very loose scruples. (1:41) And then Peter.

Look at Peter. He's (1:47) impetuous, to say the least. (1:50) And, of course, you've got (1:52) James and John.

And they, in (1:56) particular, are going to be looked at this (2:00) evening because Jesus titled (2:04) them Sons of Thunder. (2:08) And we're going to look at that. Now, (2:11) when he calls them Sons of Thunder, it's because of the attitude (2:16) that they had.

Now, (2:20) especially among men, (2:24) when we become (2:26) Christians, new Christians, we are so full of (2:30) zeal. We are so full of get out there and get the (2:34) word out that we will beat people over the (2:38) head with this rather than to be like the Lord and (2:42) be patient and loving and tender. (2:47) And so, you know, (2:50) Proverbs 19.2 comes to mind.

(2:54) It is not good to have zeal without knowledge, nor to be hasty (2:58) and miss the way. And, needless to say, James and John (3:02) sort of missed the way at first. And it took them quite a (3:06) while to get out of Son of (3:10) Thunder mode.

Matter of fact, up until six (3:14) months before Jesus went to Jerusalem, (3:19) that's when (3:21) they still had that attitude. So, (3:25) I'm going to show us a few (3:29) characters from the Bible who were Sons of Thunder. (3:35) Everybody knows who Saul of Tarsus (3:37) is.

Saul (3:41) probably being the greatest of the (3:45) apostles. Even though he didn't spend (3:49) time with the twelve at Jesus' (3:53) feet, he did spend three years with Jesus by (3:57) direct revelation from the Lord. So, he did get his, he got (4:01) better.

He got one-on-one training from the Lord. So, his (4:05) full focus and attention was on Paul. So, in a way, (4:10) Paul was very blessed.

But Jesus (4:13) saw his heart. Jesus saw the (4:17) zeal and the drive that Paul (4:20) had. Or rather, let me say, Saul.

(4:25) I've got to keep my pronouns chronologically in order (4:29) here. Saul is the name given him when he (4:33) was born. Paul is what he became after he was a (4:37) Christian.

So, anyhow, Saul (4:42) breathed out hatred (4:44) towards this new sect. This cult (4:48) that the Pharisees saw of the (4:52) Lord's. You know, Christianity.

(4:56) He thought he was doing God a (5:00) favor by doing everything he could to stamp out (5:04) this new religious movement that Jesus (5:08) Christ started. And so, he would hunt (5:12) Christians down and drag them before (5:16) the Sanhedrin and get them sent to prison. He was (5:20) standing with the others, guarding the (5:24) cloaks of the men who stoned Stephen to death, (5:29) giving full approval of that.

So, (5:34) when you look at Saul, you see (5:36) a man who was a Pharisee. He studied at the (5:40) feet of Israel's premier teacher (5:44) Gamaliel. And (5:48) he was, in his own words, a Jew's Jew.

(5:52) He was a nationalist. (5:56) He could have been called a zealot. He was all about (6:00) Israel.

He was all about Jerusalem. He was (6:04) all about the law of Moses. And anybody who (6:08) deviated from that, he considered a direct threat to their religion (6:12) and their way of life.

And so, he made it his life's (6:16) mission to try and get rid of Christianity. (6:20) Well, as we know, we'll use his (6:24) own words as to his (6:28) life-changing moment. He had a (6:31) supernatural (6:35) intervention, if you will, to get that (6:39) attitude, to get that energy turned around in the right (6:43) direction.

So, from heaven, (6:48) Jesus saw Saul (6:51) who had letters from the Sanhedrin, the high priest (6:55) and others, to arrest Christians (6:59) in Damascus. That's in another country! (7:03) So that's what a zealot he was to get rid of Christians. He (7:07) was going miles out of his way to hunt these people (7:11) down.

So, on his way, when he was in the desert (7:15) going to Damascus from Jerusalem, suddenly (7:19) a light was blazing around him. (7:24) A light of Jesus' (7:27) glory, shining so bright, it (7:30) blinded Paul. But, let's listen (7:35) to Paul's own description of this life-changing (7:38) event here.

And this is from (7:43) Acts chapter 22, if you wanted to read along, starting at (7:47) verse 1 and following. Anyhow, this is Paul, (7:50) he's been arrested in Jerusalem by a mob of (7:55) Jews who saw him at the temple, assuming (7:58) that he took Greeks in there with him, but he didn't. (8:02) So the Romans picked Paul up and carried (8:07) him to safety.

And this is Paul giving his defense (8:11) to the Jews and before the Roman (8:14) cohort. He says, brothers and fathers, listen now to my (8:18) defense before you. When they heard that he was addressing them (8:22) in Aramaic, they became even quieter.

He continued, (8:27) I am a Jew born in Tarsus of Cilicia, (8:30) but brought up in this city, meaning Jerusalem, educated (8:35) at the feet of Gamaliel according to the strictest of our (8:38) ancestral law. I was zealous for God just as all (8:43) of you are today. I persecuted this (8:47) way, and the way is what the Lord's (8:50) church was called them to death, arresting and putting (8:54) both men and women in jail as both the high priest and the whole (8:58) council of elders can testify about me.

After I received (9:03) letters from them to the brothers, I traveled to Damascus to (9:06) arrest those who were there and bring them to Jerusalem to (9:10) be punished. Now, I just want to interject something here (9:15) that you can see (9:18) truly Paul has the spirit of the sons (9:22) of thunder here. And just a note about sons of thunder, it comes (9:26) from a Hebrew word (9:29) that's a compound word, (9:34) and it means son of (9:38) violent anger or thunder in this case.

(9:42) And Jesus used that about (9:46) James and John. (9:49) Let me continue. As I was traveling and approaching (9:54) Damascus about noon, and this is noon, high day (9:58) where the sun is its brightest, and (10:02) Paul says, an intense light from heaven (10:06) suddenly flashed around me.

I fell to the ground and heard a voice (10:10) saying to me, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? (10:14) I answered, who are you, Lord? He said to me, I am (10:18) Jesus of Nazareth, the one you are persecuting. (10:23) Now those who were with me saw the light, but they did not hear the (10:26) voice of the one who was speaking with me. I said, what should I do, (10:30) Lord? The Lord told me, get up and go into Damascus (10:34) and there you will be told everything that you have been assigned (10:38) to do.

Since I couldn't see (10:42) because of the brightness of the light, I was led by the (10:46) hand by those who were with me. I went into Damascus, I was (10:50) unable to see for three days and did not eat or drink. (10:54) Someone named Ananias, a devout man according to the law (10:58) who had a good reputation with all the Jews living there, came and (11:02) stood by me and he placed his hands on me and said, brother (11:06) Saul, the Lord Jesus whom appeared to you on the road you were (11:10) traveling has sent me so that you may regain your sight (11:14) and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

And in that (11:18) very hour I looked up and saw him, and he said, the (11:22) God of our ancestors has appointed you to know his (11:26) will, to see the righteous one and to hear the words from (11:30) his mouth, since you will be a witness for him to all (11:34) people of what you have seen and heard. And now why are (11:38) you delaying? Get up and be baptized and wash away your sins, (11:42) calling on his name. At once something like scales (11:46) fell from his eyes and he regained his sight.

Then he got up and was (11:50) baptized and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

(11:54) After I returned to Jerusalem, was praying in the temple, I fell into (11:58) a trance and saw him telling me, hurry and get out of (12:02) Jerusalem quickly because they will not accept your testimony about me. (12:06) But Lord, I said, they know that in the synagogue (12:09) after synagogue, I had those who believed in you (12:14) imprisoned and beaten.

And when the blood of your witness (12:18) Stephen was being shed, I stood there giving approval and guarding the (12:22) clothes of those who killed him. He said to me, go because (12:26) I will send you far away to the Gentiles. (12:31) So Saul had a real transformative (12:34) moment in his life.

He went from thinking (12:38) he was doing a world of good by getting rid of Christians, (12:42) having that son of thunder attitude (12:46) and bringing them into justice to becoming a believer (12:50) himself. And we can see it (12:54) in the very words as he was saying, you know, pleading to (12:58) Christ. You know, he realized the error (13:02) of his ways.

He realized that (13:06) zeal he had for hunting down Christians (13:10) was not right. It was wrong. And so (13:14) you know, God bless Jesus.

He knows how to (13:18) redirect that zealous energy for (13:22) him, put it to good work for him. (13:27) So his plea showing that he had (13:30) repented and had a contrite attitude of heart and that he was truly (13:34) humbled, he turned that zeal into, you know, (13:38) from being right by the law to being right by the Lord. (13:43) And so Jesus was able to harness and redirect (13:46) his strong but misplaced passion and to become a (13:50) productive soul winner.

He went from being the son of thunder (13:54) to one who chased people down and threw them in jail to having (13:58) a loving and concerned and compassionate attitude (14:02) for the Gentiles that he was going to be bringing the gospel (14:06) to for Jesus. So two other disciples (14:10) of the Lord's that were close to him had the official (14:14) title of sons of thunder, James and John. (14:19) Let's see what their story is.

And in Luke 9 (14:22) starting at verse 51, if you'd like to turn there and read along, (14:26) you can see (14:30) exactly the attitude that James and John had. (14:34) Luke 9 starting at verse 51 (14:37) we'll read to verse 56. Now it came to pass (14:42) when the time had come for him to be received up, and we're talking about (14:46) Jesus heading to Jerusalem, (14:49) that he steadfastly set his face to go to (14:54) Jerusalem and he sent messengers before his face and (14:57) as they went they entered the village of the Samaritans to prepare (15:02) the way for him, but they did not receive him because his face (15:06) was set for the journey to Jerusalem.

And if you remember (15:09) the conversation that Jesus had with the Samaritan woman in John (15:14) chapter 4, they discussed about the Samaritans (15:18) worshipping on the mountains and the Jews worshipping in (15:22) Jerusalem, and Jesus basically said (15:25) we worship what we know but you guys don't, and so (15:30) they realized that he was going to Jerusalem so they didn't want anything to do with him. (15:35) And when his disciples, James and John, saw (15:38) this, that Jesus was rejected by the Samaritans, (15:41) they said, Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven (15:46) and consume them? Just as Elijah did? (15:50) Now you can picture the glee in their eyes and the excitement (15:54) like, wow, let's really show them, Lord. (15:59) But he turned, Jesus turned and (16:02) rebuked them and said, you do not know what manner of (16:06) spirit you are of, for the Son of Man did not come to (16:10) destroy men's lives, but to save them.

(16:14) And they went on to another village. So Jesus (16:18) gave them a sharp rebuke. (16:24) Now, it's in Mark 3.17 (16:27) and this is the only place in the Bible where it mentions (16:32) the name that Jesus had for James and John.

(16:36) In Mark 3.17 (16:40) actually starting at verse 16, it talks about (16:43) the list of the names of the twelve apostles. (16:46) And it says, and James the son of Zebedee and John (16:50) the brother of James, to them Jesus gave the name (16:53) Boanerges, which means sons of thunder. So (16:58) from this story in Luke chapter 9 (17:01) Mark lets us know that it's because of that attitude (17:06) that Jesus gave them the nickname, sons of (17:10) thunder.

So James and John (17:14) during the Lord's ministry, right up to (17:17) just about right up to when Jesus went to Jerusalem (17:22) as it says in Luke 9, they had that attitude. (17:27) And the Samaritans (17:29) rejected Jesus at that time, so the sons of (17:34) Zebedee took offense and actually wanted (17:37) to kill the Samaritans. (17:42) Does Jesus talk about that (17:44) kind of vengeance? No! (17:51) It's stupefying that people (17:54) who were sitting at His feet for, let's calculate, (17:57) two and a half years up to that point, should say such (18:02) a thing.

They didn't yet get it. (18:06) I mean, Jesus was preaching love (18:09) and they wanted fire to come (18:13) down from heaven and consume the Samaritans. (18:19) So, the (18:21) manner of spirit, let's look at that.

(18:25) The manner and spirit that Jesus said they had. He goes, (18:29) you don't know what manner of spirit you have in order to (18:33) say such a thing. Why would they say such a thing? (18:37) Jesus didn't teach it, so let's look into that.

(18:41) Now, in 2 Kings, (18:45) we have the story of Elijah (18:49) being at odds with Ahaziah, (18:52) who is the son of the absolute worst (18:57) king of Israel ever, Ahab. (19:00) And Ahab, who was egged on by an (19:05) even eviler person in (19:08) Jezebel. And so, between Ahab and (19:12) Jezebel, they had Ahaziah.

(19:16) And so, he is a product of pure evil. (19:21) And Ahab and Jezebel (19:25) worshiped the Baals. They (19:29) human-sacrificed to the Baals (19:32) and they got rid of, they killed (19:36) many of the prophets of God and (19:40) fortunately, one of the prophets knew to hide (19:44) some of them, a remnant.

And so, (19:48) these people were just evil beyond imagination. (19:53) And God set his face against them. (19:57) He would send prophet after prophet to (20:00) warn them, because as the king goes, so does (20:04) the kingdom.

So, Israel had fallen into this (20:08) pagan, idol worship, where (20:12) they were even passing their children through the fire (20:16) to Molech. And this was done in the valley of Hinnom. (20:21) And, I mean, (20:25) I'm surprised the Lord didn't (20:28) bring down fire on them for doing that.

(20:32) But that shows God, he is patient with us. (20:35) He doesn't want anyone to perish, but everyone to come to (20:40) repentance, even in the face of that (20:43) evil. But he would warn them, as he did in Deuteronomy.

(20:48) At the end of the law, he gave them a list (20:52) of blessings if they followed the law, and he gave them (20:55) like two pages of curses that would happen (21:00) if they did such things by breaking the law. (21:04) And that's exactly what they were doing. And so now we have (21:08)

Ahaziah, who is following in his parents' (21:11) footsteps, and he's worshipping to the Baals.

(21:16) And one day, he's on his terrace in his ivory (21:20) palace that Ahab had built, and (21:24) he falls through latticework. And latticework (21:28) is just, you know, wood that's kind of (21:32) looks like plaid, kind of mish-mashed together. Well, (21:35) it must have been a little rotted, or maybe Ahaziah was a little bigger than he thought, (21:40) and went right through, and he got terribly (21:44) injured.

And so as he's laying in bed, he calls his servants (21:48) and he says, send to the (21:52) priests of Baal and find (21:56) out if I'm going to survive this injury. (22:00) And so he sends out his servants to go to (22:03) Ekron to inquire of Beelzebub. (22:08) Can you imagine that? No, Beelzebub (22:13) is what the Jews called their (22:16) god, and Beelzebub means lord of the flies.

(22:20) But the name for their god was the lord of the palace. (22:24) And so I like the way the Jews tweaked (22:27) them on that. I enjoy their sense of humor.

(22:32) And why not call a false god lord of the flies? (22:36) Anyhow, that was aside. So (22:39) anyhow, as his servants are going to (22:44) Ekron, (22:47) the angel of the (22:48) lord, which we all know is Jesus, in the (22:52) Old Testament, as God (22:56) tells Elijah, go meet them and tell (23:00) them not to go to Ekron, but tell Ahaziah (23:05) the king that he will die in his bed. So they go back (23:09) and they tell the king.

And so the king (23:12) says, who was this who told you that? And they (23:16) said, some hairy man in hairy clothes. (23:20) And he goes, that's Elijah, the Tishbite. (23:25) And he wanted him arrested to put him to death.

So he (23:28) sent a guard, the captain of the guard, with 50 men to (23:32) Elijah. And Elijah was just on a hill waiting. (23:36) And they came up to him.

The king commands you come. (23:39) And Elijah says, if there's a prophet (23:43) in Israel, let fire come down from heaven and (23:47) consume you. And sure enough, God sent (23:51) fire from heaven down and burned up the captain and the 50 (23:55) men.

Now you might think that was unjust, but God had (23:59) a purpose for that. It was to warn (24:03) Israel to turn from false gods. (24:07) They needed something severe to shock (24:11) them back to believing in him.

(24:15) You know, no little stone statue called Beelzebub (24:18) ever did anything. But suddenly here's this prophet and (24:23) fire comes down from heaven and burns them up. (24:27) So anyhow, word gets back to Ahaziah.

(24:31) He sends another 50 men, 51 men actually. (24:35) And the same thing happens to them because the captain of the guard (24:39) says, come with us. And Elijah says, if there (24:43) is a prophet in Israel, let fire come down from heaven.

(24:47) Boom. They were consumed. Ahaziah (24:50) sends a third group.

And this captain of the guard (24:56) trembling goes up and bows (24:59) before Elijah. Please (25:02) have mercy on us. Do not kill me and (25:06) my men.

Please let us be the apple of your eye. (25:10) Please come back with us to see the king. And the

angel of (25:14) the Lord saw their contrite attitude, (25:18) saw that they were humble, and he says, go with them.

They won't (25:22) hurt you. So Elijah goes with them, appears before Ahaziah, (25:26) and tells him himself, because you consulted with (25:30) Beelzebub rather than consulting with the true (25:34) and living God, you will die on your bed. (25:38) And sure enough, he died on his bed.

So that's (25:42) the story that James and John got the (25:46) idea, hey, Jesus, let's call down fire (25:50) on the Samaritans. (25:54) And that whole point of Jesus rebuking (25:58) them, there was no reason to call down fire on the (26:02) Samaritans. They weren't worshiping false gods.

(26:06) They were just worshiping God elsewhere. (26:12) And anyhow, (26:14) the attitude they had, the manner of spirit, (26:19) what exactly was the...it wasn't the spirit (26:22) of Elijah that they had. (26:26) Let's look at Job.

(26:29) Let's look at Job. Everybody remembers the (26:32) story of Job. A good and righteous man before God, (26:36) full of benevolence and good deeds.

One day (26:40) Satan appears before the throne along with all of God's (26:44) children who were angels, and he sees Satan and says, where have you been? (26:48) Oh, traveling back and forth throughout the earth. And he goes, well, (26:52) have you considered my servant Job? Ha, Job. (26:56) You set a hedge around him and blessed everything he does.

(27:00) You take any of that away and he'll curse you to your face. Imagine talking to (27:04) God that way. There is arrogance.

(27:08) Wow. Anyhow, God says, (27:12) he's in your hands, just don't take his life. So (27:16) Satan destroyed everything Job had (27:20) and one of the tools in his bag of tricks, (27:25) being full of venom and hatred (27:27) and mockery and evil, he brought (27:32) fire down upon Job's servants (27:36) and the sheep that were out in the field.

(27:40) Burned them up. So that's one of his tricks. (27:44) That's one of the things that Satan does.

(27:47) Now let's look at what Satan does during (27:51) New Testament times. (27:56) We know that Paul, after he (28:01) had been tempered by the Lord and has become a loving (28:04) apostle, we know that (28:11) in Ephesians chapter 2, verses 1 through 3 (28:14) it says, and we're talking about the evil one here, (28:18) well, Paul talks about him, but he's talking about the (28:22) believers who once were under his influence. He says, (28:26) you were made alive when you were dead in (28:30) transgressions and sins in which you once walked according to (28:34) the course of this world, according to the prince of the (28:38) power of the air, the spirit who now works in the children (28:42) of disobedience.

(28:46) Among whom we also (28:48) once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires (28:51) of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of (28:56) wrath, even as the rest. (29:00) And also these verses later on in the (29:04) letter to the Ephesians in chapter 6, Paul says (29:08) in verses 10 to 12, he says, finally (29:11) be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the (29:15) full armor of God so that you can take your stand against (29:19) the devil's schemes, because our struggle is not (29:23) against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against (29:27) the authorities, against the powers of this dark world (29:31) and against the spiritual forces of evil (29:35) in the heavenly realms.

Therefore, put (29:39) on the full armor of God so that when the day (29:44) of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground (29:47) and after you've done everything to stand. (29:52) So, we know that there is (29:55) going to be in our lives as well a day of evil. (30:00) He didn't say if there's a day of evil, he said when the day (30:04) of evil comes.

There's going to be a day. You're challenged (30:07) just like Job. Maybe not in such dramatic (30:11) fashion, but you're going to be challenged.

And what's (30:15) going to be your attitude? Will it be the attitude of (30:19) Jesus when tempted by Satan? Will it be the attitude of (30:23) Job? Who resigned, he said (30:27) the Lord gives and the Lord takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. (30:34) That's the attitude (30:35) Christ wants in His people.

Not (30:39) hey, let's call fire down on these guys and (30:43) turn them into briquettes. (30:51) So, we find that (30:53) if we ever are in that mindset (30:57) or attitude of the sons of thunder, and I know none of us here (31:01) have that attitude. We jokingly rib each other (31:05) and call each other that occasionally.

But that's only because (31:08) we're passionate about the Lord's word. And sometimes (31:12) we got to temper that passion because it can come across as anger. (31:17) We have to be like the Lord.

We have to be kind and gentle. (31:21) You know, all those things listed in 1 Corinthians (31:25) 13. You know, the agape love.

(31:30) And so, (31:33) we got to always look at the bigger picture (31:35) and try to figure out what the Lord's will is (31:39) and how the Lord may react to something and try (31:43) to emulate that. You know, (31:47) we've been given the Holy Spirit and the Lord pours (31:51) love into us. His love into us through the Holy Spirit.

(31:56) Did you know that? (31:59) Scott taught that in his class. (32:01) In the Romans class. (32:04) And I'd read that many times, but once forced to really (32:09) crunch on it, it dawned on me like, wow, that's (32:12) really cool.

That's how God changes us. (32:17) That's how God transforms us. By Holy Spirit (32:20) in us to conform to the image of His Son (32:24) rather than conforming to the image of this world.

(32:31) So, John (32:33) and I hope James. (32:36) See, James was the first martyr of the Apostles. (32:41) So, hopefully he was changed before his (32:44) death.

I'm sure he was saved even at the point of his death when (32:48) Herod had him killed with the sword. But, we (32:52) know that John did transform because (32:56) John became known as the Apostle of Love. And you can (33:00) see that in all of John's writings.

(33:04) Dear little children, let us love one another. (33:08) And so, in his life he changed. So, if (33:12) anyone here is dealing with attitude problem, (33:16) I know none of you are sons or daughters of thunder, but (33:19) if you need an attitude adjustment, you need the congregation (33:23) to pray for you, now is the time.

This is the invitation. (33:28) So, come forward and we'll take care of you.