

23-0604p Transcript

23-0604p - *Riders of the Holy Express*, Scott Reynolds

Bible Reader: Roger Raines

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Riders of the Holy Express

Transcript (0:04 - 22:53)

Scripture Reading

Bible Reader: Roger Raines

Matthew 28:19-20,

(0:04) Good evening. (0:05) Good evening. (0:08) I'll be reading from the book of Matthew, chapter 28, verses 19 and 20. (0:16) Matthew 28, last two verses of the chapter.

(0:21) Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, (0:29) teaching them to observe that I have all commanded to you, and, Lord, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. (0:40) This concludes his reading. (0:41)

Transcript

Preacher: Scott Reynolds

(0:46) Good evening. (0:48) I'm going to do another lesson from Doug Hamilton, but I'm not going to do one on 1 Corinthians. (0:55) He has another series that he's doing on evangelism.

(1:00) He calls it his 2023 Evangelism Series. (1:05) And there was one particular lesson called Riders of the Holy Express. (1:13) It was a cool April 3rd morning in 1860.

(1:20) Johnny Fry examined his thoroughbred, tightened the saddle, checked the spurs on his boots, and took a swig from the canteen. (1:29) I wasn't expecting that, but it was nice that he put it. It was from the canteen.

(1:36) What was he thinking? (1:39) Perhaps he was meditating on the want ad he answered in the local newspaper a month before. (1:47) Wanted. Young, skinny, wiry fellows, not over 18, must be expert riders, willing to risk life daily, orphans preferred.

(2:02) 20-year-old Johnny was about to leave the boontown of St. Joseph, Missouri, to embark on his career as a message deliverer for the newly established Pony Express. (2:18) In the history of the Pony Express, they would deliver mail by horseback from St. Joseph, Missouri, to Sacramento,

California, in 10 days. (2:30) The riders, and this is available through the email I sent out.

(2:40) If you go on the link for tonight's program, it has the sermon link. (2:48) On the sermon link, it also has a link in the document itself to Doug's video of him performing this lesson. (3:00) In that lesson, he was expressing some more information than what I'm giving, so it's worth watching.

(3:12) They would deliver, oh, I couldn't remember my point. (3:19) The point was 10 days to go from St. Joseph, Missouri, to Sacramento, California. (3:28) It goes faster than the post office today.

(3:31) But anyway, the riders would run day and night, summer and winter, 24 hours a day, to make the 2,000-mile trip over the roughest area in the country. (3:46) They had manned stations every 15 to 20 miles, and they would provide the riders with a fresh horse. (3:53) It was an undertaking of enormous proportions, with 120 riders, 184 stations, 400 horses, and several hundred personnel, all during January and February of 1860.

(4:10) If you remember that year, there's something else going on in the 1860s, but that's another story. (4:18) Johnny would be the first rider to make the trip. (4:24) Will I fall victim to the bandits along the way? (4:27) Will I be shot with arrows from Native Indians? (4:31) Will the rugged terrain at some point overtake me? (4:35) These are some of the questions, I'm persuaded, that ran through their minds.

(4:39) They loaded the leather, water-resistant mailbag with the messages, and a few moments later, a cloud of dust was all that there was to see of Johnny as he galloped away. (4:53) There was only one thought that Johnny struggled with, get the message through. (5:01) And many of us have been intrigued with the stories of the Wild West.

(5:06) What makes the Pony Express so interesting is the fact that these riders were willing to face death daily to make sure the mail would get through. (5:17) They had tunnel vision, with that very thought in mind, get the message through. (5:22) And before the U.S. Postal Service was saying, through rain, sleet, or even snow, the Pony Express riders were living it to a greater extent.

(5:35) So the lesson tonight is about the riders of the Holy Express. (5:43) And I would like to share with you another true story of an additional group who risked it all for the sake of getting the message through. (5:51) They're called the Apostles of Jesus Christ.

(5:55) They were not always called Apostles, they used to be called Disciples. (6:02) A Disciple is one who follows Jesus. (6:04) However, before Jesus ascended into heaven, he gave the Disciples the message in Matthew 28, 19 and 20 that Roger read for us.

(6:18) Go therefore and make Disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, (6:27) teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you, and behold, I am with you always to the end of the age. (6:38) And they were sent out with the message of the Gospel and told to deliver it to the world. (6:42) At this point they became Apostles and their mission was to be riders of the Holy Express.

(6:51) Apostle is Apostolos in the Greek and interprets one sent out with a message. (7:01) They would have a tunnel vision for getting the message of the prized Gospel of our precious Lord out to the lost world. (7:10) What will we be encountering? (7:15) Will the forces of the devil stop us from getting the message out? (7:19) Will the devil stop us with his fiery darts? (7:23) Let's follow rider number one, Peter, along his Holy Express route.

(7:29) The day of Pentecost has arrived and Peter delivers the first message to a group of disgruntled Jews. (7:38) Rider number one, Peter. (7:40) And this part isn't in the notes, but it is in the video of Doug delivering this message.

(7:54) And he talks about using a technique that Paul uses called dialectic diatribe. (8:04) And Paul will set up an argument and he'll argue both sides of the argument. (8:10) And the best example I can think of, Doug just happened to mention it, but the best example I can think of of Paul doing just that is found in Romans.

(8:22) After he finishes a discussion about making a comparison between Adam, the man who brought death into the world, (8:35) and then the one that would come after him, that Adam was a type of Christ. (8:43) And Christ would come after him and Christ would bring life. (8:47) So Adam brings death, Christ brings life, and he's finishing up that argument by saying in chapter 5 verse 20, (9:02) and this isn't the example, chapter 6 is the example, but I'm setting up the context for us.

(9:08) Chapter 5 verse 20, the law came in so that the transgression would increase. (9:14) But where sin increased, grace abounded all the more. (9:18) So that as sin reigned in death, even so, grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(9:28) And now comes the series of arguments that Paul uses that are described as a dialectic diatribe. (9:35) What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound or may increase? (9:45) That's one side of the argument. May it never be, how shall we who died to sin live in it? (9:52) Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into his death? (10:01) And so here he's doing this back and forth argument.

(10:04) And that's how Douglass now sets up the rest of this message that I'm bringing to you tonight with the riders of the Holy Express. (10:17) So he picks up in Acts chapter 2 as we follow Peter along his route of delivering the message. (10:26) And he starts by asking Peter some questions and Peter's going to respond.

(10:31) And that's the two sides of the argument. (10:36) So we start with, what are you doing Peter? Don't you know that they are going to be angry with you? (10:45) Don't you know they might turn on you? (10:48) Don't you know that this is the great day of Pentecost and many of the Jews do not want to hear the name of Jesus? (10:55) And Peter's response, that doesn't matter. I've been sent out with a message.

(11:02) The gospel has to be delivered. It doesn't matter what they do, but what I do. (11:08) For Christ has sent me out with a message.

(11:11) Weren't you listening in Acts 2.36? (11:30) I am a rider of the Holy Express and I must carry the message through. (11:36) The next stop is Acts chapter 3. (11:40) I have more questions. (11:43) Now you've done it Peter.

The Jews are angry at you for making deliveries to the cripple on the Sabbath. (11:52) Look out, they're coming to seize you and lay stripes on you. (11:56) They're going to shut down the Holy Express in your life.

(12:00) Peter's response, aren't you reading your Bible? (12:04) This message must be delivered. (12:07) Jesus already told me in John 21.18 that I should be girded up and persecuted. (12:14) Everything is besides the point of taking that gospel message to the lost world.

(12:21) Acts chapter 6, next point on the route. (12:25) Peter, Satan is trying to stop the Holy Express again by distracting you from within by disputes of the ministries of the widows. (12:36) Now everyone is arguing and the Holy Express is being stopped.

(12:41) Peter's response, I must not allow Satan and his little gang of bandits to stop the message of our dear Lord from being delivered. (12:51) Therefore, it is time to set up manned stations of the gospel so we will be riding on fresh horses. (13:00) Stephen, Philip, Prochurus, Nicanor, Timon, Prominence, and Nicholas manned the horses.

(13:08) The gospel message must make it to the destination of the lost. (13:13) Acts chapter 7. (13:16) Peter, did you see what they did to Stephen? (13:19) They have stopped the Holy Express and prevented the message of Jesus from being delivered anymore. (13:25) Surely this will convince you not to deliver the gospel of Jesus Christ.

(13:31) If you are not careful, you're next. (13:35) Peter's response, were you not reading 1 Peter 3:14? (13:41) But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. (13:47) And do not fear their intimidation and do not be troubled.

(13:51) The Lord has sent me out with the message of the gospel and the message must make that destination for I am an apostle of Jesus Christ. (14:02) Acts chapter 12. (14:04) Peter, why are you still doing this? (14:08) Now you're locked up in Herod's jail on death row.

(14:12) They're going to kill you like they did James. (14:14) What are you going to do now? (14:16) It looks like they stopped the Holy Express in your life. (14:21) It doesn't matter, Peter says.

(14:23) When Jesus gave me the message to be delivered, he told me to deliver it to Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and to the uttermost part of the work of the earth. (14:35) Until I am over, or until that is accomplished, I'm still going to deliver the gospel message because that is what Jesus has commissioned me to do, an apostle to do. (14:51) The closing note on the Apostle Peter.

(14:54) Tradition tells us that he was martyred by being hung upside down on a cross. (15:01) He died trying to take the message out to the world as the rider of the Holy Express. (15:08) The next rider up is Paul in Acts chapter 9. (15:13) Paul, what are you doing? (15:15) The Jews have discovered that you are a Christian.

(15:18) They found out that you are on our side in preaching the gospel. (15:21) They're coming to kill you. (15:22) Watch out for they are waiting outside the wall of the city to destroy you.

(15:27) Paul's response. (15:30) I have to take that gospel message out to the far regions. (15:34) Didn't you hear the Lord when he said of me in Acts chapter 9 verses 15 and 16? (15:40) For he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.

(15:50) For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name. (15:58) I have to get the gospel message out. (16:02) Woe is me if I do not preach this gospel message.

(16:08) First Corinthians 9 verse 16. (16:10) I am an apostle of our Lord and a rider of the Holy Express. (16:16) Acts 14.

(16:18) Paul, are you alright? (16:20) That was a pretty bad stoning that they gave you in Lystra.

(16:23) Will you be able to continue with the Holy Express? (16:27) It looks like your writing days are over with Jesus. (16:33) I must deliver the gospel to the lost souls of this town.

(16:38) I am sent out with a message for I am an apostle born out of due time. (16:44) It does not matter what they say to me. (16:47) I am sent out with a message.

(16:48) If they leave me alone, to live is Christ. (16:51) If they kill me, to die is gain. (16:54) If they make me suffer, I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy.

(17:00) To be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in me. (17:05) If they let me live, I'm going to serve Christ. (17:08) If they kill me, I will be with Christ.

(17:11) If they make me suffer, I'm going to have more from Christ. (17:15) In any case, writing in the Holy Express, it's all Christ. (17:21) Therefore, I will pick up my beaten, bloodied, battered body and march right back in there.

(17:31) I must make this delivery. (17:33) Acts chapter 16. (17:36) Paul, look out.

(17:38) The Philistines have beat you and chained you. (17:40) They locked you up in jail and in stocks. (17:43) It looks like the devil has finally stopped the delivery of the gospel message in your life.

(17:50) Paul says, don't you understand that this gospel message had a jailer's address on it? (18:03) Second Timothy 1.8. (18:05) Therefore, do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me, his prisoner, (18:11) but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God. (18:15) I have a delivery for him, and that is my primary responsibility. (18:21) I am an apostle.

(18:23) Did you not see that the Lord worked this out for the good of the Holy Express? (18:29) Do you not see the jailer and his whole family immersed into the covenant? (18:35) We are taking that message successfully to the destination. (18:40) Second Timothy 4. (18:42) Paul, this situation doesn't look good. (18:44) There you are in prison on death row this time.

(18:49) Everybody has left you except Luke. (18:51) You are now ready to be offered as a drink offering, and the time of your departure is at hand. (18:58) It looks like it's time to hang up the saddle and retire the horse to the barn.

(19:06) Paul's response. (19:08) I have fought a good fight. (19:10) I have finished my course.

(19:12) I have kept the faith. (19:13) Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day. (19:22) But I will not hang up the saddle and retire the horse.

(19:25) The message must continue to be delivered. (19:28) I will turn the reins over to Timothy. (19:32) Timothy, I charge you, therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, (19:38) who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom, (19:44) preach the word, take the reins, be instant in season, out of season, (19:50) reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine.

(19:54) The gospel message must go on, and the holy express shall not end. (20:01) And the closing note he has on the Apostle Paul here is, tradition tells us, (20:08) shortly after penning these words, that Paul was led out of the dungeon and beheaded (20:16) on one of the seven hills of Rome. (20:19)

Being a Roman citizen, he could not be hung on a cross.

(20:24) They wouldn't do that, the Romans, to a Roman citizen. (20:29) They beheaded him instead. (20:32) And all this was done for preaching the gospel of Christ to others.

(20:40) The Pony Express was shut down after 18 months because of the telegraph. (20:45) There were 183 men who rode 650,000 miles. (20:52) They delivered every piece of mail but one.

(20:56) They were able to boldly handle the task because they had one thought in mind (21:01) and one thought only, deliver the message. (21:06) The apostles were sent out with a message, the gospel of Jesus Christ. (21:12) They have reached millions.

(21:14) They hung on to the end through all the persecution, through all the hurt, (21:18) through all the pain, for one reason only. (21:21) They never forgot the message they were told to deliver. (21:26) They had to take that gospel message through to the lost.

(21:31) Let them be our examples. (21:34) We cannot miraculously bring people back from the dead as the apostles did. (21:41) We cannot make the cripples walk.

(21:44) We cannot speak in tongues that we never learned. (21:47) There is one thing that all of us have been called to do, (21:51) ride in the Holy Express and take the gospel message of Jesus Christ out to the lost world. (21:58) Yes, Satan and his band of demons will try and rob us with public unrighteousness.

(22:05) Yes, he will be shooting his fiery arrows of guilt to try and knock us off the horse. (22:11) Yes, he will make the terrain tough to the cross. (22:14) But we have to get the gospel message through.

(22:21) So, hold close the whole armor of God. (22:25) And then, when we see sight of that first arrow, (22:30) hold up that shield of faith deflecting that arrow from the kingdom of God. (22:37) Be that rider of the Holy Express that he has called us to be.

(22:42) We are extending the invitation now to anyone who is subject to it. (22:48) If you need, come while you stand and sing.