

Guarding Against Sin (Matthew 18:1-9)

Introduction

We just finished our vision month where we have laid on the table the direction that God wants us to follow this year 2025. We have recognized that every time that we have an encounter with God, with His presence, His power, and His word, there is an immediate reaction of giving Him glory and adoration. Be able to see how majestic and wonderful and great our God is. That heart posture reveals our sinful nature, reveals our brokenness and with that awareness God begins to transform our life from the inside out. Now we don't have anything else other than proclaim what God has done in us.

And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me."

Entonces oí la voz del Señor que decía: —¿A quién enviaré? ¿Quién irá por nosotros? Y respondí: —Aquí estoy. ¡Envíame a mí!

Isaiah 6:8

The question is? What does "**Send Me – Envíame a mí**" mean?

Most of us do not say all of us; we struggle with this answer.

Far too often, people mistake their mission, calling or purpose as being linked to their own ego or personal fulfillment. It's not. **It's not about you!**

Jesus said Here I am! Send me way before he asked you.

Jesus say Yes to come to..

but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant,^[b] being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Por el contrario, se rebajó voluntariamente, tomando la naturaleza de siervo y haciéndose semejante a los seres humanos. Y al manifestarse como hombre, se humilló a sí mismo y se hizo obediente hasta la muerte, ¡y muerte de cruz!

Philippians 2:7-8

Jesus says Yes to seek and save the lost

This is the same mission He passed on to His Church.

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in^[a] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

Por tanto, vayan y hagan discípulos de todas las naciones, bautizándolos en el nombre del Padre y del Hijo y del Espíritu Santo, ²⁰ enseñándoles a obedecer todo lo que les he mandado a ustedes. Y les aseguro que estaré con ustedes siempre, hasta el fin del mundo.

Matthew 28:19-20

The underlying message in Jesus' mission and in our mission is **PEOPLE**

Our mission, calling, purpose and Ministry is not about business, busyness, task, calendar. It's about **PEOPLE**.

It's not about **YOU!** It's about **PEOPLE**

That is why this month of February, we want to be intentional in providing the steps to follow for us to be empowered to leave the **99** to pursue **The One**.

Before diving into the Jesus parable of the lost sheep, let's talk about the two of the biggest obstacles that we must overcome to truly understand and embrace this calling.

1. Turn and Become

At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

En ese momento los discípulos se acercaron a Jesús y preguntaron: —¿Quién es el más importante en el reino de los cielos? Él llamó a un niño y lo puso en medio de ellos. Entonces dijo:—Les aseguro que a menos que ustedes cambien y se vuelvan como niños, no entrarán en el reino de los cielos. Por tanto, el que se humilla como este niño será el más grande en el reino de los cielos.

Matthew 18:1-4

We often associate greatness with the platforms we stand on, the titles we hold, or the status we achieve, **especially in ministry**. This world measured greatness by how much money you have or your accomplishments. Most of the time we have that **urge** of doing something big to prove that **God is using us powerfully**.

Even the disciples struggle with this perspective. They assumed that the Kingdom of God would follow the same patterns of status, power, and hierarchy as the Roman Empire, Pharisees, and Sadducees.

Jesus responded by bringing a child before them.

In ancient Jewish society, children are the least in the social hierarchy. A child is weak, dependent, insignificant in the eyes of adults, has no authority or influence, has no social status or power, and needs discipline and guidance.

In order for us to do in God's assignment, we must "**turn and become like children**."

The phrase "**turn**" in Greek means to change **direction** or **repent**, implying a transformation of heart and attitude. Becoming like a child is not about a

childish attitude; is an invitation to **humility, trust, and dependence on God.**

Paul teaches us in Philippians about this.

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

No hagan nada por egoísmo o vanidad; más bien, con humildad consideren a los demás como superiores a ustedes mismos..

Philippians 2:3

Notice that greatness nor ambition are being condemned here. God has wired us for greatness, but it goes wrong when these things are driven by **selfishness.**

You must die to **self** so **People** can see Jesus in us. Remember....

It's not about **YOU!** It's about **PEOPLE**

Church, this is serious! In order to reach the **lost one**, something must **DIE.**

2. Death in order to Live

“Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin,^[a] it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea. “Woe to the world for temptations to sin!^[b] For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes! And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell^[c] of fire.

Y el que recibe en mi nombre a un niño como este me recibe a mí. Pero si alguien hace pecar a uno de estos pequeños que creen en mí, más le valdría que le colgaran al cuello una gran piedra de molino y lo hundieran en lo profundo del mar. »¡Ay del mundo por los tropiezos! Los tropiezos son inevitables, pero ¡ay de aquel que los ocasiona! Si tu mano o tu pie te hace pecar, córtatelo y arrójalos. Más te vale entrar en la vida manco o cojo que ser arrojado al fuego eterno con tus dos manos y tus dos pies. Y si tu ojo te hace pecar, sácatelo y arrójalos. Más te vale entrar tuerto en la vida que con dos ojos ser arrojado al fuego del infierno.

Matthew 18:5-7

There is no greater enemy to the Gospel of Christ than a Christian who does not practice what they preach. Nothing has turned more people away from the faith than believers who fail to deal **aggressively** with their own sin.

Jesus acknowledges that in this sinful world, temptations, trials, and opportunities for sin are **inevitable**.

But “**Woe to the one by whom temptation comes**” in other words severe judgment awaits anyone who becomes a source of sin for other.

Jesus shifts the focus from the existence of temptation to **personal responsibility**.

Before we **proclaim** with our **lips**, we must first proclaim with **our lives**.

If what we preach is true, people need to see it working in our lives before it can work in theirs.

Today is a call to deal with that **sin aggressively once and for all**.

And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.

Si tu mano o tu pie te hace pecar, córtatelo y arrójalalo. Más te vale entrar en la vida manco o cojo que ser arrojado al fuego eterno con tus dos manos y tus dos pies. Y si tu ojo te hace pecar, sácatelo y arrójalalo. Más te vale entrar tuerto en la vida que con dos ojos ser arrojado al fuego del infierno.

Matthew 18:8-9

These words might be find extreme and before continue, Jesus is not **encouraging self-mutilation**. He is making a point about how aggressive we must be against sin because the lack of management of sin can literally send others into hell.

I recognize that we have become an **“It’s Ok - hay bendito”** society. No! It’s not ok.

It is enough that people die in their sins because of our hypocrisy. Shame on us

“cut it off and throw it away”

Sin is not a small issue to manage; it’s a deadly infection that requires **decisive action**.

What are the **“hands”** or **“eyes”** in your life that lead you into sin? Are you willing to make hard choices to remove those stumbling blocks?

Whether it's relationships, habits, or entertainment, we must identify and eliminate the things that draw us away from God.

“cut it off and throw it away”

For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Porque si ustedes viven conforme a la carne, morirán; pero si por medio del Espíritu dan muerte a los malos hábitos del cuerpo, vivirán

Romans 8:13

Conclusion

“Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?”

You are here because Jesus said Yes to God. You are here because Jesus humbled himself and willingly gave His own life to pay the price of death to clean your sin.

It's your turn now!

It's your turn to **let go of pride, ambition, and self-sufficiency.**

It's your turn to **cut things off and throw them away.**

It's your turn to **be led by the power of the Spirit and live for others.**