

# *The Book of Luke*

## **The Table of Contents**

### **The Prelude to Christ's Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

#### **Luke 1**

[Barrenness \(1:5-25\)](#)  
[Mary – the Handmaiden of the Lord \(1:26-38\)](#)  
[But do you trust Him? \(1:39-56\)](#)  
[The Glory of God \(1:57-80\)](#)

#### **Luke 2**

[The Rescuer is Born \(2:1-20\)](#)  
[He shall be Called - \(Jesus, Immanuel, and Christ\) - \(2:15-20\)](#)  
[True Joy – Pray for War \(2:8-14\)](#)  
[Depart in Peace \(2:21-38\)](#)  
[Jesus as a Youth – the Power of Submission \(2:39-52\)](#)

#### **Luke 3**

[The Voice in the Wilderness \(3:1-20\)](#)  
[Jesus – The Son of God \(3:21-38\)](#)  
[Baptism in the Jordan River \(3:21-22\)](#)  
[This is My Beloved Son \(3:21-22\)](#)  
[The Genealogy of Jesus \(3:23-38\)](#)

### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

#### **Luke 4**

[The Wilderness Temptation \(4:1-15\)](#)  
[The Mission Statement of Jesus \(4:14-22\)](#)  
[Going back to Nazareth \(4:16-44\)](#)

#### **Luke 5**

[The Word is Alive \(5:1-11\)](#)  
[A Leper is Cleansed – He is Willing \(5:12-15\)](#)  
[The Pharisees, the Paralytic, and the Prince \(5:16-26\)](#)  
[Preaching, Praying, and Partying \(5:27-39\)](#)

#### **Luke 6**

[Jesus – Making a New Sabbath \(6:1-11\)](#)  
[Jesus - Making a New Nation \(6:11-17\)](#)  
[Jesus – Making a New Kingdom \(6:17-49\)](#)

#### **Luke 7**

[Compassion \(7:1-17\)](#)  
[The Dungeon of Doubt \(7:18-23\)](#)  
[Ditching the Doubt \(7:24-35\)](#)  
[Forgiven Much, Loves Much \(7:36-50\)](#)

#### **Luke 8**

[The Fire of Faith – The Word of God \(8:1-21\)](#)  
[Fear and Faith – The Storms of Life \(8:22-40\)](#)

#### **Luke 9**

[Now it is Time \(9:1-9\)](#)  
[Jehovah-Jireh \(The-Lord-Will-Provide\) – \(9:10-17\)](#)  
[Who Do Men Say that I Am \(9:18-26\)](#)  
[The Transfiguration \(9:27-36\)](#)  
[True Greatness \(9:37-62\)](#)

## **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

### **Luke 10**

[True Joy \(Go – Woe – Know\) – 10:1-24](#)  
[True Balance \(Balancing Service and Devotion\) – 10:25-42](#)

### **Luke 11**

[Teach Us to Pray – 11:1-13](#)  
[One Sign Only – 11:14-32](#)  
[Walking in the Light – 11:33-54](#)

### **Luke 12**

[Believer Beware](#)  
[Beware of the Fear of Man – 12:1-12](#)  
[Beware of Covetousness – 12:13-21](#)  
[Beware of Worrying – 12:22-34](#)  
[Beware of Spiritual Dullness – 12:35-59](#)

### **Luke 13**

[The Questions of Life – 13:1-9](#)  
[You Are Loosed – 13:10-17](#)  
[The Narrow Door – 13:18-35](#)

### **Luke 14**

[Dinner with Jesus – 14:1-35](#)

### **Luke 15**

[Lost and Found – 15:1-32](#)

### **Luke 16**

[Stewards of God \(part 1 - Possessions\) – 16:1-13](#)  
[Stewards of God \(part 2 – The Word\) – 16:14-18](#)  
[Stewards of God \(part 3 – Eternal Life\) – 16:19-31](#)

### **Luke 17**

[Conflict Resolution – the Rules of Fighting – 17:1-10](#)  
[An Encounter or a Conversion? – 17:11-19](#)  
[Soon & Very Soon we are Going to see the King – 17:20-37](#)

### **Luke 18**

[Men Ought Always Pray and NOT Lose – 18:1-8](#)  
[How to Always Prayer \(Having the Right Heart & the Right Mind\) – 18:9-17](#)  
[Dad's Ought Always to Pray – 18:15-27](#)  
[Merely Existing or Fully Living -18:15-30](#)  
[The Key \(the Resurrection\) – 18:31-43](#)

## **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

### **Luke 19**

[The Story of Zacchaeus – It's Your Story Too \(19:1-10\)](#)  
[Occupy Until I Come! \(19:11-27\)](#)  
[Exactly as He said it Would Be \(The Triumphal Entry\) - 19:28-41 \(Easter 2013\)](#)  
[Hanging on His Every Word \(19:41-48\)](#)

### **Luke 20**

[Whose Are We? \(part 1\) – \(20:1-26\)](#)  
[Whose Are We? \(part 2\) – \(20:27 – 21:4\)](#)

### **Luke 21**

[Time to be “All In” - \(21:1-38\)](#)  
[Rumors of War – \(21:5-9\)](#)

### **Luke 22**

[Communion – \(22:1-20\)](#)  
[How Great do you Want to Be? – \(22:21-34\)](#)  
[Simple Faith – \(22:31-38\)](#)  
[There is No Other Way – \(22:39-46\)](#)  
[There is Power in Failure – If we Allow It – \(22:47-62\)](#)

[Tried & True \(Christ's Mock Trial\) – \(22:63 – 23:25\)](#)

### **Luke 23**

[Tried & True \(Christ's Mock Trial\) – \(22:63 – 23:25\)](#)

[What will You be Known For? – \(23:26\)](#)

[Leaning into Jesus – \(23:27-43\)](#)

[It is Done! – \(23:44-56\)](#)

### **The Consummation of Christ's Ministry (24:1–53)**

#### **Luke 24**

[He is Alive and Walking Among Us! – \(24:1-12\)](#)

[Idle Tales – \(24:10-12\)](#)

[Treasure Hunting - \(24:13-33\)](#)

[Beautiful Hands – \(24:33-43\)](#)

[The God who Hung on the Cross – \(24:44-48\)](#)

[To Kiss His Feet – \(24:49-53\)](#)

#### **The Story Continues – And You Shall Receive Power**

[The Story Continues – Acts Intro – \(Acts 1:1-3\)](#)

[You Shall Receive Power – \(Acts 1:4-8\)](#)

[The Power of Looking for His Soon Return – \(Acts 1:9-11\)](#)

[The Power of the Upper Prayer Room – \(Acts 1:12-14\)](#)

[The Power of the Word of God – \(Acts 1:15-26\)](#)

[The Day of Pentecost – Worth the Wait \(Acts 2:1-13\)](#)

[Peter's Sermon on the Day of Pentecost \(2:14-41\)](#)

[Part 1 – Acts 2:14-21](#)

[Part 2 – Acts 2:22-41](#)

[Remaining Steadfast \(The 4 Pillars of the Church\) - 2:42-47](#)

[Evangelism – He Who Wins Souls is Wise \(2:1-41\)](#)

### **Supplemental Notes**

#### **The 70 Sevens of Daniel Chapter 9**

# Luke 1

## ***The Purpose and Method of Luke's Gospel***

**Luke 1:1** Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us,

**Luke 1:2** just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us,

**Luke 1:3** it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus,

**Luke 1:4** that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.

### **Lover of God**

Theophilus means "Lover of God" and thus God gives us from the beginning that this book is written to all who are lovers of God; and He writes to us this great love story of a God who loved us

**1 John 4:19 (NKJV)** <sup>19</sup> We love Him because He first loved us.

### **We take an Undertaking / What it Means – How to Apply**

**Verse 1 - as many have taken in hand** - We will take a great undertaking to study this book verse-by-verse. We will study for what it says, what it means, and how we apply it to our lives personally today.

### **Autopsy**

**Verse 2 – eyewitnesses** - eyewitnesses is where we get the word for autopsy, and the idea is that of thoroughly examining and making sound conclusions based on facts. So we have a thorough record before us, Doctor Luke says he went out and interviewed people personally and compiles this record for us so (verse 3) we have perfect understanding, and (verse 4) and we may have instructions for life.

## **Barrenness Luke 1:5-25**

### **Right from Beginning – Picture of Us – Barren / Invitation & Declaration – Life**

The Book of Luke, it is the life and ministry of Jesus; chapter two will declare those glorious words, "I bring you glad tidings of great joy". But chapter one doesn't begin with joy (per se), as it starts with a backdrop of barrenness, of emptiness, of fruitlessness, and God intended it to be so, because right from the beginning of the Book we see it is a book all about you, and all about me, as only God can turn bareness into fruitfulness. This wonderful book starts off with the story of barrenness, and we see it is a picture of each and every one of us, the barrenness of our life, awaiting the visitation of God, the invitation from God, and the declaration of God – that He has come for us, to bring us life everlasting and life here and now that is abounding. To give us more than this world could ever give and have to offer. Lets start in verse 5.

### ***Zacharias Ministers in the Temple***

**Luke 1:5** There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.

**Luke 1:6** And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

**Luke 1:7** But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years.

**God Choose 2 Barren People / To Declare to a Barren Nation – Behold He Comes**

God chooses Zachariah and Elizabeth, two barren people to birth the one, John the Baptist, who would be the forerunner who would declare to the barren nation, prepare the way of the Lord. Behold He Comes!

### **Blameless – but not Sinless / Sought to Please the Lord**

These two precious people were blameless we read, and it doesn't mean they were sinless, but they kept themselves above reproach, and sought after to serve the please the Lord in all their ways.

**Luke 1:8 So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, Luke 1:9 according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.**

**Luke 1:10 And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense.**

### **The Lot – No Coincidences with God / God waited for this Moment for Zachariah**

The lot fall out to him, and we know there are no coincidences with God. God waited for this time, His perfect time to tap Zachariah for this time. A specific time so He could send his message personally to Zachariah, and display His glory publically to the Nation Israel.

### **A Once in Lifetime Honor / 2 Priests Come – Leave**

This was a once in a lifetime honor, to go into the temple and burn incense at the table of incense in the Holy place (not the Holy of Holies). The priest would go in with two other priests, and one priest would bear live coals from the altar of sacrifice and the other would carry the incense, and they would go in together and stand before the table of incense and the each would put their coals and incense down and then leave the one priest there to make the offering before the Lord.

### **Talmud – Leave Quickly / People waiting Outside for a Blessing – Prayers have been Heard**

The Talmud says that these priests would perform their duty as soon as possible because incense he sinned, God would strike him dead. The people would be gathered outside the temple praying, and they would be waiting for the priest to come back out and pronounce a blessing, and they would consider that their prayers were heard and would be answered.

### **Elizabeth's barrenness – Reveals Character of Zachariah / Barrenness grounds for Divorce / Shame**

The information that Elizabeth was barren gives us great insight into the character of Zachariah. Zachariah could have put Elizabeth away, as being barren was grounds for divorce according to the rabbis. But his love for her is obvious, as he would stay with her. To him, to be married to her, a woman who was barren, would have brought shame upon his name and character.

### **20,000 Priests – 24 Divisions / Know each other Well / Thoughts – a Man Cursed of God**

It is estimated that there was 20,000 priests of Israel at this time, they were broken out into groups of twenty-four, and thus Zachariah is in a group of about 800 priests who would travel to Jerusalem together when it was their turn to go, and thus Zachariah would know them, and they would know him, and all would know that Zachariah was childless. Zachariah would know the thoughts of their heart because it was considered that a man was cursed by God, that he was not in God's favor, if he was childless. The Rabbis taught that a man that had no children was such an offense to God that God was cutting off his lineage so his name would be no more. Yet Zachariah would endure that scorn because of the love of the wife he had.

### **A Word to Couples**

Elizabeth was Zachariah's "lot" and Zachariah was Elizabeth's lot – it was not accident or happen chance, but God divinely brought them together. A Word to married couples – Zachariah is a model for both husbands and wives of the commitment to each other. Your spouse will have their many flaws. They may not fulfill you every wish and desire. They may be lacking and barren in certain areas of their lives, and it rolls over on to your marriage. They may at times embarrass you and bring you shame. You may hear (or just know) the thoughts others have about your spouse, and how it directly reflects upon you – but see, and grab on to, this example of Zachariah; a spouse who would not leave, not abandon, nor rebuke his wife. Sadly, too many people cut the ties, put the distance between, and turn away – from their less than perfect spouse. You have shamed me for the last time, you have left me wanting for the last time, I will now separate from you and go on to better things for myself. Christian, Zachariah

was faithful to the pledge he made his wife, the covenant he made with God, and even though the world, even though he found religious people who said you can go, he would not. And because he did not, he was the first person in 400 years that God directly sent a message to – and his barrenness was filled with joy!

### ***An Angel Announces the Birth of John the Baptist***

**Luke 1:11** Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

**Luke 1:12** And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

**Luke 1:13** But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.

**Luke 1:14** And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth.

**Luke 1:15** For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb.

**Luke 1:16** And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God.

**Luke 1:17** He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, ‘to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,’ and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

#### **Greatest Ever**

***Verse 15 - he will be great in the sight of the Lord*** - So Great that Jesus will call him the greatest prophet ever – why, is say John is the greatest because John will get to say what no other prophet got to say, behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

**Luke 7:28 (NKJV)** *28 For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.”*

**John 1:29 (NKJV)** *29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*

#### **Can you Say That / You can say what Daniel Couldn’t**

Can you say that, can you say behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world; if you can say those 13 words? If you can, if you will, then you too will be a great prophet. We today get to speak and point to the One that Daniel, Jeremiah, Elijah, and Joel all couldn’t, but we can. Don’t miss the opportunity to be great in the Kingdom of God.

### ***Zacharias is Unable to Speak***

**Luke 1:18** And Zacharias said to the angel, “How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years.”

#### **Well Stricken – Old – Bent Over / How can I Know – Even Zachariah knew he was Old**

Well advanced/stricken - means up there in age, and it also was applied to mean they were bent over from age. The fact that Zachariah says how will I know can lend to us understanding that he thinks he is too old to have children.

**Luke 1:19** And the angel answered and said to him, “I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings.

**Luke 1:20** But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time.”

#### **A Priest questions a Angel in the Temple - OK**

You would think for a priest that if an angel appeared to you in the temple that whatever he said you would consider it as good as done, but Zachariah questions him, and gets struck with dumbness.

#### **Gabriel probably thinking – Are you Kidding**

I am thinking Gabriel is saying, are you kidding me, a mighty angel is standing before you and you say how do I know! How many angels have appeared to you in your lifetime?

**Luke 1:21** And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple.

**Luke 1:22** But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless.

### **People expecting Quick Return / Thinking – Cursed of God**

Now the multitude are waiting to be blessed and they are use to the priests going in and getting out, and now here is Zachariah who is tarring, so long they may have wondered if he was in sin and God struck him. No doubt it would have crossed many people's mind, especially the other priests, who would be thinking, God called him in to struck him dead, because a man without a child is not in God's favor.

### **First game of Charades**

The verb here for motioned is that he was making signs,, so we have our first game of charades in the bible. Zachariah is making signs and people are going, it is a goat, no it is a shadow, no it is angel - and Zachariah would be shaking his head yes yes.

**Luke 1:23 So it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house.**

**Luke 1:24 Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying,**

**Luke 1:25 “Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on me, to take away my reproach among people.”**

### **All a backdrop of Coming Messiah**

All this barrenness is the backdrop of the coming Messiah.

### **4 Things Speak to Me**

As I look at this, I see four things that speak out to me today for you and I personally.

## **Barrenness of Prayer**

### **Zachariah - How Long since Prayer That Prayer / Not Convinced – Must have been Long**

The angel speaks to him in that place, that his prayer had been heard, and that he would bear a son. Had to be a son to carry on the family lineage. I really wondered how long it had been since Zachariah had prayed that prayer, because when the angel says he will have a son, Zachariah doesn't sound too convinced. He probably had quit praying that prayer when he and Elizabeth passed through the years of child bearing. It might now be twenty years since he prayed that prayer, but the angel says your prayer has been heard and will be answered. Zachariah is going to the temple to pray on behalf of the people, how many people came to him as a priest and said please pray for me, pray for this situation, and how many times had he seen other peoples prayers answered while his went answered.

### **Seemed God Turned Deaf Ear - Displeased / Beyond Wildest Dream / Mom & Dad Desire**

And although it seemed that God was turning a deaf ear to their prayer, that God had displeasure with them, we see quite the contrary in that God had a plan for them that went beyond their wildest dream, that not only would God give to this family their hearts desire of a child, extend the family name, but give unto them a prophet, and not only that a prophet as prophesied in the Scriptures. Imagine a mom and a dad who have dedicated their life to serving the Lord, and then to have a child that not only followed the Lord, but led other people to follow the Lord. Oh the joy of their hearts to see such things. It is every parent's heart's desire.

*Malachi 4:5-6 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup> Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. <sup>6</sup> And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.*

### **Maybe You**

Application – and maybe you have prayed that prayer, for the last time, sometime ago, considering it a done prayer, a no prayer. Lord I've prayed for my child to return to you, and it seems so barren now, the soil of their heart more barren than ever before. Lord I've asked you to work in that situation, but after all this time it appears hopeless. Lord, you know my heart's desire, but maybe my heart's desire is not your will. Christian, God has heard your prayer, and we can look at Zachariah and Elizabeth, and know that nothing is over, until God says it is over. Prayer matters, we see it here, so don't quit praying! God is waiting to bring your barrenness into glory.

## **Barrenness of Being Misunderstood and all Alone**

### **Zachariah Misunderstood – How about Elizabeth / Market – Mommy – Room / Silence broken by Baby**

Zachariah was misunderstood by his peers as we have discussed, but how about Elizabeth, imagine her barrenness. Imagine walking down to the market and seeing all the mothers in tow with their kids, to talk to other mothers and see their children clinging to them, hugging them. Imagine Elizabeth hearing those words spoken to a mother by a child, mommy, mommy I love you, and go home and walk into a home of no laughter of children. The plans for the baby room eventually turned into a memory of disappointment every time she passed it (I guess I'll make this a guest room – not a nursery). I think how divine it was that during her pregnancy it will be so silent that she won't even hear the voice of her husband for nine months, and then in one moment all the years of silence in the home will break through with the cry of a child, her child!

### **God has not Lost Track of You / Maybe Feel All Alone – He knows Every Detail / Waiting to for Glory**

Application – God has not lost track of you, He knows exactly where you are and what is happening in your life. Maybe you are feeling barren today, even the crowd of people, thinking no one understands your barrenness, your emptiness. God sees you in the barrenness; He sees every detail of your barrenness, and even in a period where no one understands you, no one understands what you are going through, oh they say that they do, but you know they have no clue – know that God knows, and He is not distant, but He is waiting to bring your barrenness into glory

### **Barrenness of Ministry**

#### **Ministry of Obscurity / Still man of Prayer – Not Bitter / Didn't say tired of the Talk**

Maybe you feel your ministry is barren, just a ministry of obscurity.. Here it is years and years since Zachariah entered the priesthood that he is still serving the Lord. Still a man of prayer who was not bitter at God for not giving him a son, nor challenging God on all the gossip and slander against him for being barren, yet we see a man just continually serving the Lord even though his ministry was considered barren by others for not having a child. Zachariah didn't say let's quit, let's be quiet, let's just farm the land and tend to the sheep, we will worship the Lord in our own way, but enough of the challenges of the people.

#### **Testimony of Great Finishers – Serving into Later Years**

What a testimony of great finishers of the faith, as even well into their later years, they are still serving and being faithful to the Lord.

#### **May have been Obscure in Earth – God picked him out of 20K / God not lost track of You / Glory**

Zachariah may have been obscure on earth, but he was not in heaven, for out of 20,000 priests he was the one God was watching, he was the one God was waiting to use for this moment. God has not lost track of you, He knows exactly where you are, and what is happening in your life, and He is working a work to bring the barrenness into glory. Your faithfulness is not barrenness, but rays of glory for God, and get this, to God and His heart as He is so joyed by your faithfulness in serving Him and His people.

#### **Questioning Ministry / John the Baptist**

Application – we can go through times of questioning and wondering why we aren't perceiving the power of the Holy Spirit moving through our life in the way we desire, we can begin to become somewhat disoriented in our walk —but John 10 opens a door for us as we read about John the Baptist. Jesus said the greatest prophet born in the history of the world was a man who did no miracle. None. May we realize that if we were never to see any miracle in our life, if we were never to see the power of the Spirit in a tangible way, it would be fine. Let it be said of us what was said of John: that all things we spoke of Jesus were true. What's the priority of ministry? Doing exactly what John did: talking about Jesus, pointing people to Jesus, exalting Jesus. No wonder John was the greatest prophet of all (Matthew 11:11). Do you speak them true to your children, your family, friends – then be of good cheer. Any ministry that points to Jesus, and says behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, is not barren.

*John 10:37-42 (NKJV) <sup>37</sup> If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; <sup>38</sup> but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him." <sup>39</sup> Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand. <sup>40</sup> And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was baptizing at first, and there He stayed. <sup>41</sup> Then many came to Him and said, "John performed no sign, but all the things that John spoke about this Man were true." <sup>42</sup> And many believed in Him there.*

## Barrenness of Life and It's Purpose

### **Barrenness is the Backdrop / Zachariah and Israel**

Barrenness is the backdrop of the entry of Jesus. We see here a story of the barrenness of Elizabeth and Zachariah, and history tells us about the barrenness of the Nation of Israel, the barrenness of the days of Israel when Christ came into the world. It was a barren world, and such a state people had to be asking what is the purpose of life, for this life is barren.

### **Israel Barren**

Israel was barren, oh not the land, but the environment:

- Barren was the throne of David, as it reads it was in the Days of Herod the Great - who was a butcher and a cruel man, a man who slaughtered his own family, and betrayed his own Countryman before the Romans, and then slaughter the children when he hears the Christ has come into the world. - a far cry from King David whose throne was the hope of Israel.
- They were barren as a sovereign nation as the Jews were under the yoke of Roman bondage.
- They were barren in prophecy as it has been 400 years since Malachi who was the last prophet to speak unto and come unto from God to the Nation.
- They were barren in the spiritual sense as the Pharisees were the ruling party in the Temple and they were laying unbearable and unachievable rules upon the people. A burdensome yet still barren religion.
- The Sadducees were the next ruling party in the temple and they denied that there was an afterlife, all there was here and now - to me that is the most barren of all barrenness that there would be no hope of heaven.
- The political realm was barren as The Herodians was the political party that was in power along with King Herod, and they cared more about aligning themselves with The Roman Empire and the world in order to prosper materially, than to stand for the ways of the Lord and their Judeo heritage. I think we can all relate so closely to the barrenness we are watching slip away from our Once Christian Nation.

### **I Relate to this Barrenness**

All this barrenness is the backdrop of the coming Messiah. And that Barrenness, that is where I was before the Messiah was revealed to me, how relatable this story is to me.

- Barren inside, I felt all alone. Even in a crowd of people I felt all alone. When people would say you got the American dream I would go home and look into the mirror and see all the way into the depths of my soul and say, then why am I so empty.
- Barren Religion that left me distant from God, I saw no hope or life in it, or even the people I knew that followed it so devoutly.
- Barren World – all the world had to offer, yet the offer was barren, I said to myself that if this is life, it is most pitiable.

### **But my First Christmas**

But how I remember my first Christmas like it was yesterday, although it was twenty years ago. I truly remember – Joy to the World, the Lord has come. Although I felt all alone, as others were like what is the big deal about this Christmas compared to the others gone by, and although they didn't relate to it as I did, I knew I wasn't alone this Christmas, for the first time I was truly alone (even in a sea of people), but for the first Christmas ever I was truly had peace and joy.

### **Can you Relate / If Not**

Can you relate? Oh how One Child has turned the barrenness into love, joy, and peace. If you still feel your life is barren, please seek Him out this Christmas, seek Him and ask why did you come, what does it mean to me, and how am I to respond to this message.

## **He Came**

He came, born into a barren world, so that He might bring fruitfulness of life into it. There is a verse that speaks to my heart so greatly, it is John 13:1. Jesus came into the world as the Babe of Bethlehem, and life and walked amongst man for 33 years, until the cross – to be the Perfect Lamb of God who takes away the sins of Ray, of John, of Chris. And then when it was the end of His earthly ministry, we see the great depth of His heart, and that is that it grieved Him to leave us. Yes He must, as the cross is the only way for man's salvation, and He must ascend so His Spirit could descend upon us, but His heart was breaking for us. We can see in the verse I love you, I loved you to the end of my earthly ministry, I love you Lazarus, I love you Mary and Martha, I love you Thomas, Peter, and the people I walked so closely with, I loved physically walking with you, touching you, holding you, and your touch and your love for me. Yes we will be together forever in eternity after I Finish the Work of Redemption, but I will miss you so greatly until I can see you face to face, and hold you in my arms again, to talk, to laugh, and cry again together. Jesus misses us, He longs for us, he can't wait to be together with us – that is the heart that He has for us.

*John 13:1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.*

## **Keep that backdrop this Christmas**

We have come from barrenness, from darkness, into a marvelous light where now we have a glorious future and hope. All because He came, and may we enter into our Christmas week, with that as our backdrop.

*1 Peter 2:9–10 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; <sup>10</sup> who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.*

# Mary – the Handmaiden of the Lord (Luke 1:26-38)

## Another Christmas Gone By

Well for the world another Christmas has gone by, the gifts have been given, the gifts have been received, the gifts have been returned, many already broken, and some gifts still leaving the receiver wondering “what in the world were they thinking?”. The parties are over, the long break that many get has passed, and now it will be 365 more days until the “Most Wonderful Time of the Year” is celebrated and experienced again. But for us, those who call Him Savior, those who call Him Lord, we get to celebrate and experience Christmas as often as we like, as we read and reflect in the “Greatest gift ever Given” – Jesus Christ, Immanuel, God with Us; the One who would come, and the One who would say, “It is Done!”.

## The Wonderful Fulfillment – Isaiah 7 & 9

So our passage this day, the wonderful announcing of the fulfillment of Isaiah 7, a virgin shall be with child. And Isaiah 9, a Child is born, and Son is given. Oh what a story, God with us, God for us, and then God in us.

*Isaiah 7:14 (NKJV)* <sup>14</sup> Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

*Isaiah 9:6–7 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

## Eyewitness - Autopsy

*Verse 1:2 – eyewitnesses* - Again, eyewitnesses is where we get the word for autopsy, and the idea is that of thoroughly examining and making sound conclusions based on facts. So we have a thorough record before us, Doctor Luke says he went out and interviewed people personally and compiles this record for us so (verse 3) we have perfect understanding, and (verse 4) and we may have instructions for life. Thus I take it to mean he interviewed Mary personally. Imagine asking her the questions, what was it like to have to birth Him in a manger, to hear the sneers and absorb the glances of those accusing you of be a harlot, and what was it like to see your Son upon a cross.

*Luke 1:1–4 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, <sup>2</sup> just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us, <sup>3</sup> it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, <sup>4</sup> that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.

## Our Text

**Luke 1:26** Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, **Luke 1:27** to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary.

**Luke 1:28** And having come in, the angel said to her, “Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!”

**Luke 1:29** But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.

**Luke 1:30** Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

**Luke 1:31** And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS.

**Luke 1:32** He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.

**Luke 1:33** And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.”

**Luke 1:34** Then Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I do not know a man?”

**Luke 1:35** And the angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.

**Luke 1:36** Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren.

**Luke 1:37 For with God nothing will be impossible.”**

**Luke 1:38 Then Mary said, “Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.”  
And the angel departed from her.**

Now let’s take a look at it verse-by-verse

### ***Gabriel Announces Christ’s Birth***

**Luke 1:26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth,  
Luke 1:27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary.**

#### **Can anything good come out of Nazareth?**

There was a saying in that day, can anything good come out of Nazareth. Later Nathaniel one of the disciples when he first was told we have found the Messiah and he is Jesus of Nazareth, and Nathaniel immediately responded with the saying of the day, can anything good come out of Nazareth.

*John 1:46 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> And Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.”*

#### **Watchtower – Shoot - Sprout**

Nazareth, the name means “watchtower”, and it also means “shoot” or “sprout or bean.” It was what we would today call a “bean town”, a little back road town full of back road people.

#### **Next to Major Trade Routes / Other side of the Tracks**

Nazareth was next to the important trade routes of Palestine. It overlooked the Plain of Esdraelon through which Gilead to the south and west. North of the city was the main road from Ptolemaists’ to the Decapolis, a road over which the Roman legion frequently traveled. Now Nazareth was close enough to the main trade routes to maintain contact with the outside world, but its remote location contributed to a certain aloofness and independence. Its people, for example, spoke a crude dialect of Aramaic. Nazareth was a community on “the other side of the tracks.” Located less than five miles from Sepphoris, the splendid capital city of Galilee, it knew quite well the impact on Palestine of Greek culture and Roman wealth and power. Yet Nazareth shared in none of those benefits. Its situation on a steep promontory ensured that its citizens would remain outsiders in the city below.

#### **Back in Pittsburgh**

I can remember as a youth growing up in Pittsburgh that we would pick up kids on the school bus that literally lived on the other side of the tracks, and we would always stare as we road through because of the difference between middle-class and poverty. And I can remember how those kids were treated differently, viewed differently because their clothes were not as nice (not that ours we Jordache or Calvin Cline). The remembrance of mother’s standing at the bus stop with babies and toddlers in dirty t-shirts and dirty faces still burns in my mind. I can remember one of my friends, she was a lovely girl, she was just as beautiful as any other girl, but she always had to live with the stigma of living on the other side of the tracks. This was Nazareth, and this was Mary’s life.

**Luke 1:28 And having come in, the angel said to her, “Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!”**

**Luke 1:29 But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.**

**Luke 1:30 Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.**

**Luke 1:31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS.**

**Luke 1:32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.**

**Luke 1:33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.”**

#### **The Word Play – The Branch**

How fitting the word play is, as Nazareth means shoot – and Jesus through His lineage to Mary and Joseph will come through the lineage, the branch, of King David. This was prophesied in the Old Testament:

*Jeremiah 23:5–6 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup> “Behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. <sup>6</sup> In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.*

*Zechariah 3:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> *'Hear, O Joshua, the high priest, You and your companions who sit before you, For they are a wondrous sign; For behold, I am bringing forth My Servant the BRANCH.*

## **5 Promises of Jesus**

Notice the five promises of who Jesus would be:

- Verse 32 – He will be Great!
- Verse 32 – He will be called the Son of the Highest
- Verse 32 – The Lord will give Him the throne of David
- Verse 33 - He will reign of the House of Jacob forever.
- Verse 33 – His Kingdom there will be no end.

## **Fear Not / Notice how Fear is Calmed (God thinks You / Who God is)**

*Verse 30 - Fear not Mary* – Do you notice how the messenger (Gabriel) calms Mary's fear? First he tells Mary what the Lord thinks of her (that she is highly favored of the Lord), and secondly proclaims promises and power of who Jesus is. And so it is a word to all of us today, and that we need not fear whatever that thing is that frightens us, for the Lord ministers and speaks to us in our fear. Give ear to the messenger of the Lord and the message given, and fear will flee from you, as the word of God always brings comfort, peace, and power.

## **Every time you Read**

I have taught the Inductive Bible Study method from the United States, to Central America, and to the former Soviet Union. I teach the student how to break the scriptures down, to observe what was said, to interpret the meaning of the passage, and how to apply it to their lives personally. But let me just make it even simpler today rather than the two or four day course we instruct; simply every time you open this word look for two people, look for Jesus, and look for yourself, and you will be filled. Every passage you will see Jesus, and every passage you will see yourself, for this Bible was to declare Jesus to you, and you to Him.

## **Highly Favored**

In verse 28, the Greek word translated “highly favored” is *charitoo*, and means “highly blessed” or “much graced” or “accepted”. It is used only one other time in the Bible, not concerning Mary, but concerning you (Ephesians 1:6). We are highly favored not because of who we are, but because of where we are. Where are we? We are in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).

*Ephesians 1:6 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> *to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted (charitoo) in the Beloved.*

*2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

## **Fear Not**

Fear not Christian, for you are highly favored, you are accepted in the Beloved.

## **Mary Miraculously Conceives**

**Luke 1:34 Then Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I do not know a man?”**

## **Betrothed – 3 Phases of Marriage**

Verse 27 says Mary was betrothed – now there were three phases of the relationship in those days, and that was the engagement, the betrothing, and then the actual marriage. It was prearranged by the parents because they concluded early on that the teenager didn't have enough sense on who to marry so they had to do it for them (but of course parents don't think that anymore). The betrothing period was one year before the wedding. It was considered binding, and if you wanted to not go through with the marriage you needed a certificate of divorce. If you were intimate with another during this period, it was considered adultery and you would be stoned. Note - both parties were not to be intimate with each other prior to the wedding night. Both Mary and Joseph were faithful to this calling.

## **Consider this Young Girl / Probably 14-16 years Old**

What an amazing story of an amazing young girl. Based on historical writings the marriage would happen when the girl was still a teenager, and thus is estimated that Mary is somewhere between 14-16 years old. Now consider all that we have said up to this point, and consider what we now know of Mary.

### **The other sides of the Tracks / Not of Wealth or Influence**

Mary lived on the other side of the tracks – across the tracks, just a few miles away was the thriving and prosperous region of Galilee. The people were more affluent, greater access to education, living a more comfortable lifestyle. But not Mary, she lived in Nazareth, not by choice but by birth. We know that Mary and Joseph were not of wealth because when they came to make the offering at the Temple on the eighth day to dedicate Jesus, and they best they could offer were two turtledoves which was the offering that the poor would bring, as those who were not poor were to offer a lamb.

### **Hick Town / Unclean**

Nazareth was considered a hick town. The Jews in Galilee considered any Jew from Nazareth to be unclean because of their continual contact with Gentiles, hence the people of Nazareth were considered “lesser” in the religious circles. It is funny how man spiritualizes things today, because if you go to the “Church of Annunciation” in Nazareth it is beautiful and ornate. It has granite and marble floors (spotlessly clean), soft lightening to set the mood, comfortable seating. Man romantizes things for sure, because that was anything that Nazareth was. Nazareth was on the poverty side of the tracks, it was dirty and dingy.

### **Recent Archaeological – Roman Garrison / Military Bases in USA**

Recent archaeological digs have uncovered sites for numerous Roman garrisons and cities within five miles of Nazareth. I have lived close to several military bases throughout my life and what I can tell you is that in every case there were more bars than there were convenience stores and there were more stripper clubs than there were bars. There was definitely a supply and demand equation that was going on, and I do not know for sure which one drove the other. I would think that Nazareth would be very much the same, as there is nothing new under the sun.

### **Could have went with wrong Crowd / Attention – Self Esteem – Escape Hick town for a Moment**

Mary could have easily allowed herself to run with the wrong crowd, she could have easily sought out the attention of men to “build up” her self-esteem, to feel “accepted” – but knew she was accepted in God. And although all the lures would be around her, military soldiers offering her a good time, a moments escape from her hick town life, to enjoy the pleasures of riches for a brief moment, but she didn’t.

### **How did she Do It – Verse 30 / Mary walked Alongside of God / Maybe her prayer was Use Me**

How did she do it? Verse 30 says that Mary was with God (and the verb form with (para) means she was with God) - that she walked with God, she was alongside of Him. She was committed to God, at the age of 14. I think the perception of Mary is that one day she was like just going along in life, and then out of the blue the angel appears to her and says you have been chosen. I don’t that at all, I think she had a lifestyle of walking along with God, reading (or hearing) the word, speaking to Him in prayer, and she “walked along side of the Lord”. Maybe Mary’s very prayer was, Lord I just want to be used by you, I want to make my life count, I am completely committed to You. I say than based on verse 30, and 38 where she says “Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word” – not so much because an angel appeared to her, but because she had already committed her life deeply to the Lord before the angel appeared to her.

*Luke 1:30 Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with (para) God.*

### **Youth - Wisdom**

Youth - you will not one day wake up and find that you are wise; wisdom is obtained by the pull method, not the push method. Neither God nor your parents can push wisdom unto you, they can demonstrate it and speak it, but it is for you (and all) to grab the wisdom and pull it into your person. Thus what you pull in today, what you pull in tomorrow, and the day after and the day after, is what you wake up with next month, next year, next decade. Mary is 14 or 15 here, but we see her abounding with wisdom at such a young age, and what she is saying in verses 46-55 at first appears to be words of praise just flowing from her lips, but if you look into the words she is reciting the character of God that was spoken of and revealed throughout the Old Testament.

### **Youth Purpose Today**

Youth, purpose in your heart today, to be like Mary, commit yourself to God, and you will find favor, and you will be blessed.

### **If Given Self Away – Commit back to Him**

If you have given yourself away and are no longer a virgin, listen God says He wants to present you as a chaste virgin - go to Him and commit yourself to Him from this day on and watch how He will honor that desire and do a wonderful thing in your life right now, and tomorrow - but today is the day to give yourself wholly dedicated to His ways. There is the law of sowing and reaping and the more you sow the more you will reap, stop the sowing of those things now, commit yourself to the Lord right now at this very moment and watch what He will do. You may say later, but getting to later becomes harder and harder – today commit yourself unto the Lord. And listen, Satan wants to tell you a lie, he says to you what is the use now, there is no going back, you are on the other side of the tracks now, you can't be accepted in your religious circles, and nor will God accept you back, and let me tell you – it is a lie from the pit of hell, a lie to keep you away from God, and all the favor and blessings He wants to bestow upon you. Commit yourself to Him, and He will pour the blessings of heaven out upon you, but He can't do that if you stay away and don't commit yourself to Him. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

*2 Corinthians 11:2 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup> For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.*

*James 4:8 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.*

### **People in the Background / God Sees**

Parents – please note, there are people in the background that produce greatest in others, and yet they are not mentioned or exalted, but nonetheless they have been a major influence and factor in the person - as you notice there is no mention of Mary's parent, but what an awesome and wonderful job they did in their daughter. Parents, Jehovah Lahai-Roi, the God who sees.

*Genesis 16:13–16 (NKJV) <sup>13</sup> Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, You-Are- the-God-Who-Sees; for she said, "Have I also here seen Him who sees me?" <sup>14</sup> Therefore the well was called Beer Lahai Roi; observe, it is between Kadesh and Bered. <sup>15</sup> So Hagar bore Abram a son; and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. <sup>16</sup> Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.*

**Luke 1:35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.**

### **How/ Verse 34 – Shall not Can**

How can this be Mary asks? Back in verse 34 - the translation should read "how shall" not "how can", as the word "shall" is in the future tense - and we see the faith of Mary believing that what has been said, "shall" come to pass. She believes it is going to happen, but doesn't know how the Lord will make it happen. She is asking a biological question, not a spiritual question.

### **Compare her to Zachariah**

Here is this 14 year old who hears the word of God, and doesn't say no way, but how will it happen being I am a virgin. She doesn't doubt, but believes, as compared to Zacariahs who doubts before he believes, and he was a priest of God. Mary, what an amazing young girl; are you starting to feel a tug on your heart, a desire to be like her?

### **Christian – Still “shall’s” Left**

Hey Christian, there are still a lot of "shall's" left to be accomplished by the Lord in your life - even those that seem impossible, but if He has spoken it to you, then wait for it to happen for it "shall" surely come to pass.

**Luke 1:36 Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren.**

**Luke 1:37 For with God nothing will be impossible.”**

### **God Confirms**

The angel confirms to Mary that your miracle isn't the only miracle, go see your relative Elizabeth, and see another miracle, she has conceived in her old age (beyond the age of child bearing). What man and science deems impossible, God can do, for with God all things are possible.

### **Camden – With God nothing is Impossible**

Three years ago my wife recognized that Camden wasn't communicating as typical child his age did. We started to see doctors, and the word autism continually came up. Some of the doctors and experts said it is most likely that he will never speak in sentences; his whole life will be a broken word, or mixed words, but nothing intelligent. Here are the words of my wife on the day of our "final" evaluation:

*The day of Camden's evaluation arrived; it will be etched in my mind forever. When he woke from his nap, I lifted him out of his crib and onto my lap; the warmth of his little body enveloped me. I didn't want to go to this evaluation. I didn't want my world turned upside down. I started reading his little Bible to him. Then I paused, placed my hand on his mouth, and prayed silently: "Lord, please touch his mouth that he may speak in Your name."*

*Camden turned around on my lap to face me and said, crystal clear: "Nothing is impossible with God."*

### **Can He?**

Can God heal my marriage? – With God nothing is impossible!

Can God restore that relationship? - With God nothing is impossible!

Can God help me overcome my addiction? - With God nothing is impossible!

Can God change what seems like a hopeless situation? - With God nothing is impossible!

Can God raise the dead? - With God nothing is impossible!

Can God bridge the gap between sinful man and holy God?- With God nothing is impossible!

Is there anything too hard for God?

What seems impossible in your life right now? With God nothing is impossible!

**Luke 1:38 Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.**

### **Wow – I am the Fulfillment of Isaiah 7**

*Verse 38 - Let it be according to your word - Imagine Mary, saying wow I am Isaiah 7:14 - my life is the fulfillment of that verse.*

### **Handmaiden / Slave**

*Verse 38 – the maidservant (or maybe your translation says handmaiden) – very beautiful wording, I think they romantized the translation somewhat, for the word really is "slave (female slave)". The word is "doule", the female word of doulous (male slave).*

### **See the Slave**

Mary says, "behold (see) the slave of the Lord.

### **Will Verse 38 be your Verse for 2012**

What a high calling, to be the Lord's slave. So I close with this question to you today - this first Sunday of the year 2012 - will verse 38 be your verse for the year, will you commit yourself to being His slave? Will you say, see the slave of the Lord! Lord, as a slave let my life be directed by your word, let your word be my will, and let all that I do be according to your word.

### **Only Other Place**

There was only one other place that "highly favored" (verse 28) is used, and that is Ephesians 1:6 (and that is speaking of us). And along that same line I find it interesting that the only other place I find this word for female slave (other than two mentions of Mary), is in Acts 2 where God says He will pour His Spirit out. To whom does God pour His Spirit out upon, it is upon those who are slaves of the Lord.

*Acts 2:17–18 (NKJV) <sup>17</sup> 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. <sup>18</sup> And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.*

**Make that your 2012 Start**

Beloved, accepted in the Lord, you who are highly favored with the Lord, start your 2012 off with “see the slave of the Lord”, and I will promise you, you will see things this year unlike any other in your life. Amen!

## ***But do you trust Him? (Luke 1:39-56)***

### **Mary Visited by Gabriel / Going to see Elizabeth**

Mary is a 14 years old girl living in Nazareth. Gabriel the angel has just declared to her that she has been chosen to be the one that will birth the Messiah. We pick up the story with her going to visit her cousin Elizabeth who is pregnant with John the Baptist.

### ***Mary Visits Elizabeth***

**Luke 1:39** Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah,

**Luke 1:40** and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.

**Luke 1:41** And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

**Luke 1:42** Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!

**Luke 1:43** But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

**Luke 1:44** For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

**Luke 1:45** Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord.”

**Luke 1:46** And Mary said: “My soul magnifies the Lord,

**Luke 1:47** And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.

**Luke 1:48** For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.

**Luke 1:49** For He who is mighty has done great things for me, And holy is His name.

**Luke 1:50** And His mercy is on those who fear Him From generation to generation.

**Luke 1:51** He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

**Luke 1:52** He has put down the mighty from their thrones, And exalted the lowly.

**Luke 1:53** He has filled the hungry with good things, And the rich He has sent away empty.

**Luke 1:54** He has helped His servant Israel, In remembrance of His mercy,

**Luke 1:55** As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and to his seed forever.”

**Luke 1:56** And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house.

### **Verse-by-Verse**

Now let's look at it verse-by-verse.

**Luke 1:39** Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah,

**Luke 1:40** and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.

**Luke 1:41** And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

**Luke 1:42** Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!

### **Blessed “Among” Woman – Not Above**

Just a note – Mary is blessed among women, not above woman. There is no passage of Scripture that supports the worship of Mary.

**Luke 1:43** But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

### **How Comforting to Mary / Spirit already Confirmed / Holy Trinity**

How comforting these words are to Mary, as she doesn't have to explain anything to Elizabeth, as the Spirit has already confirmed it to her. Christian, one of my greatest fears of the Calvary Chapel movement is that we can lean the Holy Trinity to the Father, Son, and Holy Bible because we put such a large emphasis on the studying of the

Word, the intellect of understanding, that we neglect the calling and move of the Spirit. The Word is power, but the Trinity is the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - and thus we must cultivate a deep relationship with Him. Wonderfully for us the Holy Spirit will speak to us through the Word, so that is great for us. But oh how wonderful when we are Spirit led, when we are in a close relationship with Him, and like Elizabeth, the Spirit will confirm things in our heart, the Spirit will comfort us, the Spirit will empower us. It has taken me twenty years, but I will not move to the left or the right until I feel the peace and leading of the Spirit to do so. It is a wonderful way to live, as I no longer have to strive, but I can just wait to be led by the Spirit.

### **How to Cultivate a Spirit Filled & Led Life**

Good News - how do I cultivate the life of the Spirit - Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3, which is exactly what we are doing as we study the Word, and lift up praise to Him. Being filled with the Holy Spirit is not as complicated and distant, and mysterious as we can make it out to be.

*Ephesians 5:17–21 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. <sup>18</sup> And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, <sup>20</sup> giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> submitting to one another in the fear of God.

*Colossians 3:16–17 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. <sup>17</sup> And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

### **Read to Meet Him – Not study Him**

May we read our bibles not “to study Him”, but “to meet Him”, and fellowship with Him in the Spirit; and hence we will be filled with the Spirit.

**Luke 1:44 For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.**

### **John 6 Months Old / Notice John could Hear – Had Emotions**

A 6 month old fetus is about 9 inches long, weighs about 1.5 pounds, has translucent skin with fingerprints and footprints, has eyes, and eyelids and can open those eyes for brief periods to gaze into the liquid darkness of the womb. Please note - the babe in Elizabeth's womb is only 6 months old, but that babe has emotions (joy) and interaction (heard) in the womb. The babe is life, for life begins at conception. Don't buy the lies and garbage of the world.

### **Planned Parenthood**

I came across a brochure from “Planned Parenthood” and the brochure was written in 1950. On the cover of the brochure it is clearly a family in front of a church. Here is a quote, directly stating that life begins at conception: *“If one of the new male sperm meets and unites with an egg cell, a new life begins.” (page 21 - 22)*

### **Conception Day – Entry Day**

Wouldn't it be something if we all 9 months to our age. That when we spoke age we started at conception; and celebrated our birth days from conception rather than entry into the world.

### **Politics and Religion**

There is often the struggle of politics and religion as the liberal left makes laws that promote things such as abortion, gay marriages, drug use, and various other topics. So the challenge that comes before the Christians is that people have free choice to choose what they want to do, God gives man free choice, and therefore we should too. Be that true, but when we don't oppose something, we are in essence condoning that very same thing. These issues come across as we are condemning, and we lose the battle if that is our heart, but what we must do is come across as loving and speak against such things, and say ‘yes you have a free choice, but I in my conscience cannot support (allow) something that is going to lead a friend, a neighbor, a countryman into harm – because anything that counters God's word, will always lead to hurt, harm, and in some cases even death. And Christian don't oppose it in condemnation, oppose it in love – tell them I love and care too much for other people to not speak out to warn.

### **If you have Had an Abortion**

There are plenty of studies and first-hand accounts of people (male and female) who were part of an abortion who become depressed at a later time because the taking of a human life sinks in. Let me also say, if you have had an abortion - all things are made new. God will forgive you, just ask Him. God still calls out to you and says come away with Me. God still views you as His spotless bride. Don't let the guilt separate you from Him.

*2 Corinthians 5:17–19 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. <sup>18</sup> Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, <sup>19</sup> that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

**Luke 1:45 Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord.”**

### **Belief brings Fulfillment**

*Luke 1:45 Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord.”* - Elizabeth says blessed is she who believes. Consider this verse, and consider what it says, in that yes there is a cost to follow, a price to pay, but the eternal rewards far outweigh the temporal things of this world. The person that believes the word of God will be blessed beyond measure, because it is the blessing of heaven upon you. There is no greater place to live than right in the middle of God's will. Unbelief, lack of trusting that God knows best and does the best for us, will always leave us lacking – unfulfilled.

### **How Wonderful God brings us Fellowship**

How wonderful it is how God brings people to us for fellowship in our hardest times. How wonderful it is for Mary at this time in her life to have a godly, excited, saint in her life to walk and talk with. Only these two could relate to each other, no one else could say I know how you feel. There are certain situations in your life that make you that person to another, a person who says “I know how you feel”. Christian, trust God to bring people into your life during your time of trial and hardship; but can I encourage you to ask God to be that person to someone who is in the trial and experiencing hardship. Even if you don't fully understand, and you can't relate, you can still be a comforter and an ear to hear, a person that feels the gap of loneliness. Cultivate that deep relationship with the Holy Spirit and allow Him to lead you and guide you, and use you. He will speak to you and say, hey call Mary, reach out to Mary, go to Mary. One of the reasons God says not to forsake the assembly of the brethren, is so we can comfort and encourage each other. I'll tell you nothing breaks a Pastor's heart more than hearing, people have come to the church and no one reached out to them.

*Hebrews 10:24–25 (NKJV)* <sup>24</sup> And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, <sup>25</sup> not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

### **Next – the Magnificat**

These next verses are known in the western world as the Magnificat, from the section's first word in the Vulgate, as we read Mary giving spectacular praise and glory to the Lord.

**Luke 1:46 And Mary said: “My soul magnifies the Lord,**

**Luke 1:47 And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.**

**Luke 1:48 For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.**

**Luke 1:49 For He who is mighty has done great things for me, And holy is His name.**

**Luke 1:50 And His mercy is on those who fear Him From generation to generation.**

**Luke 1:51 He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.**

**Luke 1:52 He has put down the mighty from their thrones, And exalted the lowly.**

**Luke 1:53 He has filled the hungry with good things, And the rich He has sent away empty.**

**Luke 1:54 He has helped His servant Israel, In remembrance of His mercy,**

**Luke 1:55 As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and to his seed forever.”**

### **Mary's heart**

Listen to her heart rejoice in the God of her salvation:

- My soul magnifies the Lord (v46)

- My spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior (v47)
- For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed (v47)

### **The attributes of God**

Look at the attributes she speaks of the Lord:

- He is Holy and His name is Holy (v49)
- He is merciful to those who fear Him (v50)
- He has shown strength with the mighty deeds of His arm (v51)
- He scatters the proud (v51)
- He has toppled thrones (v52)
- He exalts the lowly (v52)
- He has satisfied the hungry (v53)
- He has helped Israel (v54)
- He is merciful (v54)
- He has spoken to the ancestors (v55)

### **3 Groups God is Merciful Towards**

Mary named three specific groups to whom God had been merciful:

1. the helpless (Luke 1:51),
2. the humble (Luke 1:52),
3. the hungry (Luke 1:53).

### **Mary Quotes OT**

These verses are known in the western world as the Magnificat, from the section's first word in the Vulgate, Jerome's translation of the Bible into Latin around 400 C.E. They resemble Hannah's song of praise to God at the dedication of her son Samuel (1 Samuel 2:1–10). Many lines are quoted exactly or approximately from the Old Testament. This passage reveals to us the depth of Mary's spiritually, and we see how she had cultivated a deep relationship with the Lord at such a young age. Youth, you can do the same. Depth doesn't come with age, it comes with cultivation and investment.

### **OT Cross Reference**

*My soul magnifies the Lord (v46)*

*Psalm 34:2 (NKJV)*<sup>2</sup> *My soul shall make its boast in the LORD; The humble shall hear of it and be glad.*

*My spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior (v47)*

*Psalm 35:9 (NKJV)*<sup>9</sup> *And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD; It shall rejoice in His salvation.*

*For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed (v48)*

*1 Samuel 1:11 (NKJV)*<sup>11</sup> *Then she made a vow and said, "O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head."*

*He is Holy and His name is Holy (v49)*

*Psalm 111:9 (NKJV)*<sup>9</sup> *He has sent redemption to His people; He has commanded His covenant forever: Holy and awesome is His name.*

*He is merciful to those who fear Him (v50)*

*Psalm 103:17 (NKJV)*<sup>17</sup> *But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting On those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children,*

*He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts(51).*

*Psalm 89:10 (NKJV)*<sup>10</sup> *You have broken Rahab in pieces, as one who is slain; You have scattered Your enemies with Your mighty arm.*

*He has toppled thrones (v52)*

*Job 12:19 (NKJV)*<sup>19</sup> *He leads princes away plundered, And overthrows the mighty.*

He exalts the lowly (v52)

**Job 5:11 (NKJV)** <sup>11</sup> He sets on high those who are lowly, And those who mourn are lifted to safety.

He has satisfied the hungry (v53)

**1 Samuel 2:5 (NKJV)** <sup>5</sup> Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, And the hungry have ceased to hunger. Even the barren has borne seven, And she who has many children has become feeble.

**Psalm 107:9 (NKJV)** <sup>9</sup> For He satisfies the longing soul, And fills the hungry soul with goodness.

He has helped His servant Israel, In remembrance of His mercy (54),

**Psalm 98:3 (NKJV)** <sup>3</sup> He has remembered His mercy and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and to his seed forever (55)

**Genesis 17:7 (NKJV)** <sup>7</sup> And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you.

**Genesis 17:19 (NKJV)** <sup>19</sup> Then God said: "No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him.

**Micah 7:20 (NKJV)** <sup>20</sup> You will give truth to Jacob And mercy to Abraham, Which You have sworn to our fathers From days of old.

### **Not just some Jewish girl Popped in On / She walked Alongside of God**

Mary was not just some Jewish girl that God "popped in on". She was a 14 year old girl that walked along side of God, she had a relation with Him, and was committed unto Him:

**Luke 1:28 (NKJV)** <sup>28</sup> And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"

**Luke 1:56 And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house.**

### **Singing – Joseph still Doesn't Know**

Mary is singing this song and has yet told Joseph that she is pregnant.

### **3 Month Bump**

At 3 months, there would be a bump (really tiny). Imagine Joseph's heart when he sees the bump.

### **20 Miles back to Nazareth / 12 Hours**

Not exactly sure, but it appears that the hill country in Judea may have been near Jerusalem, thus making the trip about 20 miles back to Nazareth. Twenty miles is a long walk, on a good day it is a full day, 10-12 hours. Lots of time to think.

### **Mary telling Joseph – Entrusting her whole Life to God**

Mary by going to Joseph to tell him that she was pregnant with child entrusted her whole life to God, because had Joseph not believed her story, she knows the law gave him the authority to have her stoned to death for adultery.

### **Adultery – the Pit and the Tree**

Adultery would be punished by stoning. They would take the guilty parties into the town center and dig a pit, stone them, cover them with dung, then plant a tree So before them would be a continual reminder of the price of adultery.

### **Verse 56 – Mary's Garden / Your Will be Done / Verse 39 she Believed – V56 Proves what she Believes**

You know verse 56 is Mary's Garden of Gethsemane, it is where she is truly saying not my will, but Your will be done. Oh she said it back in verse 39, but on this journey back she is saying it with her actions. Christian your actions will prove what you believe, up to that point they are just words.

**Luke 1:38 (NKJV)** <sup>38</sup> Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

*Luke 22:41–44 (NKJV)* <sup>41</sup> And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, <sup>42</sup> saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." <sup>43</sup> Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. <sup>44</sup> And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

### **Of all Places – Nazareth / Someone once Said**

Of all places she has to return to, it is little ole Nazareth. Someone has said that "God made the garden, evil men made the city, but the devil made the small town." Little towns can be vicious with rumors, gossip, and memories that refuse to die. They can also prove remarkably resistant to change. Nazareth in Jesus' day was possibly that kind of town.

### **Doule – Lowest Slave / She Relinquishes All (Marriage, Reputation, Fellowship)**

Handmaiden is the Greek word "doule" – it was the lowest slave in the house; one who had no rights Mary relinquishes her whole future for God; she relinquishes her marriage, her reputation, her ability to fellowship amongst the Jews, she relinquishes it all for God, sets it all aside, and says let be according to your word.

### **Nazareth – Anything Good / Gossip – Elevation / Market Place Sneers / Roman Barracks / No Sleepovers**

Nazareth, can anything good come out of Nazareth was the saying of the day. A little town with lots of gossip, as the tearing down of others, can lift up even the lowest person. Oh imagine the woman at the market place as Mary went by. Saying things such as, well all I heard was she went away on a partying binge, and came back pregnant. And the rumors would morph and expand as they always do. Well said another woman, I heard it was one of the soldiers at the barracks. Then they would say, what a tramp. What a disgrace to our Nation. She should have been stoned, but Joseph was such a sap and so desperate to be married, he wouldn't expose her for the tramp that she is. And if you can imagine it, they would say things equally horrible about the little toddler Jesus as they came to the market place. They would look down upon Him when he was holding hands with Mary in the market place. Mothers would not allow their kids to play with Jesus because they were too good to associate with "those types of people".

### **Jesus will Live Under Prejudice / Mary Too**

Jesus will live under this prejudice His whole life, as would Mary. Today I want to look at it as it would regard to Mary, and as we do I believe the Lord will show us great application for our lives today as Christians in the year 2012.

### **Oh the Gossip – I know it is True because of Talmud**

Oh the gossip of Mary and Jesus was well known, I am absolutely sure of it, not just because I know the wicked heart of man, but because I can read historical writings about a man named Jesus and a woman named Mary, in the ancient Jewish texts.

### **The Talmud / Handed Down Oral Traditions**

The Jews handed down a large amount of oral tradition from generation to generation. This material was organized according to subject matter by Rabbi Akiba before his death in AD 135. His work was then revised by his student, Rabbi Meir. The project was completed about AD 200 by Rabbi Judah and is known as the Mishnah. Ancient commentary on the Mishnah was called the Gemaras. The combination of the Mishnah and the Gemaras form the Talmud. It would be expected that the most reliable information about Jesus from the Talmud would come from the earliest period of compilation—AD 70 to 200, known as the Tannaitic period.

### **Talmud – Jesus Illegitimate**

The Talmud says that Jesus was the illegitimate son of Mary and Joseph. She had to bear the whispers and the gossip her whole life.

**Talmud Shabbat 104b, Sanhedrin 67a** – *Jesus son of Strada is Jesus son of Pandira? Rav Hisda said "the husband was Strada and the lover was Pandera, but was nt the husband Pappos son of Yehuda and the mother Strada? No his mother was Miram, who let her hair grow long and was called Strada. Plumbedita says about her "she was unfaithful to her husband".*

*John 8:41 (NKJV)* <sup>41</sup> You do the deeds of your father." Then they said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God."

*Psalm 69:7–12 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> Because for Your sake I have borne reproach; Shame has covered my face. <sup>8</sup> I have become a stranger to my brothers, And an alien to my mother's children; <sup>9</sup> Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me. <sup>10</sup> When I wept and chastened my soul with fasting, That became my reproach. <sup>11</sup> I also made sackcloth my garment; I became a byword to them. <sup>12</sup> Those who sit in the gate speak against me, And I am the song of the drunkards.

## Talmud – Jesus the Nazarene

There is a passage that refers to a man named Jesus who was a Nazarene who led Israel astray:

*The master said; Jesus the Nazarene practiced magic and deceived and led Israel astray. (Talmud Sanhedrin 107b, Sotah 47a).*

*Matthew 2:23 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> *And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, “He shall be called a Nazarene.”*

## Jesus – Death for Sorcery and Apostasy

A very significant quotation is found in **Sanhedrin 43a**:

*On the eve of the Passover Yeshu was hanged. For forty days before the execution took place, a herald went forth and cried, “He is going forth to be stoned because he has practiced sorcery and enticed Israel to apostasy. Any one who can say anything in his favour, let him come forward and plead on his behalf.” But since nothing was brought forward in his favour he was hanged on the eve of the Passover!*

## Notes: Crucifixion and Hanging / Should have been Stoned

Here we have another brief account of the death of Jesus. He should have been stoned but instead He was hanged. These two references to Jesus being “hanged” certainly provide an interesting term to describe his death. But it should be noted that the New Testament speaks of crucifixion in the same way. Jesus is said to have been “hanged” (Greek kremamenos in Gal. 3:13), as were the two males killed at the same time (Greek kremasthentōn in Luke 23:39). While the term “crucified” is a much more common reference to this event, “hanged” is a variant expression of the same fate.

*Deuteronomy 21:23 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> *his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance; for he who is hanged is accursed of God.*

*Galatians 3:13 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> *Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”),*

*Luke 23:39 (NKJV)* <sup>39</sup> *Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, “If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us.”*

## Observations from that Passage / Jesus Crucified – Passover – Mock Trial w/ No Witnesses

From this passage in the Talmud we learn about (1) the fact of Jesus’ death by crucifixion and (2) the time of this event, which is mentioned twice as occurring on the eve of the Jewish Passover. We are surprisingly told (3) that for forty days beforehand it was publicly announced that Jesus would be stoned. While not specifically recorded in the New Testament, such is certainly consistent with both Jewish practice and with the report that this had also been threatened on at least two other occasions (John 8:58–59; 10:31–33, 39). It is related (4) that Jesus was judged by the Jews to be guilty of “sorcery” and spiritual apostasy in leading Israel astray by his teaching. (5) It is also stated that since no witnesses came forward to defend him, he was killed.

## Jews lost Right to Capital Punishment

It is interesting that there is no explanation as to why Jesus was crucified (“hanged”) when stoning was the prescribed punishment. It is likely that the Roman involvement provided the “change of plans,” without specifically being mentioned here. The Jews didn’t like to admit that they had lost their right to capital punishment by the Roman Government, and hence why Jesus had to be crucified. Of course we know that prophecy had to be fulfilled of the OT that Jesus would be crucified, and not stoned. Psalm 22 is the most specific prophecy of crucifixion, and it was written about 400 years before crucifixion had been invented (Psalms and King David around 1,000BC – Crucifixion invented around 600 BC).

*Psalm 22 (NKJV)* *To the Chief Musician. Set to “The Deer of the Dawn.” a Psalm of David.* <sup>1</sup> *My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning?* <sup>2</sup> *O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear; And in the night season, and am not silent.* <sup>3</sup> *But You are holy, Enthroned in the praises of Israel.* <sup>4</sup> *Our fathers trusted in You; They trusted, and You delivered them.* <sup>5</sup> *They cried to You, and were delivered; They trusted in You, and were not ashamed.* <sup>6</sup> *But I am a worm, and no man; A reproach of men, and despised by the people.* <sup>7</sup> *All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying,* <sup>8</sup> *“He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!”* <sup>9</sup> *But You are He who took Me out of the womb; You made Me trust while on My mother’s breasts.* <sup>10</sup> *I was cast upon You from birth. From My mother’s womb You have been My God.* <sup>11</sup> *Be not far from Me, For trouble is near; For there is none to help.* <sup>12</sup> *Many bulls have surrounded Me; Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me.* <sup>13</sup> *They gape at Me with their mouths, Like a raging and roaring lion.* <sup>14</sup> *I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me.* <sup>15</sup> *My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death.* <sup>16</sup> *For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet;* <sup>17</sup> *I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me.* <sup>18</sup> *They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.* <sup>19</sup> *But You, O LORD, do not be far from Me; O My Strength, hasten to help Me!* <sup>20</sup> *Deliver Me from the sword, My precious life from the power of the dog.* <sup>21</sup> *Save Me from the lion’s mouth And from the horns of the wild oxen! You have answered Me.* <sup>22</sup> *I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will praise You.* <sup>23</sup> *You who fear the LORD, praise Him! All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel!* <sup>24</sup> *For He has*

*not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; Nor has He hidden His face from Him; But when He cried to Him, He heard.* <sup>25</sup> *My praise shall be of You in the great assembly; I will pay My vows before those who fear Him.* <sup>26</sup> *The poor shall eat and be satisfied; Those who seek Him will praise the LORD. Let your heart live forever!* <sup>27</sup> *All the ends of the world Shall remember and turn to the LORD, And all the families of the nations Shall worship before You.* <sup>28</sup> *For the kingdom is the LORD's, And He rules over the nations.* <sup>29</sup> *All the prosperous of the earth Shall eat and worship; All those who go down to the dust Shall bow before Him, Even he who cannot keep himself alive.* <sup>30</sup> *A posterity shall serve Him. It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation,* <sup>31</sup> *They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born, That He has done this.*

### **Jews Meant to Nullify – Instead Historical Record**

The Jews meant to nullify the ministry and claims of Jesus, but what they really did was make a historical statement and evidence that a man named Jesus born to a woman named Mary, claimed to be the Messiah. So the history books prove Jesus walked the earth, and thus for every man and woman they must decide was He God or a lunatic, for He truly was not a mythical figure invented by man.

### **We Believe because Spirit – Talmud just Blesses Me / THE QUESTION**

We believe in Him because the Spirit of God has testified of Him to us; these ancient writings bless my faith that is for sure. Christian, here is the question and point of all that we have covered up to this point - I know you believe in Him, but do you trust Him? Do you trust Him as Mary did?

### **Do You Trust Him that He knows Best / Are you willing to Suffer your Reputation**

Do you really trust Him that He knows and is doing what is best for your life, even when you can't fully see it. Are we willing to suffer the reproach of the world for telling the truth like Mary did? Are we willing to die (at least in reputation) because we are willing to follow Him at whatever the cost?

### **Warm Passages / Must look at Whole Life of Mary**

We have had some wonderfully warm studies in the past several weeks, especially as we tied passages and verses together to celebrate the Christmas season. We have deeply and warmly looked at the God of Love, giving the Gift of Love – His Only Begotten Son, so that we may be provided a way to be forgiven of our sin. Salvation is free, but discipleship will cost you your life. Not many churches who want to say that to you today, for those words may upset you and you will take yourself somewhere else, and hear words more palatable and pleasing. But the life of Mary must be looked at in its entirety, not just chapter one and chapter two, the blessedness of birthing the Messiah.

### **Mary – Bitter / Mary will be Pierced**

One of the root words for Mary means “bitter”. And a name that is fitting, for her whole life a sword will continually pierce her soul, just as prophesied by Simeon when they brought Jesus to the Temple for dedication.

*Luke 2:34–35 (NKJV)* <sup>34</sup> *Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against”* <sup>35</sup> *(yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”*

### **Jesus at Temple / Mary birthed Him but never Owned Him**

When Jesus was twelve He and family went to Jerusalem for one of the Feasts (Passover), and on the caravan home Mary and Joseph finally join together after no doubt walking and talking with friends, and when they do they say “I thought He was with you”, as they realize Jesus is not with either. Imagine what that must have felt like, we lost the Messiah! When they get back to Jerusalem they find Jesus listening and asking questions at Temple with the teachers, astonishing for a youth (and should we be astonished that they knew to go look back at the Temple – parent if you lost your 12 year old today where you go looking for them at?). And when Mary says Jesus we were worried sick about You, and Jesus responds to Mary “did you not know I would be of My Father's business”. And a sword pierces Mary's heart because even though she birthed Jesus, she never did own Him.

*Luke 2:48–50 (NKJV)* <sup>48</sup> *So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, “Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously.”* <sup>49</sup> *And He said to them, “Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?”* <sup>50</sup> *But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them.*

### **Jesus at Wedding / Mary birthed Him but never Owned Him**

Then when Jesus begins His public ministry, Mary says Son they are out of wine. This is your chance to redeem us both, show them who You really are, show them who I really am, and Jesus responds to Mary, what concern is that of Me, for My hour has yet to come. And a sword pierces Mary's heart for although she birthed Him, she never did own Him.

*John 2:3-4 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine." <sup>4</sup> Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come."

### **Jesus at Capernaum / Mary birthed Him but never Owned Him**

Then Jesus would be up in Capernaum teaching, crowds thronging Him, Mary and the other brothers come to see Him, Jesus is told Your mother and brothers are out front, and Jesus says who are my mother, and then points to those around Him and says these are my mother and brothers. And a sword pierces Mary's heart, for although she birthed Him, she never did own Him.

*Matthew 12:46-50 (NKJV)* <sup>46</sup> While He was still talking to the multitudes, behold, His mother and brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him. <sup>47</sup> Then one said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You." <sup>48</sup> But He answered and said to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" <sup>49</sup> And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers!" <sup>50</sup> For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother."

### **Jesus at the Cross / Mary birthed Him but never Owned Him**

And then, there at the cross Jesus says to John His disciple, behold your mother, and then to Mary, behold your Son. And a sword pierces her heart as she watches her Son pierced for the sins of the world (my sin, your sin), and although Mary birthed Him, she never owned Him.

*John 19:25-27 (NKJV)* <sup>25</sup> Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. <sup>26</sup> When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!" <sup>27</sup> Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.

### **Anyone ever to Get Free Pass**

If anyone was ever to get a free pass from the pains of this fallen world, you would have to give it to Mary; but Mary's heart was pierced by her relationship with Him. And so too may be yours, may be yours right now.

### **I've Birthed Jesus – But am Feeling Pierced**

I've birthed Jesus in my life, I have asked Him to be My Lord and Savior, but right now this relationship with Him feels like a sword piercing me.

- I feel a sword of singleness – why doesn't He bring me someone.
- I feel a sword of illness – why doesn't He heal me.
- I feel a sword of rejection as people mock me for believing in Him.
- I feel a sword of burden because I struggle with why You have placed me in this certain situation.

### **Mary Only One (Birth – Cross – Resurrection)**

Mary is the only one, even through all the pain, who saw Jesus from birth, to the cross, to the resurrection.

*Acts 1:12-14 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey. <sup>13</sup> And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas the son of James. <sup>14</sup> These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

### **Do you Trust Him when being pierced? / World or the Word**

Christian I know you believe, but do you trust Him? Do you trust Him when you are being pierced? Be it the fallen world piercing us, or maybe even God's very word piercing you as you struggle to believe it is the right thing for you, whether it is the world or His Word, at some point in our walk we will be pierced.

*Hebrews 4:12-13 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. <sup>13</sup> And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

### **Do You Trust Him – Mary says you Can**

Do you trust Him? Will you trust Him? The answer is up to you, and your actions will prove out what you really believe. But Mary will tell you – Yes You Can!



# The Glory of God

## (Luke 1:57-80)

### Glory – When we Believe – Speak / The Glory is Jesus

We pick up our story with Mary heading back to break the news to Joseph, and now Elizabeth is full-term with John. In another glorious passage of scriptures we will see the glory of God;

- we will see the glory of God when we believe His word,
- we will see the glory of God when we speak His word,
- and, we will see that the Glory of God, is the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ.

### Elizabeth Gives Birth to John

**Luke 1:57** Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son.

**Luke 1:58** When her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoiced with her.

**Luke 1:59** 59 So it was, on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias.

**Luke 1:60** His mother answered and said, "No; he shall be called John."

**Luke 1:61** But they said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name."

**Luke 1:62** So they made signs to his father—what he would have him called. him by the name of his father, Zacharias.

**Luke 1:63** And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, "His name is John." So they all marveled.

**Luke 1:64** Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, praising God.

### Custom of the Day

Custom dictated that the firstborn son be named after his father.

### What's in a Name

What's in a name? Zacharias means "God Remembers" and Elizabeth means "Oath", and the two shall become one, thus for this couple, "God remembers His Oath". That oath would be the prophecy in Isaiah, but also that God promised Zacharias and Elizabeth a son.

*Luke 3:3-6 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, <sup>4</sup> as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight. <sup>5</sup> Every valley shall be filled And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough ways smooth; <sup>6</sup> And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

### John

The name John means "God is Gracious".

### God is Gracious / God keeps His Oaths / God doesn't Forget You - Isaiah 49:15-16

Beloved, God is gracious, and God remembers His oaths to you that He will never leave you nor forsake you (Hebrews 13:5), that He who began a good work in you will be faithful to complete it (Philippians 1:6), that He stores every tear of yours in a bottle (Psalm 56:8), and all the many other promises and oaths that he has made to you. You are never forgotten nor misplaced, you are never unaccounted for or put on the back burner. God is gracious and He keeps His oaths, because every time God moves His hand He sees your name (Isaiah 49:15-16). When He reaches out, when he waves, when He lifts them up, every time He moves His hands your name is before Him, and hence He says you are always on my mind, and thus on My heart. Next to your name, is a hole, a hole from spike that pierced His hands, so we might be called sons and daughters, a spotless bride adorned in white (Isaiah 61:10). God has not forgotten you nor His oath to you. Because God is gracious.

*Isaiah 49:15-16 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup> "Can a woman forget her nursing child, And not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you. <sup>16</sup> See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Your walls are continually before Me.

*Isaiah 61:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

## **Dumb and Deaf**

*Verse 62 - So they made signs to his father –* It appears that not only could Zacharias not speak, but it appears that he could not hear (hence why they are making signs to him).

## **Dumb because of Unbelief / Spiritual Principal – Silence for not Receiving His Word**

*Verse 64 - Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, praising God -* After 9 months of silence, Zacharias speaks; and his speech is praise to God. Zacharias was made dumb because of his unbelief. God had given him a word, and Zacharias had questioned the word, and did not embrace the word for his life personally. There is a clear spiritual principal here for us, and that is the silence that comes with not receiving the Word of God. The silence is in both not being able to hear, and not being able to speak. What am I saying here? It ties into where we ended our last study (I know you believe – but do you trust Him). You see God comes and speaks to us, He gives us a word, and that word may be a promise, or that word may be a direction. So this word comes, and we can say, I can't believe that promise (so we doubt), or we say, I don't want to apply this word You have given me (it will cost me too much, I don't want to change, it is too hard to do what You are asking, not now but maybe later). So we go on our way saying no, and we can think God says "ok I was only asking – forget I even brought it up", and we think it is over and forgotten, but it is not. It is not forgotten, and what begins to happen is silence. See we think we can ignore or defer something and God will let it go, "ok I was only asking – forget I even brought it up", and then we come to God in our need, and we say Lord lead me, guide me, Lord use me. But then strangely, we begin to experience silence, we begin to feel distant from Him. We don't understand why because we are praying, we are reading, we are fellowshiping, but God seems to be silent and distant from us. Oh it is not that God doesn't want to speak to us, but it is that God and saying oh yes I want to speak to you about those things you just asked, I want to talk about the desires of your heart, but we still haven't finished talking about that "other thing", that "thing" I brought up to you last week (or now it is last month or 9 months ago) – I haven't forgotten.

## **Anything you have Left Un-dealt With?**

Christian is there anything you have left 'un-dealt with'? You know He had spoken something, you know you had heard from Him, but you just couldn't and wouldn't do it, because it was too hard or in your mind too tall of a call?

## **Notice when we Doubt – Our Lips grow Silent Too**

Notice this also, when we doubt or refuse the word spoken, slowly or immediately, our lips no longer speak praise to and of Him, as our ears no longer can hear. But when we come into agreement with Him, we immediately hear again, and our lips once again lift praise unto Him. Was there a time where you once found yourself continually lifting praise unto the Lord, but your lips seems to struggle to speak praise of Him. Christian, has God spoken to you about something, maybe told you to repent of something, to go do something, reconcile with someone, and you said no I don't want to turn from that or do that, that would be too hard or too unpleasant, not now but I will later – if so, then right now, right (is later) today, say "yes I will Lord", and when you do you will find yourself hearing Him clearly again, and you will find your heart lifted up again, and you will find you lips praising Him again.

## **I Remember My Time**

I can remember I had been saved about 6 or 9 months, and God had spoken a very direct word to me and I questioned His wisdom behind it, thought it was a little legalistic, and I blew it off. But I constantly struggled with it for months because I knew what He had said. And one night when I was laying in my bed on 325 Banana River Blvd, unit 406, Cocoa Beach Florida, the back bedroom some 20 years ago – I said Lord, I will do it, because I know You know best Lord whatever you say to me I know is best for me. And it was a moment like no other moment in my life, and I can only explain it as waves of liquid love were washing over me – oh what a moment.

## **The Glory of God when we Believe - 1**

The glory of God is released upon our lives, when we believe and live out the word He has spoken to us directly.

**Luke 1:65 Then fear came on all who dwelt around them; and all these sayings were discussed throughout all the hill country of Judea.**

**Luke 1:66 And all those who heard them kept them in their hearts, saying, "What kind of child will this be?" And the hand of the Lord was with him.**

### **The glory when we do Speak / Fear feel Upon Them**

Ohh the glory of God when we do speak forth praise unto His name. The people saw God's glory when Zacharias, heard and spoke again. It says that fear came on all who dwelt around them.

### **Dan in the Ukraine / I want what he Has**

I remember meeting a man once when I was in the Ukraine doing missions. As I spent time with him over those few days we had an instant bonding, a deep brotherly bond, if there was a dozen of us walking somewhere, somehow it would always end up just the two of us walking ahead or behind the group, just enjoying brotherly love. I remember going down to the river and as everyone else walked down to the water it was just me and him standing together up on the rocks of the jetty. As I walked with him and sat with him, I knew I was in the presence of a man of God. He told me stories of God's mighty work in his life, he spoke great words of the Lord, the Spirit of God was overflowing from him. I enjoyed it greatly, it was what my heart longed for greatly, but interestingly enough I found fear coming upon me; I actually feared that out of the blue he was going to say, "Ray the Lord has shown me something of you – God has shown me the thoughts of your heart". But my fear didn't drive me away from him, or to go superficial with him, but it led me closer to the Lord. It led me closer to the Lord because I said I want what this man has, I want the same type relationship with the Lord he has, I need to fully sell-out like he has,

### **Notice people didn't go Hide – They went out and Talked**

Notice here in our story that the people didn't go into hiding and silence, but when they saw the working of God in Zacharias and Elizabeth, verse 65 says they went out and discussed it (talked about it) throughout all area they lived. So too will it be for us unto the people around us, when they sense that we have been in the presence of the Lord, they will be drawn into the presence of the Lord themselves.

### **When Praise Rolls – People are Drawn**

Hey Christian, when praise rolls off our lips, people will be drawn into the presence of the Lord themselves.

### **Application**

I would challenge you, I greatly encourage you, that in this week coming, you put it on your heart and mind, that you will let praise to the Lord roll off your lips in front of others, and that your lips will leave a blessing unto others. What do I mean? I mean just in casual conversation, no preachy way, when someone says hey how are you, or hey how what is going on, you answer them, and somewhere in there you give praise to the Lord. Maybe an answer such as, oh the Lord gave me a blessed weekend with my family; or we are going through a tough time but we trust the Lord's hand is upon us. And how about when we depart from people, we leave them a blessing (we say – the Lord bless you). It is actually a biblical principal to do so (Number 6;22-27). When you hang up the phone, when you leave the counter at 7/11, when you end a conversation with someone – and you end it as you are walking away by saying, "the Lord bless thee, or God bless you". People can feel the warmth of those words. I remember needing a ride home from work one time, and the guy at work kindly obligated, and when I got out of the car I said my usual, "the Lord bless thee". The next day at work, he was going around with this big smile on his face telling everyone, wow I just give the guy a ride home and he prays a blessing over me. People are so warmed by those words – and it is because they are words of God (Numbers 6). Maybe you remember a sermon from three years ago, I talked about a young college football player that continually had the praises of God upon his lips, and always ended the conversations by saying "God Bless You" with a smile on his face. Maybe you remember me telling you about what one reporter had said, "that if you spend 20 minutes with Tim Tebow – you will go away feeling better than when you first arrived". There is power in the blessing folks, and football enthusiasts of the 2011 football season seen it in a powerful display by a young 24 year old man.

*Numbers 6:22–27 (NKJV) <sup>22</sup> And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>23</sup> "Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the way you shall bless the children of Israel. Say to them: <sup>24</sup> "The LORD bless you and keep you; <sup>25</sup> The LORD make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; <sup>26</sup> The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace." <sup>27</sup> "So they shall put My name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them."*

### **The Glory of God when we Speak - 2**

The glory of God is released upon our lives, when we speak and live out the word He has spoken to us directly.

## **Zacharias Prophecies of John's Ministry**

**Luke 1:67** Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying:

### **When Tongue Loose – You will speak the Word of God**

Christian after your tongue is loosed; you too will speak the things of God to those around you, empowered by the Holy Spirit.

### **The Glory of God is the Lamb of God - 3**

Now, verses 68 to the end, the glory of God that we believe and speak – is the Lamb of God. The glory of God, is the Lamb of God.

**Luke 1:68** “Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited and redeemed His people,  
**Luke 1:69** And has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of His servant David,

### **Horn Represents Authority -**

Horn represented authority as it was used in that day and culture. The horn in this verse speaks of the authority Jesus will have over sin and death. We see the prophecy of that all the back in Genesis 3:

*Genesis 3:15 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup> And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.”

**Luke 1:70** As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, Who have been since the world began,

### **Prophets from the Beginning / Since world Began – It's always been a Lamb**

Prophets since the world began? Before Elijah and Jeremiah, before Abraham, Issac, and Jacob, I see a prophet since the world began being Noah, but before Noah, was Able, as he prophesied by bringing a better sacrifice, not a sacrifice of a man's labor (like Cain did), but Able brings a lamb. Able brings a lamb and since the world began we see that it will always be a lamb that will reconcile a man to God. The Glory of God, is the Lamb of God, Jesus!

*Hebrews 11:4 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.

*Genesis 4:2–5 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. <sup>3</sup> And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD. <sup>4</sup> Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, <sup>5</sup> but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

**Luke 1:71** That we should be saved from our enemies And from the hand of all who hate us,

**Luke 1:72** To perform the mercy promised to our fathers And to remember His holy covenant,

**Luke 1:73** The oath which He swore to our father Abraham:

**Luke 1:74** To grant us that we, Being delivered from the hand of our enemies, Might serve Him without fear,

**Luke 1:75** In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.

### **Zacharias leaning towards Restored Israel / Conquer Roman Occupation / 1<sup>st</sup> Coming – 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming**

Zacharias is leaning heavily that the Redeemer would save Israel from their sins and their enemies. All of Israel was waiting for a King that would come and free them from the Roman occupation of the land. Zacharias is prophesying correctly (for that day will come where Jesus will establish His Kingdom on earth), but first was the redemption of man from sin, and then His Second Coming will be the establishing of His Kingdom on earth, as He redeems the earth from sin.

### **Lamb not fully Clear / Where – Behold - Worthy**

The Lamb of God was not fully clear to Zacharias, but as we travel through the Scriptures the Lamb grows clearer.

- As Abraham climbed Mount Moriah to offer his son as a sacrifice in obedience to God's command, Isaac said, “Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” (see Genesis 22:7). Where is the lamb? That is the question that rings throughout the Old Testament.
- Here in the New Testament (John 1:29), we hear John the Baptist's answer as he points to Jesus and announces, “Behold the Lamb!”

- In Revelation 5, we hear ten thousand angels join him, declaring “Worthy is the Lamb!”

### **Where – Behold – Worthy**

- “Where is the Lamb?” - the cry of the Old Testament.
- “Behold the Lamb” - the hope of the New Testament.
- “Worthy is the Lamb!” - the summation of eternity.

*Genesis 22:7 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, “My father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” Then he said, “Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?”

*John 1:29 (NKJV)* <sup>29</sup> The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

*Revelation 5:12 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> saying with a loud voice: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!”

### **Clearer – but Wider / Individual – Household – Nation - World**

Not only does the message of the Lamb grow clearer as we travel through the Scriptures, the message of the Lamb grows wider too:

- In Genesis, as Abel brought a lamb for sacrifice we see a lamb offered for an individual.
- In Exodus, as each household sacrificed a lamb during Passover, we see a lamb offered for a family.
- In Leviticus, when the people of Israel were instructed to sacrifice a lamb, we see a lamb offered for a nation.
- In John, as the Baptist identifies Jesus as the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world, we see a Lamb who would be offered for the world.

### **The Glory of God is the Lamb of God - 3**

Now, verses 68 to the end, the glory of God that we believe and speak – is the Lamb of God. The glory of God, is the Lamb of God.

### **Zacharias now Looks Upon John**

Now Zacharias looks down upon John and begins to prophesy about him.

**Luke 1:76 “And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; For you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways,**

**Luke 1:77 To give knowledge of salvation to His people By the remission of their sins,**

### **Leading someone to Salvation – is through Knowledge of Sin / No man comes before Holy God**

Notice verse 77 - to lead someone to salvation is through revealing they need their sins removed (remission) for no man can have a personal relationship with the Holy God without first having their sins removed. Have you done that yet?

*Isaiah 59:1–2 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. <sup>2</sup> But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.

### **I was Religious – but Empty and Misguided / Knowledge of Sin brought Rest**

I remember the years before I gave my life to the Lord were empty and misguided; I had a great void in my heart. At times I could sense the oppression of depression, because I said if this is life, it is most pitiable, there has to be more. I went to church, I tried to do good works, I was very religious, I talked to God but it seemed as a one way conversation as I never heard back from Him. But when the day came (after reading the whole Bible in like 30 days), and I saw that it was my sin that separated me from God, then I realized why I needed the Lamb personally (who was offered globally to the world). It was then, when I was convicted of my sin, wanted Him to take my sin away, that I finally encountered Him.

### **Have You had an Encounter?**

Have you had that encounter?

### **I Claim these Verses**

And upon that encounter myself, I don’t just read the following verses, I claim them and I live them.

**Luke 1:78 Through the tender mercy of our God, With which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; Luke 1:79 To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, To guide our feet into the way of peace.”**

### **John’s Life – Set apart to Proclaim the Glory of the Lamb**

John’s whose life was set apart for the proclaiming of the glory of the Lamb of God.

### **We can do the Same 2 Things John did / Information - Illumination**

People were prepared for the first coming of Jesus through the ministry of John. So, too, I suggest that people will be prepared for the Lord’s Second Coming through our lives. John did two things, and so too we can do the same.

1. *Luke 1:77 To give knowledge of salvation to His people By the remission of their sins.* - Our first mandate is to provide information. That salvation comes through the remission of sin.
2. *Luke 1:79 To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, ...*- Our second mandate is to provide illumination. We shine the light on Jesus, we point to the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, and say – there is He who can bring you forgiveness of sin.

**Luke 1:80 So the child grew and became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his manifestation to Israel.**

### **The Desert**

John was in the desert, it seems every great man or woman that God uses has their time in the wilderness, the desert, where God does a mighty work in them (Moses, John, Saul, and of course Jesus). If you find yourself in a desert experience right now, just know you are in good company – and God is doing a work in you in the desert.

### **7 Things about John**

John what a blessing he will be to his parents and the world. As we read through the Scriptures we see – He will be:

1. He will be a joy and delight – Luke 1:14
2. He will be great in the sight of the Lord (Jesus says the greatest prophet) – Luke 1:15
3. He will never drink wine (Lifetime Nazarite Vow) – Luke 1:15
4. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit from the womb – Luke 1:15
5. He will have a fruitful ministry (turn many back to God) – Luke 1:16
6. He will go forth in the spirit and power of Elijah – Luke 1:17
7. He will be the forerunner of the Messiah (Isaiah 40:3) – Luke 1:17

*Luke 1:13–17 (NKJV) <sup>13</sup> But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. <sup>14</sup> And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. <sup>15</sup> For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb. <sup>16</sup> And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. <sup>17</sup> He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, ‘to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,’ and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”*

### **John and Jesus Playing?**

I wonder if John and Jesus played together as kids. Did John point and go – behold the lamb, and then Jesus came walking in to the room (haha). Wonder if they argued, no you always get to play God, and Jesus would say that’s because I Am.

### **Whose it talking About?**

You know when you read these verses here in this passage, you really have to read it carefully to determine if the verse is applying to John, or to Jesus. I’ve read some great scholars commentaries, and even they say “it appears this is a reference to Jesus and this one appears to be referring to John”. I want to tell you why that is, and that is because the more we believe the word of God spoken, the more speak the word of God to others, and the more we point to the Word of God that became flesh, became the Lamb of God who takes the away the sins of the world – the more we become just like Him.

### **Conclusion**

*Luke 1:76–79 (NKJV) <sup>76</sup> “And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; For you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, <sup>77</sup> To give knowledge of salvation to His people By the remission of their sins, <sup>78</sup> Through the tender mercy of our God, With which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; <sup>79</sup> To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, To guide our feet into the way of peace.”*

## **Luke 2**

### ***The Rescuer is Born***

#### ***(Luke 2:1-20)***

#### **A Familiar Story / God can make it Fresh and New / Leave today Touched – Heart Spoken Too**

Luke chapter 2, a familiar story to us, but a story that every time we read it we can go back to the night, and oh what a night it was, when Christ was born, and we can read the story again and again and God can speak to our hearts again and again afresh and new of His great love for us. A story, that if we allow, will be fresh and new, and we can leave here today with hearts that have just been touched by the Heavenly Father, hearts that will say that this is more than a day or hour at church, but that I have met with Him and He has spoken to my heart.

#### **Rescuer has Come / Order – Reputation - Sin**

Today we read the blessed passage of Christ the Lord is born, the Savior is born. Savior means to rescue, and thus our passage to day is the Rescuer has come. We will see in this passage

- How we are rescued from the order of the world (in that we think we are at the mercy of the world – but in reality it is God arranging the world for us);
- We will see how we are rescued from the reputations of the world, of how the world may view us, but God sees things completely different than the world does.
- And of course, we will see how we have been rescued from the Sin of the world.

#### ***Christ is Born***

**Luke 2:1** And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.

**Luke 2:2** This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria.

**Luke 2:3** So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

**Luke 2:4** Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David,

**Luke 2:5** to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child.

**Luke 2:6** So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered.

**Luke 2:7** And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

#### ***The Angels Announce Jesus to the Shepherds***

**Luke 2:8** Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

**Luke 2:9** And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.

**Luke 2:10** Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.

**Luke 2:11** For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

**Luke 2:12** And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.”

**Luke 2:13** And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

**Luke 2:14** “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”

**Luke 2:15** So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, “Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us.”

**Luke 2:16 And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.**

**Luke 2:17 Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child.**

**Luke 2:18 And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds.**

**Luke 2:19 But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.**

**Luke 2:20 Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.**

### **God Rearranging the World**

So we read of a story of God rearranging the world so that His purposes may be fulfilled; got to get these kids to Bethlehem.

**Luke 2:1 And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.**

**Luke 2:2 This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria.**

### **Luke Detailed – Born during Quirinius (12-9) – Augustus (31-14)**

Luke is very detailed and accurate of when Jesus was born; it was during the time that Quirinius was governing Syria. Historical writings confirm this, as do archeological evidence, that Quirinius was governor between 12 BC and AD 9. Historical writings and archeological evidence supports that Caesar Augustus was the Roman emperor from 31BC to AD 14. So the birth of Jesus Christ in 4BC is right in-line with the history books should skeptics ask. The more details you put into a story, the more you will either contradict the story, or verify the story, and when you piece all 31,102 verses together, you see each detail confirming this Bible is factual and actual.

### **Galatians 4:4 / 20yrs Prior Julius Caesar Maturity-Center / Peace – Street – Lang – Writing - United**

Galatians 4:4 says that God sent His Son Jesus Christ into the world at the fullness of time, at the perfect time. Some 20 years before Caesar Augustus, was his great uncle Julius Caesar. Julius Caesar had brought the Roman Empire into the place of maturity. By the time of the birth of Christ the Roman Empire was the center of the world. They had brought peace, through the sword, to the world. There was a relative peace on the earth because no other nations would dare try to go to war against the mighty Roman Army. Even the Roman Empire itself had rested from political power struggles between its leaders.

- The streets and roads were safe, people could travel freely without fear of being mugged or killed because the Roman Army had squashed all the bandits and pirates in the land. Rome had great billboards along the roadways, it was called crosses; and rise up against Rome and the Roman Law and to the cross you would go, along the roadsides, dying a slow death for days, and passerby's would get the message, break the law and here is what awaits you.
- Rome had established a dominate central language, a common language throughout the land (Greek).
- Along with the language was a dominate writing system, of pen and paper, a distribution system using the roadways.
- Free trade was flourishing because the Roman Empire had such a massive and connected road infrastructure, from the north to the south, and the east to the west, all of the Roman Empire was connected. It is written that some roads were even lit by street lights.
- The world was united through these things like no other time in all the history of the world. The perfect environment was set for the gospel to travel the world quickly and uninhabited. The only other time such a perfect environment has been established is the day we live in, a one world language (based on 0's and 1's called computer language), and superhighway which travels at the speed of light (called the internet). As it was with His first coming, so too it is at His Second Coming, and we are the generation that gets to be a part of it.

*(Galatians 4:3 NKJV) Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.*

*(Galatians 4:4 NKJV) But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,*

*(Galatians 4:5 NKJV) to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.*

*(Galatians 4:6 NKJV) And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"*

### **When Fullness Come – God Sent Son – With a Message / God Loves You / Spread from Cross**

When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son; when all things had come together, God sent forth His Son, and the message that came with Him, there is a God in heaven who loves you, and has a plan for your life.

That message, that Gospel, that “Good News” would be spread from a cross on a hill in Palestine (outside the walls of Jerusalem, a place called Golgotha); that message would spread on Roman roads to Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth; even to a storefront in Pasadena Maryland 2000 years later.

*(Acts 1:8 NKJV) "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

### **Gospel – Splashed with Blood of Christ / So Powerful-Wonderful Reach Every Corner**

That gospel, splashed with the blood of Jesus Christ there in Jerusalem, so powerful and so wonderful that it spread through the whole Roman Empire. So powerful and so wonderful that the Apostle Paul would declare only some 30 years later that it would reach every corner, every home and every heart, within 30 years of the cross. But, before the cross, came the birth.

*(Colossians 1:5 NKJV) because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, (Colossians 1:6 NKJV) which has come to you, as it has also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, as it is also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth;*

**Luke 2:3 So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.**

**Luke 2:4 Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David,**

**Luke 2:5 to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child.**

### **Augustus – thinks Calling the Shots / God Rearranging / Changed Name Octaves to Augustus**

Now Caesar Augustus thinks he is calling the shots by his decree, little does he know he is just a puppet in God’s hand as God is rearranging the whole world, the universe for that matter, for this very night. Caesar Augustus was originally called Caesar Octaves but he did not like that name, he felt it did not truly reflect all that he was, after all he was king, emperor, leader of the greatest empire in the world. So his minions thought for a while and came back to him with Caesar Augustus, which means, “of the gods”; he says I like that, that describes me well, I am, “of the gods”, call me Caesar Augustus.

### **Thinks he is god Ruling World / I Mandate – god has Spoken**

Here he thinks that he is a god, ruling the world, give a word, give a decree, and it will be. So he says, I mandate, I decree, everyone will return to their home city and be registered for taxes, god has spoken so he thinks, therefore it will be.

### **Little does he Know / World not Revolving him – But Womb of a 14yr Old / Hope of Mankind**

Little does Caesar Augustus know that the world he lives in and dictates, does not revolve around him, but the womb of a 14 or 15 year old teenage girl. For in that womb rests the hope of all mankind. For the Child that she delivers, will soon deliver her.

### **So All would be Sure – Rest Hope – Gen 3:15 / God Rearranges – Come as Prophesied / 90m – 3rd**

Jesus must be born in Bethlehem, why?, so that all would be sure, so that all could rest their hope in Him, Jesus Christ the Promised Messiah, the One promised all the way back in the garden that would crush Satan’s head and the curse. The One promised, must come into the world exactly as the Old Testament prophets said He would. I would like to talk about the odds of Jesus just fulfilling 8 prophecies such as where He would be born, how He would die, His lineage, and the likes. The odds of any man fulfilling just 8 prophecies is equivalent of filling the State of Texas 3 foot deep in quarters, and painting 1 quarter yellow, and giving a person blindfolded one chance, and one chance only to walk as long as he wants, and then bend down and pick that yellow quarter up, one try and one try only. Jesus fulfilled 300 prophecies, not just 8, I don’t think it humanly possible for me to give you an example of what those odds are. So God will rearrange the whole world around a 14 year old teenage girl. God must move her 90 miles from Nazareth to Bethlehem, in her third trimester no less, for had it not been for this decree you would never get a woman in her 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester to take a 90 mile journey anywhere.

#### *His Birth & Lineage*

1.) *The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Micah 5:2a / Matthew 2:1-2*

2.) *The Messiah would be a descendant of David. Isaiah 9:7 / Matthew 1:1*

#### *His Environment & the World Setting*

3.) *The Messiah would be announced to his people 483 years, to the exact day, after the decree to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. Daniel 9:25 / John 12:12-13*

4.) *The Messiah would be killed before the destruction of the temple. Daniel 9:26c / Matthew 27:50-51*

5.) *The Jew's authority to administer capital punishment would be gone when the Messiah arrived. Genesis 49:10c / John 18:31*

### *His Death*

6.) *The Messiah would be sacrificed on the same mountain where God tested Abraham. Genesis 22:14 / Luke 23:33*

7.) *The Messiah's back would be whipped. Isaiah 53:5c Matthew 27:26*

8.) *The Messiah's hands and feet would be pierced. Psalm 22:16c Matthew 27:38*

### **Hope Resting in 14yr Old / 90m Journey Be Careful / Camden Fussing / Mary Feeding Jesus**

The hope of mankind resting in the womb of a 14 year old girl, and a young man not much older than her I would imagine. Uncomfortable for Mary – yes, but how about Joseph? Ever travel with a woman, every two hours, honey – I have to go; really, we are making such good time. Why are the 7/11 when you are traveling more interesting to our wives than the one 5 minutes from our home? Imagine his thoughts, every step of the 90 mile journey, oh be careful, don't fall, and don't miscarry. Joseph, just a little pressure. Don't forget they have to make the journey out of Bethlehem back home after the birth, imagine every step – be careful don't drop God. I like to imagine what it was like later as they raised Jesus. I wonder if Joseph ever had those moments sitting at the table with his head in his hands looking at the bills, saying God what am I going to do – and then Jesus comes in and says “did you call Me”. One day Camden would not stop fussing and screaming, and we were all tired from a long week and a long day, and we all wanted peace and quiet. The whole house was like come on Camden, please give us a break we all said or at least thought it. I said imagine if Camden was the Promised One, the Messiah, God's Son entrusted to us for the hope of all humanity, how differently we would think. We would say, “its ok baby, you just let it all out.” Wayne asked me if Camden was the Christ would I ever discipline Him, I said no way, I wouldn't want to risk payback. Imagine Mary feeding Jesus; that's God eating my soup. When she said, "god I hope he likes it, she really would be saying, God, I hope you like it.

### **God Rearranges whole World – On 14yr Old / Brings them to Bethlehem**

Well God rearranges the whole world to bring this 14 year old to Bethlehem. Through fears and anxieties God brings them to Bethlehem.

### **God Rescues Us from the Order of the World**

God rescues us from the order of the world, we may think the world dictates our order, it dictates where we go and where we don't, we can think that the world's economy, the world's politics, the world's law are in control, but we see here that God rescues us from that, and God will do what He desires to do (using the world, not in subject to the world) to bring His plans and purposes to pass in our lives.

### **God rearranges the Order of World for You**

Christian, just know that God rearranges the world for you, though you may not know it or recognize it, He does. He does it for you, or He may be doing it through you for someone else's sake. Funny thing at work this week, although I wasn't laughing, at first. They delivered to me a new computer, brand new, and I go to start using it and it didn't work. I am like are you kidding me, this is brand new, now I am losing time, I am going deeper in the hole not getting work done, and I am like Satan you are such a dog. So a tech support guy comes to my desk to work on it, and while we are waiting for a reboot, he says to me, “it appears to me you are a religious person”, and in a moment, a twinkling of an eye, I saw that God was rearranging the world. He rearranged the world all the way back in the factory in Japan as the worker there missed a soldering joint, and the test person missed the failed part, and as the computer didn't come through the normal company channels but was the only one that came through a different distribution system, and thus once again didn't get check before it was delivered to me. God rearranged the world, so I could get to say to someone, “religious, no – I have the sweetness of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ”. And then, I got to share the whole story of why Jesus came, what he did for me, and what He does for me every day. Christian, God still rearranges the world for us, and this story reminds us that He rescues us from the ordering of the world, and personally intervenes to bring the world in order for us, and for the people of the world He is reaching out to.

**Luke 2:6 So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered.**

**Luke 2:7 And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.**

### **Bethlehem – City of David / V7 leaves Something Out / No room Inn – or Family**

Bethlehem, the city of David, Bethlehem which means “House of Bread”, it was Joseph’s family’s hometown; it might even had been where he grew up. It was where his family was from. Verse 7 however leaves something out, not only was there no room at the inn, there was no room at any of his family or relatives either. Brother Levi, Sister Miriam, Uncle Frank, Cousin Bobby: I’ll be in town for a few days, obviously you know all about the decree and how Mary and I have to make the 90 mile trek to Bethlehem, can we stay with you? Don’t know if you know but Mary is in her third trimester and the trip has been grueling on her, a soft and warm bed would be so wonderful for her. No room you say, you do know, the girl I am engaged to (not married to, is in her third trimester), ok I understand. Imagine how they would look at Mary, imagine her heart as the door shuts her out.  
*(Luke 2:7 NKJV) And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.*

### **High School Buddy – I Understand / Maybe didn’t Knock / No Room for You**

Hey Dave, Joseph here, remember the good ole days we played football together in the ole sandlot? Well me and Mary are in town for the night, huh, yes Mary is with me. Oh, that’s alright, I understand, no room. Maybe Joseph and Mary didn’t even knock on family’s door, knowing what they thought of Mary. There was more than no room at the inn, there was no room for someone like them, even if they were family, even if they were friends.

### **Savior born in Manger – Cave / Animals / No Park Place – Motel 6 / 2012 – a Back Alleyway**

So the Savior of the world is born in a manger, a barn, maybe a cave, maybe they didn’t even get inside the barn. It says that Jesus was laid in a manger (which is a word used for feeding trough). The manger is also a word that used for a place where animals were kept, a place where animals did what animals did, and Jesus, God with us (Immanuel), was not born at Park Place, not even the Motel 6, but a barn. If it was the year 2012, we would read the hope of mankind, born in a back alleyway, next to a dumpster.

### **Bethlehem was Crowded – No Room**

Bethlehem was crowded, and there was no room for Him, and a fitting picture for the hearts of man, for many a man today their lives are crowded, busy, and there is no room in their lives nor their heart for Him. Busy with careers, busy with recreation, busy we entertainment, busy with worldly commitments, busy with sin, and they say to the Son of God, sorry I have no room for you right now, come back tomorrow and we will see if there is an opening. Is your heart crowded today, have you made room in your heart and life for Christ to be birthed in you? Christian did you once have room in your heart, but now your life has become too crowded for Him? Today make room in the inn, and invite Him in.

### **She Brought Forth – No Staff / Birth to Mothering – No rest / Feeding Trough - Cardboard**

It says that she brought forth the Son, not a midwife or professional staff, no OBGYN, just a 14 year old teenager, a young man, and some swaddling clothes. She wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, from birthing to mothering, no hospital stay to recover. And she laid Him in the manger, which was a feeding trough made out of wood or stone; in the back alley behind the supermarket, she says “Joseph grab that cardboard box that I might lay God in”. The Savior comes into the world homeless, living in a cardboard box, and.....

*(Luke 2:7 NKJV) And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.*

### **First Told – Shepherds / Lock the Doors – Roman Court**

The first people that are told are shepherds. Old writings say that shepherds were considered the lower class of society. Writings say that when shepherds came to town, people would lock everything down, because they were so looked down upon; Roman law even said that a shepherd could not give testimony in a court case because they were so lowly and could not be trusted.

### **God Rescues us from the Reputations of the World**

Maybe the world has a certain reputation for you, maybe you occupation or your past has them looking down upon you. Sad to say the reputation has way too much footing even within the church today as people and ministers in a church will never allow a person to escape their past – well God rescues peoples from the world’s reputation. Shepherds looked down up by the world, but in God’s way we see shepherds looked upon from God. I come to the lowliest, so all will know, they can come. When I got saved, I felt I was looked down up in the church I went to because of my past – I always felt they were waiting for me blow it and return to the world. But God rescued me from my reputation, he declared to me, you are precious in my eyes, I love to “look down upon you”. This passage,

the announcements to shepherds sends a very clear message from the Lord to all – I have come to rescue you from the reputation of the world, of what the world thinks of you.

**Luke 2:8 Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.**

**Luke 2:9 And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.**

#### **V8 – Born at Night / See Picture Coming Together / Dark – Conditions – the Lowly / None Excluded**

Verse 8 tells us Jesus was born at night, not the day, and now we can see the picture the Lord is putting together for us through this whole story. Jesus comes in the darkness (the condition of man's heart, darkened by sin and separation from God and in need of Light and illumination), in the lowliest condition (back allies and cardboard boxes), to the lowliest of society (the shepherds), to show that no man is excluded:

#### **Been Born Exclusive / Tom Cruise / Always Wondering – Come for Me? / Picture Heart – Glad Tide**

Had Jesus been born in the exclusive hospital or palace, the finest professional doctors and pediatricians in the world, wrapped in the finest of linen clothing, in the daylight surrounded by kings and priests, you and I would have stood outside, looking in (I think of Tom Cruise and the birth of his child – exclusive, not for you to personally experience), we would have always been wondering, always questioning, yes He came, but did He come for me too! But He comes physically in a picture of sinful man's heart, cold, darkened, filthy and alone and says in verse 9, don't be afraid, I have good news, news of joy for you, a Savior is born to you. Please notice (verses 10-12) the "you" used throughout those verses as the Lord speaks to each of them individually and personally, yet all together; hey shepherd, hey outsider, yes you individually, I have great news for you, your Savior is born!

**Luke 2:10 Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.**

**Luke 2:11 For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.**

**Luke 2:12 And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."**

#### **Go see the Babe in the Alley**

The reason for the alleyway, the reason for the open birthing (the manger), so every passer-by could see, and know the Babe in the cardboard box is for you – not exclusively for the select few.

#### **A Savior is Born – You'll Recognize and Relate / Announcement – Invitation / Man Chooses**

A Savior is born to you, and you will know Him because He will be wrapped in swaddling clothes, laying in a cardboard box in an alley. You will know Him because He will come in a way that you can recognize Him and relate to Him. This is not just an announcement, it is an invitation to come and see. The gospel of Jesus Christ is more than an announcement, it is an invitation. It is an invitation to leave where you are at, to leave what you are doing, and to come and see, to come and behold. The announcement comes, the invitation given, but man must choose if he will come and behold, if he will come and receive. I imagine some shepherds went, and some stayed. Those that went got to behold the glory of God, those that stayed, stayed in their fields, unchanged.

**Luke 2:13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:**

**Luke 2:14 "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"**

**Luke 2:15 So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us."**

#### **This I got to See the Shepherds Say**

Peace, goodwill towards man, this I got to see for who has heard of such things in this world they shepherds would say. The only peace they knew at that time was through the sword of Rome, not the good will of man.

**Luke 2:16 And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.**

**Luke 2:17** Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child.

**Luke 2:18** And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. Mary

### **Mary giving Eyewitness Account / I could hear the Shepherds 5 blocks away**

Mary no doubt is giving an eyewitness account to Luke (as he said back in 1:2). Imagine her telling Luke, oh how the shepherds were blown away, they were off the hook talking about it. We could hear them 5 blocks away talking about it to every one they passed. Hey they said you got to go up to the alley behind the supermarket, and see the baby in the cardboard box. He is the Promised Messiah!

### **They were off the Hook – But Me I just Pondered these Things**

Mary would say they were off the hook, but for me, I just pondered all these things in my heart.

**Luke 2:19** But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.

### **Growing up in the Pennsylvania**

I grew up in the rural parts of Western Pennsylvania; we spent much time out in the woods, and out at the uncle's farm. One thing I remember is that every time you moved a hay bale, or a rock, there were always worms underneath, which we would pick up and go fishing with. I think of the dumpsters I have seen, and worms and more worms. I think of this and I think of Mary, hearing and pondering, yet looking down and thinking, my son, My Savior, born amongst this dirt and filth, born amongst the worms. I wonder if she thinks upon Psalm 22, the prophetic passage that the Messiah (her son) would one day speak – I am but a worm, and no man.

*Psalm 22:6–8 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> But I am a worm, and no man; A reproach of men, and despised by the people. <sup>7</sup> All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, <sup>8</sup> "He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!"

### **Tola Scarlet - Dye**

The word for worm used in that passage is (tola). The Hebrew word, tola—the plural of which is tolaith—is translated two ways in the Bible: as either “scarlet” or “worm.” Why would the same word be used for both “scarlet” and “worm”? Because in Bible days, when people needed scarlet cloth, they would grind worms into a pasty, blood-red substance that would be used as a dye.

### **Tola to Reproduce climbs a Tree – To be Eaten – 3 Days**

Why would Jesus say, “I am a worm?” Because, to reproduce, the tola would climb the trunk of a tree and fasten on a limb. Then the worm would lay the larva and cover the eggs with its body. Although the eggs would hatch, the worm wouldn't budge. So the larva would begin to feed on the body of the one who had given them life. As the tola gave its life for its young, its blood would leave a scarlet mark on the tree. After the dead worm fell, the bloody spot left on the limb of the tree would dry after three days, becoming a white, flaky substance that would fall to the ground like snow.

### **Isaiah 1:18**

“Though your sins be as scarlet—tola—they shall be white as snow,” Isaiah declares (1:18). Fastened to the tree of the Cross of Calvary, Jesus wouldn't budge until the work was finished. What work? The work that would allow you and me to be “hatched,” to be born again. “Eat of My Body,” He says. “Drink of My blood. I give My life for you. (Mark 14:22–24).

*Isaiah 1:18 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> “Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the LORD, “Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.

### **Rev 12 – Satan Accuses Us**

By His blood, Jesus not only saved us, but, like Tola in the text before us, He is the Judge who defends us. You see, Revelation 12:10 tells us that Satan accuses us day and night, going before the throne of the Father, saying, “Look at him. Look at her. They've blown it here. They've messed up there.” But the Bible says the accuser was overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of testimony.

*Revelation 12:10–11 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. <sup>11</sup> And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

### **We have an Advocate / God Points to the Worm**

“If any man sin, we have an Advocate, a Defender with the Father—that is, Jesus Christ the righteous,” John declares (see 1 John 2:1). This means that when we sin, although Satan will be at the throne of God pointing out our failures and shortcomings, we have a Defender—the Tola, the scarlet Worm, Jesus—who says, “Father, she has eaten of My body. He has tasted of My blood. They are clean.”

**1 John 2:1–2 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. <sup>2</sup> And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

### **Case Dismissed**

Hearing the accusations of the prosecuting attorney, and listening to the defense of His Son, the Father hits the gavel in the courtroom of heaven and says, “Case dismissed for lack of evidence.” And celebration breaks forth.

### **Recused from Sin**

The rescuer has come, to rescue you from the sin of the world.

**Luke 2:20** Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

### **The Shepherds Went – Saw - Glorified**

The shepherds that went, the shepherds that saw, left glorifying and praising God.

### **What an Invitation – To Become Sons of God / Today we Celebrate**

What an invitation it is; in the gospel of John it says that as many (its unlimited) as received him, to them he gave the power to become the sons of God; hence why today we celebrate the birth of our Savior:

*(John 1:12) But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*

### **He is Savior – Rescuer – Danger Ahead / Recognize need Rescue – Separated by Sin / Glad Tide**

He is the Savior! Savior means rescuer, indicating a need to be rescued from a danger. Those that recognize Him are those that recognize their need to be rescued from the danger. Man needs to be saved, rescued from our sin that separates us from the Holy God. Tiding of joy because there is hope beyond the grave, that there is a way provided that man’s sin may be forgiven before the Holy God, and that we can confidently come into His presence with no fear of being rejected:

*(Luke 2:10 NKJV) Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.*

### **Come not Obligation – Celebration – Immanuel / Rescuer says Jer 29**

We have come together today not out of obligation, but for celebration, Christ the King has Come, Immanuel, God with us, Jesus Christ the Lord and Savior, Savior.....the Rescuer, the One who would say I know the thoughts that I think towards you says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil to give you a future and a hope.

*(Jeremiah 29:11 NKJV) For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.*

*(Jeremiah 29:12 NKJV) Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.*

*(Jeremiah 29:13 NKJV) And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.*

### **We Celebrate – He Rearranged World for Us to Recognize (Circumstances-People-Prompting)**

We celebrate that He rearranged our world, if not the whole world, by circumstances, or people, or the prompting of our heart, that we would recognize Him as our Savior, our Rescuer.

### **We Celebrate – Dirty Manger Our Heart Too / Now make it a Royal Throne / Cleansed by Him to Die**

We celebrate because that dirty manger was our heart too, and now we make it a royal throne for Him. Hearts that were once dark and lonely, dirty and cold, have been cleansed by His precious blood, as the only person in history of mankind who was born to die. By His grace and in His love He takes that dirty manger and turns it into a temple, a palace, for Him to dwell in. He came not to dwell in earthly palaces, but to dwell and live in us, and call us His palace.

*(1 Corinthians 3:16 NKJV) Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?*

### **Celebrate – Rescuer Come / Not just Announcement – but Invitation / Gifts on your List**

We celebrate the announcement. The Rescuer has come. But as I had previously said, it is not just an announcement; it is an invitation, come and see. Maybe you are here today, heard these things, but never fully

considered them, never left the field to come and see. Christ the King, the Rescuer is asking you today, “Is there room in the inn”? He says to you let me take that cold and dirty manger and let Me make it a royal throne. Beloved, you have bought gifts, will give gifts to everybody on your holiday list, my prayer for you is that you will give yourself a gift today, the greatest gift, and come and see, accept His invitation, invite Him “inn”, make room at the “inn” for Him. If you have more questions, would like someone to talk to, we will be here for you as long as you need us to be, for this message of glad tiding is the whole reason for this season.

**Final Glad tidings – God Rearranging for 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming / Prophecies Unfolding / Coming for Bride**

A final glad tiding, a final good news for you today, God is rearranging the world as we speak, putting the pieces in place for His second Coming. His return is soon, He is coming for His Bride, may we make ourselves ready and adorned for Him!

# ***He shall be Called - (Jesus, Immanuel, and Christ)***

## ***Luke 2:15-20***

### ***The Shepherds Visit Jesus***

**Luke 2:8** Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

**Luke 2:9** And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.

**Luke 2:10** Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.

**Luke 2:11** For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

**Luke 2:12** And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.”

**Luke 2:13** And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

**Luke 2:14** “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”

**Luke 2:15** So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, “Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us.”

**Luke 2:16** And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.

**Luke 2:17** Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child.

**Luke 2:18** And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

**Luke 2:19** But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.

**Luke 2:20** Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

### **Praising God – All they Seen and Heard / Summarized in 3 Words – Jesus, Immanuel, Christ**

*Verse 20 - Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them - All the things they had heard and seen, as it was told them. They were told many things, and what they were told can be summarized into three words, three names – Jesus, Immanuel, and Christ.*

### **Matthew’s Account / 1:16-25 & 2:1-12**

Let’s read Matthew’s account to expound more, and just simply to enjoy this wonderful Christmas story:

**Matthew 1:16–25 (NKJV)** <sup>16</sup> And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ. <sup>17</sup> So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations. <sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. <sup>20</sup> But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.” <sup>22</sup> So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: <sup>23</sup> “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.” <sup>24</sup> Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, <sup>25</sup> and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.

**Matthew 2:1–12 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.” <sup>3</sup> When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup> And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. <sup>5</sup> So they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: <sup>6</sup> ‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.’” <sup>7</sup> Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. <sup>8</sup> And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also.” <sup>9</sup> When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. <sup>11</sup> And

*when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way.*

### **He shall be Called – Jesus, Immanuel, Christ**

Three things He was to be called: Jesus, Immanuel, and Christ.

### **Jesus – God is Salvation / God is the Rescuer**

*Verse 1:21 – and you shall call His name Jesus* – the name Jesus means, “God is Salvation”. Salvation means to rescue. So you could also read this as “God is the Rescuer”. This NT word for Jesus is the transliteration of the Old Testament word in the Hebrew for “Joshua”.

### **Immanuel – God with Us**

*Verse 1:23 – and they shall call His name Immanuel* – the name Immanuel means, “God is with us”. Verse 23 is a direct quote from the Old Testament Isaiah 7:14.

*Isaiah 7:14 (NKJV) <sup>14</sup> Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.*

### **The Rescuer is God Himself**

So the message is very clear, that the Rescuer (Jesus) is God Himself (Immanuel – God with Us). The Rescuer is called the Christ.

### **Christ – Anointed - Messiah**

*Verse 1:16 – of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ* – the name Christ means, “anointed”. The word used for “anointed” in the Old Testament was “Mashiyach”, we translate it into the English as “Messiah”.

### **3 Groups that were Anointed**

There were three groups in Israel that were anointed with oil, a symbol of God’s anointing, His Spirit to be upon them, and they were Prophets, Priests, and Kings. Jesus being the Messiah was and would be, all three. Jesus is the Prophet who came to declare the Word (Deuteronomy 18:18). He is our faithful High Priest (Hebrews 2:17) would intercede on our behalf to offer the sacrifice for our sin. And, He is the King of kings (Revelation 17:14). Jesus – Prophet, Priest, and King.

### **Isaiah 9 / Child Born – Son Given / 33 Years between the Comma**

Isaiah 9, a Child is born, a Son is given. On the first Christmas night, a Child was born, but that comma between a Child is born (comma) a Son is given, would take 33 years before its full fulfillment. Thirty-three years of being the prophet of God, declaring the Word of God, the ways of God. And then, the “Son is Given”, God Himself would do what only God (the King of the Universe) could do, and that was be the High Priest and the Sacrifice at the very same time, as he would go to Calvary to be our Rescuer.

*Isaiah 9:6-7 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.*

### **So our Celebration**

And so it is we celebrate tonight, Immanuel God with Us, the Rescuer has Come, for you and for me – He is Jesus, God’s gift to you.

### **Jeremiah 23 & 33 / Jehovah-Tsidkenu**

And I leave you with one more name of God, and how beautiful it is when we read of it in In Jeremiah chapters 23 and 33 tells us when we see Him in the kingdom, His name will be Jehovah-Tsidkenu. When you see Jesus, you’re not necessarily going to call Him “Jesus” or “Christ” or “Emmanuel,” but “Jehovah-Tsidkenu” or, “The Lord Our Righteousness.” This is great! When I see Jesus, I’m not going to say, “Jesus! Here I am! Aren’t I wonderful?” No, I’m going to say, “Jehovah-Tsidkenu, You are my righteousness. It’s not me. I have failed miserably. I botch it constantly. You are my righteousness. It’s Your blood that allows me to embrace You and sit beside you. I fall at Your feet and worship You because You are my righteousness.”

**Jeremiah 23:4–6 (NKJV)** <sup>4</sup> I will set up shepherds over them who will feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking,” says the LORD. <sup>5</sup> “Behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. <sup>6</sup> In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

**Jeremiah 33:15–16 (NKJV)** <sup>15</sup> ‘In those days and at that time I will cause to grow up to David A Branch of righteousness; He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. <sup>16</sup> In those days Judah will be saved, And Jerusalem will dwell safely. And this is the name by which she will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.’

### **We will be called Righteousness**

Jeremiah says that not only will the Lord be called The Lord our righteousness, but the city itself—the people who dwell around the Lord will also bear His name. So when I see you I will say, there is Christopher the Righteous, hello Janet the one who has been made righteous, and we will continually have praise upon our lips as we continually will be reminded, of what our Prophet, our Priest, our King has done for us.

**2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV)** <sup>21</sup> For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

### **Matthew 2:2 / For we have come to Worship Him**

This night, may we join those who said two thousand years ago, “where is He who has been born King of the Jews – for we have come to worship Him.”

**Matthew 2:2 (NKJV)** <sup>2</sup> saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.”

## *He is Jesus – God’s Gift to You*

# True Joy – Pray for War (Luke 2:8-14)

## **Most Wonderful Time**

Christmas, it is the most wonderful time of the year.

It's the most wonderful time of the year  
With the kids jingle-belling  
And everyone telling you  
Be of good cheer  
It's the most wonderful time of the year

## **Really**

Is it really? I could rewrite that song for today,

It's the most stressful time of the year  
With the kids with loud yelling  
And everyone telling you  
Buy it for me because Christmas is near  
It's the most stressful time of the year

## **It should Be / As we Wind Down – Not Up / Remember Indescribable Gift / But can be Stressful**

Well Christmas should be the most wonderful time of the year, when we reflect at this time of the year the wonderful gift, the indescribable gift, that was given to us. This should be a time where we wind down, and not wind up, after a hard year, maybe your longest year, and now a time and season to enjoy family and friends, hopefully with at least a couple extra days of time off from work. But it can become stressful when we look at the budget for Christmas gifts, maybe you have been following the super-committee in Washington trying to make the yearend budget cuts, well my wife will tell you they ought to just send me to DC and the whole thing will be done in a day, as she can testify to living off a lean budget; no pork projects in our house, no sir pork is too expensive, we eat ground beef, 70% lean, not this 90% stuff.

## **Maybe Bills as we Close out the Books / TRUE JOY / Maybe Lost – Face People & Memories / Alone**

Well maybe it is finances, and the pile of bills you are facing, because the end of the year is when we seem to close out the books and we really see how financially strapped we are, and the joy of Christmas is lost, and that is the heart of today's message – True Joy. Maybe your joy will be lost this holiday season because you will have to face people in your life who have hurt you greatly, mistreated you, maybe even abused you, and you have to go to a party and act like all is well, when deep in your heart you are filled with anxiety, fear, and/or anger. Maybe the holiday lacks joy for you because it means more time alone for you, your regular routine is put on hold for a week or more, maybe the holiday reminds you that you are alone, the realization of loved ones gone, or have moved away. The holidays are not necessarily the most wonderful time of the year for all.

## **Theme Statement – True Joy / Unlock the Treasures of God's Word**

Christian, today in this short message, I want to give you a key to “True Joy”, and not just for the holiday, but for life today, tomorrow, and forever. You may be surprised when I tell you the keys to peace and joy, is war! But stay with me and we will unlock the treasures of God's word together.

**Luke 2:8** Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

**Luke 2:9** And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.

**Luke 2:10** Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.

**Luke 2:11** For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

**Luke 2:12** And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.”

**Luke 2:13** And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:  
**Luke 2:14** “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”

**Luke 2:10**

*Luke 2:10 Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.*

### **What a Song / Difference of One Word**

Oh that wonderful Christmas song - Joy to the world! Joy to the world, the Lord has come, let earth receive her King. Oh the difference one word makes. Joy to the world, the Lord has come; thankfully it is not "joy from the world", because I don't know about you, but the world doesn't seem to be bringing me a lot of joy. The angel from the Lord got it right when he declared joy to the Lord.

### **Ever Notice how Different we React / Car cuts me Off – Headline News**

Really, have you ever noticed how differently we react to things when things are joyous? If the mood is already tense, then the tension rises and things escalate. But if the mood is light and joyous, then things don't seem to be as big and troublesome. If I am having a wonderful day with my wife and family, and we are driving to the park, and some person cuts me off, or rides on my bumper, I am just “please after you – and wave and give a gentle nod”, now if things were already tense, and this person gets on my bumper, lays on their horn, passes with 3.5 inches to spare, I am thinking headlines – “local Pastor runs man off the road in road rage instance”.

### **Difference – Joy lives Up in the Heavens**

What is the difference? It is that joy lives up here (in the heavens), the world lives down there. Thus it is joy to the world.

### **May I Remind You – Don't let the Joy that Came down become Common to You**

Let me just remind you as we enter into this holiday season, let us just enjoy for this hour together, the JOY that came down. Don't let this joy become common, or routine, or a past memory – it is there that you will find the beginning of dropping down from joy to the world, to joy from the world – and the world's joy is fickle, fleeting at best.

### **He Came for You – He gave the Indescribable Gift (Himself) / Unconditional Love – Willing to Leave Glory**

He came, for you Christian! He gave the indescribable gift, Himself for you! God loves you, an unconditional love. A love that was willing to leave the throne, the glory, the majesty, the perfection of perfect holiness, to take on the filth of the world; sin and separation, when He took on our sin, He took on all sin, at that moment He would be called a liar, a murderer, an adulterer, a drunkard and fornicator. Perfect holiness taking on total sinfulness, total beauty, taking on total ugliness – for you and for I.

*2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

### **What is that Supposed to Do For Us / Lighten the Load – Lift the Spirits – Knowing God Loves us!**

So what is that supposed to do for you presently and personally considering that you will not find joy from the world (at least not for very long)? As we consider it is joy to the world, the Lord has come - it is to lighten your load, it is to lift your spirits, because even when there is no joy from the world, we know there is joy to the world, that comes from knowing this day, this holiday season, that God loves me.

### **Do You have Joy Today? / If Not – Remind You – not From the world but Given to the World / Indescribable**

Do you have personal joy today? If not I would like to remind you, I would like to turn you back to, I would like to take you to, where real joy is - it won't be found from the world, but what has been given to the world. Oh He loves you so much, so much so that He said I will make it unmistakable, unbreakable, and indescribable - as I will send my only begotten Son to stretch for His arms to declare this is My love for you!

### **Blows me Away – That I bring Him Joy / Matt 13:44**

And get this, and this one blows me away, and that is that not only does He love me, desire me, but that Him having me, brings Him great JOY! The kingdom is like a treasure.....like a pearl

*Matthew 13:44–46 (NKJV)* <sup>44</sup> “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. <sup>45</sup> “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, <sup>46</sup> who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

### **Parables can Be Confusion / Man Sells Everything – Wrong / Can’t buy Salvation**

Now parables can be confusing, people have made many interpretations of these two parables, and maybe you have heard, maybe believe, that the parable is about a person who when they hear the good news of Jesus Christ, they go and sell everything they have to follow Him, and tremendous joy by doing so. Well, anyone here sell everything you have to follow Him? Yea I didn't either. The doctrinal problem with that interpretation is that you can buy your salvation, so that interpretation really starts to fall apart when you consider that. If we just stay within expositional constancy (all 31,102 verses), it is easy to interpret parables.

### **Only One Correct Interpretation – You are the Treasure / He would Buy the Field – It is Done**

There is only one correct interpretation and that is that you Christian are the treasure in the field, the pearl of great price, as it was Jesus who left all, His throne, His Father, His majesty - came to earth, born a babe in a dirty old manger, to a lowly and poor couple, so that after a sinless life, He would go to the cross, take on your sin and my sin, and with His last breath not just say, but declare - It is done!

*John 19:30 (NKJV)* <sup>30</sup> So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

### **God says for the Joy set Before Him (that’s you)**

Hebrews says that for the joy (that is you and me) set before Him, He endured the cross, despising the shame, won the victory and is seated at the right hand of God.

*Hebrews 12:1–2 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

### **You are the Treasure – You bring Him Joy**

You are the treasure, you are the pearl, and He has great joy over you, over me!

### **What kind of Affect – Same Love is Same Joy / We can Live in World and still have Joy**

So what kind of affect should this have over my life? Well where I want to take you today is that the love He has for you is at the same level of the joy He has for you, and thus the joy He has for you is equal to the love He has for you - and thus with that context of joy to the world, when we don't have joy from the world, we can still live in and enjoy - joy. As it was written in Nehemiah, declared by the Lord, the joy of the Lord is your strength.

*Nehemiah 8:9–12 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> And Nehemiah, who was the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, “This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn nor weep.” For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the Law. <sup>10</sup> Then he said to them, “Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.” <sup>11</sup> So the Levites quieted all the people, saying, “Be still, for the day is holy; do not be grieved.” <sup>12</sup> And all the people went their way to eat and drink, to send portions and rejoice greatly, because they understood the words that were declared to them.

### **Some Teach nothing should Bother Us / Rake – Chickfila -**

Now I know that some teach that joy means that nothing bothers you, flat tires and you praise the Lord a flat tire in the rain on the way to work at rush hour; or you are so spiritual that you blast your thumb with the hammer and you say thank you Lord may I have another. I would love to hit one of those preachers with a hammer and see if he still preaches the same sermon. Just this week, I found that I wasn't singing my favorite tunes in a few certain instances. As I went into the shed to get some wood to build a fire, looking so forward to it, as I walked into the shed in the dark, I didn't see the rake that my five-year old left on the floor. I didn't find myself singing, “joy to the world the Lord has come” – my thoughts were Camden! I took Camden on Saturday, and we went to Chick-fila, I love Chick-fila, I could it seven times a day, I'm so in love with Chick-fila, ummmmm. Ummmm, um! But what I hate about Chick-fila is there are no lines and everyone just kinds of stands around out in front of it, you come walking up and you can't tell whether they are waiting to order, waiting for their food, and it is just this total disorder. My irritation is elevated because I always have to analyze why they couldn't buy ten more feet of space for the outside lot, instead you have to squeeze your car like you are driving through a corn maze. Well I get inside, walk up, the guy behind the counter looks right at me and says may I help the next person in line, and I want to say there is no line just herd of people standing around, but yes I'll have a number 1 please. And then this 15 year old girl says real loud, excuse me sir, I was next! Then everyone looks at the rude man who cuts in line. I didn't find myself singing out to her,

God rest ye merry gentleman let nothing you dismay, remember Christ our Savior was born in Christmas Day...., instead with everything I had in me I smiled and said, oh after you please. Headline had flashed in my mind a split second prior – “local pastor loses it in Chick-fila, verbally berates teenage girl and then beats up the Chick-fila cow”.

### **Surely it is not Joy From the World / But Seriously – I know what Robs You / Abiding vs Dividing**

Surely it is not joy from the world, but joy to the world. But seriously.....I know what is robbing your joy Christian, because the same thing that robs you is what robs me, and that is when something other than Jesus has a grip on me, and continually has victory over me. Joy 15, rather than abiding, I am dividing, as I allow that thing to divide me from the Lord and from peace and joy. You know what I am talking about, a certain person, a particular situation, an unpleasant circumstance.....makes its appearance, and it defeats you, defeats me every time.

*John 15:1–11 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. <sup>2</sup> Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup> You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup> Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. <sup>5</sup> “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. <sup>7</sup> If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. <sup>8</sup> By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. <sup>9</sup> “As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. <sup>10</sup> If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. <sup>11</sup> “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.

### **Familiar Story / Goliath represents that “Thing” /**

Would you read with me a familiar story; as Goliath is a picture of that “thing” that seems to stand in the way of our joy and peace with the Lord, that “thing” that divides us from Him. Maybe your Goliath is - Alcohol, Sex, Anger, Fear, wasting time, or your finances; and now as the holidays approach, it might be specific people you will see, people who have hurt you, misused you, abused you.

*1 Samuel 17:1–11 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Now the Philistines gathered their armies together to battle, and were gathered at Sochoh, which belongs to Judah; they encamped between Sochoh and Azekah, in Ephes Dammim. <sup>2</sup> And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and they encamped in the Valley of Elah, and drew up in battle array against the Philistines. <sup>3</sup> The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, with a valley between them. <sup>4</sup> And a champion went out from the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, from Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. <sup>5</sup> He had a bronze helmet on his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail, and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of bronze. <sup>6</sup> And he had bronze armor on his legs and a bronze javelin between his shoulders. <sup>7</sup> Now the staff of his spear was like a weaver’s beam, and his iron spearhead weighed six hundred shekels; and a shield-bearer went before him. <sup>8</sup> Then he stood and cried out to the armies of Israel, and said to them, “Why have you come out to line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and you the servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. <sup>9</sup> If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants. But if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us.” <sup>10</sup> And the Philistine said, “I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together.” <sup>11</sup> When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

### **Israel Trembled / Every Morning and Every Evening**

Israel trembled, and maybe that thing brings you to trembling, instant anxiety, instant fear, instant anger, or instant defeat every time it makes its appearance to you. Goliath came out every morning and every evening; and maybe that “thing” is the same, every morning and every evening, it reminds you of me, our greatest problem that is just not going away. First thing in the morning there it is, to remind you that it is there and will be with you all day, and then in the evening so you can think about it all night, never getting rest with the knowledge that it is there, and will be in the morning.

*1 Samuel 17:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> And the Philistine drew near and presented himself forty days, morning and evening.

### **David’s Response**

Now listen to what David says in response:

*1 Samuel 17:34–37 (NKJV)* <sup>34</sup> But David said to Saul, “Your servant used to keep his father’s sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, <sup>35</sup> I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it. <sup>36</sup> Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God.” <sup>37</sup> Moreover David said, “The LORD, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.” And Saul said to David, “Go, and the LORD be with you!”

### **Soldier thought too Big to Fight – David thought too Big to Miss / Cartoon vs Reality**

When the soldiers of Israel saw Goliath, they thought to themselves, “He is so big that we can never kill him.” When David saw Goliath, he thought to himself, “He is so big that I cannot miss him.” Why is it that when we teach our kids about Goliath we tell them how easily he fell; but when we face a Goliath they seem so impossible to defeat.

### **Goliath means Splendor – Chiefly / Root means to Uncover – Send into Exile**

Goliath = “splendour” (splendour is the British variant of our word splendor) – it means chiefly. The root of the word Goliath means uncover, to reveal, to open, to remove, to discover, to take into exile.

### **When Goliath Comes – Something is Uncovered – Something goes into Exile / Too often it is Me**

When Goliath comes, someone is uncovered, something is discovered, and too often someone goes into exile. Usually the Goliaths in my flesh only uncover a sad condition of my flesh, a weakness, a stronghold, a sin, a place of no faith, a place of failure.

### **I Don’t Know About You – I Usually Pray for Peace and Separation / Never Pray for War**

Christian, I don’t know about you, but as for me, I find that I most usually pray about the Goliaths in my life by asking God to bring me peace, to keep that Goliath at bay, distanced from me – I find I never pray, God bring me Goliath today, bring me war! I want to face that thing that is defeating me with fear, with anger, with unbelief, with sin, with shame, and all the other things that wreck my faith, ruin my witness, and robs my joy.

### **Pray for War**

Christian, today I am saying to you, do you want True Joy, do you really want to live the abundant life, then I am saying to you – then pray for war. Ask the Lord to bring that “thing” to you, so you may face it in battle, so that you may have the victory over it with the power of the Lord.

### **God wants you to have the Victory – Start with that Knowledge**

Listen Christian, God wants you to have the victory. Start with that knowledge, He wants you to have the victory, He does not want you to continually be defeated by it. And when you have the victory, oh the celebration of joy on your behalf, and for the Lord, as He sees His child having victory.

### **Again – Maybe yours is (Alcohol – sex – anger – Holiday)**

Again, maybe yours is - alcohol, Sex, Anger, Fear, wasting time, money; now as the holidays approach it might be specific people you will see, people who have hurt you, misused you, abused you. Start to pray to the Lord to not hide that thing, separate that thing, but to bring that thing so that you may face that thing, and finally have victory over that “thing”.

### **Here is what Happens – you are Ready / You are Kitted-Up**

Here is what happens when you pray for war, you are prepared for it when it comes, it doesn’t catch you off guard, you are not blindsided when it comes, no – you are “kitted up” as they call it in the Army, you have your armor on, you have your helmet on, you have your weapon in your hand, you are ready for battle.

### **Take it to Prayer / Mail – Person – Call / I want to Walk Away in Victory**

Take it to prayer, Lord I know that piece of mail is coming, and when it does will you open it with me, may I see it as an opportunity to trust you more, to hear your voice that You will provide, even though it may be hard for a while. When I see that person who hurts me, who mistreats me, Lord will stand with me, will you calm my heart, will You not let my anxiety get the best of me. Lord when they call to say, come on over, big party tonight, or she says what are you doing tonight, Lord may I say – no, oh Lord give me the strength to say no! Lord I want to face this “thing” so I can walk away and say, not this time, you didn’t get the best of me this time, you didn’t rob my joy this time – I did not blow my witness, no this time I walked up with my head up, proud and delighted that I didn’t respond/react the way I have the dozen times before – Lord you gave me victory. And when that same “thing” comes again, we together can have victory again “together”.

### **And I Love verse 17:51 / Goliath’s own Sword / Turning the Tables**

I love verse 17:51 - David uses Goliath's own sword to cut off his head. Oh how I love it when I take something that Satan has been using against me, and turning the table on him, and use it against him. You have been keeping me in fear with that thing, and now I turn it against you and use it as a weapon against him. A tongue to bash people, now a tongue to proclaim the King of Glory; hands to gather things to myself, and now hands to serve someone else. Satan may say here take a drink, and it has kept you down for years, but when your victory comes, people offer you that smoke, that drink, and you say no thank you, I am done, and they say please tell me how so I can walk away too, and that thing Satan tried to use to slay you, you turn around and use to lead someone else to Christ.

*1 Samuel 17:51 (NKJV)* <sup>51</sup> Therefore David ran and stood over the Philistine, took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him, and cut off his head with it. And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled.

### **David in Jerusalem / Head Represents Authority**

For you see, as we read on, that David is now in Jerusalem with Goliath's head, it is a couple days later and he is still carrying the head of Goliath with him. The head of Goliath represents the authority that Goliath had over the Israeli army, and the people of Israel. David is showing the head to all people to say Goliath no longer has authority over you; and so it is when we have the head of that thing in our hand, we can rejoice and have joy, because we see that we can have the victory and it no longer has authority over us.

*1 Samuel 17:54 (NKJV)* <sup>54</sup> And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put his armor in his tent.

### **The Head Reminds what do with God**

The head reminded David of what he could not defeat by himself, he could defeat with the help of the Lord.

### **Christian Pick Something**

Christian, pick something (better yet – all those things) this holiday that is an enemy, and go attack it, pray for war!

### **Past Victories – Confidence of Future / But No Giant is Unbeatable**

And as you gain victories, you will see your Goliath's becomes bears and lions to you as you conquer them. The bear, the lion, at one time seemed like a Goliath, but after defeating them you know you can handle bigger. You see, your past victories, give you confidence for your future battles. David said hey I can take this guy, I've taken lions and bears, and thus I know I can take this giant. But hear me, I am by no means telling you that little victories will lead to big victories, because I would then be saying to you that there are some victories that you cannot win today, and I absolutely believe that whether you have been saved for a day, or saved for a century, there is not one stronghold in your life today that God cannot give you the victory over. God is able to conquer all Goliaths in our life, anytime, and anyplace.

### **When Battle Comes – How we fought in Prayer determines the Outcome**

Christian, when the battle comes, physically, when that piece of mail arrives, when that person walks in, when that news comes, how you respond will be determined on how you waged the war in the prayer realm.

### **Every battle Needs a Battle Plan / The Story of the Rock**

Every battle needs to come with a battle plan, and we would be wise to call the Captain of our salvation, sit with Him, and draw up a battle plan of just how are we to respond when the enemy starts launching mortars and missiles. Let me give you three things to remind you during this holiday season, and during this time you are praying for war, and it is found in Exodus, the story of the Rock!

### **Outline**

It is a simple outline for your battle:

- Come to the Rock
- Speak to the Rock
- Sing to the Rock

### **Come to the Rock**

When the children of Israel wandered the wilderness, they cried out for water, and the Lord provided by a rock that was ever-present when they needed water. Moses struck the rock in Exodus 17, and it poured out water for a thirsty people. Paul tells us that Rock was Christ (1 Corinthians 10:4). You see, when Jesus Christ, the Rock of our salvation, was smitten on the Cross, blood and water flowed from His side (John 19:34). While the blood speaks of the cleansing of sin, the water speaks of the Spirit. The blood must be shed before the Spirit can flow (1 John 5:6).

Therefore, because the Holy Spirit cannot dwell in you or come upon you until your sin is dealt with, the first step to being filled with the Spirit is simply to get saved. Come to the Rock. And, like the woman at the well, you will find your thirst quenched forevermore. And for all who have, you can now freely come, and the Lord says to come, boldly come, and let's talk about whatever is on your heart – the door is open and I am waiting for you to come.

*Exodus 17:5–6 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> And the LORD said to Moses, “Go on before the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel. Also take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river, and go. <sup>6</sup> Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink.” And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

### **Speak to the Rock**

In Numbers 20, the Israelites were thirsty once again. Moses cried to the Lord, and the Lord said, “Speak to the rock and it shall give forth water.” But Moses, weary of the whining of his congregation of three million, said, “You rebels, must we fetch water for you?” as he struck the rock twice. And, although water came out graciously, Moses was punished for his misrepresentation of God to the people. “I’m not mad at My people,” God said to Moses. “I’m not disappointed in them. I’m not through with them. Therefore, because you called them rebels and smote the rock when I told you to speak to it, you’ll not enter into the Land of Promise.” Folks, because the Rock of Ages, Jesus Christ, was smitten when He died for our sins, when you are thirsty, when you are aware you need empowering—you don’t need to work something up emotionally or expend a lot of energy physically. You don’t need to lash out in frustration as Moses did. All you need to do is speak to the Rock. Say, “Lord, I’m thirsty. My life is not flowing. Nothing’s happening. Have mercy.” Jesus said, “If you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?” (Luke 11:13). Why do we think we have to position ourselves in a certain way physically, shout emotionally, or dance heatedly in order to receive the water of the Spirit—when all we need to do is speak to the Rock? All we need to do is ask.

*Numbers 20:7–8 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>8</sup> “Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals.”

### **Sing to the Rock**

In Numbers 21, the Israelites thirsted once again. This time, however, they simply sang a song (verses 17, 18), and water sprang from the well they dug. You see, the rock didn’t actually literally, physically follow them in their wilderness wanderings. Rather, most commentators agree that a subterranean river flowed from the rock, providing a perpetual flow of water under their feet. Consequently, all the Israelites had to do to be refreshed at any given moment was realize that even if they couldn’t see it, the current was moving below them. All they had to do was sing out in faith, and water would bubble to the surface. So, too, if you’re saved, the Spirit is in you and with you wherever you go. But He will come upon you and overflow from you if you will simply sing out in faith. “Be filled with the Spirit,” Paul said, “speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:18, 19). Why do we gather together on Sundays? Because something happens when people come together to sing praise and to speak to each other in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Something happens at the Lord’s table when we realize the Rock has already been smitten. Something happens in the place of prayer when we simply talk to the Rock. Something happens when we begin to sing. Something begins to bubble up and overflow. How do you get filled with the Holy Ghost? How do you experience the coming upon of the Spirit? Not by incantations, gyrations, or manipulation, but simply by coming to the Rock given to us, speaking to the Rock smitten for us, and singing to the Rock present within us. Come to the Rock. Speak to the Rock. And sing out—believing that the Rock has already provided a flow underneath the surface. It’s there presently, so sing out expectantly. Receive it by faith today. And may the Lord cause you to be over your head in Him, carried along in the refreshment, joy, and power of the Holy Ghost.

*Numbers 21:16–18 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> From there they went to Beer, which is the well where the LORD said to Moses, “Gather the people together, and I will give them water.” <sup>17</sup> Then Israel sang this song: “Spring up, O well! All of you sing to it— <sup>18</sup> The well the leaders sank, Dug by the nation’s nobles, By the lawgiver, with their staves.” And from the wilderness they went to Mattanah,

### **Christian – Today True Joy**

Christian, this holiday season – we are going to have “True Joy”. Amen!

### **Don’t lose Sight of Indescribable Gift**

And Christian, don't lose sight of what God has done for you. His indescribable gift - the more you try to describe it, the more indescribable the gift becomes, and do you see, it then becomes the gift that keeps giving, beyond just salvation, but every day you can enjoy His gift in a fresh, new, exciting, and joyful way.

**2 Corinthians 9:15 (NKJV)** <sup>15</sup> Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

# *Depart in Peace*

## *(Luke 2:21-38)*

### **We Pick Up / Jesus Dedicated / Simeon & Anna – Depart in Peace**

Well we continue our study in the Gospel written by Luke. In verses 1-20 we read of the birth of the King of kings and the Lord of lords, and in our study today we will read of Jesus being presented and dedicated. And woven into the story are two precious people both well advanced in years (Simeon and Anna) who are both ready to depart from this world into the next, and in our passage today we will see that they can depart in peace. The question of today's study is 'when it comes your time to depart from this world into the next – will you depart in peace?'

### ***Christ is Circumcised***

**Luke 2:21** And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child, His name was called JESUS, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.

### **Jesus – God is Salvation / God is the Rescuer / Camden's Name / Jesus only Person born to Die**

*Verse 1:21 – and you shall call His name Jesus* – The eighth day was not only the day for circumcision, but the day was also for the naming of the child. The name back then, just as today, carries a deep significance, it represented what the parents heart and desire was for this child, what they felt (any many times by revelation from God) what the destiny of the child was to be. We called our son Camden Graham because we felt that reflected us as his parents, and what God will do in his life. Camden because he started his way into this world on the day that Billy Graham preached (what would be) his last crusade message at Camden Yards in Baltimore (and we were deeply involved for 3 months in the preparing and supporting of that crusade). When people will ask how did you get your name, he will answer this was the whole purpose of my parents life, to make Jesus Christ known, and it was the same for the great evangelist Billy Graham, and I carry forth now that same calling and passion. The name Jesus means, "God is Salvation". Salvation means to rescue. So you could also read this as "God is the Rescuer". The whole purpose of His life was singular, to rescue man from their sins. The only person ever born with the sole purpose to die.

*John 1:29 (NKJV)* <sup>29</sup> The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

### **Fulfilling the Law / Falling short of the Law – God's Perfect Standard**

Mary and Joseph are following the Law, and circumcision was established and implemented all the way back with Abraham and his descendants back in Genesis 17. The word law is used five times in Luke 2:21–40. Though He came to deliver His people from the bondage of the Law, Jesus was "made under the Law" and obeyed its commands (Gal. 4:1–7). He did not come to destroy the Law but to fulfill it (Matt. 5:17–18). The Law of God still stands today, as God now uses it as a mirror to show man that they fall short of His perfect and Holy standards, and thus every man needs the Rescuer.

*(Genesis 17:11 KJV)* And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.

*Matthew 5:17–19 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. <sup>18</sup> For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. <sup>19</sup> Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

*Romans 3:19–20 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. <sup>20</sup> Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

*Romans 3:31 (NKJV)* <sup>31</sup> Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.

### **On the 8th Day = Vitamin K / Prothrobins**

No explanation was given why the eighth day was specified for circumcision (at that time), but recent medical research now shows that the blood-clotting element Vitamin K rises to an adequate level at the 8th day. If you circumcised the child sooner than the 8<sup>th</sup> day there is a chance (especially in those days of not having advanced medical technology) that the child could bleed to death because the blood would not clot. It has medically been discovered that also on the eight day that the blood clotting agent "prothrobins" reaches a peak of 110%, and then

levels off at 100% on the ninth day. This is an amazing detail that this was commanded some 4,000 years long before the microscope could prove out why the 8<sup>th</sup> day.

*(Leviticus 12:3 KJV) And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.*

*Prothrombin is a blood-clotting protein. Injury to a blood vessel produces a signal which triggers the conversion of prothrombin to thrombin. Thrombin is a protein which plays a central role in provoking the assembly of other proteins to form the blood clot.*

### **On the 8th Day – New Beginnings**

Now if you have the choice to read the bible or count the bible, I would highly encourage you to just read the bible. But if you have some extra time on your hand, the numerology of the bible is fascinating. The baby boy was to be circumcised on the eighth day because not only is eight the number of days when the blood coagulates, but also as we read through the Bible we see eight is the number of new beginnings.

- Day 8 was after 7 days of creation
- 8 people came through the Flood (the beginning of the new world)
- The First born was dedicated on the 8<sup>th</sup> day (a new lineage begins) –Exodus 22
- Pentecost was on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> week (7x7=49 plus 1 equals 50)

### **Jesus is the New Lineage**

Jesus is the new lineage, that man can receive into his being the life-giving spirit of God by placing their trust in Jesus.

*1 Corinthians 15:45–49 (NKJV) <sup>45</sup> And so it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being.” The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. <sup>46</sup> However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. <sup>47</sup> The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven. <sup>48</sup> As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly. <sup>49</sup> And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.*

### **Circumcision – Cutting/Dealing with the Flesh / Deal with it Quickly**

The rite of circumcision, a specific mark placed upon the Jewish male alone, spoke of dealing with the flesh. The fact that it was to take place as soon as it was physiologically possible speaks of the fact that sin is to be dealt with from the earliest of days. The 8<sup>th</sup> day, a new beginning, and through Jesus God speaks that there is a new beginning for man, behold the former things have passed away (the condemnation of the Law), and man’s sins can be washed away once and for all.

*2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV) <sup>17</sup> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

### **Jesus -8**

Just an interesting note, for those who enjoy these things, (Gematria takes the numeric value of letters and adds them up for comparison and analysis), and interesting enough, 8 is the number of Jesus, whose name in Greek is

<u>IΗΣΟΥΣ</u>	
I	= 10
H	= 8
Σ	= 200
O	= 70
Υ	= 400
Σ	= 200
Total:	888

### **Do You want a New Beginning?**

Do you want a new beginning, do you want a fresh start – Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

*John 1:29 (NKJV) <sup>29</sup> The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*

*2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV) <sup>17</sup> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

## **NYC – Cervical Cancer**

Back in the turn of the 19th century, in NYC they noticed that Jewish woman had a lower rate of cervical cancer than non-Jewish woman. Upon further study they found it was because Jewish woman only married Jewish males and the males were circumcised, and carried less bacteria than the uncircumcised, which at that time was nearly everyone for only the Jewish people were practicing circumcision according to the Law of God. It was because of that study that circumcision was no longer just a religious practice, but the medical world saw the physical value of it and implemented as a recommended practice.

## **You can Trust the Word**

I know there are times where we can question God's word; we can question why the details matter, they seem so obscure, outdated, or old fashion. But here in something as simple as circumcision on the eighth day proves how God has depth and meaning in every word of God. You will never find greater power in your life than when you obey every detail of God's word; and every step you take away from the word, you will find a diminishing of His power in your life. If He says the eighth day to you, do it on the eighth day; if He says don't touch that, don't go there, then don't touch and don't go; and when He says touch this, go there, then touch and go. Trust God's word down to the minutest detail, and you will find yourself living in the power of His might. For His word is mighty! *Proverbs 30:5-6 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. <sup>6</sup> Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar.

**Luke 2:22** Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord

**Luke 2:23** (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the LORD" ),

## **Exodus 13 and Leviticus 12**

According to Exodus 13, every firstborn son belonged to the Lord. And according to Leviticus 12, forty days after birth, the firstborn male was to be dedicated totally and completely to the purposes and service of the Lord. So we are now 40 days since Jesus' birth, and 33 since the day of His circumcision. So again, Jesus did not come to do away with the Law, but to fulfill the Law. He did not come to throw away the Law, but to give us a way to escape the judgment of the Law.

*Exodus 13:1-2 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup> "Consecrate to Me all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and beast; it is Mine."

*Leviticus 12:1-8 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup> "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If a woman has conceived, and borne a male child, then she shall be unclean seven days; as in the days of her customary impurity she shall be unclean. <sup>3</sup> And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. <sup>4</sup> She shall then continue in the blood of her purification thirty-three days. She shall not touch any hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary until the days of her purification are fulfilled. <sup>5</sup> 'But if she bears a female child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her customary impurity, and she shall continue in the blood of her purification sixty-six days. <sup>6</sup> 'When the days of her purification are fulfilled, whether for a son or a daughter, she shall bring to the priest a lamb of the first year as a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtledove as a sin offering, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting. <sup>7</sup> Then he shall offer it before the LORD, and make atonement for her. And she shall be clean from the flow of her blood. This is the law for her who has borne a male or a female. <sup>8</sup> 'And if she is not able to bring a lamb, then she may bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons—one as a burnt offering and the other as a sin offering. So the priest shall make atonement for her, and she will be clean.' "

**Luke 2:24** and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, "A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

## **2 Turtledoves for the Poor / Prosperity Doctrine**

Leviticus 12:6 states specifically that a lamb was to be brought as a sacrifice of purification, unless one was very poor. In that case, two turtledoves would be sacrificed. Mary and Joseph brought turtledoves not because they didn't love God, but because they were poor. Although according to prosperity teaching, based upon their financial standing, Mary and Joseph must have had a substandard walk with God because they were poor people. Yet Scripture knows nothing of that kind of theology.

**However – Mary and Joseph did bring a Lamb**

I would like to make this point, which seems to always be overlooked, and that is that Mary and Joseph did bring a Lamb to offered, one that would be sacrificed, as they brought the perfect spotless Lamb Himself, who would 33 years later be offered and sacrificed for you and for me.

### **A Lamb for You**

A Lamb for you, a lamb for me; may we be careful to not let us just read a story today, an worse make that story an all too familiar story. May the Holy Spirit speak to us afresh and new – A Lamb for You, and a Lamb for Me.

### **Tribe Experiences Story of Jesus**

Imagine the mystery and delight of not just hearing, but seeing the story of Jesus for the first time, almost as an eyewitness. That's what happened to a tribe in the jungles of East Asia when missionaries showed them the Jesus film. Not only had these people never heard of Jesus, they had never seen a motion picture. Then, on one unforgettable evening, they saw it all—the gospel in their own language, visible and real.

Imagine again how it felt to see this good man, Jesus, who healed the sick and was adored by children, held without trial and beaten by jeering soldiers. As they watched this, the people came unglued. They stood up and began to shout at the cruel men on the screen, demanding that this outrage stop.

When nothing happened, they attacked the missionary running the projector. Perhaps he was responsible for this injustice! He was forced to stop the film and explain that the story wasn't over yet, there was more. So they settled back onto the ground, holding their emotions in tenuous check.

Then came the crucifixion. Again, the people could not hold back. They began to weep and wail with such loud grief that, once again, the film had to be stopped. The missionary again tried to calm them, explaining that the story still wasn't over; there was more. So they composed themselves and sat down to see what happened next.

Then came the resurrection. Pandemonium broke out this time, but for a different reason. The gathering had spontaneously erupted into a party. The noise now was of jubilation, and it was deafening. The people were dancing and slapping each other on the back. Christ is risen, indeed!

Again the missionary had to shut off the projector; this time he didn't tell them to calm down and wait for what was next. All that was supposed to happen—in the story and in their lives—was happening.

*Ben Patterson, "Resurrection and Pandemonium," LeadershipJournal.net 4-13-04*

### ***A Lamb for You – A Lamb for Me***

Celebrate it like it is fresh and new – every day!

### ***Simeon's Prophecy***

**Luke 2:25** And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

**Luke 2:26** And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

**Luke 2:27** So he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law,

**Luke 2:28** he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said:

**Luke 2:29** "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word;

**Luke 2:30** For my eyes have seen Your salvation

**Luke 2:31** Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples,

**Luke 2:32** A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel."

### **Gospel for whole World**

The gospel up front, told clearly, this good news is for the Gentiles and the Jews, it is for the whole world! Jesus isn't just for Jews, nor for the USA, but for China, for India, for the Arabs, the Brits, and the outer most parts of the world.

*Revelation 14:6 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—

### **Depart Means**

The word depart meant to “set at liberty”, “to set free”, “to set a captive free”, “to acquit one accused of a crime”, “to set a prisoner free”, “to untie a ship and set sail”, “to take down a tent and move on”, and “to unyoke a beast of burden”. Simeon has seen the Rescuer and knows he can set sail now. Oh what a beautiful and wonderful day when a man today sees what Simeon saw, the Rescuer, and life becomes free and unburdened, untie the ship and set sail, no matter what happens on this earth, “I am going to Heaven!”

### **Context Lends Simeon is Very Old**

It seems from the context that Simeon was well advanced in years. The context lends itself to that after he sees the Babe Jesus he is ready to die; it doesn't appear that he is not ready to start a ministry to prepare the people for the coming Messiah.

### **Just – Devout / May we make that our Aim**

*Verse 25 - Was just and devout* – Just, means he was obedient to the Law of God, and devout means he was serious about his obedience and relationship with the Lord. May we make it our aim, our very being, to have a walk like Simeon's that is just and devout

### **Simeon means Hearing / Just & Devout formula for Hearing**

*Verse 25 – Simeon* - Simeon means “hearing”. Simeon heard an amazing revelation from God, and he waited for it to come to pass. I will tell you the formula for having an ear to hear a word from God, is to be just and devout people. . Christian is there anything in your life right now that is keeping you from being fully sold-out to Him? Then let it go, even if that thing seems so small and insignificant, raise the bar of your spiritual life and I will guarantee you that you will see things like you never have before.

*Romans 10:16–17 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “LORD, who has believed our report?” <sup>17</sup> So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

### **Simeon Heard greatest News / But we Don't know what He Did for Living / Just the Important Thing**

So Simeon has heard the greatest news and revelation ever delivered to the world, the Messiah is coming and you will see him, yet I find it ever so interesting that the scripture doesn't reveal to us clearly what he did as occupation in his life, was he a priest, did he have a job making tents, was he a politician? All that we are told about him what was important about him, and that is that he was just and devout.

### **The Consolation of Israel / The Comforter**

*Verse 25 - Consolation of Israel* – the Greek word for “consolation” is the word “paraklesis” and it means “comforter and helper”. The Jewish rabbis called the Messiah that would come, “the paraklesis Meschiach” - The Comforting Messiah”. Jesus would promise the same in John 14, that we would never be without the Comforter and Helper in our life once we receive Him into our hearts and lives.

*John 14:15–18 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup> If you love Me, keep My commandments. <sup>16</sup> And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper (parakletos), that He may abide with you forever— <sup>17</sup> the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. <sup>18</sup> I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

### **God moving the World for Simeon**

*Verse 27 - So he came by the Spirit into the temple* - God moving the world - Simeon at temple why? So here God is rearranging the world. He moves Simeon to come to the Temple. Who knows what Simeon's day was like leading up to that moment, but we see God had him in the place that he would be coming to the Temple, and not going for a hamburger, or having to get the oil changed on the donkey. God does the same for us, we just don't always recognize it.

### **Depart in Peace / If you were to Die Tonight**

*Verse 29 - Luke 2:29* “Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace” – He could depart this earth in peace, because He had a personal encounter with the Prince of Peace. If you were to die tonight, could you, would you be

sure, that you would depart in peace, because you had a personal encounter with the Prince of Peace while you walked this earth? If you say, I think so, I hope so, if you cannot say in your heart absolutely, then I will put before you that you may just not know Him personally; because when you know Him personally and intimately, then you will know without a doubt the you are His, and He is yours, and you will have a peace and assurance of that.

### **Only way is According to God's Word**

Verse 29 – According to Your word - The only way to know Him and depart in peace, is according to His Word. Can you hear Him talking to you in His word right now?

### **Simeon talking as if Death is Imminent**

Simeon is talking about his death to come, as if it is now imminent, but he knew he could depart – because he had peace with God. You know parents we need not just teach our children on how to live, but we need also teach them how to die. I am reminded of a woman who was dying of cancer, and every week she had young girls come to her house and she taught them how to die the right way of a Christian woman. As she was dying teaching them, that when your time to go comes, this is how you go. At her funeral she didn't have the Pastor read Psalm 23, she ordered and gave every person a New Testament Bible. She couldn't afford the New Testaments, the cancer had taken her broken, but on faith she ordered the Bibles, and the day the bill came for the Bibles in the mail so did an insurance check for the exact same amount. She had special flags made to replace the flags that went on the cars of the funeral procession, and instead of saying funeral, hers said "going home". She was going in peace, and Simeon was going home in peace; will you go home the same way?

### **At age 21 – Gun to my Head**

I remember at age 21 a man pulled a gun on me and put it to my head, for me taking his parking spot. I almost died over a parking space! Age 21! And I was not ready, for I did not know the Lord personally, for up to that point all I knew was religion, but I did not have a personal relationship with Him.

### **No Peace as Law Breakers**

I would not have departed in peace, because I did not receive my pardon, set free from my sentence, acquitted of my guilt, and that was my sin against the Holy God. I had broken His Law, and had not been forgiven nor set free from my guilt. The Law judges us, and it finds us guilty, and thus we cannot have peace with a Holy God when the Law shows that we have sinned against Him. We only need to be guilty of one point and God views it as we are guilty of them all. We rake and stack sin, we think one sin is worse than another, but that isn't how God views it, for He is so Holy that one sin is just as offensive as another. Even the little ink spot on a bright white shirt makes the whole shirt dirty because that ink spot is glaring out of the bright white. So it is before the Perfect pure God.

*James 2:10 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.*

### **The 10 Commandments**

What are the commandments?

- #1. "You shall have no other gods before Me... (Exodus 20:3).
- #2. "You shall not make for yourself a carved image... (Exodus 20:4-6).
- #3. "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain... (Exodus 20:7)
- #4. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy...(Exodus 20:8-11)
- #5. "Honor your father and your mother... (Exodus 20:12)
- #6. "You shall not murder. (Exodus 20:13)
- #7. "You shall not commit adultery. (Exodus 20:14)
- #8. "You shall not steal. (Exodus 20:15)
- #9. "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. (Exodus 20:16)
- #10. "You shall not covet your neighbor's goods; (Exodus 20:17)

### **Problem**

The problem is we have all sinned and are all guilty before Him.

*Romans 3:23 (NKJV) <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

### **Penalty**

The Penalty of breaking one of God's Laws is eternal punishment, hell.

*Romans 6:23 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

### **Provision**

But God in His great love for His creation says I will trade places with you, if you are willing. You were sentenced to death, but I will take the punishment that was meant for you, I'll go to the cross, so you can be set free, so that when your tie comes to leave this world, you can leave it in peace because you will have peace with me.

*Romans 5:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

### **Profession**

What must man do to receive this free gift, to have this peace with God? Recognize, Repent, and Receive.

### **Recognize**

First recognize that you have broken His Law, no excuses, throw yourself on the mercy of the court.

*Romans 3:23 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

### **Repent**

Secondly you must be willing to repent, that means change direction. You cannot say Jesus save me, and go on and live like you were before, and continue to break His Holy Law.

*Luke 13:3 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.

### **Receive**

And thirdly, you must receive Him, you must ask Him to come into your life and forgive you of your sins:

*Romans 10:9–11 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. <sup>11</sup> For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

### **Set Sail / Depart in Peace**

If you have not done that today, then what are you waiting for – Set Sail! You can have peace with God today, and when the time comes to depart, you can know with full faith, you can depart in peace.

*Romans 5:1 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

**Luke 2:33 And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him.**

**Luke 2:34 Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against**

**Luke 2:35 (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."**

### **A Sign and a Sword**

A sign and a sword; when Mary would see the sign (the cross) it would pierce her heart, as the one she birthed and loved, would be pierced.

### **The Sign – The Cross**

The sign would be the cross and the resurrection. The cross says it all.

- Do you wonder if you can be forgiven of your sins, the cross says it all. The sign says forgiven.
- Do you wonder if God truly cares about you and loves you, the sign says it all - loved.
- Do you wonder if there is power in following Jesus, the sign says it all - Empty! It is an empty cross and an empty tomb.

### **It is a Universal Sign**

It is a universal sign, it is the one sign of salvation.

### **John McCain Experiences the True Light of Christmas**

During the 2008 presidential race, John McCain was asked by Time magazine to share his "personal journey of faith." In his article McCain shared a powerful story of something that occurred while he was a prisoner of war in Vietnam. When I was a prisoner of war in Vietnam...my captors would tie my arms behind my back and then loop

the rope around my neck and ankles so that my head was pulled down between my knees. I was often left like that throughout the night. One night a guard came into my cell. He put his finger to his lips signaling for me to be quiet and then loosened my ropes to relieve my pain. The next morning, when his shift ended, the guard returned and retightened the ropes, never saying a word to me. A month or so later, on Christmas Day, I was standing in the dirt courtyard when I saw that same guard approach me. He walked up and stood silently next to me, not looking or smiling at me. Then he used his sandaled foot to draw a cross in the dirt. We stood wordlessly looking at the cross, remembering the true light of Christmas, even in the darkness of a Vietnamese prison camp.

John McCain, "A Light amid the Darkness," Time magazine (8-18-08), p. 40; submitted by Kevin Miller, executive vice president, Christianity Today International

### **Some a Sign of Peace – Others a Piercing**

For some it will be the sign of peace with God, but for others it will be a sign that pierces them, a call to turn from their sins, and follow after the word and ways of God, and some will say ‘we will not have this man rule over us’, and Jesus and the cross will become a stumbling block to them:

**Luke 19:14 (NKJV)** <sup>14</sup> *But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We will not have this man to reign over us.’*

### **Anna’s Testimony**

**Luke 2:36** Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity;

**Luke 2:37** and this woman was a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.

**Luke 2:38** And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

### **Comparison of 1<sup>st</sup> Trip to Jerusalem to the Last**

Look at the comparison of Jesus’ first trip to Jerusalem (here) and His last trip to Jerusalem (the cross).

### **God moving the World – It was Easy to get Anna There**

God moving the world - Anna at temple why? Well this one is much easier than all of them, because that is what Anna did, she was at the Temple day and night. It was no problem getting Anna and Simeon to the Temple, because that was their life, as just and devout people who were seeking after the things of the Lord. Christians it is much easier for us to see and be a part of the things God is doing, when we put ourselves in the path and places we know He is already moving.

### **105 years Old**

If Anna was married at 14, married for 7 years, and now widowed for 84, that makes her about 105 years old.

### **Anna Prayed / Anna Looked / Anna Talked**

After losing her husband, Anna could have become bitter. Instead, she became better and blessed. Rather than simply becoming old and fatigued, she kept about her such a high degree of vitality and spirituality that she was chosen singularly of all women to be the prophetess who recognized Jesus as Messiah. Why? I believe the text gives us three reasons....

1. Anna prayed to the Lord. She didn’t give herself over to bemoaning her loss. Rather, she said, “I’m going to use my single state as an opportunity to give myself to God completely and wholeheartedly.”
2. Anna looked for the Lord. Like Simeon, she lived in the anticipation of the coming Messiah.
3. Anna talked about the Lord. Not only did she worship like Simeon, but she spoke of Him to all that looked for redemption. So, too, if I am truly worshiping, I cannot help but witness and talk to people about the Lord.

### **She has seen the Rescuer / Depart in Peace**

She has now seen the Rescuer of Israel, the one she prayed for night and day, and now she too can “Depart in Peace”.

### **Great Passage**

Wow, another great chapter of the Bible (and we haven’t even finished up chapter 2).

## *Jesus as a Youth – the Power of Submission* (2:39-52)

### **Picking Up**

We pick up our study here in verse 39. We have seen the birth of Jesus, last week we studied day 8 of His life as he was circumcised according to the Law of God, then we moved on to day 40 in His life as He was dedicated at the Temple, and we saw two precious saints of God (Simeon and Anna) come and pronounce prophecy, blessings, and worship upon Him. And now, we pick up here still at day 40 as Jesus and family head back home to Nazareth. Doctor Luke writes this letter to us, so that “we may know” as that is the whole purpose of this letter, so that we may know with certainty the things of God, and how they are examples and instructions to us. In today’s passage, we will see a mighty example, and a powerful illustration and instruction, on “submission”, and we will see that when we submit (especially in the hard things) God will do mighty, powerful and great things in us and those in our family.

*Luke 1:4 (NKJV) <sup>4</sup> that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.*

### **Jesus Returns to Nazareth**

**Luke 2:39** So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth.

### **Hardest thing to do – Go Home**

Sometimes one of the hardest things for a Christian is going home. If you will imagine with me for a moment, imagine what it is like for Joseph and Mary having to go back home to Nazareth. In Jerusalem nobody knew their name or their past. In Jerusalem they are met and greeted by two precious people of God (Simeon and Anna). Simeon recognizes the Babe in their arms as the Promised Messiah, the One sent from God, the One who would be King of the earth, and the One who is King of the Universe. Anna recognizes Him too, she breaks forth into praise and thanksgiving right there in front of Mary and Joseph, and then it says she goes out and tells all the Messiah has come, I’ve seen Him, He is in the arms of that 14 year old girl, she has been chosen to birth the One who will redeem us of our sins.

### **Encouragement from Anna & Simeon**

Oh the encouragement Joseph and Mary received from Simeon and Anna; angelic beings spoke to them, then they hear what a host of angelic beings proclaimed to the shepherds, but today in Jerusalem flesh and bones speak to them, someone they can relate to comes and encourages them. These two precious people of God comfort and encourage them; and recognizes who they are, and all that God has done, and is doing, and will do in their lives – as they have been chosen by God with this great honor to carry the Messiah, the Redeemer of all mankind.

### **Back to Nazareth – No Warm Welcome There**

But now it is time to head back to Nazareth; they will not be greeted with open arms, they will not have men and woman of God coming to them to encourage them and comfort them. Nobody will run to them to lift the Babe from their arms and say “my eyes have seen the salvation of Israel”. No they will return to Nazareth and be looked down upon, no they will return to Nazareth and hear the whispers of being a harlot, no they will return to Nazareth and watch people not turn to them, but away from them, they will see the stares in the market place, and the condescending looks of others upon.

### **The Place I was – Was so Warm**

Sometimes one of the hardest things for a Christian is going home. Oh the place I was (I use to live), was so wonderful, it was so warm, it was so encouraging, it was so comforting; but now I go home and all those things seem absent, and things seem so cold. Sometimes one of the hardest things for a Christian is going home. We don’t give Joseph and Mary enough honor for going back to Nazareth; if I was them I would have stayed in Jerusalem or moved up to Galilee, I would have went anywhere but Nazareth (where the people knew me). But they came back to Nazareth clearly because that is where God called them and told them to go so that God’s Divine will would be done (Matthew 2:23). God was doing something greater than providing them a place to live and work, God was arranging the world so that His Gospel would go forth (for if Jesus didn’t live in Nazareth, wasn’t called a Nazarene,

then He could be the Messiah, for the Messiah had to fulfill all 300 prophecies exactly, and 299 of 300, would nullify Him from being the Messiah.

*Matthew 2:23 (NKJV)*<sup>23</sup> *And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene."*

### **Where has God Called you? / Then Live There Wholly**

Christian, where has God called you to live? Then live there and live your whole life set apart to Him while you are there. When He calls you to another place then go there and live unto Him there also. But live in that place of wishing you were somewhere else, although you are physically present, you are spiritually and emotionally absent. I remember when I moved into this area 15 years ago, I left a wonderful church family and all my friends, but I know God had called me to come here. When I got here He plugged me into a Calvary Chapel about 45 minutes from here. But even though I knew I was called here I found myself saving my money to fly back to Florida for conferences, long weekends, and vacations. I found myself doing all my mission trips out of the Calvary Chapel in Florida. God blessed all of it, my missions and returns back, but then He clearly spoke to me one day and He said something in the nature of "Ray, this is your home now (Maryland), start to live here. It was a wonderful word because as much as I missed where I once was, once I started to live here, I started to impact here – because even though I was physically present here, I had been emotionally and spiritually absent, and thus I was making no impact on the very place I lived. But once I decided to live here in Maryland, and live my whole life set apart to the place I lived, oh it was wonderful and it became powerful as I began to impact the people around me, because now I had a heart for them because God changed my whole heart to see them, and reach out to them, saved and unsaved.

### **Live where Called – God will do Exceedingly Abundant**

Live where God called you to live, and be all there, and God will do exceedingly abundant anything you could ever imagine if you do, as we will see in our passage today.

### **Youth**

And youth, so often the thoughts are if I can only get out of this place. Oh I can't wait to leave this stinking town, get away from these parents of mine, for when I get out and away, then I am really going to live. Youth look at verse 40 and see what will happen if you will submit to where the Lord has you to live, and to who He pick as your parents.

### **Luke 2:40 And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.**

#### **Nazareth not Known for Producing Great People**

Can anything good come out of Nazareth? Nazareth wasn't known for its fertile ground of producing great people, as is indicated in John 1:46; but if you will live where God calls you to live, and live dedicate and devoted to Him, you will find three things growing in your life, you will grow stronger in spirit, you grow in your wisdom, and you will grow in the grace of God in your life. Wow those are three powerful attributes to grow in, and imagine your life filled with those things! Christian live where God calls you to live, and be all there while you are there!

*John 1:46 (NKJV)*<sup>6</sup> *And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."*

#### **First Time Grace used in NT**

By Divine design, the word "grace" is first used in the New Testament here in the Book of Luke. Grace means favor, sweetness, loveliness, and affection (just to name a few). Grasp that, because that means the word grace (Greek word – charis) wasn't used in all of Matthew (28 chapters) or Mark (16 chapters), which went through all the teachings of Christ, including the Sermon on the Mount, all the way to the Cross, the Death, the Burial, and the Resurrection, and the Commission to "go forth and proclaim the good news" (the message of grace is there) but the word grace (charis) is not used until the Book of Luke. First when the angel appears to Mary to announce she has been chosen, and now this second time here in this passage (it will be used several more times in the Book of Luke – and 150+ more times throughout the NT – the very last use of the word in the NT is the last verse of the Bible). But how interesting that it is first used with a 14 year old teenage girl who submits herself in obedience to the will of the Lord, and secondly here to Jesus as a child. Grace came upon youth willing to submit to all God had planned and was doing in their lives, the grace (favor) of God came through obedience and submission.

*Luke 1:30 (NKJV)*<sup>30</sup> *Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God."*

*Luke 2:40 (NKJV) <sup>40</sup> And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.*

*Luke 2:51–52 (NKJV) <sup>51</sup> Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. <sup>52</sup> And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.*

*Revelation 22:21 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*

### **Youth – God Choose where to Live – Who Parents Are**

So Youth, just remember, just as God the Father choose where Jesus would live, He chooses for you where to live (even that place with all its faults). Mary and Joseph were chosen to raise Jesus, so too has He picked your parents for your life too. He will use who He has picked, to shape you and mold you into who He desires you to be (even through all the faults of your parents). God will choose who your parents are and where you will live, and if you will allow Him, He will use the people and the place, to grow strong in the spirit, to fill you with wisdom, and to fill you with His grace. Submit to His will, be obedient to where He has you and who He has you with, and you will experience abundant grace (favor) of the Lord; just like Mary and Jesus did.

### **Promised Blessing – 10 Commandments**

Only one of the Ten Commandments comes with a promised blessing, and that is children honor and obey your parents. And the wording of “long upon the land” means to yield substance, to be fruitful”. Children do you want a “fruitful life, one filled with substance”, honor and obey your parents.

*Exodus 20:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.*

### **Jesus Celebrates the Passover**

**Luke 2:41 His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover.**

#### **Passover – to Pass Over / Exodus**

Passover was an annual Feast in Jerusalem commemorating and celebrating how God delivered the children of Israel out of the bondage and slavery of Egypt, and how on the final night they sprinkled the blood of a lamb over the doors of their home, and the angel of death “pass-over” each home that had the blood of the lamb covering, but struck the first born of each home that did not. The Egyptians did not, and thus that final plague was the decisive plague that Pharaoh said go, leave this land. All this was a picture of a still yet promise, a picture of the Messiah who would be the blood over the door of a man’s heart, and when the angel of death sees the blood, it cannot touch the person, and passes over. So each year Jesus and family went to celebrate this Feast. Only the males (over the age of 13) were required by the Law to attend, but here we see that went as a family every year.

#### **Every year – His Parents Went / Do a Family Trip**

I love this verse, in that it says “every year” HIS PARENTS went to Jerusalem. We not only see this family of modest means being faithful to the Law of God, but we see also where their priorities were. This is a family of modest means, yet every year they took that week off from work, incurred the expense to travel and eat in Jerusalem, to celebrate the Feast of Passover. Ah parents I think vacations to the beach are wonderful, Disney World and Sea World too, but I think it no coincidence that verse 40 flows right into verse 41. One of the reasons that Jesus became strong in the spirit and grew in wisdom and the grace of God was because they went to celebrate and experience the Feast of the Passover. We try to make it our aim as a family to do things as a family (beyond just church) that we can do something that is totally dedicated and set-apart for the things of the Lord. This same principal would apply to married couple who don’t have children also. There is a power in the dynamic of a family just solely doing something that is separated from the world, and totally dedicated and directed towards spiritual things. Go on a mission trip together, go to the feeding ministry together, go help at the food bank together, go do something together and spend the time together cultivating the spiritual things, explain to them why you are doing it, pray leading up to doing it, pray after doing it, and then have each one share about their experience and what they saw. I know you teenagers reach an age an you only want to hang out with your friends, hanging with the parents is so boring and lame because they are so out of touch you say – but you heed this word for your life, you embrace the family times of ministry and spiritual things, you will experience strength and growth beyond your understanding.

**Luke 2:42 And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast.**

#### **From 40 days to 12 Years Old / Silent Years**

Well we just went from the age of 40 days, to the age of 12 years old, and then in about 10 verses (gets us into chapter 3), we will jump about 18 more years. This is known as the silent years, and what all happened in Jesus' life is not written. We do know that Jesus will go and live in Egypt for a short period (when Herod seeks to kill all the male children 2 years and younger, but eventually they return to Nazareth again).

### **We do Know**

They call it the silent years, but we really do know what Jesus was doing, He was growing in the spirit, in wisdom, and in grace. He was going to the Passover celebration every year, and every day in His home He was being obedient to His parents.

### **Psalm 69**

Although nothing is written about events, I do believe we have some insight into what it was like for Him as He grew up, and we can gain that insight from Psalm 69, which next to Psalm 22 is the most quote Psalm in the New Testament, it is a messianic psalm, meaning it is pertaining to Jesus the Messiah. This Psalm is called the "Psalm of the Suffering One".

**Psalm 69:7–12 (NKJV)** <sup>7</sup> Because for Your sake I have borne reproach; Shame has covered my face. <sup>8</sup> I have become a stranger to my brothers, And an alien to my mother's children; <sup>9</sup> Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me. <sup>10</sup> When I wept *and chastened* my soul with fasting, That became my reproach. <sup>11</sup> I also made sackcloth my garment; I became a byword to them. <sup>12</sup> Those who sit in the gate speak against me, And I *am* the song of the drunkards.

### **Jesus was a Stranger / Song of the Drunks**

Verse 8 says that Jesus was an alien (stranger) to his brothers and sisters (note it says His "mother's children" – keeping perfect with the virgin birth). I don't see this verse speaking of this wonderful relationship that He had with his brothers and sisters, and thus there may have been continual tension and resentment towards Jesus growing up. Verse 12 says those who sat in the gate (that would be business men and town leaders) spoke against Him, and read this, the drunks would sing songs about Him, they made little ditties about Him and Mary. Jesus' life growing up in Nazareth does not appear to be a wonderful childhood.

### **Called Illegitimate / Bore the Shame to make me a Son**

He was raised in a town where he was called illegitimate (a tag that He would carry everywhere He went – John 8:41) in order that I might be a legitimate son of God. The Son of God bore that for me on the cross, He paid the penalty for my sins, and we have no idea what He endured for 33 years in order that we might have a clear title as a legitimate son of God. This is who we are studying to know today, this is who we are celebrating today, the One who would bear the reproaches and slander of man, so that we might become God's children.

**John 8:41 (NKJV)** <sup>41</sup> You do the deeds of your father." Then they said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God."

**Galatians 3:26 (NKJV)** <sup>26</sup> For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

**Galatians 4:7 (NKJV)** <sup>7</sup> Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

**1 John 3:1 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

**Luke 2:43 When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know it;**

**Luke 2:44 but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day's journey, and sought Him among their relatives and acquaintances.**

**Luke 2:45 So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him.**

**Luke 2:46 Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions.**

### **3 Obligatory Feasts**

There were three obligatory feasts for all males 13 years and older: Feast of Unleavened Bread (thus, including Passover); Pentecost; and Tabernacles (Ex 23:14-17; 34:23; Deut 16:16). This would be precedent to, as a 13-year-old, officially becoming son of the commandment," a full member of the synagogue, (Mishna, Niddah 5:6); similar to the modern custom of the bar mitzvah.

### **Travel as a Community**

When people traveled to the festivals in Jerusalem, they would do so as a community en masse, with the women and children leading the way in order that none would be left behind. Thinking Jesus was traveling with His cousins or other members of the extended family, Mary and Joseph were unaware He had remained in Jerusalem.

### **Lost the Messiah**

Oh no, we lost the Messiah.

### **Look for Self in Scripture / We can move on without Jesus**

One of the things I see in this story, as I look for Jesus and I look for myself, is that we too can be like this. Be like this in that I mean we can lose track of Jesus, we can start moving on our way, going in a certain direction, and not realize that Jesus is not with us, He isn't going the same direction we are. Christian, before we head out, before we start off, we need to always make sure we are hand-in-hand with Jesus. We just assume because we start off doing something that He is with us, and He is in it, but we can get miles down the road on the venture of ours, and find out He isn't with us. In fact this journey has caused us to lose Him.

### **We can leave Him at Church/Temple**

And secondly, as equally sad and concerning, is how often we leave Jesus at the Temple. In that I mean we come to church, we worship, we celebrate, we have an experience with Him, and then we leave Him not to see Him again until we return to the Temple. This seems to be American Christianity now, as people meet with Him once a week (or a couple times a month), and then go on their way leaving Him behind until they return again.

### **When Feel Out of Touch – Go back where last Saw Him**

*Verse 45 - they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him -* When you feel out of touch with Jesus, when you wonder where He is, it's always a good idea to do what Mary and Joseph did: Go back to the place where you saw Him last. "Remember from whence thou art fallen," Jesus would say to the church at Ephesus. "Repent and do your first works again" (see Revelation 2:5). In other words, when did you most clearly perceive the presence of Jesus? What were you doing? Were you up early in the morning? Was Bible study a priority? Were you worshiping passionately? What were you doing when you were really in touch with Jesus? Go back and do it again.

*Revelation 2:4-5 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. <sup>5</sup> Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.

**Luke 2:46 Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions.**

**Luke 2:47 And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.**

**Luke 2:48 So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously."**

**Luke 2:49 And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"**

**Luke 2:50 But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them.**

### **Jesus Dialoging with Scholars**

What is going on here is a dialogue of Jesus age 12, and these religious leaders (rabbis, theologians, and scholars). They are asking Jesus questions and He is answering, and Jesus is asking questions and they are answering. From a 12 year old!

### **Astonished**

*Verse 47 - "...astonished":* evxi,sthmi existemi: to throw out of position, thus, to amaze, to astonish, throw into wonderment; to astounded; to be out of one's mind, besides one's self. Luke uses this same word of how people responded when they say the miracles of Jesus. They are blown away by His questions and answers, at the same degree they are blown away by His miracles years later. From a 12 year old!

*Luke 8:54–56 (NKJV)* <sup>54</sup> But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, “Little girl, arise.” <sup>55</sup> Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat. <sup>56</sup> And her parents were astonished, but He charged them to tell no one what had happened.

*Luke 24:21–23 (NKJV)* <sup>21</sup> But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. <sup>22</sup> Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. <sup>23</sup> When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive.

### **Amazed**

*Verse 48 - “...amazed”*: evkplh,ssw ekplessso: expel by a blow, drive out or away; commonly, to strike with panic, shock, astonish; to be struck with amazement, astonished, amazed.

### **Joseph not the father**

*Verse 48 – Your father and I ...* - Because Mary referred to Joseph as His father, Jesus will give a reminder to His mother in verse 49 who His Father really is.

### **The Apprenticeship**

Looking into the Jewish culture of that time a child was considered to be under his mother’s care until the age of twelve, and then at twelve, take on the apprenticeship of his father, the picking up of the family business. Here Jesus is picking up His Father’s business, the family business, He is learning and growing in the family business, the preaching and teaching of the heart of God.

### **Jesus’ 1<sup>st</sup> Recorded Words / His MUSTs**

*Verse 49* - Jesus’ very first recorded words in all of Scripture, “I must be about My Father’s business”. The word “must” appears several more times in Luke’s Gospel—in chapter 4, when Jesus said, “I must preach... to other cities also,” and in chapter 9, when He said, “The Son of man must suffer many things... and be slain.” There are lots of options in life. But for Jesus, look at His musts: His Father’s business, preaching the Good News, seeking out men, and offering Himself on the Cross.

*Luke 4:42–44 (NKJV)* <sup>42</sup> Now when it was day, He departed and went into a deserted place. And the crowd sought Him and came to Him, and tried to keep Him from leaving them; <sup>43</sup> but He said to them, “I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent.” <sup>44</sup> And He was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.

*Luke 9:22 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> saying, “The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.”

*Luke 19:5 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, “Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.”

### **Christian – What is your Top Musts**

Christian, can I ask you to ask yourself, what are your top 3 “musts” in your life; what three things do you find yourself saying, “I must do”? It is a good question, for the answer will show you where you are in your relationship to the Lord.

### **Age 12 He knew His Purpose – Do you Know Yours**

By the time Jesus was 12 years old, He understood His mission on earth. Do you understand what your mission on earth is? Youth, by the time Jesus was twelve, He understood what His purpose and mission in life was. You are old enough to understand your purpose and mission on this earth is (and I am not talking about what your career will be, where you will go to school, etc, etc) but that are called to live for Him! Totally!

### **Jesus Grows in Wisdom**

**Luke 2:51** Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart.

**Luke 2:52** And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

### **Last record of Joseph / Single Parents**

This is our last record of Joseph in the Scriptures, it appears that Joseph dies and passes off the scene. Mary is left to raise Jesus and the rest of the siblings. You single mothers, split families, God knows what you are going

through, He knows the burdens and the trials of single parenting, and He can relate to you and He can speak to you wisdom of how to raise a godly child in a single parent home.

### **Youth of Single Homes**

You youth who grew up in a single home, or a split home, and maybe you felt your childhood wasn't all that it should have been – Jesus understands you, and He understands what you are going through, He can relate to you, and He can speak to you and walk with you and comfort you in and through it, so cast all your cares upon Him because He cares for you.

*1 Peter 5:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.*

### **He was Subject – Formula for Wisdom and Grace / No Excuse or Exceptions – Jesus is the Example**

*Verse 51 – and He was subject to them* – and here we see Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and found favor (there is that word again for “grace”). We see a formula for you youth on how to grow in wisdom and grace, and that is through submission to your parents. Jesus was God, knew more than them at the age of twelve, but even still He submitted Himself to imperfect parents. Youth and teens, you have no exceptions, Jesus is your example, and that is you are called and required to be submissive to your parents (even as imperfect as they are). Jesus was subject to His parents because He was first and foremost subject to His Heavenly Father, and He had to be about His Father's business, and that business was being faithful to the Law, and part of that Law said to honor your mother and father.

*Exodus 20:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.*

### **When does that End / When you Leave**

Well when does that end? When you leave. In Ephesian 6 it says children obey your parents, but a key to understanding when a child is no longer considered a child is back in Ephesians 5. It is when a child “leaves” their parent, that they are their own individual. When they leave, they take on all personal responsibility of themselves. They have separated themselves from their parents, and are stepping forth saying I take the responsibility for myself from here. That means spiritually and physically. So youth, young adults, when you are ready to “leave” and take on full responsibility, then that is when you can stop submitting to your parents, for from that point on you will be in that place where you fully look to and trust the Lord for every provision and area of your life. Of course you would do well to keep seeking the wisdom and experience of your parents, and you must always give them the honor and respect they deserve. So, when you leave, you can choose whether to obey your parent's words, but until you leave, you are to obey. But I am mature now, I drive, I should be able to make my own decisions (really – who is paying your car insurance). I think I can set my own time of when I come and go (really – who is paying the mortgage or rent for that home you want to come and go freely from). I am in college now, I am not a kid (really – who is helping you pay for your college). The point is, you are not as “adult” as you think you are, because you still are dependent on your parents. Until you leave, subject yourself to your parents, and you will find yourself growing in wisdom and grace of the Lord.

*Ephesians 5:30–6:3 (NKJV) <sup>30</sup> For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. <sup>31</sup> “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” <sup>32</sup> This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. <sup>33</sup> Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. <sup>1</sup> Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. <sup>2</sup> “Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise: <sup>3</sup> “that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.”*

### **Parents how do we raise godly Kids**

Parents, how do we raise our kids? We could do a 13 week series on parenting, but today I leave you with just a word of power from the Scriptures. Last week we were trying to make a determination on whether to home school our youngest son, or keep him in the public school. As I was doing my morning devotions, as I was going through the book of Judges at that time, and if you recall the story of Samson that before he was born an angel appeared to his parents, and they said and how do you want us to raise him, what is your plan and future for him. I was like yes, God is going to answer me right here in his word, because I am asking the same thing. He did answer, but not as I expected Him to. In the story the angel (who I believe was none other than the Lord Himself), didn't say do this and do that at (He would later), but He answered them and said, eat nothing from the vine, not drink wine, and eat anything unclean. The illustrations of those two represent (wine – the joys and indulgences of the world) and (eat unclean – don't consume the unclean things of the world). The Lord's first answer on how to raise a godly child, is for the parent to first be godly, to not be consumed by the things of the world, and being obedient to keep oneself pure

before the Lord. We saw two godly examples last week as we looked at Simeon and Anna. So, God spoke to me, He speaks to us through that passage, parents here is the first thing I want you to do in your child rearing, be holy, be set apart, be just, be dedicated to Me. Why, because when we are, we set for them living examples, and secondly when we are set apart from the world and dedicated directly on to Him, we will have ears to hear, and a teachable and lead able spirit to counsel and guide them.

*Judges 13:12–14 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> Manoah said, "Now let Your words come to pass! What will be the boy's rule of life, and his work?" <sup>13</sup> So the Angel of the LORD said to Manoah, "Of all that I said to the woman let her be careful. <sup>14</sup> She may not eat anything that comes from the vine, nor may she drink wine or similar drink, nor eat anything unclean. All that I commanded her let her observe."

## There is great power in submission!

# Luke 3

## The Voice in the Wilderness (3:1-20)

### Introduction to the Passage and Prayer

Chapter 3 is about 18 years after chapter 2 ended. John and Jesus are both 30, and we will see John's ministry in full-bloom here in this chapter, and we will see Jesus coming to be baptized, and the beginning of His public life before man, and from here a 3.5 year march to the cross for the redemption of your sin, and my sin. Well John is quite an interesting man, and quite a story. In our passage today I believe God has something for everyone;

- for those who are anxious about what tomorrow holds, He will calm you,
- for those who are bound by religion, He will free you,
- for those who are hungering for more, He will fill you,
- for those who want to go deeper in Him, He will empower you.

Let's pick it in chapter 3, verse 1.

### *The Ministry of John the Baptist*

**Luke 3:1** Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene,

**Luke 3:2** while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests, the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

### 7 People

Seven people are mentioned, which all help us to precisely date the beginning of Jesus' ministry.

1. Tiberius ruled over the Roman Empire from a.d. 14 - a.d. 37. He was a clever but cruel, licentious, evil man. The first year of Jesus' ministry was the 15<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Tiberius, a.d. 29.
2. Pontius Pilate was appointed governor of Judea in a.d. 26 and ruled to a.d. 36. His name has been found on a plaque in Caesarea.
3. Herod Antipas ruled over Galilee from the city of Tiberius from 4 b.c. - a.d. 39. He was the one who would imprison John the Baptist.
4. Herod's brother Philip ruled to the east of the Jordan from 4 b.c. - a.d. 34. His capital was at Caesarea Philippi.
5. Little is known about Lysanias who ruled in Abilene, northwest of Damascus.
6. Annas was the high priest from a.d. 6 – a.d. 15, but was deposed by the Roman authorities.
7. Caiaphas served from a.d. 18 – 36 as a political appointee of Rome.

### Time Stamp / 483 Years

The importance of these names is to "time-stamp" when Jesus' public ministry began. It will give a starting point for us to count how many Passover's He attended, because there is a prophecy all the way back in Daniel chapter 9 that stated that the Messiah would come into Jerusalem (but be cutoff – killed) exactly 483 years (173,880 day) to the day – And Jesus did, down to the vary day (173,880 day). (Supplemental Notes are at the end of these notes)

### Your God will be Right on Time

Your God will always be right on time – down to the day! You may say and feel like you have been waiting 483 years, but let your heart know today that your God will be on time, right on time, every time, exactly as He plans it to be for your life. Single? God will bring that mate right at His perfect time. Waiting for Him to show or reveal something to you? God will reveal it at the exact perfect time. Waiting for Him to provide or break through to something you need? He will not only provide it right on time, but in the right amount. Wait on the Lord precious saint.

*Psalm 37:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.*

### **John about 30 / 30 in Wilderness / Desolate & Barren – Yet God Came / When Word comes – God comes**

*Verse 2 - the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.* - John was in the wilderness. In verse 23 we will read that Jesus begins His public ministry at the age of 30, thus since John and Jesus were born only about 6 months apart, John then is about the age of 30 also. Thirty years, out in the wilderness, off the beaten path, out of the mainstream of the world, desolate and barren.....yet God came to John, right on time I might add. The Word is God (John 1:14), and thus when the word comes, God comes, and God came to John out in the middle of nowhere. Christian, God knows right where you are, His eyes are upon you right where you are, and although you may feel you are in no-mans-land, you are distant and far away, God knows exactly where you are. God will come to you in that place and He will speak to you in that place, and see here in the verse to come, He has a purpose for having you in that place. Wait on Him, and you will hear and see. We just read of 7 powerful people in the land, but God didn't come to speak to o them, He came and spoke to John. God speaks to the people who are listening to His voice, who have a heart to meet and hear from Him.

*Psalm 37:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.*

### **John's Parents probably Dead / John is Non-typical / Parents God will Provide your Kids / You Just**

Considering that John's parents were in their eighties when he was born, it is most likely that they have passed away. We know from Matthew's account that John was a pretty quirky guy, totally different from the typical person, we read he clothed himself in camel's hair (not the typical clothing of that culture), and he ate locust and wild honey. Locust, maybe the wild honey made them taste better, I don't think I could get past the crunching sound. People here in Maryland eat soft crabs (legs and all), and the thought of that makes me shiver. So John isn't your typical person, and I relate to his parents on what their thoughts may have been about his future. We know he is the forerunner of the Messiah, but how will he fare and be provided for when we die. I speak to every parent, I speak to every parent with a special needs child in this place today, I speak to every person who may have anxiety about yourself personally and how will you fare in the years to come.....God will see them and us through. We must trust that God knows exactly where our children are, and where we are, and that God will provide for them, and God has a plan and purpose for them. Parents, your responsible is today (right now), and that is for you to be just and devout before the Lord, and to raise your child in the ways of the Lord.

*Matthew 3:4 (NKJV) <sup>4</sup> Now John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey.*

### **Story of Young Man in India**

God will provide and protect, I know so because His love for your child is greater and deeper than even yours, it is not even comparable, and consider how great that is considering the depth of love you have for your child. I heard a story on the radio a few weeks ago, and a missionary was telling a story about a young man in (I think) India. The young man (maybe 16 or so) heard the Gospel, responded by giving his life to Christ. He was given a Bible which put him at great risk because if anyone found him reading it, he could face death for betraying the god of their land. So this young man hid the bible in a floorboard of the home, and when everyone had gone to sleep at night he would get the bible out and read it, and then put it back before anyone awoke. Well one day his father awoke and saw him reading that bible, and the dad took the bible and burned it. He told his son to renounce Jesus, but the son refused, and so the battle and tension in the home was on, it continued for about two weeks, and finally after one last ultimatum, the father said to the son then you must leave. Several months' later word had come to the son that his father was gravely ill, and that he was at death's door. The son sent word to the family, may I please come to see my father, and it was granted. As they talked the son asked the father, dad why didn't you kill me, why did you only throw me out? And the father replied, I did try to kill you, for three days straight I put arsenic in your food, and for three days straight I sat waiting for you to die before my eyes, each day I put more than the day before, and each day

you ate and walked away, and it was then that I realized it would not be possible to kill you, and my only other option was to throw you out of my house. The fate of the father is not known, but the witness of God was sure.

### **This is the Same God who is Looking over You and Your Child**

This is the same God that loves you child, is looking over your children, and this is the same God that loves you. Until He says “come home”, He will provide for you, care for you, and use you for His glory.

**Luke 3:3 And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins,**

### **Message of Repentance – Not Confession**

That word that had come to John in the wilderness was the message of repentance, of the turning away from sin, and turning to God. Repentance means to turn away from. The message hasn't changed in 2,000 years. Notice it wasn't a message of confession, but a message of repentance. Today's modern gospel is afraid to upset people, so they just say confess your sins and you will be saved, and people like that because they feel they say a prayer they are set for heaven, but they don't have to repent or change how they are living, what a deal they feel. John's message was repentance, and Jesus' first words of His public ministry was the same, repent.

*Matthew 4:17 (NKJV) <sup>17</sup> From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”*

**Luke 3:4 as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying: “The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.**

**Luke 3:5 Every valley shall be filled And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough ways smooth;**

**Luke 3:6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’ ”**

### **Isaiah 40**

This is what was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, coming to pass right on time:

*Isaiah 40:3–5 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup> The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God. <sup>4</sup> Every valley shall be exalted And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough places smooth; <sup>5</sup> The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see it together; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”*

### **Prepare the Way – Landscape the Roads**

Prepare the way of the Lord (of the King) – when a city in that day knew the King was coming to visit, they would go out for the couple miles of road leading into the city, the road that the king would be coming in on, and they would make it straight it as smooth and straight as possible, they would landscape and beautify landscape, and clear out the trash.

### **We get to tell People – The King is Coming**

Jesus said there was no greater prophet, but still anyone in the Kingdom of God is greater than John (that is us). That is because we get to proclaim this great news, we get to tell people this message of hope, that there is a King coming, He is coming to you personally, prepare the way of your heart to receive Him. What a glorious calling we have.

*Luke 7:28 (NKJV) <sup>28</sup> For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.”*

**Luke 3:7 Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, “Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?**

**Luke 3:8 Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.**

**Luke 3:9 And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”**

### **Matthew's Account – Religious Leaders**

Matthew's account gives us the details that John called the religious leaders who had come out to see what he was up to, because they heard all the people coming out to him, and they got all worried their little religious kingdom was being threatened, that is who John called the brood of vipers.

**Matthew 3:7 (NKJV)** <sup>7</sup> *But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"*

### **These men Playing Religious Games**

These men were playing religion; they were not entering into a relationship with God. God hates it when people play religion. We see John here being hard and harsh, and Jesus would do the same. John will say don't think because you are descendants of Abraham, claim your lineage, claim who you know that you are right with God. Jesus would say the same.

**John 8:39 (NKJV)** <sup>39</sup> *They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham."*

**John 8:44 (NKJV)** <sup>44</sup> *You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.*

### **John Portrayed as Fanatic / Name – Gracious / Facing them with their Sin / Truth set Free – Not Silence**

John is always portrayed as some fanatic. I remember one movie I watched and when they reenacted this scene they had John like some madman, grab all these religious men and force-dunking them, and he grab the next one and slam him under, and then grab another slam his under, and the guys arms would be flailing all around. No, no, John's name means gracious. John is facing them with their sin, he isn't shying away from the truth that will set them free. Their religion is leading them to hell, and everyone else they are involved with too. John is graciously giving them the truth for life, and not giving them the silence unto death, and by that I mean he has judged them as damned and refuses to share the truth with them that will set them free. If John was brash and harsh, mean and unloving, he would had just remained silent and let them die in their sin.

### **Vipers – Poisonous Snakes / Claims based on Family & Church / Came not with Heart – but Hate**

Brood means "offspring's", vipers is a "poisonous snake". You offspring's of poisonous snakes, your religion keeps reproducing itself, and your religion is poisonous, your religion leads to death. These men were claiming their righteousness based on who their parents, where they went temple (church), their religious jargon, and their pious acts, but deep down they were all phonies. They came out to John the Baptist not bring people with them to hear the good news, but like vipers they came to strike at him, to tear him down, so people would turn from his message, unto theirs.

### **God <> Religion**

God does not equal religion, God hates religion.

### **Luke 3:10 So the people asked him, saying, "What shall we do then?"**

#### **People – Other Onlookers**

The people (could be those who were on lookers and some of these religious men who were convicted by the message).

#### **The response when Person Touched by God's Word**

But when any person has been touched by God word, has seen their sin, and is convicted in heart, the response will always be, "what shall I do?"

**Luke 3:11 He answered and said to them, "He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise."**

**Luke 3:12 Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?"**

**Luke 3:13 And he said to them, "Collect no more than what is appointed for you."**

**Luke 3:14 Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, "And what shall we do?" So he said to them, "Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages."**

## **Response**

John response:

- He who has two tunics, he who has food – John is saying stop thinking about yourself only but think about your neighbor who is in need.
- The Tax Collector – John says quit ripping people off
- The Soldiers – treat all people with respect, fairly, and be content with what God has given you.

## **King is Coming – this how He intends His Kingdom to Be / Reaching Up and Reaching Out**

The King is coming, and this is how He intends His Kingdom to be. His Kingdom flows in love, in respect, and in care of each other. His kingdom is not about living for self, but living for God and for others. His Kingdom is reaching up, and reaching out.

## **God was drawing people to John's Ministry / They knew Something Missing**

God was drawing people to John's ministry. The Spirit was moving upon them, there was something missing in their lives and they knew it. They knew religion wasn't the answer or else they would have went to the Temple rather than hike to the wilderness. There was something longing in their hearts, being self-seeking wasn't working for them, having two tunics in the garage, and a fat bank account still left them empty. For some the striving to make more and more money left them broke, even though they were rich. Others had the respect, the recognition, the fear of man, but they wondered why they were still empty inside.

## **How about You Today?**

How about you today? Could that describe you? Then today prepare the way of the Lord into your heart, invite Him, and then live for Him.

**Luke 3:15 Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not,**

**Luke 3:16 John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.**

**Luke 3:17 His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire."**

**Luke 3:18 And with many other exhortations he preached to the people.**

## **John growing in Popularity / But knew Who was Coming**

John is growing in popularity, people were ready to dub him the Messiah, could have been a dangerous place for John, he could have lived a nice life, been showered with gifts and praises, and gave up eating locust for prime rib, and traded his camel hair in for some nice Egyptian linens, and He could have left the wilderness and moved into a high-rise in Jerusalem. But he didn't because He knew who was coming; he knew Jesus was coming soon. Christian live with the expectancy that Jesus is coming, soon, and all the things of life will fall into their proper place and priority.

## **Baptize with Spirit and Fire / Scary for those not committed their Life**

Jesus was coming John said, and He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire, Now verse 17 is scary for anyone who have not committed their life to Christ and have repented (turned from their sins). Not just a profession, but with repentance also.

## **For the Saved - Purification**

But for us that have committed our lives to Him, this verse is pure freedom and power, as God declares His power to us, in that He will come into our lives with power and fire. He will go through our lives and clear out the chaff, He will burn it away and only leave the fruit.

**Luke 3:19 But Herod the tetrarch, being rebuked by him concerning Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done,**

**Luke 3:20 also added this, above all, that he shut John up in prison.**

### **Not Chronological / But John's Ending**

This verses isn't in chronological order, it is added to say what eventually happens to John the Baptist, and that he ends up in prison for calling sin, sin, as one of the leaders in the region stole his brother's wife, and made her his own, and John calls it like he sees it, and Herod imprisons him for it, and later beheads him.

### **Billy Borden Story**

In 1904 William Borden graduated from a Chicago high school. As heir to the Borden family fortune, he was already wealthy. For his high school graduation present, his parents gave 16-year-old Borden a trip around the world. As the young man traveled through Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, he felt a growing burden for the world's hurting people. Finally, Bill Borden wrote home about his "desire to be a missionary."

One friend expressed disbelief that Bill was "throwing himself away as a missionary."

In response, Borden wrote two words in the back of his Bible: "[No reserves.](#)"

Even though young Borden was wealthy, he arrived on the campus of Yale University in 1905 trying to look like just one more freshman. Very quickly, however, Borden's classmates noticed something unusual about him and it wasn't that he had lots of money. One of them wrote: "He came to college far ahead, spiritually, of any of us. He had already given his heart in full surrender to Christ and had really done it. We who were his classmates learned to lean on him and find in him a strength that was solid as a rock, just because of this settled purpose and consecration."

During his college years, Bill Borden made an entry in his personal journal that defined what his classmates were seeing in him. That entry said simply: "Say 'no' to self and 'yes' to Jesus every time."

Borden's first disappointment at Yale came when the university president spoke in a convocation about the students' need of "having a fixed purpose." After that speech, Borden wrote: "He neglected to say what our purpose should be, and where we should get the ability to persevere and the strength to resist temptations." Surveying the Yale faculty and much of the student body, Borden lamented what he saw as the end result of an empty, humanistic philosophy: moral weakness and sin-ruined lives.

During his first semester at Yale, Borden started something that would transform campus life. One of his friends described how it began: "It was well on in the first term when Bill and I began to pray together in the morning before breakfast. I cannot say positively whose suggestion it was, but I feel sure it must have originated with Bill. We had been meeting only a short time when a third student joined us and soon after a fourth. The time was spent in prayer after a brief reading of Scripture. Bill's handling of Scripture was helpful. . . . He would read to us from the Bible, show us something that God had promised and then proceed to claim the promise with assurance."

Borden's small morning prayer group gave birth to a movement that soon spread across the campus. By the end of his first year, 150 freshman were meeting weekly for Bible study and prayer. By the time Bill Borden was a senior, one thousand of Yale's 1,300 students were meeting in such groups.

Borden made it his habit to seek out the most "incurable" students and try to bring them to salvation. "In his sophomore year we organized Bible study groups and divided up the class of 300 or more, each man interested taking a certain number, so that all might, if possible, be reached. The names were gone over one by one, and the question asked, 'Who will take this person?' When it came to someone thought to be a hard proposition, there would be an ominous pause. Nobody wanted the responsibility. Then Bill's voice would be heard, 'Put him down to me.'"

Borden's outreach ministry was not confined to the Yale campus. He cared about widows and orphans and the disabled. He rescued drunks from the streets of New Haven. To try to rehabilitate them, he founded the Yale Hope Mission. One of Bill Borden's friends wrote that he "might often be found in the lower parts of the city at night, on the street, in a cheap lodging house or some restaurant to which he had taken a poor hungry fellow to feed him, seeking to lead men to Christ."

Borden's missionary call narrowed to the Muslim Kansu people in China. Once he fixed his eyes on that goal, Borden never wavered. He also challenged his classmates to consider missionary service. One of them said of him: "He certainly was one of the strongest characters I have ever known, and he put backbone into the rest of us at college. There was real iron in him, and I always felt he was of the stuff martyrs were made of, and heroic missionaries of more modern times."

Although he was a millionaire, Bill seemed to "realize always that he must be about his Father's business, and not wasting time in the pursuit of amusement." Although Borden refused to join a fraternity, "he did more with his classmates in his senior year than ever before." He presided over the huge student missionary conference held at Yale and served as president of the honor society Phi Beta Kappa.

Upon graduation from Yale, Borden turned down some high-paying job offers. In his Bible, he wrote two more words: "[No retreats.](#)"

William Borden went on to do graduate work at Princeton Seminary in New Jersey. When he finished his studies at Princeton, he sailed for China. Because he was hoping to work with Muslims, he stopped first in Egypt to study Arabic. While there, he contracted spinal meningitis. Within a month, 25-year-old William Borden was dead.

When the news of William Whiting Borden's death was cabled back to the U.S., the story was carried by nearly every American newspaper. "A wave of sorrow went round the world . . . Borden not only gave (away) his wealth, but himself, in a way so joyous and natural that it (seemed) a privilege rather than a sacrifice" wrote Mary Taylor in her introduction to his biography.

Was Borden's untimely death a waste? Not in God's perspective. Prior to his death, Borden had written two more words in his Bible. Underneath the words "No reserves" and "No retreats," he had written: "No regrets."

***No Reserves, No Retreats, No Regrets***

# *Jesus - The Son of God*

## (Luke 3:21-38)

### Baptism in the Jordan River (3:21-22)

#### **Reason for Writing:**

*Luke 1:3-4 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, <sup>4</sup> that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.

#### **Theophilus**

Theophilus means the “friend and lover of God”, and so we have a book written to you personally today. The God of the universe loves you personally, has called you to Himself for a personal and intimate relationship, and has written this book to you so that you may know for certainty all the things about Jesus, and how they apply to you, how they instruct you on how to live, reflect, and enjoy the love of God in your life personally today.

#### **Outline of the Book of Luke:**

##### The Life of Christ (Luke 1-24)

##### **The Prelude to Christ’s Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- Introduction (1:1–4)
- The Birth of Jesus (1:5–2:38)
- The Boyhood of Jesus (2:39–52)
- The Baptism/Temptation of Jesus (3:1–4:13)

##### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- The Commencement of His Ministry (4:14–44)
- The Calling of His Disciples (5:1–6:16)
- The Continuation of His Work (6:17–9:50)

##### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- Samaria (9:51–10:37)
- Bethany and Judea (10:38–13:35)
- Perea (14:1–19:27)

##### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

##### **The Consummation of Christ’s Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

#### **Today’s Passage**

In our passage today we will look at the baptism of Jesus and His lineage. Both the baptism and lineage are foundational for the rest of the book because we will see God the Father is affirming and validating that Jesus is His Son, and has lived a life that qualified Him to be the Lamb of God who could take away the sins of the world – hence He had lived a sinless life up to this point, and His lineage proves He has the right to the Throne of David (a prerequisite to be the King of Israel).

#### **Baptism**

Today we will just focus on verses 21 and 22, the baptism of Jesus. If you have yet to be baptized, then see us after the service and we will set that up for. Whether you have been baptized or not, this study today on baptism is about

what has happened in your heart, that vow you made to your God, where you said I will follow You all my days, I dedicate myself to You, I set my life apart unto You, I live unto You, and I am deeply in love with You. Whether you have or have not been baptized, you can remember that moment right now today, and you can experience fresh and new right now today. It was not the water of the pool or river, but the living waters that washed over you, and made you alive and in love with your God!

*Titus 3:5-7 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup> whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

## **The Baptism of Christ**

**Luke 3:21** When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened.

**Luke 3:22** And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, “You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased.”

### **People were Coming – Religion wasn’t getting it for Them**

*Luke 3:21* When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; - People were coming out to the wilderness, religion wasn’t getting it for them, if religion was the answer they would have went to the Temple in Jerusalem, they would have listened to the speeches of the seasoned and polished religious leaders there at the Temple, but religion and speeches weren’t doing it for them, there was something missing, there was a longing within their heart that could not be filled by religion, and thus they made the trek out to the wilderness to hear the man John the Baptist.

### **Jesus comes after people Baptized / I Am what you have been Missing / That was Me**

Jesus comes on the scene after they were baptized (John 1), after they made their profession of sin and separation unto God. God puts a prompting into the heart of man, something is missing, man begins to ask why am I empty, there has to be more to this life than this, and then when the heart is fertile, He comes and reveals Himself – I am what you have been missing, I am what you are seeking, I can be all that you are desiring (love, acceptance, forgiveness, meaning, and purpose for living). I know for myself after I had it all (so the world said), I kept asking myself then why am I so empty, if this is life, it is a sad thing, and then it was there that I said what about God (but of course it was God calling and drawing me), who is He I asked, what do I mean to Him, and from there I began to read the Bible and saw all that He was and all He is, and all that He thought of me, I saw how my sin separated me from Him, but I saw how much He loved me by giving me His only Son Jesus, and I asked Him into my life to be my Lord and Savior, and in a moment I felt the void and emptiness of my life be filled with Him. That was over twenty years ago, and He has and is, my all-in-all.

*John 1:29-33 (NKJV)* <sup>29</sup> The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! <sup>30</sup> This is He of whom I said, ‘After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.’ <sup>31</sup> I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water.” <sup>32</sup> And John bore witness, saying, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. <sup>33</sup> I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’”

### **What is Baptism / Baptism is Making a Vow / Statement before the World and God / Does not Save**

What is baptism? Baptism is making a vow before God, and a statement to the world that is watching. It is spiritual significance of what has happened inwardly in the heart, the physical is only the opportunity to demonstrate it outwardly. Physical baptism does not save, and is not a requirement for salvation; the requirement for salvation is the inward heart change. Baptism is the place of making a vow before God, of saying I am following You, I am dying to myself, and I am living on to You. It is the burying of the old man and nature, it telling the world don’t call me no more to do those things and go to those places, for that old man is dead, and this new man is living and alive unto God.

*Romans 6:1-14 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? <sup>2</sup> Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? <sup>3</sup> Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? <sup>4</sup> Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. <sup>5</sup> For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, <sup>6</sup> knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. <sup>7</sup> For he who has died has been freed from sin. <sup>8</sup> Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, <sup>9</sup> knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. <sup>10</sup> For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. <sup>11</sup> Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in

*Christ Jesus our Lord. <sup>12</sup> Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. <sup>13</sup> And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. <sup>14</sup> For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.*

### **Change Identity**

The word baptism was used in the Jewish culture when they dyed a garment from one color to another. It meant to change the identity from say white to red. So when they dipped the garment into the dye solution, they said I am baptizing this garment.

### **Not Theology Today – But Example / Events have Application and Meaning for Us**

Today rather than give a deep theological overview of baptism, which I have done in the past, today I would like to look at the significance of where this baptism was performed (the Jordan), for there I believe God gives us great insight to the meaning of baptism, and its application for us. Look at the four events in the OT that happened at or very near this same spot that Jesus is being baptized. There is no coincidences in the Bible, every word, every story, every event, has a meaning, significance, and application for us personally today.

### **The Jordan River was:**

1. Where Joshua and Israel entered the Promised Land (Joshua 4)
2. Where Elijah was taken up into Heaven (2 Kings 2)
3. Where Naaman was healed of Leprosy (2 Kings 5)
4. Where the prophet lost/found his Power (2 Kings 6)

### **1.) Where Joshua and Israel entered the Promised Land (Joshua 4)**

#### **House of Passage - Bethabara**

In John's gospel we are giving a more detailed location of where this baptism was taking place in reference to the Jordan river which is quite long and runs north and south through the whole land of Israel. The location was Bethabara, which means the "house of passage"; This is the very location that Joshua crossed the Jordan at when he led the recently freed people of Israel into the Promised land, after their captivity and slavery in Egypt.

*John 1:26–28 (NKJV) <sup>26</sup> John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know. <sup>27</sup> It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose." <sup>28</sup> These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.*

#### **Memorial – Place 12 Rocks / Baptism – A Place of Remembrance / Delivered from Egypt – Into New Life**

When the children of Israel crossed over, God had told them to place a large rock on the bank of the river (one for every tribe of Israel – twelve in total) so that every time they went to that spot, passed through that part of the river, they would see the stones and remember what God had done for them there. It was here they would remember that God delivered us finally from the wilderness and desert wandering, delivered us from the slavery of Egypt (a picture of the world), and brought us into the Promised Land. That is what baptism is for us, it is a reminder of God delivering us from the bondage of the world and the wilderness wandering, and brought us into a new life and a new beginning.

*Joshua 4:4–7 (NKJV) <sup>4</sup> Then Joshua called the twelve men whom he had appointed from the children of Israel, one man from every tribe; <sup>5</sup> and Joshua said to them: "Cross over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of the Jordan, and each one of you take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, <sup>6</sup> that this may be a sign among you when your children ask in time to come, saying, 'What do these stones mean to you?' <sup>7</sup> Then you shall answer them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it crossed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. And these stones shall be for a memorial to the children of Israel forever."*

#### **Why 12 Stones – We are all in this Together / All Travelling Together**

I might also point out, why twelve stones, because one for each tribe of Israel represented that they were all in it together, they were all traveling together, and thus no one was to be left behind. When we get baptized or watch someone be baptized, we are doing it as a family, we are saying I was there when you got baptized and I am here the years later to walk with you and be with you, as we are all in this together.

#### **Jordan means Descending**

I should also point out that Jordan means "descending, flowing down". It is a picture for us, as we are descending down, we are saying I can't reach up to You in my own merits, I can only do it through You coming down to Me. I

can't make myself a new man, I need You to do it for me, bury the old man Lord, and make a new one that lives unto you.

### **The Priest on Dry Ground / Lord I am Making a Vow to You – I am Trusting in You / Do a Miracle**

When the Israelites crossed into the Promised Land, it was as the priests put their feet in the water that the waters parted (Joshua 3:15). They didn't stand on the edge of the bank, saying, "Lord, part the waters and we'll step in." No, they stepped in first, and as they did, a miracle took place. The significance to us is that in our baptism we are stepping out in faith, we are saying Lord I am making a vow to you this day that I am trusting in You, I am trusting You will keep me from falling, that You will see me through, and that You will do a miracle in my life.

*Joshua 3:9–15 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> So Joshua said to the children of Israel, "Come here, and hear the words of the LORD your God." <sup>10</sup> And Joshua said, "By this you shall know that the living God is among you, and that He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Hivites and the Perizzites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Jebusites: <sup>11</sup> Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is crossing over before you into the **Jordan**. <sup>12</sup> Now therefore, take for yourselves twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man from every tribe. <sup>13</sup> And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests who bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the **Jordan**, that the waters of the **Jordan** shall be cut off, the waters that come down from upstream, and they shall stand as a heap." <sup>14</sup> So it was, when the people set out from their camp to cross over the **Jordan**, with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, <sup>15</sup> and as those who bore the ark came to the **Jordan**, and the feet of the priests who bore the ark dipped in the edge of the water (for the **Jordan** overflows all its banks during the whole time of harvest),

### **Not Promising life of Ease / The Elevation gets Higher**

I am not promising you a life of ease and comfort, for interestingly this spot at the Jordan River was the lowest spot in the whole river, and looking at a map of geography, the elevation goes higher and higher. We see after the Jordan crossing, the next elevation up was Jericho, and the children of Israel would have to battle them, and God would do the whole battle for them by simply marching around the city and then blowing the trumpet and the walls would fall. But after Jericho they would face the city Ai which is much higher in elevation and we would see that this time God would send them into the battle, and they would struggle to the point of defeat and their hearts would melt, but God would lift them up and give them a victory in the next battle. And so it is with our Christian life, as we grow and mature, the elevation gets higher and harder, but continue on with the Lord and He will give us the victory.

*Joshua 7:2–5 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> Now Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Beth Aven, on the east side of Bethel, and spoke to them, saying, "Go up and spy out the country." So the men went up and spied out Ai. <sup>3</sup> And they returned to Joshua and said to him, "Do not let all the people go up, but let about two or three thousand men go up and attack Ai. Do not weary all the people there, for the people of Ai are few." <sup>4</sup> So about three thousand men went up there from the people, but they fled before the men of Ai. <sup>5</sup> And the men of Ai struck down about thirty-six men, for they chased them from before the gate as far as Shebarim, and struck them down on the descent; therefore the hearts of the people melted and became like water.

### **Look – If God can Save / Then can any battle be Greater**

Look, Christian, if God can do the miracle of salvation in your life, if He has the power to change your old nature into a new nature, if He has the power to deliver you from sin and death, then can anything else be hard for Him? If He can give us victory there, then He can give us victory everywhere else, regardless of how high and insurmountable they may seem. God back to your baptism, go back and remember your washing away of sin and death, and all the way back there, you will see God will give you victory every step from there.

#### **Can He?**

- Can He break my addiction? Go back to the Jordan.
- Can He change my heart of unforgiveness against the person who hurt you? Go back to the Jordan.
- Can He heal my marriage? Go back to the Jordan.
- Can He give me peace? Go back to the Jordan.
- Can He calm my fears? Go back to the Jordan.

## 2.) Where Elijah was taken up into Heaven (2 Kings 2)

### **People thought John was Elijah**

This is the same spot in the Jordan that Elijah the prophet was taken up into heaven. Remember the people thought John was Elijah the prophet risen from the dead, the physical resemblance are there for sure as Elijah was recognized as a hairy man wearing a belt, and we see John the Baptist was a mirror image of that. But how interesting is this, in that John was baptizing in the exact same place the Elijah was raptured into heaven. No wonder many people thought John was Elijah returned to earth

**2 Kings 1:8 (NKJV)** <sup>8</sup> So they answered him, "A hairy man wearing a leather belt around his waist." And he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite."

### **Promise of Eternity**

Beloved, the message and the application the Lord sends to us in baptism is the promise that you and I will be with taken into heaven when our time here is done. The place John baptized, was the very same place that Elijah was taken into heaven.

**2 Kings 2:4–11 (NKJV)** <sup>4</sup> Then Elijah said to him, "Elisha, stay here, please, for the LORD has sent me on to Jericho." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!" So they came to Jericho. <sup>5</sup> Now the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho came to Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that the LORD will take away your master from over you today?" So he answered, "Yes, I know; keep silent!" <sup>6</sup> Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here, please, for the LORD has sent me on to the Jordan." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!" So the two of them went on. <sup>7</sup> And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went and stood facing them at a distance, while the two of them stood by the Jordan. <sup>8</sup> Now Elijah took his mantle, rolled it up, and struck the water; and it was divided this way and that, so that the two of them crossed over on dry ground. <sup>9</sup> And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?" Elisha said, "Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me." <sup>10</sup> So he said, "You have asked a hard thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so." <sup>11</sup> Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

### **Not just at Death – But Now Too / I will never Leave You**

But that promise of God being with us is not just at death, but here and now as we walk with Him after we make that vow that we will follow Him, that we profess before the world, I am living unto Him! Before Joshua crossed over this very same spot, the Lord appeared to him and said be of good courage, you can do this, I will fight for you, I will go before you, and I will never leave you nor forsake you. Jesus would say the same to us also. Let baptism be an illustration of that and example for you to remember back on when times get hard. God says remember the vow you made to Me? I made a vow to you at that very same time also, that I will never leave you nor forsake you. I am with you now, and you will be with me in heaven.

**Deuteronomy 31:3–8 (NKJV)** <sup>3</sup> The LORD your God Himself crosses over before you; He will destroy these nations from before you, and you shall dispossess them. Joshua himself crosses over before you, just as the LORD has said. <sup>4</sup> And the LORD will do to them as He did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites and their land, when He destroyed them. <sup>5</sup> The LORD will give them over to you, that you may do to them according to every commandment which I have commanded you. <sup>6</sup> Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you. <sup>7</sup> Then Moses called Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, "Be strong and of good courage, for you must go with this people to the land which the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall cause them to inherit it. <sup>8</sup> And the LORD, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed."

**Hebrews 13:5–6 (NKJV)** <sup>5</sup> Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." <sup>6</sup> So we may boldly say: "The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"

### **Pickles**

How can God do this? Because when He looks at us, He no longer sees us, but Jesus who seals us. Not that I am calling you all pickles, but that is often how this word was used in turning a cucumber into a pickle. First the cucumber was dipped in boiling hot water to be cleansed, and then it was immediately dipped into the vinegar solution, and a chemical change took place as the cucumber took on the elements of the vinegar and were permanently changed forever. There was no reversing the pickling process. And so it is for us, once we are immersed in Christ.

907 βαπτίζω [baptizo /bap-tid-zo/] verb. From a derivative of 911; TDNT 1:529; TDNTA 92; GK 966; 80 occurrences; AV translates as "baptize" 76 times, "wash" twice, "baptist" once, and "baptized + 2258" once. 1 to dip repeatedly, to immerse, to submerge (of vessels sunk). 2 to cleanse by dipping or submerging, to wash, to make clean with water, to wash one's self, bathe. 3 to overwhelm. Additional Information: Not to be confused with 911, baptō. The clearest example that shows the meaning of baptizo is a text from the Greek poet and physician Nicander, who lived about 200 B.C. It is a recipe for making pickles and is helpful because it uses both words. Nicander says that in order to make a pickle, the vegetable should first be 'dipped' (bapto) into boiling water and then 'baptised' (baptizo) in the vinegar solution. Both verbs concern the immersing of vegetables in a solution. But the first is temporary. The second, the act of baptising the vegetable, produces a permanent change. When used in the New Testament, this word more often refers to our union and identification with Christ than to our water baptism. e.g. Mark 16:16. 'He that believes and is baptised shall be saved'. Christ is saying that mere intellectual assent is not enough. There must be a union with him, a real change, like the vegetable to the pickle! Bible Study Magazine, James Montgomery Boice, May 1989.

## 3.) Where Naaman was healed of Leprosy (2 Kings 5)

### **Naaman Healed**

Well another event that happened in the Jordan river (very well may have been at this very same spot) was the healing of leprosy of a man named Naaman.

### **Leprosy a picture of Sin / Starts small and grows – then Destroys**

Leprosy is a picture of sin. It begins small but spreads quickly. Sin is the same way. “This is so small. It’s no big deal,” we think. But it eats at us, erodes us, and eventually destroys us.

### **Can it be that Simple / There is no Other Way**

Naaman was a mighty man in the land at that time he had wealth, power, and position; but none of that could keep the leprosy from destroying him. But the prophet Elisha (who was Elijah’s mentee) said you can be healed of your leprosy, just go and dunk yourself in the Jordan seven times and you will be healed. At first Naaman was insulted that it could be that easy to be cleansed, but in the end he sees there is no other way to be healed, and he goes and dunks himself seven times in the Jordan and he was healed.

*2 Kings 5:9–14 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> Then Naaman went with his horses and chariot, and he stood at the door of Elisha’s house. <sup>10</sup> And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, “Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and you shall be clean.” <sup>11</sup> But Naaman became furious, and went away and said, “Indeed, I said to myself, ‘He will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy.’ <sup>12</sup> Are not the Abanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?” So he turned and went away in a rage. <sup>13</sup> And his servants came near and spoke to him, and said, “My father, if the prophet had told you to do something great, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he says to you, ‘Wash, and be clean?’” <sup>14</sup> So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

### **Your Sins are Buried / Don’t let your Past crush your Present**

God speaks a message to us in our healing of leprosy (sin), that it is that simple for us to be cleansed and healed from our sin. (for us – but not for Him as He endured the cross for us). Remember your baptism, you buried your sins in the ocean of forgiveness, and I remember them no more says the Lord. Oh precious saint of God, when Satan comes and throws your past up in your face, go back to the Jordan; when that person tries to silence you with your past sins, go back to the Jordan. When you feel unworthy, unloveable because of your past, go back to the Jordan because it is there God reminds you that your sins have been dealt with, and buried, and they can never judge you again, because God has already judged them and buried them through His Son.

*Psalms 103:12 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

*Hebrews 10:17–18 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> then He adds, “Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.” <sup>18</sup> Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.

### **Baptism – the Celebration of Being One with Him**

Baptism, the beautiful remembrance and celebration that we are one with Him. That I am his, and he is Mine: Missionaries Ilir and Kate Cami write:

For some years we have worked with a ministry to refugees in Athens, Greece. Athens is part of the "Refugee Highway," where people from around the world pass through on the road to a better life. In May 2006, one of the missionaries in Athens, Kallie Skaife, reported what happened to an Iranian man identified as "M."

In 2003, everything "M" knew was destroyed by an earthquake measuring 7.45 on the Richter scale. He was tortured by the question of why something like this would happen. "M" went to live with relatives in Afghanistan, was married, and had a daughter. But he was still filled with despair.

Leaving his family behind, "M" headed west and ended up in Athens, staying with more relatives. Though he and all his family were Muslim, "M" became interested in Christianity, finding himself strangely moved by the sight of the crosses he saw decorating the Orthodox churches in the city. "M" was given a Bible and started reading. Since his relatives forbade such a thing, "M" used a tiny flashlight to read during the night after his uncles were asleep.

He studied the Bible this way for two years. Finally, "M" realized God was calling him to be born again. He contacted the refugee ministry center, declaring his faith in Christ and asking for more information.

On Sunday, May 7, 2006, "M" set his alarm for 6 a.m. He wanted to spend time reading his Bible and praying that morning, because on that day he was to be baptized at a fellowship with other Iranian believers. But "M's" cousin had discovered the plan. Before "M's" alarm went off, the cousin boiled water in a saucepan and poured it on "M" while he slept, scalding both thighs and one arm.

"M" came to the baptism anyway. Standing before those gathered, the burns on his arms clearly visible, "M" declared, "No matter what they do to me, I will love Jesus."

After the baptism, "M" said he felt like standing in the center of the city of Athens and shouting to everybody, "I belong to Christ!"

#### 4.) Where the prophet lost/found his Power (2 Kings 6)

##### **The Lost Axe head / The School of Prophets**

And lastly (though not all inclusive), the Jordan River was where Elisha performed the miracle of raising the axe head that had come off of one of Elisha's students axe handle as they were building a house for the school of prophets.

**2 Kings 6:1–7 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> And the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, "See now, the place where we dwell with you is too small for us. <sup>2</sup> Please, let us go to the *Jordan*, and let every man take a beam from there, and let us make there a place where we may dwell." So he answered, "Go." <sup>3</sup> Then one said, "Please consent to go with your servants." And he answered, "I will go." <sup>4</sup> So he went with them. And when they came to the *Jordan*, they cut down trees. <sup>5</sup> But as one was cutting down a tree, the iron ax head fell into the water; and he cried out and said, "Alas, master! For it was borrowed." <sup>6</sup> So the man of God said, "Where did it fall?" And he showed him the place. So he cut off a stick, and threw it in there; and he made the iron float. <sup>7</sup> Therefore he said, "Pick it up for yourself." So he reached out his hand and took it.

##### **Double Miracles – First Miracle**

Elisha had asked that he would perform double the miracles that Elijah did, and he did exactly that. Elisha's first miracle was performed at the Jordan when he parted the waters with the mantle that was left to him from Elijah.

**2 Kings 2:9–14 (NKJV)** <sup>9</sup> And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?" Elisha said, "Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me." <sup>10</sup> So he said, "You have asked a hard thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so." <sup>11</sup> Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. <sup>12</sup> And Elisha saw it, and he cried out, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!" So he saw him no more. And he took hold of his own clothes and tore them into two pieces. <sup>13</sup> He also took up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and went back and stood by the bank of the *Jordan*. <sup>14</sup> Then he took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and struck the water, and said, "Where is the LORD God of Elijah?" And when he also had struck the water, it was divided this way and that; and Elisha crossed over.

##### **Man Lost Axe Head / the Cutting Edge of Power**

One of the men found himself in a predicament. While he was doing the work of the ministry, the axe head he was using fell in the Jordan River. The axe head in this story is a symbol, a picture of the cutting edge of power, of effectiveness. It speaks of the Holy Spirit. The only way we'll ever build anything—be it ministry or marriage, families or friendships—is if we build in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Psalmist declares that those who build apart from the Lord labor in vain (127:1). You can follow every principle of marriage, parenting, and ministry, and still fail if you are not doing it in the power of the Holy Ghost, for it is "not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit saith the Lord" (Zechariah 4:6).

**Psalm 127:1 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> Unless the LORD builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, The watchman stays awake in vain.

**Zechariah 4:6 (NKJV)** <sup>6</sup> So he answered and said to me: "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts.

##### **Baptism – the place of Descending**

If you have lost your cutting edge power, if you feel you have to strive to gain or maintain, then go back to the Jordan, go back to that place of surrender where you had said to the Lord I can do nothing apart from You, I need You for all things in my life. Maybe you started off in the Spirit, but now you find you have taken the reigns back over in your life, and you feel you have to "help the Lord out", then go back to the Jordan and remember that day and place where you said I totally surrender, Lord take it from here.

##### **Where did you Lose It / Go back to the Cutting Edge**

Elisha asked one question: "Where did you lose it?" To the church at Ephesus, Jesus said, "I know your good works, your knowledge, your giving. But I have something against you for you have left your first love. Remember from whence you are fallen and repent. And do your first works again" (see Revelation 2:1–5). Was there a time when you loved the Lord radically, when you worshiped the Lord fervently, when you served the Lord consistently? Was there a time when you couldn't wait to get in the Word, when you found witnessing something that was natural?

Was there a time in your life when you were more in love with Jesus and more fervent in serving Him than you are today? If so, remember how it once was, and then repent. Say, "Lord, I admit to You, I confess before you that I'm not in the place I once was, in the place I long to be. And I repent." Then do your first works again. What were you

doing when you loved the Lord? Did you get up early to pray? Do it again. Did you open your house and share the gospel with people? Do it again. Did you come consistently to Bible study and worship meetings? Do it again. It's so simple. Just go back to the place where you lost your cutting edge.

**Revelation 2:1–5 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> *“To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, ‘These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: <sup>2</sup> ‘I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; <sup>3</sup> and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name’s sake and have not become weary. <sup>4</sup> Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. <sup>5</sup> Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.*

## ***Go back to the Jordan***

### **The Jordan River was:**

1. Where Joshua and Israel entered the Promised Land (Joshua 4)
2. Where Elijah was taken up into Heaven (2 Kings 2)
3. Where Naaman was healed of Leprosy (2 Kings 5)
4. Where the prophet lost/found his Power (2 Kings 6)

# Jesus - The Son of God

(Luke 3:21-38)

This is My Beloved Son (3:21-22)

## Reason for Writing:

*Luke 1:3-4 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, <sup>4</sup> that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.

## Theophilus

Theophilus means the “friend and lover of God”, and so we have a book written to you personally today. The God of the universe loves you personally, has called you to Himself for a personal and intimate relationship, and has written this book to you so that you may know for certainty all the things about Jesus, and how they apply to you, how they instruct you on how to live, reflect, and enjoy the love of God in your life personally today.

## Outline of the Book of Luke:

### The Life of Christ (Luke 1-24)

#### **The Prelude to Christ’s Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- Introduction (1:1–4)
- The Birth of Jesus (1:5–2:38)
- The Boyhood of Jesus (2:39–52)
- The Baptism/Temptation of Jesus (3:1–4:13)

#### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- The Commencement of His Ministry (4:14–44)
- The Calling of His Disciples (5:1–6:16)
- The Continuation of His Work (6:17–9:50)

#### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- Samaria (9:51–10:37)
- Bethany and Judea (10:38–13:35)
- Perea (14:1–19:27)

#### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

#### **The Consummation of Christ’s Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

## Last Study – This Study

Last we looked at baptism as it related to us very specifically, we looked at the events that took place (at or very near) this same place the Jesus was baptized – the Jordan River. We gleaned much fruit from our trip down to the Jordan River. Well today I want to take a very specific look at Jesus’ baptism, and what is being declared by the Lord to us through His baptism. So last week the place, and this week the Person.

## The Jordan River was:

1. Where Joshua and Israel entered the Promised Land (Joshua 4)
2. Where Elijah was taken up into Heaven (2 Kings 2)
3. Where Naaman was healed of Leprosy (2 Kings 5)

4. Where the prophet lost/found his Power (2 Kings 6)

**Luke 3:21 When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened.**

**Luke 3:22 And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."**

### **Notice when this was Said**

Verse 22 - This is My Beloved Son whom I am well pleased – Let it be noted that God the Father says this about Jesus before He started His public ministry. Jesus had preached no sermons nor had performed any miracles, yet God the Father would say, "this is my Beloved Son whom I am well pleased". Up to this point Jesus' life had been living at home, and working in the carpenter shop. God was pleased with the Son because He had fellowship with the Son, they were one, not because Jesus had done great exploits, but because in the simplest and most base things of life Jesus had been faithful and in fellowship with the Father. And so too it is for you, God is pleased with you because you are one with Him; great service and great deeds (or lack thereof) will not increase or diminish His pleasure towards you. Christian remain faithful and focused on the Lord.

### **What did Jesus Pray For?**

What did Jesus pray, we don't know for sure but we can get an idea from a passage where we are given insider information on the prayer life of Jesus. Jesus very well could have prayed to bring God the Father glory, and secondly he prayed for you. This baptism is Jesus stepping up, and stepping in, to start the road towards the cross for you and for me, and for all who would receive Him.

*John 17:1-5 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, <sup>2</sup> as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. <sup>3</sup> And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. <sup>4</sup> I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. <sup>5</sup> And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

### **He did It for You – He did it for Me**

Jesus, He did it for you; He did it for me!

### **Matt 12**

Verse 22 - This is My Beloved Son whom I am well pleased – In Matthew's gospel the Lord expounds for us all that this means, and He does that by tying this statement back to the Prophet Isaiah. Jesus has to fulfill every prophecy spoken of Him in the Old Testament (Matthew 3:13-17 to fulfill all righteousness), and God has a statement and message for us through them all.

*Matthew 12:15-21 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup> But when Jesus knew it, He withdrew from there. And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all. <sup>16</sup> Yet He warned them not to make Him known, <sup>17</sup> that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: <sup>18</sup> "Behold! My Servant whom I have chosen, My Beloved in whom My soul is well pleased! I will put My Spirit upon Him, And He will declare justice to the Gentiles. <sup>19</sup> He will not quarrel nor cry out, Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. <sup>20</sup> A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench, Till He sends forth justice to victory; <sup>21</sup> And in His name Gentiles will trust."

*Isaiah 42:1-4 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> "Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. <sup>2</sup> He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, Nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. <sup>3</sup> A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth. <sup>4</sup> He will not fail nor be discouraged, Till He has established justice in the earth; And the coastlands shall wait for His law."

*Matthew 3:13-17 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. <sup>14</sup> And John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?" <sup>15</sup> But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him. <sup>16</sup> When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. <sup>17</sup> And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

### **Behold /Study Him and become like Him**

Isaiah 42:1 – Behold - I like how Isaiah 40 starts out, it says "Behold". "Behold, My Servant." It's an exhortation we are given throughout the Word. The word, "behold," doesn't mean to quickly glance at. Rather it means to scrutinize, to fix one's eyes upon, to study carefully. In this day, we are prone to reach for books that give ten steps to this or eight principles for that, or try to find a paragraph or 3 minute video on the internet. But the Lord has a different agenda. When you look at the Lord with openness, you are changed and, in the process, become more like

Jesus. When you look at Him, you become more like Him—and suddenly, you don't need ten steps to get out of depression or even eight steps for a magnificent marriage. If you're becoming like the Lord, those things take care of themselves.

### **3 Characteristics of the One we Behold**

Please note with me three characteristics of this One we are told to behold...and then we shall see even more of what this baptism of Christ means to us. We saw considerable insight last week as we study the events of the Jordan River, and today we will gain even more as God reveals more as we see the baptism of Jesus.

### **3 Things to Behold**

- 1. He is Appointed**
- 2. He is Anointed**
- 3. He is Approachable**

### **1 - He is Appointed**

**Isaiah 42:1 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> **"Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.**

### **Acts 4:12 / Jesus was Appointed**

According to Acts 4:12, there is no other name under heaven whereby man must be saved. Jesus was appointed, elected, and chosen to become our substitution. Not just for the Nation Israel, but for the whole world (the Gentiles – non Jewish people).

**Acts 4:12 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup> *Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."*

### **To be Appointed – Receiving the Appointment / The Godhead**

To be appointed, also means that the appointee accepts the appointment. In a few months there will be presidential conventions and each respective party will say we appoint you to represent us in the upcoming presidential election, and that person then will step forward and say I accept this appointment, and I will represent you and your desires. I will not serve my agenda, but our agenda as one, for we both have the same goal and purpose. That absolutely amazes me, as I think of the three persons of the godhead (which we see here in these verses as the Son is baptized and the Spirit descends, and the Father speaks), in counsel together, in agreement as one, that Jesus the Son would be the Lamb, and the Father and Spirit would allow Him to be, and then have the brutal moment of watching Him be the sacrificial Lamb.

### **Gates of Splendor**

I am reminded of "Beyond the Gates of Splendor" which is a documentary film that tells the true story of five American missionaries: Jim Elliot, Pete Fleming, Ed McCully, Nate Saint, and Roger Youderian, who in January 1956 were spared to death in the jungles of Ecuador by the Auca Indians, an isolated tribe known as the Waodani. At first, the missionaries found acceptance among the Auca, but eventually they experienced their fierce hostility. In a testament to forgiveness, family members of the slain missionaries returned to live among the tribe, evangelizing the very people who had killed their loved ones. In a scene, Kathy and Steve Saint, the children of Nate Saint, speak of their own baptisms administered by the Aucas who now believe. Kimo, a participant in the killings and the baptisms, refers to Steve's baptism. "By his father's grave we did it when Steve was a little older. It was right up the river there. He brought his mother too." Kathy says, "I was in the same water where my dad's body had been thrown, and at either side of me were the two men that in their youth had killed dad. And all I knew was that I really loved these two guys."

### **For You and For Me**

I try to imagine what it would be like to extend that kind of love and sacrifice to someone that took my son or spouses life, and it is hard for me to wrap my mind around the thought. But then, to consider that is exactly how God loves me, that He appointed His Son to die for me, and the Father had to watch it, and yet even after the brutal cross – they both reach out to me in love and receive me as family. I am blown away. Jesus comes to be baptized here in the Jordan, knowing He is beginning the march towards the cross, for you and for me, and He knows once He steps into the water the clock starts to tick, but for the joy (you and me) nothing could stop Him.....

*Hebrews 12:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

### **Mt Transfiguration**

*My Beloved Son* - we read of the exact same words “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” – in Matthew 17, it became known as the Mount of transfiguration because it was there that Jesus face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as light; I believe that Jesus at that time, the age of 33, had lived a perfect and sinless life, had kept all the Laws of God, and at that moment if He so desired He could had walked into heaven based on His works. But He didn’t, He said no, not without you, I will stay; I must stay, so you can go with me.

*Matthew 17:1–5 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; <sup>2</sup> and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. <sup>3</sup> And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. <sup>4</sup> Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” <sup>5</sup> While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!”

### **Jesus accepted the Appointment**

Jesus is appointed, and He accepted the appointment because of His love for you and for me.

## **2 - He is Anointed**

*Isaiah 42:1 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> “Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One *in whom* My soul delights! **I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.**

### **Conceived in Holy Spirit – Indwelt with Holy Spirit – Now Empowered by Holy Spirit for Priesthood**

Jesus is not only appointed, but He’s also anointed, for at His baptism, the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove. From that time, Jesus went about ministering miraculously and preaching persuasively. Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit and was indwelt with the Holy Spirit all the time He was growing up. But He did not receive the “coming upon”(the Greek word epi which means coming upon – in our passage here in Luke)—the empowering and anointing—of the Spirit for service until He was thirty years old and ready to begin His public ministry.

### **30 Years is age of Ministry in OT**

In the Old Testament, 30 was the age of ministry, Priests began ministry at age 30 (Num 4:3). Jesus is our High Priest.

*Numbers 4:3 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> from thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, all who enter the service to do the work in the tabernacle of meeting.

*Hebrews 3:1 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus,

### **Christ means Anointed**

Christ means “anointed”, it was the word associated with the Messiah who would redeem man from their sins.

### **When You are Born Again – Acts 1:8**

When you’re born again, when you became a Christian, the Holy Spirit was placed inside of you and resides within you (that is the Greek word “en”) (1 Cor 3:16, John 20-22). But Jesus would tell His disciples that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them (Acts 1:8). Then they would be truly ready to serve the Lord in ministry.

*1 Corinthians 3:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

*John 20:22–23 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

*Acts 1:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

### **Luke 11:13 / Ask**

How do we receive this Spirit? In Luke 11:13, Jesus said, “If you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask.” It’s really that simple. Just say, “Lord, I need the baptism of, the coming upon, the empowering of the Holy Spirit” so I can too go out and change the world for You!

*Luke 11:11–13 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> *If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? <sup>12</sup> Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? <sup>13</sup> If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”*

### **Note – Religion doesn’t give Power to Do It.**

Let me just make a note about the Spirit “in” us; because He is appointed, we can have the Spirit of God within us, and because of that we now have the power to live victorious Christian lives. Religion tells us what to do, and what not to do, but it doesn’t tell us how to or give us the power to do it. But when we call upon Jesus, ask Him into our lives, he begins to live in us and through us, and He gives us the power to live the way He has told us and shown us how to live.

*Psalm 31:3 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> *For You are my rock and my fortress; Therefore, for Your name’s sake, Lead me and guide me.*

### **Jesus Appointed & Anointed**

Jesus is appointed, and He is anointed – all of which proves He is for us. And to make sure there is absolutely no doubt of that, God makes it clear to us that He is approachable, that we can come to in total confidence that He will receive us and not turn us away. Listen to verses 2-4 of Isaiah 42.

### **3 - He is Approachable**

*Isaiah 42:2–4 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> He will not cry out, nor raise *His voice*, Nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. <sup>3</sup> A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth. <sup>4</sup> He will not fail nor be discouraged, Till He has established justice in the earth; And the coastlands shall wait for His law.”

### **He is Patient / Don’t Confuse Earthly Parents with Heavenly Father**

*Verse 2 - He will not cry out, nor raise His voice* - God is patient and understanding with us, He will not raise His voice, he doesn’t scream or yell at us. Don’t confuse you earthly parents with your Heavenly Father.

### **He is Gentle – Bruised Reed**

*Verse 3 - A bruised reed He will not break* - Many reeds grew in Galilee—but under the heat of the sun, they would often wilt. Then they’d be stepped on and broken. That’s just like us. We spring up—but when fiery trials come our way, we begin to wilt and then finally collapse. We think He is ready to snap us off, throw us aside, come to an end with us, but our text tells us otherwise, for a bruised reed He shall not break, and we see how gentle He is with us. The picture is that of Him gently lifting the reed back into place, making it straight again, and then propping it up until it heals and stands straight again.

### **He Understands us – Smoldering Flax**

*Verse 3 - And smoking flax He will not quench* - Flax is the wick of a candle that no longer has a flame, just a small smoldering ember. That, too, is like us. We know we’re supposed to burn brightly for the Lord—yet usually we’re lucky just to smolder. We think Jesus must be ready to come with a big bucket and douse us altogether. But that’s not what our text says, for a smoking flax He shall not quench. Why? Because He knows our frame and remembers we are but dust (Psalm 103). Therefore, I am convinced that we expect more from ourselves than God expects from us. When we don’t reach our goals, execute our plans, or fulfill our promises, we get down on ourselves. But God doesn’t because He knows we’re dusty, bruised reeds and smoking flaxes. And He loves us nonetheless. The picture is that of God cupping His hand around us, and breathing a gentle breath upon us with His Spirit, until we ignite and burn bright again.

*Psalm 103:11–14 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> *For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; <sup>12</sup> As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. <sup>13</sup> As a father pities his children, So the LORD pities those who fear Him. <sup>14</sup> For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.*

### **Boldly Come**

Verse 4 - He will not fail nor be discouraged - Therefore what we see in His baptism is a God who says I know and understand you, I understand where you are at, and you can come to Me (boldly come), I will wash you, I will cleanse you, I will refresh you, I will heal you, I will ignite you, just come to Me so I can. Come, no matter how many times you have fallen, or strayed, for I am not discouraged, and I will not fail you, and I will finish the work that I started in you.

**Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)** <sup>16</sup> *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

**Philippians 1:6 (NKJV)** <sup>6</sup> *being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;*

### **Important to Spend Time Thinking of His Attributes – BEHOLD Him!**

It is important for me to spend time thinking about Jesus because when I consider His attributes, something wonderful begins to happen within me. That is, as I see Jesus in His Word, meditate on His character, and study His personality—as I read the Gospels and behold the Lamb, I become more like Him. Therefore, how I encourage you to make beholding Him your priority—for those who behold Him will not only fall in love with Him, but become more like Him.

**Luke 3:21 When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened.**

**Luke 3:22 And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, “You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased.”**

### **Only Luke Tells Us – Jesus Prayed**

Only Luke gives us this detail, that while Jesus prayed, then the heavens opened.

### **Do you want to See the Heavens Up – Spirit Move (Your Life – Church – Country)**

Do you want to see the heavens up – then pray? Do you want to see the Spirit move in your life, your church, and your Country – then pray. In 2 Chronicles 7, notice the key is God saying “in this place” as he was speaking of the Temple, and in Isaiah 56 He calls His Temple a House of Prayer (and Jesus confirms that in Luke 19); God is calling His people together in corporate prayer, not just individual prayer, and if we will join in corporate prayer, I will promise you that we will see the heavens open, we will see the Spirit move, like no other time in our lives.

**2 Chronicles 7:12–16 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup> *Then the LORD appeared to Solomon by night, and said to him: “I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice. <sup>13</sup> When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among My people, <sup>14</sup> if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land. <sup>15</sup> Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to prayer made in this place. <sup>16</sup> For now I have chosen and sanctified this house, that My name may be there forever; and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.*

**Isaiah 56:7–8 (NKJV)** <sup>7</sup> *Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices Will be accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.” <sup>8</sup> The Lord GOD, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, says, “Yet I will gather to him Others besides those who are gathered to him.”*

**Luke 19:45–46 (NKJV)** <sup>45</sup> *Then He went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in it, <sup>46</sup> saying to them, “It is written, ‘My house is a house of prayer,’ but you have made it a ‘den of thieves.’”*

**Jeremiah 29:11–13 (NKJV)** <sup>11</sup> *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. <sup>12</sup> Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. <sup>13</sup> And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.*

### **Heal the Land**

Heal their land is greater than just the Country, for who lives upon that land? It is you, it is your children, it is that Christian that is sitting next to you, it is that neighbor you long to speak to about Jesus, and it is that co-worker that you have worked with for years but the opportunity to tell them about the God who is appointed, the God who is anointed, the God who is approachable, is in love with them.

### **Story from Jim Cymbala**

Let me close with one story, a true story, it will be of special interest to you who have wayward children, but it is of special interest to all who think there is no hope for that particular situation in your life, and you think it will never change, well hear this story and ask God to do the same in your life.

Pastor Jim Cymbala, in his book *Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire*, tells how God answered fervent prayer on behalf of his daughter. He writes: "Our oldest daughter, Chrissy, had been a model child growing up. But around age sixteen she started to stray,...not only from us but also away from God. In time, she even left our home. There were many nights when we had no idea where she was.

As the situation grew more serious, I tried everything. I begged, I pleaded, I scolded, I argued, I tried to control her with money,...nothing worked! She just hardened more and more.

While this was going on, (my wife) Carol needed an operation. (During the post-surgical depression that followed), the devil took the opportunity to come after her and say, 'You have a big choir, and you're making albums and doing outreaches at Radio City music Hall. Fine, you and your husband can go ahead to reach the world for Christ—but I'm going to have your children. I've already got the first one. I'm coming after the next two!'...One day (Carol) said to me, 'Listen, we need to leave New York. I'm serious. This atmosphere has already swallowed up our daughter. We can't keep raising our kids here!'

Then in November, ...I received a call from a pastor friend I had persuaded Chrissy to talk to. He said, 'Jim I love you and Carol, but Chrissy is going to do what Chrissy wants to do. She's eightenn. She's determined. You have to accept what she decides. You don't have much choice!'

I hung up the phone. I couldn't accept Chrissy being away from the Lord!

*God strongly impressed me that I was to converse with no one but God. In fact, I should have no further contact with Chrissy—until God acted!*

*Christmas came and it was nearly impossible to keep my composure, trying to open presents with the other children and no Chrissy.*

*February came. One cold Tuesday night during prayer meeting, I talked from Acts 4 about how the church boldly calling on God in the face of persecution. We entered into a time of prayer, everyone reaching out to the Lord simultaneously.*

*An usher handed me a note. A young woman whom I felt to be spiritually sensitive had written: 'Pastor Cymbala, I feel impressed that we should stop the meeting and all pray for your daughter.'*

*In a few minutes I picked up the microphone and told the congregation what had just happened. 'The truth of the matter,' I said, 'although I haven't talked much about it, is that my daughter is very far from God these days. She thinks up is down and down is up; dark is light and light is dark. But I know God can break through to her, and so I'm going to ask Pastor Boestaaf to lead us in prayer for Chrissy. Let's all join hands across the sanctuary.'*

*To describe what happened in the next few minutes, I can only imply a metaphor: There church turned into a labor room.... There arose a groaning, a sense of desperate determination, as if to say, 'Satan, you will NOT have this girl! Take your hands off!'*

*When I got home that night, I said (to Carol), 'It's over!'*

*'What's over?' she wondered.*

*'It's over with Chrissy...I tell you, if there is a God in Heaven, this whole nightmare is finally over!'*

*Thirty-two hours later...as I was shaving, Carol burst through the door. 'Go downstairs!' she blurted. 'Chrissy's here! It's you she wanted to see!'*

*I wiped off the shaving foam and headed down the stairs, my heart pounding. As I came around the corner, I saw my daughter on the kitchen floor, rocking on her hands and knees, sobbing. Cautiously I spoke her name.*

*'Chrissy?'*

*She grabbed my pantleg and began pouring out her anguish. 'Daddy—Daddy—I've sinned against God. I've sinned against myself. I've sinned against you and Mommy. Please forgive me—'*

*Then suddenly she drew back. 'Daddy,' she said with a start, 'who was praying for me? Who was praying for me?' Her voice was like that of a cross-examining attorney.*

*'What do you mean, Chrissy?'*

*'On Tuesday night, Daddy—who was praying for me? In the middle of the night, God woke me up and showed me I was heading toward this abyss. There was no bottom to it—it scared me to death. I was so frightened. I realized how hard I've been, how wrong, how rebellious. But at the same time, it was like God wrapped His arms around me and held me tight. He kept me from sliding any farther as He said, I still love you! Who was praying for me Tuesday night?'" (from *Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire*, pages 60-65)*

**A story a Thousand time Over**

This is not just a one-time story, it is one of the thousands upon thousands that have happened, and will happen, when God's people come together and pray.

**Prayer produces Prayer / a Lifestyle of Prayer**

Individual prayer will lead you to want corporate prayer, and corporate prayer will ignite you to want individual prayer, and thus you will live a life of prayer, and a lifestyle of prayer, of conversation, of communion, of oneness with the Appointed, the Anointed, the Approachable God —who is madly and deeply in love with you!

# Jesus - The Son of God

## (Luke 3:21-38)

### [The Genealogy of Jesus \(3:23-38\)](#)

#### Verse 22 – The Son of God

In verse 22 God says this is My Son in whom I am well pleased; note how that statement is the predecessor to the genealogy of Christ, which will show the human lineage all the way back to Adam, and ultimately back to “the Son of God (v38).

*Luke 3:22 And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, “You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased.”*

*Luke 3:38 the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.*

#### Why the Genealogy?

Why the genealogy? Well it is important that every detail of the Law is fulfilled, that to make it clear exactly who the Messiah could be, and then was (Jesus). God gives multiple avenues of detail, and for each detail He gives more opportunity for challenges that this Bible is not inspired, but then every time detail after detail all are proven out, each detail points to Jesus, and each detail proves this Bible was written outside of our time domain. And at first glance and thought the genealogy is boring and long-winded, but follow it through today, and you will find “profit”, for God is not only going to tell you about Jesus, but He will show you, you, in the genealogy, and He will declare a wonderful love story to you, and how He gives you a new beginning, and hope for today.

*2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

#### ***The Genealogy of Christ through Mary***

**Luke 3:23** Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, the son of Heli,

**Luke 3:24** the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Janna, the son of Joseph,

**Luke 3:25** the son of Mattathiah, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai,

**Luke 3:26** the son of Maath, the son of Mattathiah, the son of Semei, the son of Joseph, the son of Neri,

**Luke 3:27** the son of Joannas, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri,

**Luke 3:28** the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmodam, the son of Er,

**Luke 3:29** the son of Jose, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi,

**Luke 3:30** the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonan, the son of Eliakim,

**Luke 3:31** the son of Melea, the son of Menan, the son of Mattathah, the son of Nathan, the son of David,

**Luke 3:32** the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon,

**Luke 3:33** the son of Amminadab, the son of Ram, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah,

**Luke 3:34** the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor,

**Luke 3:35** the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah,

**Luke 3:36** the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech,

**Luke 3:37** the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalalel, the son of Cainan,

**Luke 3:38** the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

#### Age of 30 - Priesthood

*Verse 23- Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age* – here is your High Priest beginning His service to you. Age of Ministry: In the Old Testament, 30 was the age of ministry, Priests began ministry at age 30 (Num 4:3)

*Numbers 4:1–3 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: <sup>2</sup> “Take a census of the sons of Kohath from among the children of Levi, by their families, by their fathers’ house, <sup>3</sup> from thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, all who enter the service to do the work in the tabernacle of meeting.*

#### Contradiction?

When you turn back to Matthew’s Gospel you find that Joseph is the son of a man named Jacob, not Heli; and from Heli back to David you have an altogether different line from what you get in Matthew. Surely here is a contradiction in the Bible! Surely this proves that, after all, the Bible cannot really be inspired of God, that it only

consists of mere human records and it is not trustworthy! That's the way men have reasoned. When we look into it carefully I think the mystery is cleared up. It is remarkable that God has preserved the key to the mystery in the last book on earth in which we might have expected to find it.

**Matthew 1:16 (NKJV)**<sup>16</sup> *And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.*

### **Supposed – Established by Law / Adoption**

Verse 23 – “as supposed” – is the key here; at first glance it reads like, people thought Jesus was the son of Joseph, but they heard the rumors about Mary's adultery, and so they weren't fully sure whose son Jesus was. But the word actually means “established by the law”. So Jesus was Joseph's son not by birth, but by the law. So it can be read that Jesus was the son of Joseph by adoption.

**Luke 3:23** *Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, the son of Heli,*

### **Son of Heli**

Verse 23 – “Joseph the son of Heli” – But Matthew's genealogy says that Joseph was the son of Jacob! Well, here again we see the “law” brought into play here, in that this word for son was used as a son by birth, or a son by the law (hence a son-in-law). There is a clear difference between Matthew's genealogy and Luke's, in that Matthew's uses the word “begot” (which means “to be born”), and Luke only says “son”, which we see can mean son or son-in-law.

**Matthew 1:16 (NKJV)**<sup>16</sup> *And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.*

### **Joseph was Adopted by Mary's Dad**

Now back to why is Joseph called the son of Jacob and the son of Heli? Because Joseph was adopted by Heli who was Mary's father. We can know that because the word that was used here is (son or son-in-law). Why would Mary's father Heli adopted Joseph, because by law if Mary had no brother's, according to the OT Law, the son-in-law would be adopted, and that son-in-law would receive the father's inheritance as if he was a “begotten son”. The Torah provides for inheritance through the daughter, if no sons were available and she married within her tribe (Num 26:33; 27:1-11; 36:2-12; Josh 17:3-6; 1 Chr 7:15). By tradition, the father would legally adopt his son-in-law in such cases (Ezra 2:61; Neh 7:63; 32:41; cf. 1 Chr 2:21-23, 34-35; Num 27:3-8).

**Numbers 27:8 (NKJV)**<sup>8</sup> *And you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If a man dies and has no son, then you shall cause his inheritance to pass to his daughter.'*

### **Why Important? / Matthew – Throne of David / Blood Curse**

Why is this important? Matthew goes through the royal line down to Joseph, the legal father of Jesus Christ. In the first 17 verses of Matthew, he makes the case that Jesus had legal title to the Throne of David. The Problem: The Messiah, the royal line, would be from the tribe of Judah (Gen 49:10). The Messiah would be from the line of David (Ruth 4:22; 2 Sam 7:11-16). The succession of the kings of Judah proved to be, with only a few exceptions, a dismal chain. We eventually encounter Jeconiah (aka Johoiachin) who is so bad, God finally pronounced a “blood curse” on him (Jer 22:30).

**Jeremiah 22:24–30 (NKJV)**<sup>24</sup> *“As I live,” says the LORD, “though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, were the signet on My right hand, yet I would pluck you off; <sup>25</sup> and I will give you into the hand of those who seek your life, and into the hand of those whose face you fear—the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and the hand of the Chaldeans. <sup>26</sup> So I will cast you out, and your mother who bore you, into another country where you were not born; and there you shall die. <sup>27</sup> But to the land to which they desire to return, there they shall not return. <sup>28</sup> “Is this man Coniah a despised, broken idol— A vessel in which is no pleasure? Why are they cast out, he and his descendants, And cast into a land which they do not know? <sup>29</sup> O earth, earth, earth, Hear the word of the LORD! <sup>30</sup> Thus says the LORD: ‘Write this man down as childless, A man who shall not prosper in his days; For none of his descendants shall prosper, Sitting on the throne of David, And ruling anymore in Judah.’”*

### **When Satan saw this the Party was On**

Oh how Satan must have rejoiced when he saw God pronounce the curse on Jeconiah, he must have gathered all his henchman and had a party that night, saying God just shot Himself in the foot, he cursed the whole royal line, and the Messiah can't come through this line. But God is weaving details into His word, so that only one person would have the legal claim to the Throne of David, and be the Messiah – Jesus His only Begotten son.

### **The God Solution / Virgin Birth / What a Damper on Satan's Party**

How could the Messiah come from the royal line if there's a blood curse on the royal line? The answer is the Virgin Birth! Joseph's blood was not in Jesus, because of the virgin birth. Because Joseph's blood was not in Jesus, Jesus was not under the blood curse, and thus being the legally adopted son of Joseph, he would have the right to the Throne of David, which the Messiah had to come through that lineage in order to claim the legal rights to the Throne

of David. Mary's father Heli also came through the lineage of David, and he had the right to the Throne of David, and by adopting Joseph, and Joseph adopting Jesus, Jesus would have the legal right to the Throne of David. Once again the Bible is perfect. What a damper this must have been on Satan's party!

*Isaiah 7:14 (NKJV)* <sup>14</sup> *Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.*

### **Recap**

The royal line is passed through Jesus' legal father (Joseph), and His physical descent from David is established by Mary's lineage. Through Joseph's lineage we see Jesus as the Son of Man, sentenced to the curse; through Mary's lineage (the virgin birth) we see Jesus as the Son of God, not bound to the curse, and thus within the legal bounds of the Law to take the throne, become the King, and adopt us who are under the curse, and make us heirs to His Kingdom.

### **Every Detail of this Bible is Perfect**

We discover that every detail in Scripture proves to be deliberate and relevant and ultimately points to Jesus Christ!

*Proverbs 30:5 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> *Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.*

### **So Perfect – Here is a Message He sends to You**

As we read Luke 3 here backwards it goes from Adam all the way to Jesus. Now the string is also given in Genesis chapter 5 gives a genealogy of Adam. It is no coincidence the each name has a meaning, and when you put the names together, it has a message for us. Here is what the names mean in Hebrew of Genesis chapter 5.

- Adam                    --Man (is)
- Seth                    --Appointed
- Enosh                   --Mortal
- Cainan                --Sorrow (but)
- Mahalalel            --The Blessed God
- Jared                   --Shall come down
- Enoch                  --Teaching
- Methuselah        --His death shall bring
- Lamech                --The Dispairing
- Noah                    --Comfort, Rest

### **It is the Gospel**

So what we read through these names is the Gospel. That we were appointed to death (mortal sorrow), but the loving and blessed God came down, showing us the way, and that way is through Him and His death upon the cross, shall give us a hope and a peace (comfort and rest).

*John 3:16–17 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.*

### **A Love Story Written to You / A Marriage Proposal / God knows and uses our Past**

There is a story written in the heavens, and it is a love story of a God who loves you, has made a marriage proposal to you, will you marry me, will you be my bride, will you let me love you all the days of your life and into eternity, and will you love Me the same? And this lineage tells us a story of love in that God is saying I know your past, I know all about you, I know who your father is, and your grandfather, in fact I know you past even greater than you do (for how many can trace their lineage back to Adam). And in it all and through it all, I have used all the past, to bring you to this future, a future of love and a personal relationship with Me!

### **The Genealogy in Matthew**

#### **A Message in Matthew's Account**

God wrote us an amazing message in Luke's account, and He wrote another amazing message in Matthew's account, and it is equally powerful – so let's turn to Matthew chapter 1.

#### **Skip first 17 / Birth of Jesus – Good Stuff / Miss Out**

When we turn to the Book of Matthew how often do we quickly skip over the first 17 verses, these genealogies, so we can get to Matthew chapter 1:18, *Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows*. Verse 18, the good stuff, our savior is born. However by doing so, we miss out on an important message from God: *(Matthew 1:18 NKJV) Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.*

### **Bridge OT to NT / Old Covenant to New Covenant / Man's Ability – God's Ability**

For you see the book of Matthew is the bridge from the Old Testament, to the New Testament. If you recall the word testament means "covenant". The Old covenant to the New covenant. The Old Covenant was based on man's ability to be perfect before the Holy and pure God, we failed. The New Covenant is based on God's ability to make us perfect before Him, which He did through Jesus Christ for all who will receive Him.

### **God Writes / From the Beginning / Old Passed Away – I'm Doing Something New**

And as God writes this book to us, right from the beginning He is saying, The old things have passed away, behold all things are made new:

*(2 Corinthians 5:17 NKJV) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

### **Starting New Work / Trust In – Excuses – Misconceptions / Wiped Out**

In these 17 verses, He is saying, I'm starting a New Work,

- *Trust* - all the things you trusted in before I am going to wipe out,
- *Excuses* - any and every excuse you may have for not following me, wiped out.
- *Misconceptions* - your misconceptions that I won't receive you, or I can't and won't use you, wiped out.

### **We All Fall in 1 of 3 Areas**

I believe each and every person here at one time or another falls into one of these three groups.

### **5 woman Mentioned / Major No-No – Especially Gentile / God – Starting New Work**

There are 5 women mentioned in this genealogy, the first 4 all gentiles. This would be a major no-no for Jewish genealogy; you just didn't mention a woman, or a gentile. But God does, and He does it for a reason, to make a clear and defined statement....I am starting a New Work here, and here's proof, by the first 4 women mentioned in these passages. Let me show you something here He says to us today.

- 1.) Tamar: Dispels Your Families Past
- 2.) Rahab: Dispels Your Past Reputation
- 3.) Ruth: Dispels Your Religious Background
- 4.) Bathsheba Dispels Your Past Sins

### **Matthew:**

Now speaking of being used by God, Before we study these 4 women it is import to note, who wrote this book.....Matthew.

### **Matt – Tax Collector / Quota – Backed by Army / Greedy – Corrupted - Hated**

Matthew was a tax collector...Rome would set quotas then the tax collector would levy additional tax on top of that for his share. If Rome wanted 10% then the tax collector would add another 10 for himself. They were backed by the roman army, tax collectors were rich, greedy, corrupted, and they were hated.

### **But Met Jesus – Follow Me / Opened Heart – Then Home – then Hand / Write New Record**

But Matthew met Jesus. Jesus said follow me, and he did, Matthew opened his heart, then he opened his home and invited the other tax collectors to meet Jesus, after this he opened his hand. Matthew was a record keeper, the records of who paid taxes, it was only natural for him to grab a pen and start writing down a new record, the teachings and deeds of Jesus Christ.

### **Be Encouraged / God Uses what in Hand / Moses – David – Peter & James -Matthew**

This encourages me, cause I see the Lord will use whatever is in our hands presently to do His work in the ministry. Whatever your thing is, that's what he will use.

- As God called *Moses* in the wilderness, He said, Moses what's that in your hand...a rod...great I'll use that.....let's go talk to pharaoh.
- *David* what's that in your hand...a rock and a sling...great I'll use that...let's go kill a giant
- *Peter, James, John* what's that in your...a net...great I'll use that...let's go catch some men
- *Matthew* what's that in your hand....a pen...great I'll use that...write this down

### **God Uses anyone Willing / Doesn't Matter Opinion of World – Matthew Hated**

God uses anyone that is willing...doesn't matter what the opinion was of the world around them, Matthew was a tax collector, he was hated, yet he got to write down the greatest events to happen in this world

### **Jesus Asks Us – What is in Your Hand / hammer – Guitar – Keys**

Jesus says to you and me today, what's that in your hand. This? It is a hammer, I'm a carpenter...God says great I'll use that. What's that in your hand, a guitar...great I'll use that...what that in your hand, car keys...great I'll use that...

### **Think Can't Be Used – Past or Present / Wrong – Proves it with 4 Woman**

If you think you can't be used because of your past or present...God says wrong...I'll use that. And He proves it with these 4 women.

### **(Matthew 1:1 NKJV) The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:**

#### **Every Jew Knew Messiah through David / Proud of Lineage from Abraham**

Every Jew knew the Messiah would come through David; and every Jew proudly boasted of their lineage from Abraham.

#### **Glorious Bridge OT to NT / Gen 5 – He Died / Birth of Jesus / Romans 6:23 / New Work**

And here we see the glorious bridge from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant. The first genealogy in the Old Testament is Genesis 5, it starts with "*This is the book of the genealogy of Adam*". In Genesis 5 it reads so and so begot so and so, and he died, and so and so begot so and so, and he died. But here in Matthew 1, so and so begot so and so, all the way up to verse 18..."*Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows*". The comparison of the 2 genealogies is simply Romans 6:23. The wages of sin is death...Old covenant, but the gift of God is eternal life, New Covenant. Matthew chapter 1, God is starting something New here:

*(Romans 6:23 NKJV) For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

*Matthew 1:18 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.*

#### **Written so Knew Jesus is King**

This book was written so we/Jews/everybody will know Jesus is the King of kings. That is why he starts with genealogies. It proves that Jesus had the right to the throne because his lineage came through David-a king forever: *(Matthew 27:11 NKJV) Now Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" So Jesus said to him, "It is as you say."*

#### **God Starts Tearing Down Walls**

But as soon as God gets into it, he starts tearing down the walls:

- *Trust* - all the things you trusted in before I am going to wipe out,
- *Excuses* - any and every excuse you may have for not following me, wiped out.
- *Misconceptions* - your misconceptions that I won't receive you, or I can't and won't use you, wiped out.

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Wall**

Matthew 1:3 here goes the first wall

#### **1.) Tamar: Dispels Your Families Past**

**(Matthew 1:2 NKJV) Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers.**

**(Matthew 1:3 NKJV) Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram.**

**Tamar – Sons of Judah – Custom / Black Widow / Withholds 3<sup>rd</sup> Son / Prostitute - Perez**

The story of Tamar is told in Genesis 38. If you recall Judah's firstborn son married Tamar, but he died. So the custom was the next brother would marry her to carry on the other brother's name, so the 2<sup>nd</sup> son married her and he died. So now Judah is a little concerned thinking there is something wrong with the girl, the black widow story or something. So he says my 3<sup>rd</sup> son is still a youth, wait until he matures, and then he will marry you, but Judah had no intention of ever giving his last son to her. Tamar waited, but finally figured it out herself. So she heard Judah was on his way to town one day, she dressed like a prostitute, covered her face with a veil, and stood by the way waiting for him. Judah sees her, has relations, Tamar becomes pregnant with child – Perez, who is King David's great times 8 grandfather.

### **Bible Reports the Truth**

This is a strange story, but I appreciate this about the Bible, it tells the story in its entirety, in full truth, not trying to hide or cover anything. These are real stories about real people, and we read about them and can relate to them. We see that if God forgives them, then He will forgive us.

### **Proud of Family Purity Lineage / Blemish to Skip Over / God Lists Her**

The Jews were proud, trusted in “**Family Purity**”, the ability to trace their family purity, and tell who is in their lineage. Tamar takes care of that, they can't say they are perfect now, Tamar is a blemish everyone would rather skip over...but God lists her in the genealogy of the Messiah.....and God says to you.

### **Let These Words Never / Family Messed Up**

Let these Word's never past from your lips again: God won't receive me, God can't use me because.....

- my family's past is so messed up

### **All Believers / Family Messed Up / God Can't Use Me**

For all you who are believers, you may say I'm a little embarrassed with my families past, stuff went on that wasn't normal. God can't use me; He can't restore me because of my families past.

### **Past Marriage – Relationships – Ashamed / No One Want Me /**

Some of you who are from divorced families or divorced yourself, may say I will never be able to have another relationship, things happened in my past marriage that I am ashamed of...no one will ever want me. I've talked to so many people who said they were in abusive marriages, now have kids, they think no one would want to be with them, ...God says wrong...he proves it here with Tamar...messed up family past and everything, yet she is in the lineage of the Messiah.

### **God Will Use You – Godly Marriage / Can Have Godly Relationship / Don't Settle for Less – 2<sup>nd</sup> Best**

God can and will use you to be that godly husband or wife that has a marriage that brings glory to God, and children who grow up knowing and loving him. So many people are deceived into believing that they can never have a godly relationship because their past family was messed up. And sadly, they settle for 2<sup>nd</sup> best, robbing themselves of all that God would have for them.

### **Let these Words Never**

Let these Word's never past from your lips again: God won't receive me, God can't use me because.....my family's past is so messed up.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Wall**

Matthew 1:5 here goes the second wall

### **2.) Rahab: Dispels Your Past Reputation**

(Matthew 1:4 NKJV) Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon.

(Matthew 1:5 NKJV) Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse,

### **Rahab – Card Carrying Prostitute / Joshua 2 / People Spoke about Her**

Rahab was a prostitute a card carrying prostitute, everybody knew her. Her story is in Joshua chapter 2. If you recall she was the woman who hid the 2 spies as they scoped out Jericho for invasion and destruction. I need not go

into the details of prostitution, but simply to say with every experience she would lose a piece of herself, become void and empty inside, and everywhere she went she knew what people were saying about her.

### **Jewish Pride – Sexual Purity / Adultery Stoned in Manure Pit / King David Great Great**

The Jews were so proud, took such trust, in their “[Sexual Purity](#)”. If someone was caught in adultery or pregnant out of wedlock they would take them to the town square, put them in a pit filled with manure up to their knees and then stone them to death so they would fall into the manure. The story of Rahab takes care of that... Her son is the great-great granddad of King David. She was a prostitute, yet she is in the lineage of the Messiah.. And God says to you today.....

### **Let These Words / Past Reputation**

Let these Word’s never past from your lips again: God won’t receive me, God can’t use me because.....

- my past reputation is so bad

### **God Can’t Use Me / Rahab Hall of Faith / Risked Everything for God**

You may say my reputation is so low, God can’t use me. Rahab is listed in the Hall of Faith in Hebrews 11. A prostitute in the hall of faith, there is room for you and me. A tremendous women, not because she was a harlot, but even with her limited knowledge and understanding she risked everything, believing the God of Israel was the True and Living God.

*(Hebrews 11:31 NKJV) By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.*

### **Maybe You Say That / Promiscuous – Drugs - Alcohol**

Maybe you say, my reputation is so low God will never use me in the ministry. See I was promiscuous before I was saved; I did drugs, alcohol, an adulterer. God can give you a new reputation.

### **15 Year Class Reunion / No Preaching**

My 15 year class reunion I went. I woke that morning saying Lord I don’t want to go see people I haven’t seen in 15 years and say, you’re going to hell. I just didn’t feel like preaching. God said your testimony will be your witness. I said ok, not sure what that means, but ok. So I get up there, and they are giving out these nominations. My friend Bobby was voted most unlikely career profession. Bob was a great menace to the teachers, they hated him, and today he is a principle of a high school. I was picked greatest changed life. When I went up, I was asked to explain...I got to tell them about Jesus. God gave me a new reputation. Rahab’s new reputation is a woman of faith, she was a prostitute, yet she is in the lineage of the Messiah.

### **Let These Words**

Let these Word’s never past from your lips again: God won’t receive me, God can’t use me because..... my past reputation is so bad

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Wall**

Matthew 1:5 here goes the third wall.

## **3.) Ruth: Dispels Your Religious Background**

**(Matthew 1:5 NKJV) Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse,**

### **Ruth – Gentile / Toilet bowl / Can’t enter Temple**

Ruth: was a Moabite, a gentile, and Moab was God’ toilet bowl. At Ruth’s time there was a law which said a no Moabite or Ammonite could enter into the temple of God because they came against the children of Israel after they left Egypt.

### **Jews Proud – Racial Purity – No Gentiles / Unclean – Burn Clothes / Ruth takes Care of that**

The Jews were so proud, took such trust in their “[Racial Purity](#)”, free of pollution, gentile free. Not only would a Jew not relate to a gentile, but if they accidentally touched a gentile they would go home and burn their clothes. Jews would say look at my lineage...Jew begets Jew. Paul talks about being a Hebrew of Hebrews in Philippians 3:5. Ruth takes care of that, Her son Obed is King David’s granddad, she was from God’s toilet bowl, banned from the temple, yet she is in the lineage of the Messiah.... and God says to you.....

### **Let These Words / Religious Background**

Let these Word's never past from your lips again: God won't receive me, God can't use me because.....

- I have no religious background

### **You May Say / Not Raised in Church – Saved Late In Life / No Formal Training**

You may say my background is terrible, I wasn't raised in the church, or I went to church but didn't understand it. God can't use me, he can only use people who were saved since they were three, or I have no Formal Training. Ruth takes care of that. She came from Moab, only thing she knew of God she learned from her mother in-law Naomi, yet it was enough to make her follow. She said your God will be my God:

*(Ruth 1:16 NKJV) But Ruth said: "Entreat me not to leave you, Or to turn back from following after you; For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people shall be my people, And your God, my God.*

### **Not Lifetime of Church / Don't Let past Wipe out Future**

It is not a lifetime of church, God says now is the acceptable time, today is the day of salvation (2 Cor 6:2) don't let your past wipe out your future:

*(2 Corinthians 6:2 NKJV) For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*

### **I Didn't Know / Job – Malachi / God still uses Me**

I didn't know anything about the bible and I went to church my whole life. Job was a job. Malachi the great Italian prophet. Never heard of Psalms pronounced. Thought Paul the apostle was the same man King Saul. Yet God chooses to use me. God used Ruth, no background, yet she is in the lineage of the Messiah.... and God says to you.

### **Let These Words Never**

Let these Word's never past from your lips again: God won't receive me, God can't use me because..... I have no religious background

### **4<sup>th</sup> Wall**

Matthew 1:6 here goes the fourth wall

## **4.) Bathsheba Dispels Your Past Sins**

**(Matthew 1:6 NKJV) and Jesse begot David the king. David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah.**

### **Bathsheba / Adultery / Played Role of Fall of David / 10K to hiding in Caves**

Bathsheba: was Uriah the Hittites wife, and adulteress. She played a role in the bringing down of the great leader of the great nation Israel. King David the giant slayer, Saul killed his 1000 and David his 10,000. He goes from a king to a fugitive on the run, almost overnight. The enemies of God had reason to mock God:

*(2 Samuel 12:14 NKJV) "However, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also who is born to you shall surely die."*

### **Jews Proud of Royal Purity / King David / Bathsheba takes Care of That**

The Jews were so proud, took such trust in their 'Royal Purity'. Our king is the king...King David, he is the royal lineage forever. To the Jews so proud of their history and their great King David, Bathsheba takes care of that, this reminder of his affair with Bathsheba and then the murder of her husband must have been a particularly painful one, yet she is in the lineage of the Messiah. And God says to you.

### **Let These Words / My Past Sins Terrible**

Let these Word's never past from your lips again: God won't receive me, God can't use me because.....

- my past sins are so terrible

### **Abortion / Drug Dealer – Addicted / Brent & Allen**

Maybe you have had an abortion, sold drugs to someone who is now addicted, or just turned them on to them. Whatever it is God says he can still use you. Me, Brent, and Allen all played HS football together, Brent turned AL onto booze, and Allen has never stopped. Brent says he still has sorrow for that, but he won't allow it to stop him from preaching the gospel. Brent told the story of how one day, while playing football for the Penn State Nittney Lions, he was in the stadium with 80,000 fans, and as he stood on the sideline he received a vision of a man on standing on a wooden platform preaching the gospel to 10's of thousands, as the vision was closing in on the platform he said Lord who is that, and then the vision faded. Although he couldn't see the face, he knew in his heart it was him, and he said Lord if that is to be me, then it will have to be all you. And one day 5 years later he shows up at my house with a videotape, of him in Africa preaching the Good News of Jesus Christ to 100,000 people.

**Let These Words Never**

Christian, Let these Word's never past from your lips again: the God won't receive me, God can't use me because..... my past sins are so terrible.

**It is a New Beginning**

God shows us from the beginning, He is starting something new, He is giving us "A New Beginning".

- 1.) Tamar: Dispels Your Families Past
- 2.) Rahab: Dispels Your Past Reputation
- 3.) Ruth: Dispels Your Religious Background
- 4.) Bathsheba Dispels Your Past Sins

***(2 Corinthians 5:17 NKJV) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.***

# Luke 4

## The Wilderness Temptation (4:1-15)

### Reason for Writing:

*Luke 1:3-4 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, <sup>4</sup> that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.

### Theophilus

Theophilus means the “friend and lover of God”, and so we have a book written to you personally today. The God of the universe loves you personally, has called you to Himself for a personal and intimate relationship, and has written this book to you so that you may know for certainty all the things about Jesus, and how they apply to you, how they instruct you on how to live, reflect, and enjoy the love of God in your life personally today.

### Outline of the Book of Luke:

#### The Life of Christ (Luke 1-24)

##### **The Prelude to Christ’s Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- Introduction (1:1–4)
- The Birth of Jesus (1:5–2:38)
- The Boyhood of Jesus (2:39–52)
- The Baptism/Temptation of Jesus (3:1–4:13)

##### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- The Commencement of His Ministry (4:14–44)
- The Calling of His Disciples (5:1–6:16)
- The Continuation of His Work (6:17–9:50)

##### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- Samaria (9:51–10:37)
- Bethany and Judea (10:38–13:35)
- Perea (14:1–19:27)

##### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

##### **The Consummation of Christ’s Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

### Last Study – This Study / High Times – Trying Times

In Luke 3, we saw Jesus baptized in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. When He came out of the water, the heavens were opened, and the Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove. Then He heard a voice saying, “This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” Talk about a radical baptism! But be aware of this fact: After a high time often comes a hard time; on the heels of a triumph, trouble often follows. Consequently, here in chapter 4, we see Jesus, having been baptized, having heard the voice of the Father, facing a difficult time indeed....

### Led by the Spirit

Notice that Jesus was led—or literally driven—by the Spirit into the wilderness, where Satan would tempt Him. Why? Was the Spirit trying to do Him in? Not at all. The Spirit led Him into the place of temptation not to do Him in, but to show Him off. The Spirit was able to show off the power and the ability, the holiness and tenacity of Jesus. The same is true for you. Why does the Lord allow hardship in your life? He's out to show His strength in your life that the devil might be defeated once again.

*Luke 4:1 Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,*

*Luke 4:2 being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry.*

### **Shown Off – Show us How – Shows us Off**

Jesus has been shown off to us, and He shows us how to have victory in our trials, and then after our victories, God shows us off!

### **Jesus can Relate to Us / How About You Today**

We see from this passage that Jesus can relate to us, He understands us and what it is like to be tempted (and lock this in Christian, being a Christian does not make us exempt from trails and temptations), and thus He can relate to us because He has been there. Maybe you feel you are in a wilderness wandering, going through a dry time, being hounded by Satan, maybe you feel all alone, maybe you are wondering where God is and why He doesn't help you, or maybe you are wondering why God is allowing all this to happen in your life – then God's word is for you today, and you will see he is working, he understands you, and He can fully relate to where you are at and what you are going through. And through it all, God will be showing you things to empower you, and in the end God will be showing you off to others to empower them.

*(Hebrews 4:15 NKJV) For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

*(Hebrews 4:16 NKJV) Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

## ***The Temptation of Christ***

**Luke 4:1 Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,**

**Luke 4:2 being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry.**

**Luke 4:3 And the devil said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.”**

**Luke 4:4 But Jesus answered him, saying, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.’ ”**

**Luke 4:5 Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.**

**Luke 4:6 And the devil said to Him, “All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.**

**Luke 4:7 Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.”**

**Luke 4:8 And Jesus answered and said to him, “Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’ ”**

**Luke 4:9 Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here.**

**Luke 4:10 For it is written: ‘He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you,’**

**Luke 4:11 and, ‘In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.’ ”**

**Luke 4:12 And Jesus answered and said to him, “It has been said, ‘You shall not tempt the LORD your God.’**

**Luke 4:13 Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.**

**Luke 4:14 Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region.**

**Luke 4:15 And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.**

### ***Verse-by-Verse***

**Luke 4:1 Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,**

**Luke 4:2 being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry.**

### **Satan's 3 Plays**

Satan tempted, tried, pursued Jesus for the whole forty days, and in the end we read of the last three of the temptations. We see that the three temptations that Satan used against Jesus are the same three that he used in the Garden (4,000 years before), and the Apostle John sums them up for us in his first Epistle (1 John 2:16). These three (the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life) constitute Satan's entire game plan.... Satan has only three temptations, three plays in his playbook: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. And he runs them over and over again..., the same plays for 6,000 years now, the same plays he will run today on you.

*1 John 2:16 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.*

*Genesis 3:6 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food (lust of the flesh), that it was pleasant to the eyes (lust of the eyes), and a tree desirable to make one wise (the pride of life), she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.*

### **Pee-Wee Football**

When I coached pee-wee football, our playbook had over 100 plays in it, I only ran six of them, I had six offensive plays, three that went outside, and three that went up the middle – six plays total that was it. My theory was I didn't want to make football complicated to the little ones, but more so from a coaching strategy, I knew that if you couldn't stop those six, you wouldn't be able to stop any of the others, and I knew if you could stop those six, you would be able to stop any of the other 94 we had in the playbook. Satan runs the same three over and over and over again (lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life), because he knows if (we) can stop those three, we can stop any and everything else he throws at us, but if we can't stop those three, then who needs a big playbook.....just keep running the same play over and over again.

### **Satan always Goes back to the Well / Michelob Light for the Winner**

I always say, Satan knows how to go back to the well; he will go back over and over to that thing that constantly defeats you. When I first got saved, and for those early years, Satan never bothered to lay out lines of cocaine before me, because it would have been meaningless, I'd be that is just plain stupid. He would try to throw money at me, and he quit that real soon because he saw that could not draw me into forget the Lord. So, what did he do, Michelob Light (for the winner – if you remember that commercial); ok, drugs and money don't work, but if I can get him drinking, then the lust of the eyes and the pride of life would immediately follow. I would walk away, be walking strong, and then boom, Michelob Light for the winner, and I would lose again. I would lose again and again for those first several months after I got saved.....But God!

### **Even 20 Years Later – the Same Play**

When God gave me the victory, when God gave me the power to walk away and to overcome, I was living victorious! But Satan continually tried to go back to the well, he would continually put people and places in my path, even today 20 some years later, because he only has three plays, and he tries to run them over and over. If I can't stop those three, I won't be able to stop any.....but if I can stop those three, then I can and will stop anything else he runs against me.

### **How Stop – Recognize, Resist, and Rejoice**

How do I stop them (James 4:7), I recognize, resist, and rejoice. I recognize his strategy, I resist his strategy through the help and power of the Holy Spirit and God's Word (that is the submit to God part of this verse), and then I rejoice and give God praise and glory.

*James 4:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.*

### **Lust of the Flesh**

**Luke 4:3 And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread."**

**Luke 4:4 But Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.' "**

### **Turn Rocks into Bread / You Deserve some Satisfaction – Moments of Pleasure**

“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food...” (Genesis 3:6). The first temptation Satan used in the Garden of Eden is the same one He used first in the wilderness: the lust of the flesh. And it’s the same temptation he sets before you whenever he whispers, “Don’t you deserve a moment of satisfaction, a moment of pleasure? Just imagine how good this will fill? Why should everyone else have all the fun? Aren’t you a child of God? Don’t you think He wants you to experience life and be fulfilled?”

**Genesis 3:6 (NKJV)** <sup>6</sup> *So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food (lust of the flesh), that it was pleasant to the eyes (lust of the eyes), and a tree desirable to make one wise (the pride of life), she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.*

### **Fasting Overview / At End – Body Hungers / Satan comes when Tired & Exhausted / Guard your Rest**

After three days your body’s hunger pains pretty much subsides, and your body adjusts to not receiving daily food, and your body begins to consume fatty tissue, and actually starts to function highly efficiently. The body actually feels stronger and sharper because it starts to offload all the toxins that have been built up in the body, and the energy that was used to process the food we eat, starts to be used to go heal the body. But at about day 40 the body reaches a point that there is nothing left to process and offload, and all that is left to eat is muscle and organs. The body becomes fatigued, the body starts sending the signal to the brain to eat, it says if you don’t give me something to eat, I am going to eat you. So the body is exhausted and hungry, and that is the state Jesus is in at the end of the fast. Then Satan comes, and that is when Satan comes at you. Notice the onslaught that barrage and the bombardment, he throws all the massive artillery at Jesus when Jesus is tired. That is how he will so often come at you, when you are tired and exhausted. Christian, man is body, soul, and spirit, and the three cannot be separated. Guard your rest, get your rest, don’t wear yourself out (even for ministry) maintain your rest, eat right, go for a walk – don’t stay up late and wake up tired doing mindless things with that clicker in your hand. Satan will come when you are tired and burned out, guard against those things.

### **Since you are Son of God / Where is your God**

**Verse 3 - If You are the Son of God** - In the Greek this would read “Since you are the Son of God” (Satan does not dispute that Jesus is the Son of God). Satan will say to you, when you are tired, or stressed out, brought to the end of your rope, and Satan will say to you “since you are a child of God, where is He, where is your God, how can a God of love allow this to happen in your life”. Maybe your marriage is broken, maybe you singles are lonely, maybe you youth are bored, maybe your child is sick, maybe your finances are dry, maybe that addiction just keeps it grip on you, and then Satan says where is your God now, why doesn’t He help you now in your greatest need.

### **Jesus answers with the Word / Didn’t win by Being Son God – but by word of God**

Jesus answers with the word. And here is the key for today, Jesus was the Son of God, but He didn’t beat Satan in his hour or trial by being the Son of God, but by knowing, believing, and applying the Word of God. Christian, you do not have to be the Son of God to have victory over the flesh the world, and Satan (even though you are the child of God) – you whip him and the world by knowing, believing, and applying the Word of God!

**(Deuteronomy 8:3 NKJV)** *“So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.*

**(Proverbs 30:5 NKJV)** *Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.*

**(Psalms 138:2 NKJV)** *I will worship toward Your holy temple, And praise Your name For Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word above all Your name.*

**Psalms 119:89 (NKJV)** <sup>89</sup> *Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven.*

### **Jesus answers from Deuteronomy 6-8 / Jesus’ Morning Devotion**

Jesus will respond all three times to Satan with the Word, and that Word will be from Deuteronomy chapter 8 and chapter 6 (twice). I tell you what I believe, and that is that Deuteronomy chapters 6-8 were Jesus’ morning devotion that day. Christian, stay faithful for your morning devotions, for they are the arsenal for your days war. How often that word I glean from the morning devotion is what sticks in my mind throughout the day, the word I remember when the attacks come from the Satan, and the word that is on my mind, and thus near my lips when I speak to that someone who is going through a hard time and being attacked by the Devil themselves.

### **Word was Empowered by Spirit / Know and Believe Word – but need Spirit to Apply / Controlled by Spirit**

And, that Word of God was coupled with the Spirit of God in and upon our life. We can know the Word, we can believe the Word, but we need the Spirit to apply the Word. Man's human intellect can know and believe the Word, but it takes the supernatural work of God to live out the Word on a daily basis. How does this happen for you personally? First you must be born-again to receive the Spirit of God within you, and secondly you must submit yourself daily to the Spirit that is within you. Each day you decide who is going to drive, who has the control, who is leading – is it you, or is it the Spirit of God that is in you. When we talk about being filled with the Holy Spirit, we are saying in the simplest terms, the person is controlled by the Holy Spirit. Every believer is filled with the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 3:16), but not every believer is controlled by the Holy Spirit. I think, no I know, way too often we read our bible in the morning, say that was great, say a prayer for him, say a prayer for her, ask the Lord to bless this and bless that, but we run off without seeking and waiting for the Lord, and saying – Lord lead me today, I want to follow You today (rather we ask Him to follow us), and say Lord into thy hands I commend my spirit, have Your way with me today.

*Luke 4:1 Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness.*

*1 Corinthians 3:16 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?*

### **Makes Sense – because the Word was written by the Spirit.**

The Word empowered by the Spirit makes sense of course since the Holy Spirit was the one who inspired the Bible. He was the author who inspired the writers. The Bible is His Book. Spirit-controlled Christians don't usually have to force themselves to read the Bible. The Spirit gives them a holy appetite for it. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, so he will always direct us toward God's truth. When a person has little interest in the Word, or when Scripture seems dull and tedious to a church body, that is a sign that something is seriously out of sync. When we don't have respect for the Word and reverence for its authority, and when we don't humble ourselves to hear what God has said, we're on the wrong path.

*(2 Timothy 3:16 NKJV) All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,*

*(2 Timothy 3:17 NKJV) that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

### **Do You want Victory Daily**

If you want victory day by day, as compared to win a little here, win a little there – then couple the Word with letting the Spirit lead and control you, and you will have victory just like we read here in our passage today. This passage was written to show us how to have and live victorious Christian lives. It is what God desires for us, life and that more abundant.

*John 10:10 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

### **Important Note**

You know this Daylight Savings Time kills me, the spring forward and lose an hour. I need to get up at 5am, now I am getting up at 6, I pray Lord wake me up at 5 so I can get back to my routine – the Lord said “how about you set your alarm clock”. There is a point in every battle where I/we have to do uncomfortable things and endure some hard things. Here is an important note to glean before we move on, and that is notice that Jesus is fully involved in the battle, that Jesus is the one leading the counter-attack. My point that I am making is that many Christians rather than going on the counter-attack, rather than going on the offensive, they try to remove themselves from the battle; how? By saying Lord please take this away, Lord please if this is not from You than have it go away. If you don't want me to turn stones to bread, take the stones away. Lord if you don't want me involved with this person remove them from my life, if you don't want me involved in this addictive or destructive behavior than remove that desire from my life. Hey pray that for sure, prayer is power; but here is the bottom-line of it all, “The Word is the Word – And that Settles It”. The prayer isn't take it away, the prayer is empower me to walk away – because since Your Word has declared it, there is nothing more to discuss, it is not talking time, it is walking time.

### **Lust of the Eyes**

**Luke 4:5 Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.**

**Luke 4:6 And the devil said to Him, “All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.**

**Luke 4:7 Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.”**

**Luke 4:8 And Jesus answered and said to him, “Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’ ”**

### **Temp you You / Offers a Shortcut of God’s Ways**

“And that it was pleasant to the eyes” (Genesis 3:6b). After the lust of the flesh came the lust of the eyes. The lust of the eyes doesn’t refer only to looking at something that would tempt or stimulate you to do wrong. The lust of the eyes is seeing any other way than God’s to accomplish His purpose. “Why go through the agony and the suffering of Calvary?” Satan asked Jesus. “Just bow down and worship me, and the kingdoms of the world will be yours.” Satan is offering a shortcut to Jesus, and keeps running that same play with us, why go all the way through all that, why wait, come to me and I will give it to you today – *just do it, have it your way, you deserve a break today* – Nike, Burger King, and MacDonald’s all rolled into one.

*Genesis 3:6 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food (lust of the flesh), that it was pleasant to the eyes (lust of the eyes), and a tree desirable to make one wise (the pride of life), she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.*

### **Jesus rejects with the Word / Deut 6**

Jesus rejects the offer by quoting the Word and the truth that is in the Word:

*Deuteronomy 6:13 (NKJV) <sup>13</sup> You shall fear the LORD your God and serve Him, and shall take oaths in His name.*

### **Who you Worship – You will Serve**

*Verse 8 - ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’* – Jesus said, and Him you shall serve, because Jesus knows whomever you worship is whom you will serve.

### **Satan had Title Deed to Earth / Offer me Pasadena / Secret Service Story**

Satan said to Jesus, All of these will I give to You if You will bow down and worship me. For they are mine and I can give them to whomever I will. Jesus did not dispute the claim of Satan. But acknowledged that he was the possessor of the earth at that time. Now if you offered to give me all of Pasadena, I would say you are a nutcase, you have no claim to Pasadena, therefore you have no power to give it to me. I could only receive Pasadena by due process, by the process of an election. I met a guy who told me he thought he heard God tell him he was to be the president of the USA, and so on Ronald Regan’s inauguration day he went to DC with a sheriffs hat on and toy pistols on his side, and told a Secret Service guy to tell Mr. Reagan there was a new sheriff in town and Ron was to announce him as President. Yea, they took him to a little underground room and interrogated him for a few hours. In the end they just said this guy is crazy, and told him if he ever came back into the District of Columbia again he would go to jail, and thus he did a few weeks later, and the Secret Service kept their promise. It is due process, according to true ownership, Ronald Reagan had entitlement to the Presidency of the USA. Well notice Jesus never disputed Satan’s ownership. Jesus came to redeem the world back to God. But not by bowing down to Satan but by going to the cross and giving His life as a ransom for all.

### **God Owns Earth – gave it to Adam**

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was the Lord’s and the fullness thereof. It belonged to God by virtue of divine creation. But God then gave the earth to man. When He created Adam and placed him on the earth, He told Adam that he was to have dominion over the earth. He was to take care of it and treasure it as a beautiful gift of God.

*(Genesis 1:28 NKJV) Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”*

### **Tempter Came / Left Kingdom God – Enter Kingdom of Satan**

But when Satan came and tempted Eve to eat of the tree in the midst of the garden, of which God had told them specifically they were not to eat of that tree, and if they did they would surely die, when Eve ate and gave to Adam and he ate in disobedience to the command of God, but it was also obedience to Satan. A double action. And in so doing, Adam and Eve left the kingdom of God, the kingdom of light and life and they entered into the kingdom of Satan, the kingdom of death and darkness.

### **Adam Forfeited Earth to Satan / Satan god of this World**

And in so doing, the earth, which was theirs, was given over to Satan. They forfeited this beautiful earth into Satan’s control. And Satan has control over the world today. Paul calls him the god of this world. Jesus referred to him as the prince of this world.

*(2 Corinthians 4:3 NKJV) But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,  
(2 Corinthians 4:4 NKJV) whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.*

*(John 12:31 KJV) Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.*

### **Jesus came to Redeem the World / Wages of Sin Death / Redeemed not with Gold**

When Jesus came to the earth, His purpose in coming to the earth was to redeem the world back to God. It once belonged to God, God gave it to man, man in a sense gave it to Satan, but Jesus came to redeem the world back to God (Matthew 13 and Revelation 5), to pay the price of redemption (1 Peter 1:18-19). The price of redemption was death, for the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). That was His death upon the cross, the shedding of His blood. The giving of His life for man's sin--the price of redemption. He paid the price to redeem us from sin.

*Matthew 13:44 (NKJV) <sup>44</sup> "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.*

*Revelation 5:1-7 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. <sup>2</sup> Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?" <sup>3</sup> And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. <sup>4</sup> So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. <sup>5</sup> But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals." <sup>6</sup> And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. <sup>7</sup> Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.*

*(1 Peter 1:18 NKJV) knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,*

*(1 Peter 1:19 NKJV) but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*

*(Romans 6:23 NKJV) For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

### **Satan's Offer is Only Temporary – Jesus have World – but not the People**

Satan offers Jesus the world, but the price was for Jesus to not worship and honor His Father by going the way of the cross, Jesus only need to give honor to Satan, and He could have skipped the cross and had the world. But Jesus knew, and we do too, that the kingdom would only be temporary. Jesus could have had all the kingdoms of the world, but He could not have had the people of the world for eternity, but only for the brief time span that man lives, for after that every man and woman and child would enter hell because their sins would have separated them from God.

### **Shortcut the Cross is of the Devil / Peter will find that Out**

Take a shortcut Satan is offering, but Jesus rejects the offer. Jesus considers anything that shortcuts the cross of the Devil, as Peter would find out later when he said far be it from You Lord that you should suffer, and Jesus said get behind Me Satan.

*Matthew 16:21-23 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day. <sup>22</sup> Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!" <sup>23</sup> But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."*

### **Let it be Said Today to any Pastor or Church**

Let that be said to any church, pastor, or person – there is only one way for the redemption of man from their sin, and that is through the cross of Christ.

*Colossians 1:19-20 (NKJV) <sup>19</sup> For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, <sup>20</sup> and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.*

*Luke 9:23 (NKJV) <sup>23</sup> Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.*

### **Satan's Offer is Temporary / Don't Take the Shortcut / Satan Puppet master – Recognize & Resist**

Hey Christian, see what Satan offers us is always and only temporary, it doesn't last and eventually perishes and fades away. Christian don't take the shortcut, for anything, from salvation to simply waiting on Him to lead and

provide for you. Trust His word, and trust His timing. Satan wants to offer you a shortcut, so he can cut you short, and cut you off from what God desires to do in your life. We live in a have it now world, and Satan is the puppet master pulling those strings. Recognize him, and resist him.

### **I was saved 6 Months / Out of Loneliness – back to the Clubs**

I have to tell you, about the six month mark of being saved I know God's word and His ways that He desired for me. Yet out of loneliness I would still go to the clubs with my friends because I didn't want to stay home all alone. Amazingly, I have to tell you, I can't believe how good looking I got during that time. I mean every time we went out I had girls coming up to me, "hi – come here often, what's your sign". I went and looked in the mirror just to make sure nothing had changed dramatically overnight, and it hadn't, and it was so obvious to me, that I immediately saw it, ahh Satan is energizing these woman (he is the prince of the power of the air – he has the ability to energize anyone who is tuned into his radio station 66.6). Of course he was, he was offering me the world, he was working on my ego, and he was working on nullifying my witness, and hopefully even having me walk away from the Lord. Hey Christian is you suddenly find yourself popular, or the top of the list for the party, season tickets for life, or maybe even the top of the list for the promotion – think it through.

*Ephesians 2:1–3 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup> in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, <sup>3</sup> among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.*

### **John 2 – Best wine for Last**

Read John 2:8-10, remember that story? John 2 is a great illustration for us. Satan and the world gives you all the best they have up front, they want you to grab it now and then be grabbed and sucked in by it now and forever, but it never gets better. Jesus is not like the world or Satan, what Jesus saves the best wine for last. Satan says have this drug, have that person, look at that pornography, have that affair, live today, have this now, have this money, have this life today – but after drinking it all in, a person is intoxicated by it all, and sucked into a life they can't get out of all. Satan says you can do church later, don't get locked into Sunday's and Wednesday's, enjoy, rest, go take care of Number 1 – get your best life today! Christian.....God saves His best wine for last, and yes it may mean waiting, it may mean not having now, it may even leave you feeling like you are missing out, but trust His word and you can be sure the best wine is still yet to come.

*John 2:8–10 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> And He said to them, "Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast." And they took it. <sup>9</sup> When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. <sup>10</sup> And he said to him, "Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!"*

*Psalms 37:5–7 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup> Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass. <sup>6</sup> He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday. <sup>7</sup> Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.*

### **An Adult Story - Chrissie**

We are all adults here, this is why we don't have children in the service can I talk openly and frankly. It was during that time I had mentioned previously that I had some friends come to me, Ray you will never guess who wants to go out with you – Chrissie! Dude, can you believe it, she wants to go out with you, she is saying a house date if ya know what I mean. She wants us to set it up, what do you say? Oh I was flattered, my ego pumped, but my heart was for God and Him only – regardless. And I said no, they said why, and I said because God says I am not to have sex outside of marriage. They looked at me like I was crazy, but I knew God's Word was true, and I can honestly say I didn't even struggle with the decision. Well, a few months later the news breaks, Chrissie had a non-curable sexually transmitted disease, she contracted from a married man who lied about being separated from his wife, and lied about not having to worry about diseases. Chrissie's had decided all men were pigs, and every man would pay. Satan offered me his best wine that day, God gave me my best wine last, after I had faithfully waited for Him to bring me my wife. God's word is pure, and it is a shield too:

*(Proverbs 30:5 NKJV) Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.*

### **We still haven't seen Anything yet**

And we have still not seen anything yet – for heaven and eternity is still ahead of us!

## Pride of Life

**Luke 4:9** Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here.

**Luke 4:10** For it is written: ‘He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you,’

**Luke 4:11** and, ‘In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.’ ”

**Luke 4:12** And Jesus answered and said to him, “It has been said, ‘You shall not tempt the LORD your God.’

## Multitudes will come to You / 400 Feet High

“And a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof” (Genesis 3:6c). After the lust of the eyes came the pride of life, as Satan set Jesus on a pinnacle of the temple (the historian Josephus tells us that the pinnacle of the temple was about 400 feet high) and said, “Multitudes will come to hear You preach if You jump from the temple and let angels catch You. Show them who You are.” Make a name for yourself, hear the people say how wonderful you are, how gifted and talents, how popular and powerful you are (sound familiar?).

**Genesis 3:6 (NKJV)** <sup>6</sup> So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food (*lust of the flesh*), that it was pleasant to the eyes (*lust of the eyes*), and a tree desirable to make one wise (*the pride of life*), she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

## Satan Quotes Scriptures / Leaves Parts Out

Satan quotes scripture (Psalm 91), did you know that Satan can quote scripture. Just keep that in mind when that cult quotes you scripture. Satan quotes scripture, but Satan leaves out the part “in all your ways”. He leaves out the part “all your ways”, for that part declares that the way the Father had prescribed for Jesus, was by the Father’s way, not the way the Devil was trying to get Jesus to go.

**Psalm 91:11–12 (NKJV)** <sup>11</sup> For He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways. <sup>12</sup> In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.

## Our Ego / Love the Praises of Man

The “pride of life”, our ego loves to hear the praises of man, we love to be recognized, we love to hear people talk about how wonderful we are. For many people they invest their whole life into the football field, into the mirror, into their careers, because they love to be recognized and exalted when they walk into the room, they knowing what other people think about them (as talents, beautiful, intelligent, powerful).

## Satan can’t beat you – he will Join You

Here is another one for you to consider, if Satan can’t get you to indulge your flesh, if he can’t get you to take a shortcut, then he will try to “join” you. He won’t fight against you trying to be a man or woman of God, but what he will do is try to get you to get ahead of God and God’s plan for your life. Ok you are called, God has a plan, come on let’s get moving and start to make things happen – time is a wasting. That is what Satan is trying to do to Jesus, ok he is saying, jump down and get this ministry started off with a bang, let them see and hear all about Your greatness. Satan loves to have you jump out there and start moving apart from God’s plan and leading.

**Psalm 37:5–7 (NKJV)** <sup>5</sup> Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass. <sup>6</sup> He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday. <sup>7</sup> Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.

## Jesus answers with the Word / Morning devotion – Never know who come looking for a Fight that Day

Jesus for the third time, answers with the Word. It is good to have our morning devotions, for you never know who will come knocking on your door looking for a fight that day.

**(Deuteronomy 6:16 NKJV)** “You shall not tempt the LORD your God as you tempted Him in Massah.

## The 3 Plays

These three things can build more so through the years of life. They exist all through our lives, but can be more prevalent in certain periods of life. Lust of the flesh in our youth (but will always be there), fulfilling the desires of sex and partying. Then the Lust of the eyes when we get a little older (but will always be there), as a person says I must buy this, have that, bigger houses, nicer cars, more of these things. And then the pride of life, where a person has experienced the lust of the flesh (and older age makes them desire being in bed by 9pm then partying until 3 in the morning), they have established careers and have surrounded themselves with the nice things of life, and now

they see how fleeting all those things are, and desire the esteem of man, the praises of man, wow you are so successful, you have really climbed the ladder, you are older and you are so wise and well respected.

### **Fearful to Me – Under 18**

It is a fearful thing to me as I think about this, but 80 percent of the decisions for Christ are made before the age of 18. And each year thereafter the number decreases. For many people they have all the things of the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and they are left empty and realize this world isn't it. I met many older men and woman, and they don't feel they are sinners because they aren't doing those things, but more so, they have a problem of stepping forward and saying, agreeing, that they need forgiveness, that they need help, they fear it will diminish the respect they are looking for from others by saying those things, a sign of weakness and humility. And why so few people come to Christ in their later years. Whatever age you are, you need Jesus.

**Luke 4:13 Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.**

**Luke 4:14 Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region.**

**Luke 4:15 And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.**

### **Until an Opportune Time**

*Verse 13 - he departed from Him until an opportune time* – It is only until another time.

### **Same 3 Plays / We Defeat by Same 3 plays – Recognize, Resist - Rejoice**

Satan will come with the same three plays again, for he just runs them over and over. We defeat him by the same three; recognize, resist, and rejoice!

### **If you are in a Trial**

Maybe you have been struggling with a wilderness trial yourself, maybe you feel like you are ready to give in and give up, you are tired and exhausted from resisting, and you feel the Devil is closing in, and you wonder why God is allowing him to persist in his attack upon you. Christian, don't run – but resist.

### **James 4:7 & 1 Peter 5 / Ephesian 6 the Armor**

Peter gives a singular answer when he tells us we are not to run, but to resist; we are not to fear, but to resist; we are not to give in, but to resist. James says the same thing when he says, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). Inspired by the same Spirit, James and Peter are in agreement concerning the strategy of dealing with Satan. Because we have the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith, the sword of the Spirit, the breastplate of righteousness, our loins girded with truth, and the gospel of peace for shoes, there is only one part of our anatomy vulnerable to the Enemy: our backs (Ephesians 6:13–17).

*James 4:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.*

*1 Peter 5:8–9 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. <sup>9</sup> Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.*

*Ephesians 6:13–17 (NKJV) <sup>13</sup> Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. <sup>14</sup> Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, <sup>15</sup> and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; <sup>16</sup> above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. <sup>17</sup> And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;*

### **Turn to the Fight**

Don't try to run from the fight, turn to the fight!

### **The Lord does not want us to Run / We are Equipped to Stand**

It's never the strategy of the Lord to run from the Enemy. Rather, we are equipped to resist and even attack with such power that not even the gates of hell can withstand the onslaught (Matthew 16:18). We have an Enemy who wants to take us down, wipe us out, make us miserable, and nullify our effectiveness. Peter calls this one a roaring lion.

*Matthew 16:18 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.*

### **The Roaring Lion / the king of the Pride**

The roaring lion, known in Bible times and even to this day, is the king of the pride of lions—not because he is the most powerful lion in the family, but because of what he once was. You see, the roaring lion is the oldest lion in the pride. His teeth are worn. His feet are slow. He's not as quick as he once was, nor as powerful as he used to be. Therefore, his assignment is to hide in the grass until an unsuspecting impala or deer comes walking through. Then he is to stand up and roar. Hearing this, the deer or impala runs away from the roar of the lion—right to the place where all of the young, virile lions are waiting. In so doing, he runs to his death.

### **The Counsel to the Impala / Don't Run**

If you could give counsel to the impala or the deer in the savannahs of Africa, you'd say, "If you walk through a grassy area and hear a roar, whatever you do, don't run. Don't be afraid. Just go toward the roar. Resist, resist, resist. Don't run."

### **Devil had Teeth Kicked in at Calvary**

The devil is a roaring lion. He had his teeth kicked out at Calvary. Yet he can still roar. "YOU'RE GOING TO FAIL," he roars, but if we will recognize, if we will resist running off or ahead of God, we will have victory, and we will rejoice.

*Romans 16:19–20 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> For your obedience has become known to all. Therefore I am glad on your behalf; but I want you to be wise in what is good, and simple concerning evil. <sup>20</sup> And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

### **After Victory God will Show us Off**

After the victory – God will show us off, as a show piece, just like He did here in this passage with His Son, in whom He is well pleased.

# *The Mission Statement of Jesus*

## **(Luke 4:14-22)**

### **Reason for Writing:**

*Luke 1:3-4 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, <sup>4</sup> that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.

### **Theophilus**

Theophilus means the “friend and lover of God”, and so we have a book written to you personally today. The God of the universe loves you personally, has called you to Himself for a personal and intimate relationship, and has written this book to you so that you may know for certainty all the things about Jesus, and how they apply to you, how they instruct you on how to live, reflect, and enjoy the love of God in your life personally today.

### **Outline of the Book of Luke:**

#### The Life of Christ (Luke 1-24)

##### **The Prelude to Christ’s Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- Introduction (1:1–4)
- The Birth of Jesus (1:5–2:38)
- The Boyhood of Jesus (2:39–52)
- The Baptism/Temptation of Jesus (3:1–4:13)

##### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- The Commencement of His Ministry (4:14–44)
- The Calling of His Disciples (5:1–6:16)
- The Continuation of His Work (6:17–9:50)

##### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- Samaria (9:51–10:37)
- Bethany and Judea (10:38–13:35)
- Perea (14:1–19:27)

##### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

##### **The Consummation of Christ’s Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

### **New Section – Public Ministry / Final 3 Years / His Mission Statement / When we setup Church**

We move into a new section of our study through the Book of Luke, as Jesus now enters into the public ministry, it is the final three years of our Saviors Life, and He begins to call all men to follow Him for eternal life. What we will read in our passage today is what I call “The Mission Statement of Jesus Christ”; Jesus will declare to us what His mission was when He came. When we set up this Church, when we incorporated it with the State of Maryland, the first article (statement) in the official State documents was our mission statement. We stated why we came, what our purpose is, what our goal is, so it was clear to all exactly why we existed. This is what Jesus does very clearly for us in the passage before us.

### **His Mission Statement – See God’s heart for Us – Passion – Love / What Our Hearts should Be**

In this mission statement, we will see God’s heart towards us, what His passion is towards us, what He wants to do for us; we will read a depth of love that this world does not know, and cannot provide, and we will be shown the

heart that we are to have for others (regardless who they are, and where they are with the Lord).

### **Let's Read the Mission Statement**

Let me read the heart of the passage, the heart of God, the mission statement of Jesus Christ before we get going into our verse-by-verse study.

*Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed;*

*Luke 4:19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."*

Jesus' Mission Statement

- To preach the gospel to the poor,
- To heal the brokenhearted,
- To proclaim liberty to the captives,
- To give recovery of sight to the blind,
- To set at liberty those who are oppressed,
- To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

### **This is why the Father Sent the Son / Your Need – was His Mission / Your Heart – is His Passion**

Verse 18 – He has sent Me – This is why the Father sent the Son, to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, to give recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. Your need, was and is His mission! Your heart, is His passion; eyes to see is His desire; broken chains, freedom, new life – at whatever the cost, even if it meant His life.....What a God of love, what a God who is in love with you, what a God who right now today says to you, what is your need today, bring it to Me and more so, bring yourself to Me that I might hold you, comfort you, and speak to you My love and My passion for you.

### **As the Father has sent Me – So I send You**

Verse 18 – He has sent Me – Just as Jesus was sent, so He sends us. In John 20 Jesus says, "as the Father has sent me, I also send you." The word for sent in both Luke 4 and John 20 are the word "apostello" it is where we get our English word "apostle". We look at it as a title, a position, but it really is a "commission". The word simply means, "sent out". And so we are.

*John 20:21-23 (NKJV)* <sup>21</sup> So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." <sup>22</sup> And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

### **Pneuma – Breath of God / Anointed – Furnished with Power – Saturated / I've asked 10K times**

In both passages we see the same "formula" (if you would), as Jesus says the Spirit of the Lord is upon Him, and He is anointed. The word for "Spirit" is "pneuma" and it means "wind, to breath upon", and the word "anointed" means "furnishing with power", it also means to fully soak and saturate (we saw that when they would pour the oil upon a person or instrument for the dedication to God's service). How I ten thousand times have ask the Lord to anoint me for service, to breath His Spirit upon me and saturate me with Himself for His service; but this week as I sat and fellowshiped with Him and His Word, asked the Holy Spirit to teach me (John 14:16-17), the Lord opened this Scripture up in a fresh and powerful was to me.

### **God Revealed – This is what it means to be Anointed**

God through the Scriptures, clearly revealed to me what it means to be anointed, what a person who is anointed does, when I will know that the anointing of the Lord is upon me, for my heart will be a heart that desires - - - -

- To preach the gospel to the poor,
- To heal the brokenhearted,
- To proclaim liberty to the captives,
- To give recovery of sight to the blind,
- To set at liberty those who are oppressed,
- To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

### **This is His Mission Statement – Needs to be Our / Whatever you Doing for the Lord – This is Mission**

This is Jesus' mission statement, and as sent out ones it needs to be mine, and it needs to be yours..... Whatever you are doing for the Lord, be that Sunday School Teacher, Street Evangelism, Film Ministry, parenting, marriage, your mission statement is this (Luke 4:18-19), your means and places of fulfilling that mission statement is what varies, but the mission inside every ministry is the same. It is a life of grace, of tenderness, of caring, of going out of the way, it is a life of love – to every person God places in our life and on our path. In the hometown, and the outer parts of the world.

- To preach the gospel to the poor,
- To heal the brokenhearted,
- To proclaim liberty to the captives,
- To give recovery of sight to the blind,
- To set at liberty those who are oppressed,
- To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

### **Easy to Veer from Mission Statement / Easy to grow Cold because Nature of People**

How easy it is to veer from the mission statement; to get busy and distracted with our daily lives, that we lose sight of the mission statement, and more so the heart of the mission statement; it is equally as easy to lose sight of this mission statement because the people in need of this mission can seem so hard, stubborn, and unacceptable to receive.....regardless, it doesn't change the mission statement, nor the heart we are to have for them, just as the Lord never gave up or quit on us, so we are to be for every person God puts in our life.

- To preach the gospel to the poor,
- To heal the brokenhearted,
- To proclaim liberty to the captives,
- To give recovery of sight to the blind,
- To set at liberty those who are oppressed,
- To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

### **Reflect on Him / Communion**

I'd like to take a moment to reflect on Him, on His mission, and the words that He spoke that are His thoughts and heart for us, settle in our hearts, calm our minds, turn this meeting room into the sanctuary of God, and let Him soak (anoint) us with His Spirit, to breath His breath (Spirit) upon us. Let's settle into a time of worship, let's take communion together, and then see what the Lord speaks to our heart through His word.

### ***Acceptance Throughout Galilee***

**Luke 4:14 Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region.**

**Luke 4:15 And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.**

### **Jesus filled at Birth / After Wilderness returns in Power of Spirit / Course is Set – the Cross / Spirit Teaching**

Jesus had been filled with the Holy Spirit since His virgin birth; but now after His wilderness temptation, He returns from it in the Power of the Spirit, His course is set, His focus is singular – the cross! Jesus went into the synagogues and taught in power, and the people were amazed, for they had never heard anyone teach with such passion and compassion, and the hearts of people were moved, and that can only happen when the Spirit moves in a person's heart.

### ***The Mission Statement of Jesus Christ***

**Luke 4:16 So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read.**

**His Custom – His Regular Routine / Since age 12 – now 30 /**

Verse 16 - And as His custom was – It was what Jesus did regularly, He went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day. We studied the story of Jesus at the age of twelve sitting, listening, and asking the rabbis questions at the Temple when His family went to Jerusalem for the Passover celebration. Well this verse is telling us that Jesus went to the local synagogue every Sabbath, that is what He did regularly, and that is from the age of twelve up to this point of being at the age of thirty.

### **Do you think the Rabbis wowed Jesus / Nazareth not Primetime /**

Mind you, Nazareth was considered the back roads, the other side of the tracks, it would not have been “prime” duty for the “prime” rabbis, thus the synagogue in Nazareth would not have had the “prime” teachers. Yet Jesus still went, every Sabbath. Do you think these rabbis really taught Him anything, I don’t think so. Do you think the synagogue in Nazareth was the “happening” synagogue in region, I don’t think so. Yet Jesus, the Son of God, went faithfully every week. It is a great example for us.

### **Why? Not to forsake Assembly**

Why did Jesus go, simply because that is what God calls for us to do. He says do not forsake the assembly of the brethren, for when you go you stir up love in another, and have the opportunity to exhort (lift up and encourage another). Many people veer from the mission statement, because they do not make it their custom to weekly assemble with the brethren.

*Hebrews 10:24–25 (NKJV)* <sup>24</sup> *And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, <sup>25</sup> not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.*

### **Why? God worships in Our Midst / God Sings over Us / God loves you that Much**

And secondly, why did Jesus go weekly to a synagogue in the backwoods of Nazareth, because He knows the certainty of this truth, it is there that God will be, and God will be there worshipping in the midst of all who are there. For all the people who “blew off” synagogue (church) that day in verse 15-16, they missed God in their midst. In Zephaniah, we read that God rejoices over us in singing; how it pleases His heart to gather in our midst, join us as we worship Him, and at the same time He looks around and looks upon His sons and daughters, and He breaks forth in singing over us. Wow, and yes that is how He feels about you, yes He is that in love with you, you bring Him joy.

*Hebrews 2:11–12 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> *For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, <sup>12</sup> saying: “I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You.”*

*Zephaniah 3:17 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> *The LORD your God in your midst, The Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing.”*

**Luke 4:17 And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:**

### **Visiting Rabbi invited to Share / Isaiah 61**

As was the tradition in those days, Jesus, a visiting Rabbi, was afforded the opportunity to read and comment briefly on Scripture. And the text for that given day being Isaiah 61—a prophecy concerning the coming Messiah—Jesus’ first sermon would be about Himself.

*Isaiah 61:1–2 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> *“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; <sup>2</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn,*

**Luke 4:18 “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed;**

**Luke 4:19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”**

### **Preach – Glad Tidings / Good news – God has Come / I have news for the Poor**

Verse 18 - To preach the gospel to the poor, - preach (euaggelizo – English for evangelize), and it means to bring glad tidings, joyful tidings. Evangelism isn’t doom and gloom, it is good news! The good news that God has come, that God loves you so much that He has come. Jesus says I have good news, I have good news to the poor, I have come, I have been sent from the Father to them.

### **Physical Illustration to make Spiritual Point / Poor – reduced to Begging / Feel Forgotten**

In each point Jesus will take a physical illustration, and use them to make a spiritual point; the word poor means “reduced to begging, empty, destitute of wealth, influence, position, honor. The poor, the downtrodden, the outcast, the unattractive, and the forgotten people, this is who Jesus looked for, whom the Father sent Him to reach out to. Do you feel forgotten, do you feel there is something missing in your life, do you feel this world has left you broke and hopeless, does your heart say I wish someone or something could come and fill this emptiness of my life. Jesus’ mission statement is to do just that, to take you from poverty to the riches of God blessings, a personal relationship with Him. For those have been, remember what it was like, and remember how it felt to be filled with His love and in time you celebrated “He came for me – He loves me”.

### **His Mission Statement – Thus Ours / As Father Sent Me – so I send You**

This was His mission statement, and thus it is ours; for as the Father has sent me, so I send you.

*John 20:21 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”*

### **May we remember the Desperate, Empty, Destitute, Forgotten, and Hopeless / Bring Glad Tidings**

And remember, there are those who are desperate, destitute, feel forgotten and hopeless.....they are all around us, who will bring the glad tidings, who will tell them, He has come!

### **Heal – to Make Whole / Broken – Shattered / Heart – Center of Circulation / People just hanging On**

Verse 18 - To heal the brokenhearted, - the word heal means “to make whole”, for the word broken means “broken into shivers, break into pieces”, and the word heart means “center of circulation”. Jesus’ mission was to come and make whole hearts that broken into pieces, and because of the fractures the circulation was disrupted from smooth flow. How many people are just hanging on for the day because their hearts are broken, their lives seem to be in pieces, they see all the pieces, but they don’t know nor have the power to put the pieces back together again so their lives be whole again. Life and love can’t seem to flow through their bodies anymore. A few years ago I blew out my knee; I thought it would heal on its own but it just didn’t, and every day for a year I would have an ache in my knee. I started to go to physical therapy and the doctor immediately put his finger on a large portion of scar tissue on my ligament. He said that the tissues of the ligament ran vertically, but the scar tissue was laying horizontally, it was like a mat of fiber now, and thus when the blood pumped through my body, it could not flow freely through my knee ligament, and the only thing that could heal the damage was the blood (as it contains the healing properties), but the blood could not get through the scarring. So the doctor began to apply heat, electro pulses to warm the area up, and then he would run his thumbs over the area to break up the scar tissue so the blood would flow through the ligament and bring with it healing and restoration.

### **Jesus gives Picture of Great Physician / Setting the Broken Bone / My Mission statement why I Came**

Jesus gives us a tender look at Himself as the Great Physician. A physician that come to ailing and broken person, and performs surgery on them. He comes to the broken bone and He gently puts His hands upon it, He begins to use His touch to set it straight again, His bedside manner is one of gentleness and warmth. He looks into the eyes of the patient, He gives a word of comfort that He will make things whole again. He sets the broken bone, He wraps the broken bone, and He comes back again and again, changing the bandages, running His hands upon the fracture, and He does it as often and as long as it takes to bring complete healing. It is My mission statement, it is why I came He declares, I know the ills and the hurts of the world, but I Am your great Physician, and I can make all things whole again. I can give you love again, I can give you hope again, I can give you all these because it is who I am, and I give you Myself.

### **His Mission Statement – Thus Ours / As Father Sent Me – so I send You**

This was His mission statement, and thus it is ours; for as the Father has sent me, so I send you.

*John 20:21 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”*

### **Have You set Out to set broken Bones / A Gentle Touch – Warm Embrace – a Comforter**

Have you set out to set some broken bones, some broken hearts, are you asking the Lord to be that gentle touch, that warm embrace, that comforter – for those who are brokenhearted?

### **Proclaim – to Herald / Boston Herald – Report the News / Herald the Captives are Free / Release the Guilty**

Verse 18 - To proclaim liberty to the captives, - to proclaim means to “herald”; we call them newspapers, but in the early days, and many still today, call them “heralds” (Boston Herald, Miami Herald, Zimbabwe Herald). They simply reported news that was truth. Jesus heralds that the captives are free. The immediate picture is a person imprisoned, held captive. The Jews under Babylon and then Roman occupation had many citizens wrongly imprisoned, held captive because they stood up against the tyrant. The Jews wanted their Messiah to deliver them from the oppressor and occupier. But this word, it means to release from prison the guilty – it means to grant a pardon, remove the penalty for breaking the law, it was setting the guilty free. It is the whole message of the gospel, we were guilty, God forgave us through the Son that He sent. Jesus came to herald, state a truth, all the guilty I will set free.

### **His Mission Statement – Thus Ours / As Father Sent Me – so I send You**

This was His mission statement, and thus it is ours; for as the Father has sent me, so I send you.

*John 20:21 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”*

### **We are to Herald to the Guilty / Little more Personal – the Guilty who Hurt You**

We are to herald the truth of this gospel, that Jesus has come to set the captives (the guilty) free, to tell people that they can be freed from their sin; maybe you never considered this either, but some people war against God because they know they are guilty but think He won’t forgive them, and thus they feel there can never be peace between them. But how about something even more personal and closer to your heart, have you conveyed this very same truth to the person that has hurt you, the person who is guilty before you, have you heralded the truth to them, that you forgive them, the past is over, and they no longer have to live captive to what they did against you in the past? They may continue the war against you because they know they are guilty and think there will never be peace between you, because they don’t know what God has done in you, that you carry and live the same mission statement as Him, to proclaim liberty to the captives.

### **Recovery – Means they Once Saw / Jesus will Receive the Backslider**

Verse 18 - To give recovery of sight to the blind, - recover, means that once saw, but now they don’t. Jesus heralds that He has come to give second, thirds, and ten thousands chances. That He will receive the backslider, He will receive the person who once saw Him so clearly, but has become blinded by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

### **His Mission Statement – Thus Ours / As Father Sent Me – so I send You**

This was His mission statement, and thus it is ours; for as the Father has sent me, so I send you.

*John 20:21 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”*

### **We can become Frustrated with them – Why can’t they See It / Tell them the 1001 Time**

Of the spiritually blind, we are tempted to say in frustration, “Why can’t they see it? How could spiritual truth be any clearer?” We can say I’ve told them this a thousand times, they just don’t get it. Beloved, tell them 1001 times, don’t weary of telling them, but always tell them in the same heart, same passion, and same compassion as this mission statement.

### **Oppressed means Crushed – Broken – Lose Vitality / They Beaten and Can’t get up / Addiction - Depression**

Verse 18 - To set at liberty those who are oppressed, - The difference between the captive (prior sentence) and oppressed, is that the word for oppressed here means “crushed, broken into pieces, to lose its vitality”. The picture is someone who is simply beaten, they feel this is life, it will never change, they will never get out from under this weight, this burden, that they are under. There are countless that feel it is no use they will never overcome their addiction, their depression, their past! They feel they are damaged goods, they feel nobody wants them, but Jesus heralds this truth, I have come and I will, and I can. Whatever is crushing you, Jesus says I will and I can.

### **His Mission Statement – Thus Ours / As Father Sent Me – so I send You**

This was His mission statement, and thus it is ours; for as the Father has sent me, so I send you.

*John 20:21 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”*

### **Crying Out for "Those Nobody Wants"**

(Story from a Pastor – Leadership Magazine) The Tuesday night prayer meeting at Brooklyn Tabernacle felt like skydiving into a tornado, exhausting and exhilarating all at once. I'd read about the meeting in Pastor Jim Cymbala's book *Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire*, but nothing prepared me for the event itself: 3,500 God-hungry people storming heaven for two hours.

Afterward, my friend and I went out to dinner with the Cymbalas. In the course of the meal, Jim turned to me and said, "Mark, do you know what the number one sin of the church in America is?" I wasn't sure, and the question was rhetorical anyhow. "It's not the plague of internet pornography that is consuming our men. It's not that the divorce rate in the church is roughly the same as society at large."

Jim named two or three other candidates for the worst sin, all of which he dismissed. "The number one sin of the church in America," he said, "is that its pastors and leaders are not on their knees crying out to God, 'Bring us the drug-addicted, bring us the prostitutes, bring us the destitute, bring us the gang leaders, bring us those with AIDS, bring us the people nobody else wants, whom only you can heal, and let us love them in your name until they are whole.'"

I had no response. I was undone. He had laid me bare, found me out, and exposed my fraudulence. I was the chief of sinners. I had never prayed, not once, for God to bring such people to my church. So I went home and repented. I stopped sinning. I began to cry out for "those nobody wants."

### **Reference is to Year of Jubilee / Economic Balance / Their Fault or Misfortunes**

*Verse 19 - To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.* - The reference here is the "Year of Jubilee" described in Leviticus 25. Every seventh year was a "Sabbatical year" for the nation, when the land was allowed to rest; and every fiftieth year (after seven Sabbaticals) was set apart as the "Year of Jubilee." The main purpose of this special year was the balancing of the economic system: slaves were set free and returned to their families, property that was sold reverted to the original owners, and all debts were canceled. The land lay fallow as man and beast rested and rejoiced in the Lord. Some people lost their land and home because they fell behind to their creditors and couldn't pay their debt. Some people owed so much they could only pay the debt off by becoming a servant in the home of their creditor. Sometimes it was because of their own fault, sometimes by no fault of their own, just a series of misfortunes, but none the less, they have lost home and possession, and even their own freedom.

### **Began with blowing of Shofar on Day of Atonement / High Priest goes into Holy of Holies**

The Year of Jubilee began with the blowing of the shofar (a trumpet like instrument that was made from a ram's horn) on the Day of Atonement. The Day of Atonement was the day (the one and only day) that the High Priest would enter the Holy of Holies in the Temple and represent the people of the Nation of Israel before the Lord, and seek forgiveness for their sins.

### **Primary Purpose – Reunite Owner with Possessions**

The primary purpose of the Year of Jubilee was to reunite the owner back to their possessions. Jesus has come to reunite you to the Father.

### **Jesus says My Mission Statement is to Restore You / Spiritual Jubilee – Physical Jubilee**

Jesus is saying my mission statement is to restore to you all that you have lost in this world, regardless if it was your mistake or a series of misfortunes, I can give you a spiritual year of Jubilee today, I can make all things new to you, regardless of past failings. And, let it be known there will come a day that there will be a physical year of Jubilee and all you who have physical ailments, disease, children with special needs.....there will be a day in a blink of an eye, that all things will be restored and made new.

### **His Mission Statement – Thus Ours / As Father Sent Me – so I send You**

This was His mission statement, and thus it is ours; for as the Father has sent me, so I send you.

*John 20:21 (NKJV)* <sup>21</sup> So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

### **We get to tell of this Blessed Hope**

We get to tell of hope that no one else can tell, we get to tell people there is a Year of Jubilee today, and one yet to come, that there is hope for today, and blessed hope when we take our last breath.

### **Living His Mission – Living Him**

Here is what I have found, and that is when I am living out His mission statement, it He that is living in and through me, and I experience Him in a wonderful and intimate way each time.

**Luke 4:20 Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him.**

**Luke 4:21 And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”**

**Luke 4:22 So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, “Is this not Joseph’s son?”**

### **Today it is Fulfilled**

Jesus says today what you have heard, is fulfilled, for I am the One who can fulfill all these words.

### **His Mission Statement – Thus Ours / As Father Sent Me – so I send You**

This was His mission statement, and thus it is ours; for as the Father has sent me, so I send you.

*John 20:21 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”*

### **The Mission Statement**

- To preach the gospel to the poor,
- To heal the brokenhearted,
- To proclaim liberty to the captives,
- To give recovery of sight to the blind,
- To set at liberty those who are oppressed,
- To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

# Going back to Nazareth

## (Luke 4:16-44)

### Ended Last Week

We ended last week with Jesus heading back to His hometown of Nazareth, and proclaiming His mission statement, of why He came and why the Father sent Him.

**Luke 4:16** So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read.

**Luke 4:17** And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

**Luke 4:18** “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed;

**Luke 4:19** To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”

### Jesus' Mission Statement

- To preach the gospel to the poor,
- To heal the brokenhearted,
- To proclaim liberty to the captives,
- To give recovery of sight to the blind,
- To set at liberty those who are oppressed,
- To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

### Bruised Reed – Smoldering Flax

In Matthew's gospel the heart of Jesus, the reflection of this mission statement we read here in chapter 4 is that a bruised reed He will not break, and smoldering flax He will not quench. This is your God, He is gentle with you, He is kind, He is loving. If you feel like your flame is about to go out, He cups His hands around you and breathes His breath (rauch) upon you, if you feel you are bruised, He gently props you back up until you can stand on your own again. He is such a gentle God, such a loving God, such an intimate God; if you have a bruising and exhausting week, come to Him today and let Him restore and refresh you.

**Matthew 12:14–21 (NKJV)** <sup>14</sup> Then the Pharisees went out and plotted against Him, how they might destroy Him. <sup>15</sup> But when Jesus knew it, He withdrew from there. And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all. <sup>16</sup> Yet He warned them not to make Him known, <sup>17</sup> that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: <sup>18</sup> “Behold! My Servant whom I have chosen, My Beloved in whom My soul is well pleased! I will put My Spirit upon Him, And He will declare justice to the Gentiles. <sup>19</sup> He will not quarrel nor cry out, Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. <sup>20</sup> A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench, Till He sends forth justice to victory; <sup>21</sup> And in His name Gentiles will trust.”

### Now Rejection

And now we pick it up in verse 20 and we will read an amazing story, the people of His hometown reject Him, and drive Him to a cliff wanting to kill Him. Have you been rejected in your hometown for your faith? Then today God has a word for you that He knows what you are going through, but also a word for you on how you are to handle and approach that rejection and how you can still reach your Nazareth.

### Rejection at Nazareth

**Luke 4:20** Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him.

**Luke 4:21** And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

### Stops before End / 1<sup>st</sup> Coming & 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming

It is significant that he stopped reading with the words “... to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.” He did not add the rest of the words from Isaiah “... and the day of vengeance of our God.” The purpose of His First Coming

was to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. This present age of grace is the accepted time and the day of salvation. When He returns to earth the second time, it will be to proclaim the day of vengeance of our God *Isaiah 61:1-2 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> *“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; <sup>2</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn,*

### **Jesus stops at the Comma / 2,000 Year Comma**

Jesus stops at the comma. The second part of the verse speaks of His Second Coming. The comma has been 2,000 years long now. We are living in a comma. Everybody in this room, and every person you know, family and friends, are living in a comma – and some day that comma will end.

**Luke 4:22 So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, “Is this not Joseph’s son?”**

**Luke 4:23 He said to them, “You will surely say this proverb to Me, ‘Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.’ ”**

**Luke 4:24 Then He said, “Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country.**

### **They Marvel you Don’t Run with Them / Prophet not Honored / Jesus Example / Believe after Live it Out**

A prophet is not honored in his own country. Peter said they marvel that you run not with them; because they could understand you then when you were one of them, but this new you they just don't get it. The prophet is not honored in their hometown. Now know this, it doesn't mean they won't get saved by your preaching of the gospel, as a lot of people stop or won't share Christ with their family and friends because they say well even the Bible says a prophet is not honored in their own home. Family and friends will get saved, Jesus' family got saved, and you can be sure that many people in Nazareth got saved too. How does this play out practically for you, just look at Jesus for the example. Hey that is Joseph's son claiming to be the Messiah they said, He has been breathing in too much sawdust maybe they mocked. When did they believe His claim, after He lived it out. Jesus lived it out, and when He rose from the dead, they believed. The key for your family and friends to believe your claims (I am a Christian), is for you to live it out. Can you rise from the dead, well in their eyes you can, and that is the times when they think that event or situation should kill your belief in Christ, but you just rise up and continue to follow Him. In their minds they will see things happen in your life and says, now we will see them curse God and come back to their old life, but they watch you praise rather than curse, and rather than laying down and dying, you rise up even stronger in your clinging to the Lord. They.....watch the old man die, and the new man rise! They see you live it out, they see you acting like Jesus even when they curse, mock, and persecute you, they see your statement is more than words, but actions.

*1 Peter 4:4 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> *In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you.*

*Romans 6:5-7 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> *For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,* <sup>6</sup> *knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.* <sup>7</sup> *For he who has died has been freed from sin.*

### **Major Key – We have to go back to Nazareth / I Am Messiah – Announced in Nazareth (not Jerusalem)**

Christian, here is a major key; we have to go back to Nazareth. In my studies it appears (and if I not correct the point remains) to me that Jesus has marveled the people with His teaching, but up to this point He had yet to publicly declare He is the Messiah, but here on this day He clearly does. He makes His announcement in Nazareth; Jesus could have said I will make this announcement in Jerusalem, I will make it during one of the Feasts when there are a couple million people in Jerusalem, I will make this announcement at the Temple, but He doesn't, He makes it in His hometown of Nazareth. His mission statement would include His hometown of Nazareth because they were poor, they were brokenhearted, and they were captive, blind, and oppressed.

### **Mission Statement – Jesus knows their Condition / He Understands Them / We want them Understand Us**

Jesus understands their condition, their state, and their lack thereof. Christian I believe our failing in our Nazareth is that we are trying to make people understand us, rather than us trying to understand them. We are the new creation, we are living the new life, so we try to have them understand us and this new and different life we are living. I see the Jesus example here in that He understands where they are at, and approaches to them, rather than just trying to get them to come to Him, which is a big difference. We try to explain to them what has happened to us, what the gospel means, why we are different, and all that is great; but remember, they are still blind, they are still captive, and

the natural man does not discern the things of the Spirit (1 Cor 2:14). So when we are rejected in our hometown, among our family and friends, may we remember it is because they are still blinded; so it is as much, or more so, for us to understand them. They can't understand how a person can change so dramatically so quickly; so when we talk with them we need to be gentle and understanding with them. Patiently and lovingly, we need to speak and walk with them (and I don't just mean the first weeks and months we are saved - but until they get it). Say to them, I know this must be quite a shock to you, or ask them - tell me what you are thinking, and it is ok to be honest, we are friends. Ask them, say well it has been ten years since I gave my life to Christ and I would really like to know what you thought ten years ago and what you think about it today.

*1 Corinthians 2:14 (NKJV) <sup>14</sup> But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

### **Maybe won't Repent / Maybe can't Believe God would Visit Them**

They may not be willing to come to Christ because they don't want to turn from their sin; but they may not be willing to come to Christ because they can't believe that God would personally visit their town, their home, and be a God who a bruise reed He will not break, and a smoldering wick He will not extinguish. Go and try to understand them, see where their heart is at, and see what they Lord may do. And, go back as often as the Lord calls you to go, be sensitive to His leading and don't write them off, and don't say because a prophet is not honored in his hometown I would just be wasting my time.

### **Go with Heart of Mission Statement**

And go with the mission statement, go with that heart, and God will experience God in a mighty way, because the Spirit of the Lord will be upon you, and you will be saturated and soaked in His love and warmth.

*Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed;*

*Luke 4:19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."*

**Luke 4:23 He said to them, "You will surely say this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.' "**

**Luke 4:24 Then He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country.**

**Luke 4:25 But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land;**

**Luke 4:26 but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow.**

**Luke 4:27 And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian."**

**Luke 4:28 So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,**

**Luke 4:29 and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff.**

**Luke 4:30 Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way.**

### **Jesus knows their Heart / Jesus is nobody's Puppet / 300 Prophecies of OT**

*Verse 23 - Physician Heal Thyself* - Now Jesus reads the heart of many, and they are saying, show us a miracle and we will believe it, do miracle like we heard you were doing up in Capernaum and we will believe it. Jesus is nobody's puppet, and He answers to no man, He did not come to put on a dog and pony show, but to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Lots of people still today still say to God, show me a miracle and I will believe in You and follow You. The validation of Jesus' ministry was not the miracles, it was the 300 prophecies that He fulfilled in the Old Testament, that is what is indisputable; Jesus could have performed no miracles when He came, and would still have the right to expect people to know He is the Messiah.

### **Jesus not Fire – but Gracious Words / Bruised Reed – Smoldering Flax**

I think we read this passage and always frame our minds to think Jesus is bringing fire and brimstone upon these people, but remember it is in the context of the mission statement and His heart (which is the bruised reed He will not break nor the smoldering wick He will not extinguish), but also it is clearly said, He spoke gracious words.

*Luke 4:22 So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is this not Joseph's son?"*

### **They Astonished – Something Deeper / Something deeper in Heart / They fired up Salvation to Gentiles**

They were astonished by His teaching and powerful words, but there was something deeper in their hearts than what was in their minds, and it was bigotry. They didn't get fired up when Jesus said He is the Messiah, but what they do get fired up over is the message He states in the two examples He gives, and that is that in both examples He gave the people that were touched and served, even though both stories deal with the land of Israel, the people who were touched and served by God right in the middle of the land of Israel were not Jewish people but Gentiles.

### **Amazing how Bigotry Plays Out / Look down on Gentiles – Jews look down on**

Isn't it amazing how bigotry plays itself out, or better said how it plays people? These people in Nazareth hate the Gentiles, look down upon the Gentiles, the Jews believed God only created the Gentiles so to fuel the flames of hell. If a Jew rubbed against a Gentile on the street they would go home and burn the clothes they had on, and mind you they didn't have a closet full of clothes like we do today. They despised the Gentiles because they thought they the Jew were the chosen and exalted people, but how amazing it is that how they felt about the Gentiles is nearly the way their own countryman felt about them as they were looked down upon by all (can anything good come out of Nazareth). Bigotry knows no race, color, creed, or income level.

*John 1:46 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."*

### **Bigotry Learned – Generation to Generation / Missions to Ireland**

This type of bigotry is "learned", it is passed from generation to generation, and people are taught to be bigots from what they watch in their family growing up. I did missions in Ireland for several years each summer, and we constantly were faced with the division in that country between the northern part and the southern part. We were asked by nearly every person immediately upon meeting them and start to talk about the Lord, they would ask "are you Catholic or Protestant". That was the immediate determination if they were going to continue in our conversation, because they totally hated each other. If you were one and not theirs, they would have shut you down and walked away from you, the spiritual conversation was over. I taught our group to always answer, "I am just someone who loves Jesus, who loves you", and the wall would go down. After getting to know them I would often ask, so why do you hate the other, and in every case the answer was something along the lines of "I don't know, it is because they are (Catholic or Protestant). The hatred and bigotry was so entrenched in their families they reached a point that no one even knew why they hated at this point, they just did. And here for the people of Nazareth, this is where they are, and so entrenched was their bigotry that they could miss the Messiah standing right before them because of their hatred and bigotry, and they couldn't accept that God would be willing to love and save "those people".

### **Interesting – Jesus knows exactly where to put His Finger / Love 99% - Hate the 1%**

It is interesting to me how Jesus knows exactly where to put His finger on a person's heart to reveal to them the thing that is keeping them from Him. The rich young ruler's was money, the woman at the well was her need to be in a relationship (God used that to draw her to Himself), and the people of Nazareth was their hatred towards the Gentiles. See people can love 99% of Jesus' words, but it is that 1% that will make them reject the 99%. Today people can love to hear all about His love, His forgiveness, His provisions – but at the moment His word says that something that puts His finger on a specific area of their life that they are unwilling to turn from, they will not hear anything else, they will ignore the other 99%, because that 1% is so precious to them. Oh I love to hear about His love and His goodness, but then the words repent, turn away from that drug, that relationship, that action you are involved in, change your heart and mind concerning those things, and everything changes.

### **Push Jesus to Brink of Hill – But no Further / Jesus Stops and Walks Past / Has God put Finger on You**

But see the example here, they push Jesus all the way to the brink of a hill, ready to push Him to His death for these words that He spoke, but then Jesus just walks past them. Not sure how that all happened, it will be an amazing video to watch when we get to heaven, but here is the point for all. Jesus in His love and mercy for a person will allow them to push Him to a certain point, in His passion for them He will humble Himself and allow them to push back against Him, but then at a point He stops, and then walks right by them. He leaves the person.....He leaves them on their own, just standing there wondering what just happened, where did God go. If God has put His finger on something in your life, stop pushing back against Him, else He may leave you in your tracks, and walks by you.

### ***Demons are Cast Out***

**Luke 4:31 Then He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbaths.**

**Luke 4:32** And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority.

**Luke 4:33** Now in the synagogue there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon. And he cried out with a loud voice,

**Luke 4:34** saying, “Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are— the Holy One of God!”

**Luke 4:35** But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be quiet, and come out of him!” And when the demon had thrown him in their midst, it came out of him and did not hurt him.

**Luke 4:36** Then they were all amazed and spoke among themselves, saying, “What a word this is! For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out.”

**Luke 4:37** And the report about Him went out into every place in the surrounding region.

### **Man Thrown / Stay away from Occult**

*Verse 35* - the demon throws the man across the room but he did not get hurt. That is scary stuff. People who want to get into all that demonic and occult stuff are pure crazy. Dungeons and Dragons, Ouija Boards, and anything else that touches on the occult, get away. Youth look out; it is on the rise more so today than ever. The world is making the occult look attractive and appealing, but behind it all is darkness and evil. Here we find demons going to church, here it appears that the two can co-exist, but they cannot once Jesus arrives.

### **Great Light – Reveals Great Darkness**

Great Light will always reveal great darkness. People like to live in the shadows, live in that grey area, a place they can live both lives. But when Jesus comes, and his Word comes, then all darkness is revealed, and there is no more shadow to live in, the choice comes to live in the light or live in the darkness, but there is no more a shadow to live in.

### **Demons Know / Knowing is not Salvation**

*Verse 34* – the demons know who Jesus was. Let it be seen, that knowing and believing Jesus is, doesn't mean salvation. Salvation only comes through a personal relationship with Him.

*James 2:19 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!

### **There is Power in His Word / Bring Power into Your Life / Power into you Marriage & Family / Share It**

*Verse 32* - *And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority* – There is power in His Word. Second point of this passage - Do you want power in your life, then speak His Word, do you want power in your marriage then speak His Word, husband share scriptures with your wife, and wives share scriptures with your husband and there will be power in your marriage, more power than any date night or weekend getaway (but hey thrifty husbands don't use that as excuse to not take your wife out on a date). Do you want power in your kid's parents, then speak the Word to them. I am not equipped to do anything in the ministry, not so! All the power is in His Word, go and speak His word and whatever you are doing (Sunday school teacher, nursing home, soup kitchen) and you will have power in that ministry. But don't speak it from your head, speak it from your heart, soaked and saturated (anointed) by the Holy Spirit.

### **Rhema – the Spoken Word**

When the angel came to Mary and she says how can this be, and the angel responds that with God nothing is impossible. The exact rendering of that verse should read “No word of God is without power”. The word ‘nothing’ in that verse is the word “rhema” and it means ‘the spoken word’, and the word “impossible” means “without power”. So we can read it to say “No word of God is without power – or equally so, The spoken word of God has power”. God has spoken it, and thus it has power.

*Luke 1:34–38 (NKJV)* <sup>34</sup> Then Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I do not know a man?” <sup>35</sup> And the angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. <sup>36</sup> Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. <sup>37</sup> For with God nothing will be impossible.” <sup>38</sup> Then Mary said, “Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

### **Christians get in the Word**

Christian get in and stay in the word of God because every word has power! Is there any reason for us not to be in the word, because every word has power. When Jesus rebuked the devil in our last study, he said man shall not live

by bread alone, but by every word (rhema – spoken word) of God. The word is life and it is power, Christian make time for it every day of your life.

*Luke 4:4 (NKJV) <sup>4</sup> But Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.' "*

### **Peter's Mother-in-Law Healed**

**Luke 4:38** Now He arose from the synagogue and entered Simon's house. But Simon's wife's mother was sick with a high fever, and they made request of Him concerning her.

**Luke 4:39** So He stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. And immediately she arose and served them.

#### **Immediately Healed – takes me Days to Recover**

*Verse 39 and it left her* - amazingly that immediately after healing the fever she is fully recovered. Man even when I get over a fever I am spent for the next three days recovery.

#### **Serving – Sign a Person touched by Jesus**

*Verse 39 - and she served them.* A sign that a person has been touched by Jesus, is that they serve.

#### **Pastor College Tuition**

*Story of a Pastor:* I grew up in a rough Boston housing project called Columbia Point in a family of nine children. Although I'd been a hardworking student, paying for college seemed impossible. But my mother's favorite expression was "Pray, and the Lord will make a way somehow." I viewed that as good advice for other people. But when I decided to go to college and seminary because I believed the Lord had a call on my life, I had no other choice! I packed for college and even went to orientation, but still didn't have any money. I'd have to pack up my belongings and make the 100-mile trip back home. But an heir to a corporate fortune heard about my plight and paid for my college and seminary education. After I graduated, I went to my benefactor's office to thank him for all he had done for me and asked him what I could do to pay him back. Imagine my saying to a multimillionaire, "What can I do to repay you?" The man responded, "Help somebody." I've spent the last 20 years in the ministry with that goal in mind. I've pastored in the drug-ridden, crime-infested inner city as well as well-manicured suburbs. And I've learned that the blessing of God is like a boomerang. As I've tried to help somebody, the Lord has blessed me.

*\*Vernal E. Simms, senior pastor of Morris Brown A.M.E. Church in Philadelphia, From One Brother to Another, eds. William J. Key and Robert Johnson-Smith II (Judson, 1996)*

#### **What would you Serve Jesus / He cares more about Fellowship – than the Food**

She serves Him. What would you serve Jesus if He came over for dinner? I can tell you that Jesus cared more about who was there for dinner than what was for dinner. He didn't come to be served but to serve, and thus He looked forward to the fellowship over the meal. Christian, invite people over for fellowship, and don't worry about the house being a wreck, or having to cook the perfect meal. The Body of Christ misses out on so much fellowship because people get wrapped up in the meal, rather than wrapped up with each other, and simply enjoying have another believer to share life with.

#### **Subs are Good**

Subs are good, can't miss with Ragu over pasta, hmm are those Oreos, pass the milk please. Get wrapped up in each other, and not wrapped up in the meal.

#### **Jesus concerned in Ministry of Home – as He is in the Church**

Notice here, that Jesus is as concerned about moving and ministering in your home as He is in the church. He ministered openly in public to draw men and woman to Himself, but He comes with that same heart to move and minister in the home individually.

#### **Example of Peter – Bring Jesus back Home from Church**

Notice this example of Peter, coming home from the synagogue, Peter walks in to find his mother-in-law sick with a fever. How often that happens to us. We leave the refreshment and restoration we find in church only to find feverish activity and fiery trials awaiting us at home. But Peter models the solution because guess who he brought

with him! Take Jesus home with you. Then, whatever feverish trials await you, the Lord is there with you. Talk about Him on the way home. Talk with Him when you get home, and you will thwart any attempt of the enemy to undo what you have received.

### ***Jesus Ministers Throughout Galilee***

**Luke 4:40** When the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them.

**Luke 4:41** And demons also came out of many, crying out and saying, “You are the Christ, the Son of God!” And He, rebuking them, did not allow them to speak, for they knew that He was the Christ.

#### **Laid hands on All – Compassion & Passion he has for the Hurting**

Verse 40 - He laid hands on every last one of them. We see the compassion and passion our Lord has for the hurting.

**Luke 4:42** Now when it was day, He departed and went into a deserted place. And the crowd sought Him and came to Him, and tried to keep Him from leaving them;

**Luke 4:43** but He said to them, “I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent.”

**Luke 4:44** And He was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.

#### **Jesus Departed / He departs for Oneness with the Father / Jesus had Prayer Closet Everywhere**

Verse 42 - Jesus departs to a deserted place, this was another thing we will read that Jesus does daily, He departs to spend time with His heavenly Father in prayer and fellowship (fellowship means “oneness”). The definition of deserted is “wilderness, desolate, lonely place”. Jesus had a prayer closet, wherever He went, so to be alone in oneness with the Father.

#### **Everyone needs a Deserted Place / Never know when Faced Demons or People Pressing on You**

Everyone needs a deserted place, that quiet place where they just spend time alone with the Father in oneness. It is important because whether you are in the ministry or the workplace, you never know when you will be faced with Satan and his demons, and whether the ministry or the workplace how often are you faced with the crowds pressing in on you, seeking you out, needing this and trying to pressure you to do that. Jesus could respond perfectly and accordingly to each situation because He spent time alone in oneness with the Father each day.

#### **Study Summary**

I love these passages because I get a lot of life application. It has been a great word, enough to keep us busy for the next seven days until we meet again.

#### Today's application:

- Go back to Nazareth – Understand Them – Go with Mission Statement
- Jesus puts His finger on the spots of the heart.
- Every Word of God has Power – Study and Speak the Word
- Go Serve
- Depart daily to a deserted place

# Luke 5

## The Word is Alive!

### (5:1-11)

#### Reason for Writing:

*Luke 1:3-4 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, <sup>4</sup> that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.

#### Theophilus

Theophilus means the “friend and lover of God”, and so we have a book written to you personally today. The God of the universe loves you personally, has called you to Himself for a personal and intimate relationship, and has written this book to you so that you may know for certainty all the things about Jesus, and how they apply to you, how they instruct you on how to live, reflect, and enjoy the love of God in your life personally today.

#### Outline of the Book of Luke:

##### The Life of Christ (Luke 1-24)

##### **The Prelude to Christ’s Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- Introduction (1:1–4)
- The Birth of Jesus (1:5–2:38)
- The Boyhood of Jesus (2:39–52)
- The Baptism/Temptation of Jesus (3:1–4:13)

##### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- The Commencement of His Ministry (4:14–44)
- The Calling of His Disciples (5:1–6:16)
- The Continuation of His Work (6:17–9:50)

##### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- Samaria (9:51–10:37)
- Bethany and Judea (10:38–13:35)
- Perea (14:1–19:27)

##### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

##### **The Consummation of Christ’s Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

#### Overview of 1-11 / Pure Power – You can Experience Same Today / This Word is Alive

In the passage before us, all so familiar, we will read of the multitude of people pressing in upon Jesus to hear the Word of God; Jesus gets into Peter’s boat and teaches from there, and then after He is done teaching He says Peter lets go fishing, and the catch was so great the nets were tearing and the boat was near sinking. Peter sees the glory of who is before Him, and falls at Jesus’ feet and says depart from me a sinful man, and then Jesus gives the great calling to Peter to become “fishers of men”. Eleven verses of pure wonder and power, eleven verses written for you today so that you can experience Jesus today, just as Peter experienced Him 2,000 years ago, because this

Word is alive as much today as it was 2,000 years ago. Let's release this Word – and let it do today what it did 2,000 years ago, and that is change hearts, change minds, and change lives.

### **Not just about Leaving All**

In this passage we usually focus on the “calling” part, the stepping out part, the forsaking all part, and while that is true and applicable, it's depth goes much greater than that as God speaks not just to the one who feels a calling to step out and go full-time in the ministry, but it is for every person who wants a deeper more personal intimate relationship with the Lord, for the person who says I want more of You Lord, I want to experience You in a fresh and mighty way, I want more of You!

## ***The First Disciples are Called***

**Luke 5:1** So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret,

**Luke 5:2** and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets.

**Luke 5:3** Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat.

### **Boat**

Just recently they found one of these fishing boats in that region; it had been buried in mud for close to 2,000 years, and gives us an insight to what these boats looked like. It was about 27 feet by 7.5 feet. So when you consider that two boats are filled to the brim with fish when it is all over, you can appreciate how great the catch was, and how mighty the miracle is.

### **Washing the Nets**

Peter was washing his nets because if a net wasn't washed and then stretched, it would rot. If they were not washed and stretched the salty water would make them hard, which in the heat then would make them brittle, and then when strained they would break.

### **Natural Amplifier**

Using the water as a natural amplifier to preach to the crowds on the shore, Jesus asked Peter to take Him out in the boat. Because of the sloping of the terrain the voice would carry over the water and up the hill, and a person need only talk in a normal voice and a person hundreds of feet away could hear them.

### **Pressing Him for the Word**

Jesus needed to do this because the people were pressing in upon Him, and see here, not because they wanted to see a miracle, but because they wanted to hear the word of God. The word of God moved their hearts, they wanted to hear more.

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

### **Sea of Galilee – Harp Shaped / Heart & Melody**

This Lake of Gennesaret is also called the Sea of Galilee (although it is really just a lake, about 13 miles by 7 miles). Jesus will do much of His ministry up in this area, and how fitting to me that He ministers and teaches here as the shape of this water body is shaped like a heart and a harp, in fact Gennesaret means “harp”. How fitting to me because Jesus' whole ministry was all about His heart for us, and His words are like a harp, a sweet melody, a love song to you and I, about a God who loves us and intimately adores us, and desires communion and fellowship with us. No wonder people were pressing in to hear such teaching.

### **[Video – Casting Crowns – The Word is Alive](#)**

### **This Word is Alive / Same Jesus who Taught from Boat – Same who Teaches you Today / Heart & Melody**

This Word is alive! The same Jesus that taught from that boat is the same Jesus that teaches you today. The word spoken and read isn't spoken from a man, nor read by you alone, but it Jesus speaking again and again, teaching again and again, revealing the heart of God to you, playing a melody of passion for you just as a musician makes

beautiful music with a harp. God speaks to us through this word that is in our hands, perfectly preserved, and perfectly powerful to change your life.....daily, not just once, not just here and there, but powerful enough to change your life every time you fellowship with it.

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

**Luke 5:4 When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, “Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.”**

**Luke 5:5 But Simon answered and said to Him, “Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net.”**

### **Rabbi – not Master / Great Teacher – but not a Fisherman / We only fish at Night**

The Greek word translated “Master” literally means “Rabbi.” Peter doesn’t refer to Jesus as “Creator of all things,” or “God of the Universe.” Rather, He addresses Him as “Rabbi,” as if to say, “Bible Teacher, we’re the fishermen. We’ll listen to what You have to say regarding spirituality, but fishing is our territory. And everyone knows that here in Galilee, we only fish at night, and the fish are in the shallow not the deep.”

**Luke 5:6 And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking.**

### **Brake – to the Point of Breaking**

The Greek word translated “brake” speaks only of the beginning of the breaking process. In other words, the net was beginning to show signs of strain.

### **Good thing Peter Washed his Nets**

Remember, Peter was washing his nets because if a net wasn’t washed and then stretched, it would rot, and for a day such as today, the whole catch would have been lost. It is good for us to continue to be faithful in the little mundane tasks of life, for they often set up the big days ahead of us.

**Luke 5:7 So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.**

**Luke 5:8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!”**

### **Peter Response to the Preceding Teaching / Provision – Pride / Peter listening for Abe / How about You**

I will suggest to you that Peter is not responding so deeply just because he sees the miracle of this catch, I will suggest to you that the miracle of the catch was directly related to the message that Jesus had just taught moments before. What exactly that message was we are not told, but the message was not enough to make Peter fall to his face and recognize he was in the presence of the Holy God. Maybe the message had been on God cares intimately about every detail of your life, He will meet your need, and Peter listened and was saying yea right I worked all night and came up empty. Maybe the message was on pride, and how man thinks he is in control but all that he receives is a gift from God, and Peter listened and was thinking to himself – that is right Jesus tell them for they need to hear this message, in fact I see ole Abe over there and if you only knew how prideful and arrogant he is, preach it Jesus, give them both barrels. Christian how often do you listen to a Bible study and say, wow I hope or wish so-and-so was here to hear that, they need to hear this; true as that may be, God has you here to hear, and yet how often we don’t hear because we are thinking about someone else needing to hear.

### **Peter only Half-Listening / Jesus never Misses an Opportunity / Ties message directly to Peter**

Peter was listening, but only half listening, for whatever Jesus was preaching, Peter was hearing but he wasn’t receiving. Read through the scriptures and you see that Jesus never missed an opportunity, and I am convinced He was taking the opportunity to tie His message directly to Peter. So true is it today, and every time you open the word, and that is that every message is directly to you and for you.

### **God gives Peter Experience with the Message / Christian – God wants to Give Experience / Why Wait**

Peter receives a gift from God, as Jesus immediately gives Peter an experience to go with the message he just heard. Christian here is great application for you today, and that is each time you hear a Bible study, each time you have

your personal devotion in the Word, know and believe that God wants to give you a personal and real experience, something supernatural, after you hear it. If the message is on prayer, realize that God wants to do something supernatural in your prayer time the next time you pray (so why would you wait to pray); if the word is on reaching the lost and hurting, realize that God wants to do something supernatural the next time you reach out (so why would you wait to reach out); if the message is on forgiveness (giving or receiving), on restoration, on victory over sin, on mending a broken heart, realize that God wants to supernaturally do something in your life personally immediately following His word that is given.

### **What is your Need Today / Maybe didn't Realize your Need**

What is your need today, what is it that you are longing for and desiring? God wants to meet that need; but here the beauty of the word and being in it, and that is that many a many of times, we didn't even realize that was our need until God brought it before us, showed it to us through His word empowered by His Spirit, and because we were seeking Him, we had ears to hear, He could show it to us and just like that we had a miracle moment of God revealing Himself to us in a special and personal way. Christian, realize that God wants to supernaturally do something in your life personally immediately following His word that is given.

### **Peter could have said Tomorrow**

Now Peter could have said, "will do Jesus, tonight that is exactly where I am going to cast my nets, that sounds like a great idea, and later on tonight I am going to do just that". Would that have sounded all too familiar of something we say? If we, when we, say such things, we miss that God wants us to experience His word personally each time he speaks it to us – so don't wait, each time you hear a Bible study, each time you have your personal devotion in the Word, know and believe that God wants to give you a personal and real experience, something supernatural, after you hear it.

### **This Word is Alive / Same Jesus who taught from Boat – Same who Teaches you Today / Heart & Melody**

Christian this Word is alive! The same Jesus that taught from that boat is the same Jesus that teaches you today. The word spoken and read isn't spoken from a man, nor read by you alone, but it Jesus speaking again and again, teaching again and again, revealing the heart of God to you, playing a melody of passion for you just as a musician makes beautiful music with a harp.

### **I Pray / will you Give Me your Time & Possessions**

And, by the way, this whole series of events began back in verse 3 when Jesus asks Peter to launch Him out into the water in Peter's boat. If you are using the OKJV, then your translation reads that Jesus said "I pray thee". We can overcomplicate prayer, but here is a good example in that prayer is simply asking. And notice, that prayer is two-way, we ask God, but He also asks us. Jesus will ask you, will you give Me of your time (even though you may be tired, or would rather be home relaxing right now), will you give me of your possessions so that I might use them to reach and bless others? So often we will never see the supernatural working of God because we won't respond to what He asks of us first. We can sit and say I respond after You Lord, but God is saying, you will see My response after you row out. No fish would have been caught that day if the boat never left the shore. Christian where is your boat today?

*Luke 5:3 (KJV 1900) <sup>3</sup> And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.*

### **Asks – Because you Come with It**

Why does Jesus ask? Because you come with it, it is you that He wants, not the time, money, or possession – but His desire is you, to be with you, and to fellowship with you. Because as you engage in that thing, it is you in the boat with Him, fellowshiping and sharing life together. He asks because you come with that thing that He asks. Wise is the man or woman who sees this truth, who understand that He is asking not of our stuff, but of us! And listen Christian, when you give of that thing that He asks, guess what you get, you get Him! That should be what our hearts desire, yet how often we get distracted by the cares of the world and say we don't have time, and thus we miss out on the greatest possession, Him! The God that is alive, ready and wanting intimacy with us, to walk and love with us. He didn't need Peter's boat, for He is Jesus, He walks on water.....He wanted the boat so He could have Peter, and Peter could have Him.

**Luke 5:8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"**

### **Peter sees himself in Light of God's Greatness**

Peter sees himself (his sinfulness, how far short he falls), when He sees how great Jesus is. I see today that the reason people walk away from the Lord, backslide, go into the state of Luke warmness, is because they never or quit experiencing Jesus in His greatness. They hear the word, but don't experience it; they hear Him ask, but they won't respond (or say tomorrow I'm busy today). Jesus simply becomes a story to them, someone from 2,000 years ago, but not today. Everybody I met who has walked away from the Lord, or just so lukewarm who knows if they are a believer or not, all of them quit experiencing God; they wouldn't lend their boat to Him, they wouldn't row out for Him because they had other things more important to them to do. The word and church became a chore, something on their "to-do" list that kept dropping on the priority until it fell off the list. Being a Christian was a noun (something they call themselves), but never a verb (something they actually put into action). Christians realize that God wants to supernaturally do something in your life personally immediately following His word that is given.....respond to it, every time, and immediately.

### **When you Do**

For when you do, when you experience God, you will see Him.....you will see Him of how great and mighty He is. When you see Him, you will see His Holiness, how He is Creator of all things, how He is not the Big Man Upstairs, but the Holy God! And you will fall at His feet and realize you are a sinful person, that you are saved by grace, and you will never desire to walk in darkness, you will not think highly of yourself, but you will know you continually live in the presence of the Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God Almighty.

*Revelation 4:8 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!"*

### **Most asked Question**

One of the most asked questions I am asked as a Pastor is "why should I continue to do good when nothing seems to be happening in my life?" The most direct answer is, Because He is God! That is all the reason there need be. I remember when I first got saved I struggled with the word to remain pure, I thought maybe that word was for that period for when it was written, but not for today. I was just justifying that is all, I knew it. But I remember that blessed day after struggling with it, and I said to the Lord, if I remain single and pure for the rest of my life (I was 27 at the time), then so be it.....Your Holiness deserves my full obedience. That word is the same word I share with my gay and lesbian friends, I chose purity, even though I could argue that I was made otherwise (a fornicator), and God empowered me to have victory in that area, and if I had to live that life for 60 years, then so be it because He is the Holy God, and He not only requires it, but deserves our full obedience.

### **God used the Emptiness**

But I will add this, God used the emptiness of the net from the night before to reveal Himself in a way Peter had never seen Him before. He will do the same for you in that area that you think is lacking or empty. But, people too often take that one area of emptiness and make it their whole focus on life, and they miss all the other areas that God is working right in their very midst. Maybe Peter was only half hearing Jesus teach because he kept thinking about the night of emptiness, all no money coming in today, the day is a total bust, and yet there was Jesus right next to him in his very boat. How we can be such a people when we focus on our emptiness, rather than the very fact that Jesus is amongst us, and fellowshiping with us.

**Luke 5:9 For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken;**

### **Did you Notice – Nets vs Net**

They were astonished! Now I am not sure that you caught this, but did you notice something here, Jesus said Peter let down your nets, and Peter sounds so faithful by saying if that is what you want that is what we will do, at Your word I will do it.....I will let down "a net". Jesus said let down your nets (plural), Peter responds by letting down a net (singular). The catch was mighty, enough to strain the nets and nearly sink the boats – and that was with just the one net that Peter let down. Imagine if Peter would have let down the nets plural?

**How that can be Us / Just finished Washing / We let Down Net vs Nets**

How that can be so us, we are faithful (up to a point – but not a point of totally going for it). Hey Lord I just washed and stretched all my nets, and now you want me to get them all salted up again, do you realize I will have to clean them and stretch them again, that will take hours and I am already exhausted and just want to go home and watch a little television and relax before I have to start the daily grind all over again. But ok, I know you are speaking and I will do it, but rather than letting down all say six of my nets, I will let down one. Oh we see a great work of God, but how often we limit and reduce all that He wanted to do, but us only going half way, just to the point of comfort and security, and not going to the point of letting it all out.

### **Example**

The Lord may say I want you to do this certain thing for Me once a week, and we say ok Lord at Your word I will do that once a month. And amazingly He blesses that thing we do once a month, but we have no idea how blessed we would have been if only we would have done that thing once a week.

**Luke 5:10 and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men.”**

**Luke 5:11 So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.**

### **We are just the Nets**

Jesus said from now on you will catch men. This passage brings me great relief in evangelism, because I always feel that I was the fisherman, it was up to me to know exactly where the fish are, and I have to be this greatly skilled evangelism; but reading this passage I see that I am only the net, Jesus is the master fisherman, it is He who knows where to throw the net, it is He who brings the fish into the net, and thus I only need to be ‘a net’, something that he can cast out there and use to bring in the catch. Don’t get yourself all wrapped up in being the master fisherman Christian, just make yourself available to the net, and you won’t find sharing your faith stressful or frightful, but freeing and joyful as you experience being in the Master’s hand.

### **Keep Washing the Net**

Peter was washing his nets because if a net wasn’t washed and then stretched, it would rot. Every time it was used, a net would have to be washed with fresh water and stretched if it was to remain useful. So, too, as fishers of men, we are nets that must be continually washed with the water of the Word and stretched by the Spirit if we are to remain useful. You may be thinking, Why should I get washed and stretched? The Lord isn’t using me. Why bother? But like Peter, you don’t know what’s going to happen tomorrow. When the Lord wants to use someone, He doesn’t find the one who’s rotten and brittle. No, He touches the one who’s been washed in the water of the Word, who’s been stretched and disciplined.

# *A Leper is Cleansed – He is Willing*

## **Easter 2012**

### **(5:12-15)**

#### **Introduction**

In chapter four Jesus proclaims Himself the Messiah, sent by the Father, and declares His mission statement.

*Luke 4:16–21 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. <sup>17</sup> And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: <sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.” <sup>20</sup> Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. <sup>21</sup> And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

#### **Jesus’ Mission Statement**

- To preach the gospel to the poor,
- To heal the brokenhearted,
- To proclaim liberty to the captives,
- To give recovery of sight to the blind,
- To set at liberty those who are oppressed,
- To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

#### **Bruised Reed – Smoldering Flax**

In Matthews gospel the heart of Jesus, the reflection of this mission statement we read here in chapter 4 is that a bruised reed He will not break, and smoldering flax He will not quench. This is your God, He is gentle with you, He is kind, He is loving. If you feel like your flame is about to go out, He cups His hands around you and breathes His breath (rauch) upon you, if you feel you are bruised, He gently props you back up until you can stand on your own again. He is such a gentle God, such a loving God, such an intimate God; if you have a bruising and exhausting week, come to Him today and let Him restore and refresh you.

*Matthew 12:14–21 (NKJV)* <sup>14</sup> Then the Pharisees went out and plotted against Him, how they might destroy Him. <sup>15</sup> But when Jesus knew it, He withdrew from there. And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all. <sup>16</sup> Yet He warned them not to make Him known, <sup>17</sup> that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: <sup>18</sup> “Behold! My Servant whom I have chosen, My Beloved in whom My soul is well pleased! I will put My Spirit upon Him, And He will declare justice to the Gentiles. <sup>19</sup> He will not quarrel nor cry out, Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. <sup>20</sup> A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench, Till He sends forth justice to victory; <sup>21</sup> And in His name Gentiles will trust.”

#### **Today’s Passage**

Today we read a precious story of Jesus doing just that, and it is a picture of what He has done for us, and what He desires to do for all who will come to Him. Today we will read of Jesus cleansing a leper, a man who was cast off and out of society, a man who was told and felt cursed of God, a man whose life was empty and barren, lonely and forgotten, and whose every tomorrow was worse than his yesterday, a man who had no hope except one – he heard Jesus was passing through. Would Jesus stop for him (will He stop for us), even if He did stop would He be willing to reach out to a person such as him, would He be willing to reach out to us? Verse 12.....

#### ***A Leper is Cleansed***

**Luke 5:12** And it happened when He was in a certain city, that behold, a man who was full of leprosy saw Jesus; and he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, “Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.”

**Luke 5:13** Then He put out His hand and touched him, saying, “I am willing; be cleansed.” Immediately the leprosy left him.

**Luke 5:14** And He charged him to tell no one, “But go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as a testimony to them, just as Moses commanded.”

**Luke 5:15** However, the report went around concerning Him all the more; and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities.

**Full of Leprosy – Late Stages / 10 Million / Dreadful – Slow and Visible / Under – Spot – Sore - Diminish**  
*Verse 12 – full of leprosy* – this man is in the full stage, the late stage, of leprosy, Doctor Luke gives us his diagnosis after interviewing the eyewitness. Leprosy still exists today, it is not curable, it is estimated there are over 10 million people worldwide infected with leprosy. A terrible, dreadful disease is leprosy; it was a slow and visible death - it was more mentally painful than it was physically because leprosy would destroy the nerve endings, leaving the person numb. Leprosy would begin below the surface of the skin and then work its way upward and outward. It would rot the skin leaving white spots (thus the word “leopard”), and in its later (full stage) it would cause extremities like fingers and toes to atrophy to nothing. That is the stage that this man is in, the full stage, the late stage, the final stage before death.

**Mentally Painful – Not Physically / The Walking Dead – No Hope - Futility**

Although it is numbing, thus not painful, the mental anguish was tremendous as a person would have to watch their body slowly be eaten away, live a slow death, and it was known as “the walking dead”. There was no hope, there was no future, a body and life with leprosy was hopeless and futile.

**But Jesus / Jesus is Still Coming Through – Sanctuary – Among Us – Meet You**

But then Jesus comes through. I don’t know what you may be facing today in your life, “but Jesus” is still coming through. He is coming through this sanctuary at this very moment, He is walking amongst us today at this very moment, and He is still “coming through” to meet you where you are at, and deliver to you in your need.

**List of 61 in Talmud**

This leprosy of this man is dreadful, in the Talmud (the Jewish commentary on the Law of God), the Jews had a list of 61 things that made a person unclean or contaminated and were forbidden from entering the general population until they were made clean, things such as touching a Gentile, or a dead body, etc. Well number 61 on the list was death, and number 60 was leprosy. So leprosy was the worst thing that could happen to a living being.

**The Finger of God / 3 People in the OT**

Leprosy in the Jewish culture was known as the finger of death. The person was walking death, and it was because God put His finger on them and smote them for some sin or wrong doing they had done. They said although it may be secret and unknown sin, God sees and knows, and is bringing His judgment upon that person. People assumed this erroneous conclusion because in past history people such as Miriam, Gehazi, and Uzziah had been judged with leprosy (cf. Numbers 12:6–10; 2 Kings 5:25–27; 2 Chronicles 26:19 respectively).

**Imagine the First Spot / My Biopsy / He Covers it with Robe / Waits for Results – Life is Over – No Home**

I imagine what it must have been like for this man, for I have had a few times in my life where I have had to get a biopsy on a mark on my body. So I know what it must have been like in a sense for this man in the beginning. You notice a spot, a mole or some mark on your body, you say that looks different, oh it’s probably nothing. But it sticks in your mind, and you look again and again. You want it to go away, but sometime later you see that it is still there. So then you immediately think, could it be the “big C” cancer. So this man sees a little spot appear, he hopes it will go away, but it doesn’t instead it grows a little more. Maybe he tried to cover it with his robe or shawl for a period of time because he doesn’t want people getting paranoid about him, but in his mind he is wondering, he is denying, he is saying could it be the “big L”, leprosy. So as for me I reach the point that it might be something, so I set the doctor’s appointment and have to wait a month to be seen, and then they say yes that doesn’t look normal, and they cut a piece of it and then you have to wait another week for the results. So every day you wait. This man watches the little spot grow and then finally he has to go to the priest for diagnosis (Leviticus 13-14), and his worst fear is confirmed, it is leprosy! Life is over, he cannot go home, he can never hold his wife or children again, in fact he must leave the house and community, leave his job, he must separate himself from all he knows and loves, and go live among the leprosy colony. Imagine that day, imagine those words, imagine that walk to join the outcasts.

**Luke 5:12 And it happened when He was in a certain city, that behold, a man who was full of leprosy saw Jesus; and he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, “Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.”**

**Man is Hopeless – Walking Dead / Hears about Jesus / Jesus Traveling in Group**

This man is hopeless, life is futile, he is walking death. He hears about Jesus as the reports of the great healer has been making their way through the region. He hears that Jesus is passing through and this man makes his way to put

himself on the same path as Jesus. Jesus isn't traveling alone at this point, He has disciples following Him and people pressing in upon Him

**By Law – Unclean, Unclean / Rocks to Pelt him / The Stench / Missing Nose & Ears / Endures the Rocks**

By the law this leopard has to cry out starting at 100 feet away, unclean, unclean. If the leopard came within 100 feet people would pick up rocks and start pelting the leopard to get them to turn away. It is written that a person in the late stages of leprosy because their skin and body is rotting, they can be smelled from 100 feet away. This man would not only have had the odor, but at this late stage his nose is gone, his ears are gone, his lips are gone, he is a hideous site – yet he endures the pelting of the rocks, the repulsed looks of man, people holding their nose at the stench, and by now everyone putting distance between them and him.

**People won't Run Far – What will Jesus Do / Finger God / Rebuke or Mission Statement / Leopard Wonders**

The people won't run too far, because they want to see what would Jesus do to such a repulsive person, especially a person who has been cursed by God, who God personally smote because of their secret sin, a person sentenced to die a slow and mentally painful death. What would Jesus do they must have wondered, the One who claims to be sent by God. Will Jesus rebuke him openly, will Jesus say you got what you deserve, would Jesus pick up rocks Himself and pelt the man and say get away. No doubt, this leopard man wondered the same as he started to make his way towards Jesus.

**Luke 5:13 Then He put out His hand and touched him, saying, “I am willing; be cleansed.” Immediately the leprosy left him.**

**I Wonder – Times watched from Distance / Remembers the Day – Unclean / Wife Waits – Kids Wait**

I wonder how many times from a distance he watched a father kiss his wife good bye at the door of the house as he left for work. I wonder how his heart torn as he watched a father play with his children.. Tears upon his cheeks as he watched fathers hold their baby in their arms. And he remembers back to the day that he heard those words, it is leprosy, you are unclean, depart. Upon those words he could not return home, he was immediately sent out from the camp. Imagine the day he told his wife I think it might be leprosy, I have to go to the priest, and for the next 7 days she waits for the news, the kids are asking when is daddy coming home, and the worse scenario happens, as it is a knock on the door, and it isn't her husband but a friend or a representative from the Temple, it is Leprosy.

**Doesn't Question Ability – but Willingness / Greek Tense – Repeatedly saying If You are Willing**

Verse 12 - Lord, if You are willing - Notice that the man is not questioning whether Jesus is capable of healing him, whether Jesus has the power to heal him, but he asks if Jesus is willing to heal him. The Greek tense in the parallel passage in the Gospel of Mark indicates that he repeated this several times (Mark 1:40). What a poignant picture—the leper, still prostrate, repeating in the hoarse voice typical of those with advanced leprosy, “Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean—Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean—Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.”

*Mark 1:40 (NKJV) <sup>40</sup> Now a leper came to Him, imploring Him, kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, “If You are willing, You can make me clean.”*

**The People Believe Judged of God / High Priest gave no Sympathy – Judgment and Glare / Depart**

Again, the people believed, as they were taught no doubt, that leprosy was God's judgment against a person for their personal sin. The day that man was pronounced unclean by the High Priest, not only was the world he knew crushed, never to see his family again, except maybe from a distance, but he would get no sympathy from the High Priest, he would get only a judgmental and glare, he would get the look that you have now gotten what you deserved. The look of the High Priest would say it all, you are outcast, depart and never return, go join the walking dead and pay for your sin.

**High Priest Ultimate Representative of God - No Sympathy / No 60 of 61 – Go walk Among the Dead**

The High Priest was the ultimate representative of God to the people, and this Priest would give him no sympathy for his leprosy, number 60 on the list of 61 of uncleanness. His finger would point the way, and say it all, go walk among the dead, your sin has found you out.

### **He would Live in that Memory over and over / Cursed of God / Would God Forgive? .....**

He would live with that memory, of those words "unclean" that look of the High Priest "depart you cursed of God", and walk wondering or convinced that God was against him, and would never forgive him. This man hasn't been touched in years, he hasn't had anyone look into his eyes with love and concern for years, and here he is with his face planted into the dirt, wondering what was next, he has made his plea for Jesus to heal him, but what would happen next? Would Jesus say depart from Me, would Jesus start backing away saying get your leprosy away from Me, would Jesus pick up rocks and pelt him, what went through his mind at this moment with his face buried before the Lord of heaven and earth? As the leper lay at Jesus' feet, Jesus looked on him as no one else had before. According to Mark's Gospel, Christ was "filled with compassion" (Mark 1:41), indicating that Jesus was so touched by what he saw that he had an outward reaction. This man doesn't hear words, for first he feels a touch, after years of no touch, now it is God Himself reaching down to him, God reaching down - did you hear that? And based on what I have read of the heart of Jesus, He is reaching down with His hands to this man's face to raise his head up, so Jesus can look him in in the eyes, the eyes that no one has looked into for years, and Jesus raises his face and looks into his eyes and says, I am willing. Willing means, nothing would bring Me more pleasure, nothing would move My heart more, than to make you clean.

*Mark 1:41 (NKJV) <sup>41</sup> Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed."*

### **Immediately he was Healed / Nose, Ears, Fingers / Skin Soft and Supple / This is what Christ does Today**

Luke concludes: "Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. 'I am willing,' he said. 'Be clean!' And immediately the leprosy left him" (Luke 5:13). The healing was sudden and complete. The man's feet—toeless, ulcerated stubs—were suddenly whole, too large for his shrunken sandals. The knobs on his hands grew fingers before his very eyes. Back came his hair, eyebrows, eyelashes. His skin was supple and soft. The amazement of the multitude must have been audible. This is what Jesus Christ can do for individuals today in a split second of belief. The healing of Christ in salvation from sin is instantaneous and complete ("the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from every sin," 1 John 1:7).

*1 John 1:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.*

### **Spiritual Picture / Leprosy picture of Sin -This Man Represents all Humanity / HE IS WILLING**

In every miracle Jesus performed there is a spiritual picture God is telling us. Leprosy is a picture of sin in the Bible, and the picture is that this man represents all of humanity, he represents all who are unclean, and this man represents you and me. And Jesus says, I am willing, nothing would please Me more than to touch you and make you clean.

**Luke 5:14 And He charged him to tell no one, "But go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as a testimony to them, just as Moses commanded."**

### **Leviticus 13&14**

Leviticus 13-14 gives the method on how the priest was to diagnose leprosy, and then the sacrifice that was to be made if a person was cleansed and healed of the disease.

### **Tell No One / Chapter written for this Verse / 2 Sparrows – Sprinkle 7X / Never Done / Picture Jesus**

Jesus says tell no man, meaning don't go home first, don't go back to the family, don't get sidetracked from what I am telling you to do, and that is go show yourself to the priests in accordance with the Law of Moses. In Leviticus 14 there is a whole chapter dedicated to what is to be done when a person is cleansed of leprosy. But that whole chapter was written for this verse, because no man had ever been cleansed of leprosy. The person healed was to go to the High Priest and present himself, and upon verification by the Priest that indeed the man was cleansed, they were to take two sparrows and kill one of them and pour its blood along with water into a jar, and then they were to take the living sparrow and dip it in the blood and water. The priest then sprinkled the blood 7 times upon the man that was cleansed, and then they would take the living bird that had just been dipped in the blood of the sacrificed bird, and then set it free into the open sky. This ceremony had never been done in the land of Israel, for no Jew had ever been healed of leprosy (Miriam was healed of leprosy before the Law of Moses – Numbers 12, and Naaman who was healed was not a Jew – 2 Kings 5). It is a picture of Jesus being sacrificed, He is the first dove, and His blood covers us, cleanses us, and we are set free from the jar, that tomb, and we are free and we are made clean because of His sacrifice.

**Leviticus 14:1–7 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup> “This shall be the law of the leper for the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought to the priest. <sup>3</sup> And the priest shall go out of the camp, and the priest shall examine him; and indeed, if the leprosy is healed in the leper, <sup>4</sup> then the priest shall command to take for him who is to be cleansed two living and clean birds, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop. <sup>5</sup> And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water. <sup>6</sup> As for the living bird, he shall take it, the cedar wood and the scarlet and the hyssop, and dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water. <sup>7</sup> And he shall sprinkle it seven times on him who is to be cleansed from the leprosy, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose in the open field.

### **8 days Later – Temple Ceremony / Accepted back into the Nation / Jesus Go – A God who is Willing**

A week after that ceremony, all, and it says all, of the people were to come to the Temple and the High Priest was to make the declaration and introduction of the cleansed person, and present the person back to the nation, a decree made that they are clean and can come back into the camp, the family, the country. Jesus tells this man not to get side tracked telling other men people about the cleansing, but get to the Temple and start this process, for the message will be sent, there is a God who touches, there is a God who is willing there is a God that is able. His name is Jesus!

### **Ear – Thumb – Foot / Hear – Did – Went / Interestingly Same as High Priest**

Interestingly the sacrifice at the Temple, the Priest would take the blood of the sacrifice and dip it on the cleansed man's right ear, then his thumb, and then his toe. Then the priests took oil and touched the right ear, the right thumb, and the right toe. God saying I have cleansed all that you have heard in the world, all the rejection, all the words of hate, all the words against you, and I anoint (oil in the scriptures is a picture and symbol of the Holy Spirit), and the Spirit anoints us to hear God's word, to hear His words of love spoken unto us. Our hands and the things we had done were cleansed and forgiven, and the Holy Spirit will give us a new work that is for His glory; and the foot, the places we had gone and done, covered by the blood, forgive, and now God will take us places and use us in those places for His glory. The other place you read of this anointing being made is when the priests were set apart for service unto God, and thus we who have been healed of the sin of leprosy have been set apart unto the priesthood for His glory.

**Leviticus 14:10–18 (NKJV)** <sup>10</sup> “And on the eighth day he shall take two male lambs without blemish, one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish, three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering, and one log of oil. <sup>11</sup> Then the priest who makes him clean shall present the man who is to be made clean, and those things, before the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. <sup>12</sup> And the priest shall take one male lamb and offer it as a trespass offering, and the log of oil, and wave them as a wave offering before the LORD. <sup>13</sup> Then he shall kill the lamb in the place where he kills the sin offering and the burnt offering, in a holy place; for as the sin offering is the priest's, so is the trespass offering. It is most holy. <sup>14</sup> The priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering, and the priest shall put it on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. <sup>15</sup> And the priest shall take some of the log of oil, and pour it into the palm of his own left hand. <sup>16</sup> Then the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand, and shall sprinkle some of the oil with his finger seven times before the LORD. <sup>17</sup> And of the rest of the oil in his hand, the priest shall put some on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot, on the blood of the trespass offering. <sup>18</sup> The rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall put on the head of him who is to be cleansed. So the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD.

**Leviticus 8:22–24 (NKJV)** <sup>22</sup> And he brought the second ram, the ram of consecration. Then Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram, <sup>23</sup> and Moses killed it. Also he took some of its blood and put it on the tip of Aaron's right ear, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. <sup>24</sup> Then he brought Aaron's sons. And Moses put some of the blood on the tips of their right ears, on the thumbs of their right hands, and on the big toes of their right feet. And Moses sprinkled the blood all around on the altar.

**1 Peter 2:9–10 (NKJV)** <sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; <sup>10</sup> who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

### **Jesus Reaches out to Religious Leaders / Messianic Age has Come – Jesus Heals and Forgives**

Jesus is reaching out to all of the religious leaders, an event that has never happened in all of Israel, has just happened in their lifetime. This miracle was a massive witness to the leadership of Israel that the Messianic Age had come. The Jews expected the ravages of sin to be removed in the time of messianic salvation. Indeed, Jesus would allude to this later in his message to John the Baptist about who he was (cf. 7:22). The grand message was that messianic times had arrived—indeed, the Messiah was here. Many in Israel had leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet only Naaman was cleansed (cf. 4:27). But now one greater than Elisha had come. Jesus had the authority to heal the ravages of sin!

**Luke 7:20–22 (NKJV)** <sup>20</sup> When the men had come to Him, they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, ‘Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?’” <sup>21</sup> And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight. <sup>22</sup> Jesus

*answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them.*

### **The Message – There is a God who Touches – Who is Willing**

As much so, the message is sent, there is a God that touches, a God that is willing; come to Him all you who labor and are heavy laden and you will find rest.

*Matthew 11:28–30 (NKJV)* <sup>28</sup> *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."*

### **Will He Touch Us – Yes it Pleases Him / Not only Touch Us – but we can Touch Him**

Will Jesus touch us, yes He is willing, it pleases His heart, it is His great pleasure to touch you. And not only will He touch us, but He allows us to touch Him. He allowed us to lay our hands upon Him, and transfer all our guilt and shame, our sin and defilement unto Him. He is our Passover Lamb. Leprosy is a picture of sin in the scriptures, for like sin, leprosy begins below the surface and then begins to spread and destroy, it numbs the person to the sensitivity of sin and the Holiness of God.

### **Valuable Lessons from this Story**

We learn valuable lessons from the healing of this leper. Anyone wanting Christ's spiritual healing must put these lessons to work in his or her own life. We must come to Christ with a deep awareness of sin. Do we acknowledge that we are sinners and that we have nothing in ourselves to commend us to God? Do we mourn our sins? If so, we are ready for Christ's healing touch. We must bow before him in humble reverence—submit to him as our only hope and tell God that if he does not save us, we will be lost. We must believe he can make us clean. Do you believe? "He himself bore (your name)'s sins on the tree, so that (your name) might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds (your name) has been healed" (1 Peter 2:24).

*1 Peter 2:24–25 (NKJV)* <sup>24</sup> *who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness— by whose stripes you were healed. <sup>25</sup> For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.*

**Will He Touch Us – Yes it Pleases Him / Not only Touch Us – but we can Touch Him** Will Jesus touch us, yes He is willing, it pleases His heart, it is His great pleasure to touch you. And not only will He touch us, but He allows us to touch Him. He allowed us to lay our hands upon Him, and transfer all our guilt and shame, our sin and defilement unto Him. He is our Passover Lamb. Leprosy is a picture of sin in the scriptures, for like sin, leprosy begins below the surface and then begins to spread and destroy, it numbs the person to the sensitivity of sin and the Holiness of God.

### **The Gospel**

#### **Problem**

The problem is we have all sinned and are all guilty before Him. We have broken His Law, and like every lawbreaker we must face the crime we have committed.

*Romans 3:23 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

#### **The 10 Commandments**

God says if we have broken any of the commands (laws) He considers us guilty of them all, essentially saying He does not rank sin, for all are an offense before His Holiness.

- #1. "You shall have no other gods before Me... (Exodus 20:3).
- #2. "You shall not make for yourself a carved image... (Exodus 20:4-6).
- #3. "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain... (Exodus 20:7)
- #4. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy...(Exodus 20:8-11)
- #5. "Honor your father and your mother... (Exodus 20:12)
- #6. "You shall not murder. (Exodus 20:13)
- #7. "You shall not commit adultery. (Exodus 20:14)
- #8. "You shall not steal. (Exodus 20:15)
- #9. "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. (Exodus 20:16)
- #10. "You shall not covet your neighbor's goods; (Exodus 20:17)

*James 2:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> *For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.*

## **Penalty**

The Penalty of breaking one of God's Laws is eternal punishment, hell.

*Romans 6:23 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

## **Provision**

But God in His great love for His creation says I will trade places with you, if you are willing. You were sentenced to death, but I will take the punishment that was meant for you, I'll go to the cross, so you can be set free, so that when your tie comes to leave this world, you can leave it in peace because you will have peace with me.

*Romans 5:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

## **Profession**

What must man do to receive this free gift, to have this peace with God? Recognize, Repent, and Receive.

## **Recognize**

First recognize that you have broken His Law, no excuses, throw yourself on the mercy of the court.

*Romans 3:23 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

## **Repent**

Secondly you must be willing to repent, that means change direction. You cannot say Jesus save me, and go on and live like you were before, and continue to break His Holy Law.

*Luke 13:3 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> *I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.*

## **Receive**

And thirdly, you must receive Him, you must ask Him to come into your life and forgive you of your sins:

*Romans 10:9–11 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> *that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.* <sup>10</sup> *For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.* <sup>11</sup> *For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."*

**Luke 5:15** **However, the report went around concerning Him all the more; and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities.**

## **2000 Years Later**

2,000 years later, His fame still grows!

# ***The Pharisees, the Paralytic, and the Prince***

## ***(Luke 5:16-26)***

### **Another Wonderful Passage / Chapter 4 Mission Statement / John the Baptist Asks**

We come to another wonderful passage of Scripture today as we will see Jesus heal a man paralyzed. In chapter 4 Jesus declared His mission statement, His reason for coming, to preach the good news to the poor, and to heal the brokenhearted. In a few chapters we will read of John the Baptist asking, are you the One, and Jesus confirmation to Him being the One, is that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the gospel is preached to the poor.

**Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)** <sup>18</sup> *“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”*

**Luke 7:20–22 (NKJV)** <sup>20</sup> *When the men had come to Him, they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, ‘Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?’” <sup>21</sup> And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight. <sup>22</sup> Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them.*

### **Brokenhearted – Poor / Is that you Today? / Are you Paralyzed**

I’ve come to heal the brokenhearted; I’ve come to tell good news to the poor. Can this describe you today? Is your heart heavy about something, does your heart feel like it is divided, does it feel like it isn’t whole, Jesus wants to heal your heart today. Do you feel bankrupt and broke in a world where it seems everyone is healthy, wealthy, and wise? Jesus wants to proclaim good news to you today. Is there something in your life presently, that seems to have you paralyzed, something that keeps you from arising and walking in the freedom and power? Jesus says that is My purpose for coming into your life, so that you may arise and walk, so you may live in the freedom and power that comes from God directly.

### **Pharisee – Paralytic – Prince / Each will speak to Us**

In our passage today, we will see the Pharisees, the paralytic, and the Prince. Each person will speak to us; each person has a message for us to take away today.

### ***A Paralytic is Healed***

**Luke 5:16** So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.

**Luke 5:17** Now it happened on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was present to heal them.

### **Pharisee jobs to Validate Claims / But came to Terminate / Hated Jesus because they couldn’t Do**

The religious leaders had come from all over, it was their job to evaluate and validate any person who came upon the scene and claimed to be a prophet, not to mention be the Messiah. So they come out to check out Jesus and they are coming from everywhere we see, Jerusalem, Judea, and Galilee. But as we will see they did not come to validate but to terminate, they came looking for any chink in the armor so they could launch their full assault upon Him and thus rid Him of their lives. They hated Jesus not because He healed the sick, raised the dead, made the lame walk, and the blind see, they hated Jesus because they couldn’t do any of those things. They hated the attention going to another, they hated hearing how great Jesus was, they hated seeing their praise go to another.

### **The Power was present to Heal / Critical & Prideful Heart / God’s Power - Powerless**

*Verse 17 - and the power of the Lord was present to heal them* - The power of the Lord was present to heal them, but sadly for these religious leaders they were not healed; their healing needed was for their critical and prideful heart. Jesus just healed a man with leprosy, in just a few moments He will heal a man who is paralyzed, but He is powerless to heal these men's critical heart. Did you hear what I said, Jesus was powerless.....yes although the power of the Lord was present to heal, there was something more powerful (if you will – in this sense), and that was a critical and prideful heart. Imagine that, something that makes God’s power, powerless. God’s power is

limitless, His willingness is limitless, His passion and compassion is limitless, yet there is still something that can stop this limitless power from flowing, and that is a hard heart, a critical spirit.

### **How I have Seen It / He wants to Flow – but there is a Cork**

How I have watched it, how I have been guilty of it, that God wants to pour out all He has, He wants to flow His love and blessing, yet because of heart that is hard towards that person, that situation, it could even be hard against Him, that although His power is present, it just sits there bottled up, corked, ready to flow but there is a cork (aka – the hard heart) that keeps it bottled up. In our country we use pvc piping to flow water out to the fields and the homes; but in the remote jungles of the world they use bamboo. Inside bamboo is a little film that is made during growth and it runs across the who interior, and it is called “heart”. So they will say, we have to break the heart before the water can flow through. So too it is with us, we have to break the hard heart before the living water of God can flow through us.

*John 7:38 (NKJV) <sup>38</sup> He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”*

### **Christian – break the Cork – Let His Power Flow / Don’t let Hard Heart keep you from all God Has**

Oh Christian, break the cork, pull the cork, let the power that God wants to pour out on you be released. Don’t allow a hard heart or a critical spirit keep you from all that God wants to do for and in you.

### **But Ray – You Don’t Know / That Person Did – Or God didn’t Do / Bitter at Life / Jesus is Standing Before U**

But Ray you don’t know what that person did to me! You may even say you are still bitter at God because you think He failed you when you needed Him most. You may just be bitter that life hasn’t worked out the way you think it should have, everyone else has this wonderful life and filled with joy, but you feel overlooked and forgotten. Christian, don’t rob yourself, don’t miss that Jesus is standing right there in front of you (just like He was with these men), don’t let the cares of this world rob you that He cares for you.

### **Catch the Scene – Pharisees Sitting – Disrespect / Arms Folded – Prunes / Yet Jesus Teaches in Power/Peace**

You have to catch this scene here to fully appreciate what all is happening. Jesus is teaching, thus Jesus is teaching (that is how it was back then – the teacher sat the listeners stood), but here come the religious leaders and we are told that they too are sitting. It is disrespect right from the beginning. I can picture them sitting there with arms crossed, prune faces, searing eyes.....and yet Jesus teaches in peace, power, and love. Even though their hearts were not for Him, His heart was for them, and He preached I am sure like “His” life depended on it, for it did, that is why He came to seek and save the lost, with His own life.

*Luke 5:3 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup> Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon’s, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat.*

### **How did He do It – How can we have same Heart / His Pattern / Perfect Perspective and Perfect Peace**

How did He do it, how can we do it, how can we have this same heart.....verse 16, it is the pattern that we will repeatedly read throughout this marvelous gospel, Jesus lived a life that had a pattern of prayer. Jesus spent time with the Father hours before He would encounter these men, and because he had, His whole life and purpose was in perfect perspective, and He was in perfect peace. Christian do you want a life that is in perfect perspective and in perfect peace.....then follow His pattern.

*Luke 3:21–22 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. <sup>22</sup> And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, “You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased.”*

*Luke 5:16 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.*

*Luke 6:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.*

*Luke 6:28 (NKJV) <sup>28</sup> bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.*

*Luke 9:18 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> And it happened, as He was alone praying, that His disciples joined Him, and He asked them, saying, “Who do the crowds say that I am?”*

*Luke 9:28 (NKJV) <sup>28</sup> Now it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, that He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray.*

*Luke 9:29 (NKJV) <sup>29</sup> As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe became white and glistening.*

**Luke 11:1 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."

**Luke 11:2 (NKJV)** <sup>2</sup> So He said to them, "When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven."

**Luke 18:1 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart,

**Luke 21:36 (NKJV)** <sup>36</sup> Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

**Luke 22:32 (NKJV)** <sup>32</sup> But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren."

**22:41 (NKJV)** <sup>41</sup> And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed,

**Luke 22:44 (NKJV)** <sup>44</sup> And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

**Luke 22:46 (NKJV)** <sup>46</sup> Then He said to them, "Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation."

### **How escape Critical Heart – Pray / Last Week – Word not Translated / People won't Pray / Perspective**

How do you escape the critical heart, PRAY! Last week I said the number one reason I have seen people walk away from the Lord, backslide, or become so lukewarm no one can tell if they are saved or not, is because they never translate the Word of God into an experience with God, they read and hear the word, but it never is manifested into any type of action or demonstration in their life. Well, what is the number one reason I see people have a critical heart, a judgmental heart, a prideful heart, it is because they don't (and they won't) pray, especially for others. It is not possible to pray for someone, and continue to have resentment towards them. Prayer changes things alright, it changes you, it changes your heart, it changes your attitude, it changes your perspective on the person or situation. **Romans 16:20 (NKJV)** <sup>20</sup> And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

### **Prayer Preceded Power / The Power of Peace / No Control – No Peace / Prayer Preceded Power**

Prayer preceded power. And the power I am talking about today is the power of peace. Oh the power of peace; it takes hopeless situations and brings them hope because peace brings us into the presence of God. When we are filled with anxiety, when we filled with turmoil, when we feel we have no control, or that person or situation is in control we lose all peace, and thus we lose all power. Prayer preceded power, and the power was the peace of God,

### **Why – When you Pray you are in Presence of Prince of Peace**

Why is there peace when you pray, because Jesus is the Prince of Peace, when you pray you are in the presence of the Prince of Peace.

**Isaiah 9:6 (NKJV)** <sup>6</sup> For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

### **Don't let Person rob your Peace / Hear the Lord say I will Cover You / Ever Notice Paul's Prayers**

Don't let that person or situation rob you of your peace, don't take on the critical and prideful heart, but hear the Lord say to you today, let it go, trust in Me in this situation, trust I will take care of you. For when you do, you will be filled with Peace, and there is power in peace, for Jesus is the Prince of Peace. Did you ever notice what Paul's continual prayer was when he wrote, grace and peace. Peter and John pray the same blessing themselves.

**2 Corinthians 1:2 (NKJV)** <sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**2 Corinthians 13:11 (NKJV)** <sup>11</sup> Finally, brethren, farewell. Become complete. Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

**Galatians 1:3 (NKJV)** <sup>3</sup> Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ,

**Galatians 6:16 (NKJV)** <sup>16</sup> And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

**Ephesians 1:2 (NKJV)** <sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Ephesians 6:23 (NKJV)** <sup>23</sup> Peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Philippians 1:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Philippians 4:7 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

*Philippians 4:9 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

*Colossians 1:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are in Colosse: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Colossians 3:15 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup> And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.

*1 Thessalonians 1:1 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

*1 Thessalonians 5:23 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*1 Thessalonians 5:23 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*1 Timothy 1:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> To Timothy, a true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

*2 Timothy 1:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> To Timothy, a beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

*Titus 1:4 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> To Titus, a true son in our common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.

*Philemon 3 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Hebrews 13:20 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

*1 Peter 1:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.

*2 Peter 1:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,

*2 John 3 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> Grace, mercy, and peace will be with you from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

### **God wants you to Have Peace – So Come into His Presence**

God wants you to have peace, therefore come into His presence and say Lord you know my heart right now, I do not have peace, I am bitter and hurt and resentful, what they have done to me, what they are doing to me, Lord bring me peace which passes understanding.

*Philippians 4:7 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

### **Honestly – You will have to Go back Often**

I will have to tell you this honestly, you will have to go back again and again, because the world is so selfish, so focused on themselves. But God is focused on you, and He will be waiting and ready every time you come, and every time, prayer will precede power.

### **Let us Pray Right Now**

I know there are people here today, and you have a situation in your life (whether that be a person or a circumstance), and your heart is critical, and you know it is causing you have a critical heart, and that critical heart is preventing you experience the peace and power of God in your life presently.....I want to stop the service right now and pray together for God to release any one who is bound and wants to be set free right now.

**Luke 5:18** Then behold, men brought on a bed a man who was paralyzed, whom they sought to bring in and lay before Him.

**Luke 5:19** And when they could not find how they might bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the housetop and let him down with his bed through the tiling into the midst before Jesus.

### **Typical Roof / This was no Small Task**

The typical roof of that day consisted of timbers laid parallel to each other about two or three feet apart. Sticks were closely laid crosswise upon the timbers, and the structure was padded with reeds, thistles, and twigs. The whole thing was overlaid with about a foot of earth, which was packed down to minimize leakage. All told, the roof was about two feet thick. During the spring, grass flourished on these primitive roofs. So the paralytic's friends had their work cut out for them—they were performing a mini-excavation.

### **Whose House was It? / Peter and Boat / Time & Possession – because you Come with It / Romans 12**

So whose house is this anyways? Imagine it being your house. Many early commentators say this was Peter's house. The reason being is that they were up in Capernaum, Jesus had been to Peter's house previously healing his mother-in-law, and just recently left his boat, so they conclude this is Peter's house. We don't know for sure, but it is a high probability. Here is the take away, and that is just a few verses ago we read of Peter giving his boat to Jesus, and we have a passage of tremendous application of giving of our time and possessions to the Lord for His glory sake. We have the application that God asks us for our time and possession not because He needs them, but because we come with them, and that is what He is desiring. We use the story of Peter as a life-example of stepping out and giving unto the Lord; but here (if this be Peter's house) is the next progression, and that is there is no acknowledgement or recognition of what we have done, what we have sacrificed, how devoted we are, it simply becomes our reasonable sacrifice. No press, no promotion, and no praise – just the reasonable service unto the Lord. Sadly, lots of people will not do anything for the Lord if they don't get the recognition for doing it. Many won't serve in the obscure ministries in the obscure places, because they know no one will recognize or appreciate them for doing so. But although we don't know exactly whose house this is, God knows exactly whose it is, and.....He visited it, and did a miracle in it.

*Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

**Luke 5:20 When He saw their faith, He said to him, “Man, your sins are forgiven you.”**

**Luke 5:21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, “Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?”**

### **First hear Digging – Debris Fall – Light Pierces / What a Photo Op – Dusty Robes**

Those inside the house first heard shoveling and then, with increasing distinctness, the voices of the four men as they tore the thatch away and removed the roofing from between the beams. Debris began to fall upon those inside, and then a crack of light widened to the size of a man. Words were exchanged between those inside and those on the roof. Then a warning came from above, and the paralytic's bed was lowered on ropes. What a photo op! Above, the light streaming past them in dusty beams, were four sweaty, impish, determined faces. Below were Pharisees and teachers of the Law shaking dirt from their robes. And in between was the paralytic and the Prince of Peace.

### **I Love the Scene – It is a Standoff**

I love the scene, here is a classic standoff. The Pharisees are sitting on one side (shaking the dust from their caps), Jesus is sitting on the other side, and right in between them is the paralytic. Imagine the paralytic, he looks at Jesus, he looks at the religious leaders, back and forth he looks, hellooooooooooooo.

### **The Scene is Set**

So the scene is set, what will Jesus do.

**Luke 5:22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He answered and said to them, “Why are you reasoning in your hearts?**

**Luke 5:23 Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Rise up and walk’?**

**Luke 5:24 But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—He said to the man who was paralyzed, “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.”**

**Luke 5:25 Immediately he rose up before them, took up what he had been lying on, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.**

### **Greatest Need – Forgiveness / We are the Paralytic**

Jesus knew that the deepest needs people have are not physical and material, but spiritual and eternal. Christian, we are the paralytic in this story, and our greatest need was forgiveness of sin before the Holy God, and Jesus delivered it. The body of the paralytic is a picture of us, unable to do, powerless, lifted up and carried away only where the world would choose to take. The paralyzed body gets weaker and weaker every day. Day one it was slightly weaker than it was before the paralysis hit, but each day the muscles don't move, and they fade into atrophy, they get weaker and weaker as each day passes. The mind says move, get going, but the paralysis disconnects the will from the walk, and a person is confined to just where the world will move them to. How that is so much like sin in our lives, as we may will to do the will of God, but we are powerless to do it, and we just get moved around wherever the world decides to take us, that is until we have the encounter with Jesus and He gives us new life, and new power to walk at and in His word. When this man is made whole by Jesus, he will be able to walk and have newness of life.

### **How do we Know – Our Walk Proves / Otherwise it is Just Talk**

How do we know sins are forgiven? How do we know the gospel is true? When people who were paralyzed and lame begin to walk and leap and praise God. When people who were paralyzed by sinfulness and foolishness embrace the Good News of forgiveness, the reality of a person's conversion is manifested in his walk. If there's no walk, it's just talk.

### **Jesus sends Pharisees a Message – Your greatest need is Forgiveness**

Jesus is also sending the message to these religious leaders of what their greatest need was, and that was forgiveness of sin. Your religious works and affiliation are not enough to give you forgiveness of sin, you must come to the Savior.

### **More than 1 Paralytic in the Room**

It says this man departed and went to his house. How cool would it be if he got back on the mat with the robes and his friends raised him back out of the house through the hole, it would be like one of these sight and sound grand finales. Sadly there was more than one paralytic in that room that day, there was a whole row of Pharisees who were paralyzed in their sin, and because their unwillingness to bow their knee, surrender their life to Him, the paralyzed man walks out in newness of life; the Pharisees walk out, but they walk out still paralyzed in their sin.

### **How will you Leave here Today**

If you have yet to commit your life to Jesus, how will you leave here today?

**2 Corinthians 6:2 (NKJV)** <sup>2</sup> For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

**Luke 5:26 And they were all amazed, and they glorified God and were filled with fear, saying, "We have seen strange things today!"**

### **At what Length will you Go**

Beloved, at what length will you go for the salvation of another. We have been duped into believing that our faith shouldn't be pushy, it shouldn't be offensive, it shouldn't barrage in.....well look at how far these men would go, pushy.....ok if you won't let us in through the front door, we will come in through the roof. Offensive, hey that's my house you are busting on, there is rain predicted tonight too. Barraging in, I think this would fall into that category don't you.

### **How they Loved their Friend / Willing to face Inconvenience and Misunderstood / Love that rips Roofs**

How those four loved their friend! Their love overcame daunting obstacles. They would not be put off by the unyielding crowd. Because of their love they temporarily "vandalized" another's property to achieve their end. They ignored the judgments of those around them. Perhaps the paralyzed man was a beloved brother or uncle or father. Or maybe he was simply a neighbor with whom they had grown up. One thing is certain: they cared about him, and their love was the first reason for the deliverance he was about to experience. This is how it was and is with God too,

for God so loved the world that he made the ultimate sacrifice for us (cf. John 3:16). He dug, so to speak, through the roof of the world and lowered his Son down so Jesus could die for our sins. The same holds true for missionaries. Their love for God produces a love for people and ultimately the inconvenience of moving into another culture despite the risk of being misunderstood. They may live in a difficult area where medical care is primitive and they are unappreciated. Nothing but immense love would sustain this. In our own lives, our family and friends will very likely not know the healing touch of Christ unless we have the kind of love that rips open roofs, so to speak. If we truly love those around us, we will pray regularly and fervently for their salvation. We will risk being judged as fools in our efforts to win them to Christ. If we are not praying, if we are not prying open any roofs, do we really love them?

### **Conviction – Only Hope was in Jesus / Key to Removing Roofs – Conviction Jesus & Gospel only Hope**

Coupled with the four friends' love was the conviction (shared by the paralytic) that Jesus was the only hope the man had. Similarly, Peter boldly declared, "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). This is why Paul passionately wrote, "I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, the people of Israel" (Romans 9:2–4a). When a Christian believes Jesus is the only way, he or she will go to great lengths to encourage his or her friends to come to Jesus. Do we truly believe this, or do we merely say it as an evangelical shibboleth (cf. Judges 12:4–7)? The importance of the conviction that Jesus is the only way cannot be overstated. It is the key to removing roofs—to missions—to evangelism—to the gospel itself.

### **Great Faith**

Great faith - Along with their love and conviction, the four friends had great faith. There is no way they would have gone to such outrageous extremes if they did not believe that Jesus could and would heal their friend. They all possessed faith's dynamic certitude (cf. Hebrews 11:1). A wavering faith would have opted out when they began digging up the roof, if not sooner. "Ah, man, this is embarrassing. You'll have to finish without me." Determined to bring their friend to Jesus, confident he would help the invalid, the faithful quartet worked on.

### **Faith that was Persistent**

Their faith was persistent. Once they had their friend on the stretcher, there was no stopping them. None of them said, "The crowd is too big. I guess this isn't the Lord's will." Instead, they started climbing! Jesus lauded such action when he said, "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it" (Matthew 11:12). When the four tore through the roof, they took the kingdom with determined force. Such graced violence is the key for the church making the impact it should.

### **Faith that was Creative**

Their faith was creative. Some who were standing idly by and saw the four's success probably thought, "Why didn't I think of that?" Perhaps they did not love as much or believe as passionately as the four friends. A faith that truly believes Christ is the only way will be inventive. This is the genius behind the Quito radio station HCJB, which sits directly on the equator at 10,000 feet and broadcasts the gospel to virtually the entire globe seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day. The almost legendary creativity of that ministry springs from the passionate, driving conviction that Christ is the only hope for the world. If you really love your neighbors, you will find a way to bring them to the love of Christ. Imagine the scene, as the man lays before Jesus, Jesus looks up and sees four faces looking down; could Jesus had done anything less than smile and give that look, alright –that is faith that blesses me. Christian, be creative, figure out ways to reach the lost, your lost friends, don't be limited to what you see others do, but seek the Lord on how you yourself can be creative to reach them.

### **Faith that Sacrificed**

Their faith was sacrificial. Someone would have to repair the roof, and that would require time, labor, and expense. A faith that brings Christ's power to the world must always be willing to pay the price. Few Christians have influenced the church more in their time than did Francis and Edith Schaeffer. But there was a cost. Schaeffer wrote in *The Church at the End of the 20th Century*:

In about the first three years of L'Abri [Francis Schaeffer's Christian fellowship group] all our wedding presents were wiped out. Our sheets were torn. Holes were burned in our rugs. Drugs came into our place. People vomited on our rugs.... Sure it is a danger to your family, and you must be careful. But have you ever risked it?

The Schaeffers risked it because they believed Christ was the only answer. So we see in the lives of the four stretcher-bearers how Christ's power is unleashed in the world—through love, through conviction, and through faith. Do we truly love our families, our neighbors, our colleagues? Do we believe Christ is the only way? Where is our persistence, our creativity, our sacrifice?

## **ENDING**

### **There are those Paralyzed Today**

I feel the pressing of the Lord to say this to someone or everyone, and that is God saying to you, arise and take up your bed and walk. You have heard the Lord say your sins are forgiven, but you are still bedridden, you are still paralyzed, you don't feel like you can arise and walk because of your past, because of your present, because you are fearful of the future, and thus you are paralyzed, paralyzed with fear or unbelief.....the Lord says to you today, arise and take up your bed and walk.

# Preaching, Praying, and Partying

## *(Luke 5:27-39)*

### **Intro**

This chapter five has been packed with power, as we entered into this chapter it was on the tail end of chapter four where Jesus gave His mission statement, that He has come to preach the good news to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, and to set at liberty those who are captives. Then in chapter five we see Him doing just that, in power, in compassion, and each word written isn't just a history story, but a message and example for each of us of how He loves us and how He wants to move in our lives today just as He did in the stories we read. We began the chapter with Jesus saying Peter lets go fishing, and while in the boat Jesus breaks through to very core of Peter's heart, and then He says Peter follow Me, and Peter leaves all to follow. Then we saw Jesus heal the man with leprosy, and that man said if you are willing you can cleanse me, and Jesus responded by saying nothing would please Me more than to touch you. Then last week we read the story of the paralytic being lowered into the room, and Jesus saying arise and walk, but more importantly Jesus had first said your sins are forgiven. And so Jesus says to us, follow Me, come unto Me, nothing would please Me more than to touch your life personally, and after I do you arise and walk in newness of life. Well as we close this chapter today, we will read of a man who was considered the worst of the worst, someone who everyone considered destined for hell (Levi – aka Matthew) – but Jesus will seek him out and say follow me, and then Matthew throws a party for his friends who were hated too, and Jesus comes to the party, and Jesus becomes the life of the party, for everywhere Jesus is, life is.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

### **Matthew is Called**

**Luke 5:27** After these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me."

**Luke 5:28** So he left all, rose up, and followed Him.

### **Roman Tax Collection**

Levi was a tax collector for the Roman government. The Romans collected their taxes through a system called "tax farming." They assessed a district a fixed tax figure and then sold the right to collect taxes to the highest bidder. The buyer then had to hand over the assessed figure at the end of the year and could keep whatever he gathered above that amount. Such a system invited extortion. The potential for abuse was further aided by both the primitive record-keeping and the limited means of communication in the ancient world, both of which made it difficult for people to verify when they were being exploited or to appeal it. There were two categories of taxes. Fixed taxes left little room for extortion. These included the poll tax, which all men and women paid simply because they were alive, the ground tax, which required one tenth of all grain, wine, and oil, and the income tax (1 percent of earnings). It was the second area of taxes—namely, duties and tolls—that allowed the tax collectors to rob others. The people paid separate taxes for using roads and for docking in harbors, and also import and export duties, and even a sales tax on certain items. There was even a cart tax, in which each wheel was taxed!

### **Breeding Ground for Corruption and Greed**

The system was a breeding ground for graft and exploitation. A tax collector could stop anyone on the road, make him unpack his bundles, and charge just about anything his larcenous heart desired. If the traveler could not pay, the tax collector would offer to loan him money at an exorbitant rate. Such men were skilled extortionists. The Talmud classified them as robbers (Sanhedrin 25b). Not surprisingly, they often allied themselves with thugs and enforcers—the scum of Jewish society. So rare was honesty in the profession that a Roman writer remarked in amazement that he once saw a monument to an honest tax collector! Jewish tax collectors were easily the most hated men in Hebrew society—despicable, rich vermin. They were classed with "robbers, evildoers, adulterers" (Luke 18:11), with prostitutes (Matthew 21:32), and with pagan Gentiles (Matthew 18:17). They were not only hated for their robbery, but also because they were lackeys of the Romans. Tax collectors could not serve as witnesses in court and were excommunicated from the synagogues. Low-life Levi and his friends were the lowest of the lowest.

*Luke 18:11 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> *The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector.*

*Matthew 21:32 (NKJV)* <sup>32</sup> *For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw it, you did not afterward relent and believe him.*

*Matthew 18:17 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> *And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.*

### **Levi was his Name**

Levi is his name, and it is not only a very Jewish name, it is a very specific name that was given to sons who were from the tribe of Levi, and it was that tribe that was given the honor and responsibility to maintain and serve the Temple. Levi would have been raised in the ways of the Judaism (the religion of the Jews), he would have been steeped in the knowledge of the scriptures (we see evidence of that in the gospel of Matthew as he quotes the OT several dozen times), he would have had an expectation upon life from birth that he would grow up to serve in the Temple. This Levi does not, in fact because he chose to be a tax collector, he is now not even allowed in the Temple or on the Temple grounds. No Feasts, no celebrations, no making an offering for sin. It should also be noted that the Tribe of Levi did not get an inheritance to the land when Israel came and possessed the land.....for it is said that Lord will be their inheritance (Numbers 18:20); but here is Levi, and he isn't trusting in the Lord's inheritance, he is going out and getting all that he can get out of this world, regardless of what means he has to do it, regardless of how far he transgresses God's commands and ways, regardless at what expense of his countryman.

### **Appreciate the Drama**

Then Jesus comes into his world, walks upon his region. Understanding how much Levi was loathed, we can appreciate the drama in the opening description of his encounter with Jesus: "After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth" (v. 27). They very likely had seen each other before as Levi had stood at the fringes of various crowds listening to Jesus. Perhaps they had even talked privately about spiritual matters. Imagine you are Levi, the whole town and region that you control and manipulate is electrified, there is one conversation that engulfs the region, have you heard about this man from Nazareth. Levi would hear Jesus preach, hear people talk about Jesus, and then all the childhood upbringing would flood back to him, maybe reflecting back on the day he left the "fold", says no thank you to following after God, no thanks to God being my inheritance, I am going to go out and get my inheritance right now, at whatever cost. Then he hears Jesus preach, he hears that Jesus forgives sins, and based on what happens next (he follows Jesus), Matthew knew Jesus was the Messiah, that Matthew had stood in front of God Himself. As the town buzzed, as the people spoke amongst themselves could this be the Messiah, Matthew knew that Jesus was, and he would say – but what does that mean to me except doom, for I have turned my back on Him, I chose money and the world of what I was called to, I spent a lifetime on myself, could His forgiveness be offered unto a person like me.

### **Saw – Careful**

And now here comes Jesus walking past his booth, his place of thievery, his place of robbing children's milk money. And now Jesus stopped and took a good look at Levi (the word "saw," according to Abbott-Smith, means "careful and deliberate vision which interprets ... its object"). Such a contemplative look from Jesus probably made Levi nervously say to himself, what is He going to say to me, here it comes, you low life, you despicable excuse of a person, all the investment into your life, all the calling you had, and you choose your gut and money wallet over your inheritance, here I Am, what you could have had, but you choose yourself. Levi waits for it to come, the condemnation unto death, but.....

### **Bolt of Lightning – Follow Me**

then like a bolt of lightning: "'Follow me,' Jesus said to him, ....." (vv. 27, 28).

### **A Whole Sermon in Two Words / Most Publicly Unacceptable / Leprosy – Paralytic - Matthew**

When Jesus said follow me, there was a whole sermon, a volume of doctrine, a depth of meaning, in those two words. Levi was the most publicly unacceptable candidate for discipleship. Jesus sought out the man no one else wanted, the one who some wished would come under God's most severe judgment. This is one of the glories of Jesus' ministry. And this is what Luke has been building toward in his Gospel arrangement—Jesus' healing the impossibly disfigured leper (thus demonstrating his power to heal the ravages of sin), then his pronouncement to

those gathered around the paralytic that “the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins” (v. 24), and now this. Jesus offers real forgiveness for real guilt and shame!

### **In Matthews Gospel – Jesus saw “a man”**

In Matthew’s gospel, Matthew gives the account of this day, and here is that key word.....and Jesus saw “a man”. Jesus looked past what the world saw, Jesus looked past the label that was put upon Matthew by the world. When Jesus looks at you, He doesn’t see the labels and stigmas the world puts upon you, He sees a man, He sees a woman, He sees the person that He formed in the mother womb.

*Matthew 9:9 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, “Follow Me.” So he arose and followed Him.*

### **Christian see what Jesus Sees – Not World’s Label / Saved 20 Years Now**

Jesus sees a man, Jesus sees a woman.....He doesn’t see a label, a stigma. Christian, see what Jesus sees, don’t let the world’s label make you. Jesus sees past our past, He sees “a man”. I’ve been saved twenty years, and I can tell you that there are many who do not see me as “a man”, but as the label they have placed on me. Non-Christian and Christian alike (maybe even more are the Christians who do it); this is the label I put on you, this is who you will always be to me, it is what I will always think of you. When God sees you in your struggles and failings, he doesn’t see a label and stigma, He sees a person. Parent when God looks at your special needs child, He sees a person, not a label.

### **Matthew means Gift of God / From Robber to Gift**

Indeed, Levi did follow Christ for the rest of his life, for this Levi is none other than Matthew the Gospel writer (cf. Matthew 9:9; 10:2, 3). Whether he was named Matthew when Jesus first called him, we do not know. Many think that just as Simon was named Peter (“the rock”) by the Lord, so Levi was likewise tagged Matthew (“gift of God”). If so, this was divine poetry, because this covetous rip-off artist would become, as his name suggested, a gift of God to his people, and a gift to God Himself. God, considers me, God considers you, His gift.....

### **Takes the Sinner – and turns them into Art Work**

We also learn from this that Jesus sees what we can become even while we are lost in our sins. Christ saw in the disfigured life of Levi (tax collector) a Matthew (writer, evangelist, collector of souls). He sees sinners, with all their moral deformity, through his ultimate artist’s eye. “For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works” (Ephesians 2:10). No matter how scarred and ugly a sinner’s life may be, Christ can make it into something beautiful for God. He has devoted his life to it! The word there for workmanship is “poem”, God considers you His poem.

*Ephesians 2:10 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

### **Gift of God**

This is your God, this is what God thinks of you, you are His gift.....to the world, and.....to Himself. Matthew means “gift of God”, and he represents each and every one of us, we are God’s gift to the world, and .....when God wants to give Himself a gift, He saves a soul, and it is obvious that He loves to give gifts to Himself.

### **Decisive Break – Continuous Pattern of Life (Verb Tense) / No going back to Rome**

Levi follows Jesus, and the verb tense that Luke stresses is that he made a decisive break with his old life (indicated by the aorist participle in the Greek) and followed Jesus—literally, “was following him” (imperfect indicative)—as a continuous pattern of life. In doing this Levi made a substantial sacrifice because he was wealthy. There were some quiet heroics here because, unlike the fishermen who had followed Jesus, he could not go back to his old job if things did not work out.

### **All who Serve – the Father will Honor**

And, when Jesus looks upon a heart, sees a man or woman who will “follow Him”, He sees also the gift that the Father will consider.....ah Dad is going to be so pleased with this one, they are willing to “follow Me”, to honor Him, and Dad is going to honor them. The word for honor there means to “value”, to “consider precious”, and “to prize”. That is what God thinks of you, that is how He sees you, as His precious possession.

*John 12:25–26 (NKJV)* <sup>25</sup> *He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.* <sup>26</sup> *If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.*

### **Follow Him – It is Worth It / The Servant & The Prince**

Continue on Christian, be as Matthew and follow Him unto the end, don't quit or grow weary now, your redemption is near. The story is told of a prince and his servant traveling through a hostile region during medieval times who were taken captive by the enemy. After being beaten and thrown into a dungeon, the prince developed a terrible fever, and it looked as though his days were numbered. Semiconscious as he was, however, he didn't miss the opportunity to alert his servant when their guard fell asleep one day. "Get his keys and get out of here," the prince said. "I'm too weak; I can't make it. But you go. This is your chance." "My prince," answered the servant, "where you are, there I will be. If need be, we'll both die here together." Two weeks later, the prince's father launched an invasion and freed his imprisoned son in the process. "Oh, Father," said the prince immediately upon his return, "even as my servant stayed with me in my danger, suffered with me in my sickness, stood by me in my imprisonment, honor now him." And the servant was honored throughout the kingdom.

### **Same is True for You**

The same is true with you. The Lord knows you could opt to escape, that the Cross and obedience are not always easy. The Lord knows many of you are truly paying a price to follow Him. You've been passed by for promotions at work because you've stood for integrity. You have been laughed and mocked on your campus, or you've stayed in a relationship because you committed yourself in matrimony. "Forget it," the world says. "Here's a key: Get out. Go on. Be free." But you've said, "No. My Master, my Prince, my Savior has called me to follow Him. And even when it's not easy, I will stay by Him." I've got good news for you who have taken this stand by the Father's Son, the Prince of Peace. After the invasion, when He brings you safely home to heaven, you will be honored greatly, for the Father honors those who honor His Son.

### **Jesus Eats with Sinners**

**Luke 5:29** Then Levi gave Him a great feast in his own house. And there were a great number of tax collectors and others who sat down with them.

**Luke 5:30** And their scribes and the Pharisees complained against His disciples, saying, "Why do You eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

**Luke 5:31** Jesus answered and said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.

**Luke 5:32** I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."

### **3 Places to Find Jesus**

There were three places Jesus consistently frequented: open places, where He preached to the masses; quiet places, where He prayed to His Father; and festive places, where He would celebrate with the people. When you read the Gospels, you cannot help but see that Jesus loved to go to parties. Whether it was in the home of a religious leader like Simon the Pharisee or in that of Matthew, a tax collector with the raffish of society, Jesus was often in attendance at feasts or festivals. This shouldn't surprise us, considering that the first public miracle He ever did was turning water into wine—not for the purpose of serving Communion, but simply in order that a wedding celebration could continue. Jesus had the ability to attract people to Himself constantly and to enjoy being with others immensely.

### **Becoming one**

Now the Pharisees they are up in arms over this because in that culture they believed that when you ate with someone you were becoming one with them. The reason being is that they didn't eat like we do by everyone gets their own plate and their own serving, rather everyone go their own piece of bread, and then they would dip their bread into a common bowl and eat from it (no forks – just dipping). And they didn't have our no double-dipping rule, so as they double-dipped they would share and leave behind a piece of themselves. The Pharisees were saying you are taking in and becoming one with sinners and tax collectors, you are becoming them. Jesus identifies that He is willing to become one with them by eating with them. Jesus says to us, I am willing to become one with you, even though you are a sinner, I am willing to communion personally and intimately with you.

## **Will You**

Christian, does that describe you? Are you willing to become intimate with the sinner, are you willing to be associated with them? Are you willing to associate yourself with the Christians that the “self-respecting” Christians don’t want anything to do with because the stigma and label that are associated with the.

**Luke 5:31 Jesus answered and said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.**

**Luke 5:32 I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”**

## **The Righteous think they Ok / Sick need a Doctor / Jesus calls for Repentance**

Jesus is saying the person who thinks he is well, sees no need for a doctor, and thus they see no need for Him as Savior (but they are wrong – for there is none righteous – Romans 3:10). But the sinner who knows he is guilty before the Holy God knows he needs a Savior. Just so there is no misunderstanding, Jesus makes it clear that His calling to sinners is to repentance. This party isn’t Jesus saying hey don’t worry about your sin, I know you can’t help it, it is ok, go on living as you are but just believe in Me and you will go to heaven in the end. Jesus calls for a changed life; Matthew’s life changed, and his friends who have come, have joy at the party because they know they have been forgiven, and they are celebrating their new life.

*Romans 3:10 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> As it is written: “There is none righteous, no, not one;*

## **Great Physician**

Jesus is the Great Physician, and know this every person:

- *His diagnosis is accurate - His cure is perfect - His price has already been paid*

## **Prescription is Repentance**

God’s ways are perfect, even when we question them or flat out disagree with them, but if you want to be made whole, see that His prescription for healing – is repentance.

## **Have we Lost Sight Jesus came to Bring Life**

What about going to places where the sinners are (and I am not talking about bars and drinking parties), should we go to the company picnic, the neighbors cook-out? A person who truly senses the presence of Jesus in his life will celebrate life as Jesus did. What about us? Have we lost sight of the fact that Jesus Christ came to bring us life and life abundantly, to let us experience real celebration? Would we be invited to a neighborhood function readily? Do our co-workers include us when they get together, or is there something about us so Pharisaical that they conveniently forget to invite us (but if they don’t invite us because they want to talk filthy and drink excessively – then consider it a compliment that they don’t invite you)? Jesus was included in all kinds of parties. The common people embraced Him easily and loved to be around Him constantly. Why? Because He brought a higher degree of joy to wherever He went.

## **Jesus came to People as they Were – But Left them Different**

I pray not only that we might be able to penetrate the parties of our society, that people would feel free to include us in their celebrations, but that we might do what Jesus did—for although He came to people as they were, He left them different than He found them. If you find the party or the people affecting you rather than you affecting them, watch out. But if, like Jesus, you can go into a place and make a difference by your joy and the unmistakable reality of God’s work in your life, then go with God’s blessing. Acts 8 tells us that the early church was so full of joy that they caused the entire city of Samaria to be full of joy as well. Celebrate your salvation, gang, as you infiltrate your situation. Realize that Jesus can handle your humanity, that He would rather see you a friend of sinners than a self-righteous Pharisee. Then go on to make a difference in your community

## **Jesus Teaches About Fasting**

**Luke 5:33 Then they said to Him, “Why do the disciples of John fast often and make prayers, and likewise those of the Pharisees, but Yours eat and drink?”**

**Luke 5:34 And He said to them, “Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them?**

**Luke 5:35 But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; then they will fast in those days.”**

### **Pharisees Fasted Monday and Thursday**

Indeed, the Pharisees did fast every Monday and Thursday and make prayers at noon, 3:00 P.M., and 6:00 P.M. daily. “Why don’t Your disciples do the same?” they asked Jesus. In his first letter to Timothy, Paul said that there was coming a day when men would refuse marriage ceremonies (1 Timothy 4:3). Cyprian, the third-century Catholic Church leader was one such man. Marriage celebrations are too frivolous, he said. Parties and Christianity must be separated absolutely. Thus, the misconception began to grow, which is still with us today, that true spirituality and misery go hand in hand.

### **Jesus spoke on Power of Fasting**

Jesus spoke of the power of fasting and prayer when He said,

*Matthew 17:19–21 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not cast it out?” <sup>20</sup> So Jesus said to them, “Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. <sup>21</sup> However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.”

### **Teach us to Pray**

The disciples knew there was power in Jesus’ life because of His prayer life. The only thing they ever asked Him for was to teach them to pray. They saw a dynamic and power in His life that they knew came from His time alone with the Father. They didn’t say teach us how to raise the dead, that will make people believe, nor did they say teach us how to cleanse lepers, for that disease is loathsome, not even teach us how to multiply the loaves and fishes, because then we wouldn’t have to do fund raisers because we can just sell the bread and the fish and the ministry would be self-sustaining through that. No they said teach us to prayer, and the verb tense is really “make us prayers”.

*Luke 11:1 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.”

### **Fasting Detaches & Attaches**

There is power in fasting, and what happens when we fast, simply fasting is separating from, and attaching unto to.

### **God’s Supermarket**

God gives us so many gifts (love, joy, power, and yes fasting); I think one of the problems for us is that since we look at them as gifts, we think we have to wait for them to be given (and that is true for some – gift of healing, prophecy, etc), but many of these that we call gifts, I want you to look at them not as waiting to receive them, but going on to take them. God says the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace....., you can find fruit in the produce isle. Have you ever considered all the things that God has for us (for life and godliness) can be found in His supermarket of faith. There is a produce section, a meat section, a dairy section, and we can stroll through this supermarket of faith and load our carts up with all and as much as we want. The dairy section, cartons and cartons of the milk of the Word, and the store manager says take all that you want, we have a special on them today – free! Load up your cart. The meat isle has the finest cuts of beef, the highest quality, the meat of the Word, the sirloin of Ephesian, the prime rib of Genesis, the tenderloin of Philippians, the porterhouse of Exodus, and the Revelation strip steak. The store manager is saying load up your cart, take as much as you want, it is all free. Don’t leave here and go hungry. And the beauty of this market is that all the foods are zero calories, nonfattening, and zero cholesterol. Now I might add that Satan is a the great counterfeiter and he always mirrors what Jesus is doing, so he too has a market, and he too says take all you want, but his is never free, it is always on store credit, and he will be coming by later to collect on all that a person has taken as he keeps meticulous records of purchases – for anything you purchase you will pay for at some point. And Satan’s market is all loaded with calories and carbs, it may taste great in first bites, but then it starts sticking to your body, bogging you down, and the meats are the worst kind, full of cholesterol, and eventually starts to clog the arteries until the person has a heart attack. But oh God’s supermarket, fullness of nothing but goodness, and He says take all that you want, I want you to be filled with my goodness. Come here and let me take you to the produce isle, and I want you to take as much as you want, eat it all, and come back again tomorrow. What are you hungering for today, is it love, is it joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, and self-control, take and eat (see that that the Lord is good).

*Galatians 5:22–23 (NKJV)*

<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

*2 Peter 1:3 (NKJV)*

<sup>3</sup> as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,

*Psalm 34:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!

## **Fasting is Sweet**

I want to tell you there is something wonderful and delicious in the supermarket of faith, and it called fasting. It sounds like a contradiction, but God is saying come and eat of this, it is a dessert, and it is sweetness. Fasting will detach you from the world, and attach you to Me.

## **FASTING**

- F – it's Freeing
- A – it's Available
- S – it's Strengthening
- T – it's Threatening (on Satan's kingdom)
- I – it's Inspired
- N – it's Now
- G- it's God Ordained

It is *freeing* as it releases you from the flesh. It is you controlling your flesh, and not your flesh controlling you. Thus the Spirit in you rises up, and when your spirit rises you are free to hear and discern the voice of God so much clearer. Fasting is "*available*", in that God has given us an avenue to come into this special union with Him. Fasting is "*strengthening*" as in this special communion with God as he speaks to us, we hear and respond, and we become stronger in our walks. Because of that, fasting is "*threatening*" on Satan's kingdom, as we hear and respond to God and we go and we walk and worship in power and victory. Fasting is "*inspired*" as we see the example of those who have fasted throughout the scripture, and we see the power and affects it had when men and woman fasted. And, fasting is "*now*" don't say next month, or when it is convenient, make time now, set apart time immediately to spend with the Lord. Because fasting is "*God Ordained*" as He ordains this for us, not as a recommendation, but as a calling, a calling apart unto Him, for a special time with Him.

## *FASTS in the Bible*

1. Moses' 40-day fast as he prayed concerning Israel's sin / Deut. 9:9, 18, 25-29; 10:10
2. David's fast as he lamented over Saul's death / 2 Sam. 1:12
3. David's fast as he lamented over Abner's death 2 Sam. 3:35
4. David's fast as he lamented over his child's sickness / 2 Sam. 12:16
5. Elijah's 40-day fast after he fled from Jezebel / 1 Kings 19:7-18
6. Ahab's fast as he humbled himself before God / 1 Kings 21:27-29
7. Darius's fast as he worried over Daniel's fate / Dan. 6:18-24
8. Daniel's fast as he read Jeremiah's prophecy and prayed for Judah's sins / Dan. 9:1-19
9. Daniel's fast as he prayed over a mysterious vision God had given him / Dan. 10:3-13
10. Esther's fast as she sorrowed over Haman's wicked plot to destroy her people / Esther 4:13-16
11. Ezra's fast as he wept over the sins of the returning remnant / Ezra 10:6-17
12. Nehemiah's fast as he wept over the broken-down walls of Jerusalem / Neh. 1:4-2:10
13. The Ninevites' fast after they heard the preaching of Jonah / Jon. 3
14. Anna's fast as she awaited the Messiah / Luke 2:37
15. Jesus' 40-day fast before the temptation / Matt. 4:1-11
16. John's disciples' fast / Matt. 9:14-15
17. The elders' fast in Antioch, prior to the sending out of Paul and Barnabas / Acts 13:1-5
18. Cornelius's fast as he sought out God's plan of salvation / Acts 10:30
19. Paul's three-day fast after his experience on the Damascus Road / Acts 9:9
20. Paul's 14-day fast while on a sinking ship / Acts 27:33-34

## **Lord I will Skip Lunch to be with You**

Just say Lord I am going to skip lunch and go for a walk with You. Lord I am going to skip lunch and just read your word and chew on it, and be totally and fully set apart to You during our time together. When you break your fast it

is oh so sweet to say and now Lord I dine with You, and you will find that food never tasted so sweeter. I like often to have a theme of r my fast, such as I am going to just spend it worshipping You, or I am going to spend it dedicated to focusing on prayer for prodigals, or power for evangelism, or release from that thing that is grinding on me. Having trouble quitting smoking, then try fasting for lunch, and dedicating that you will not smoke from 10am-2pm, and during that time you will seek the Lord (maybe go for a walk), and say Lord give me strength and victory. Wow you will say, I made it 4 hours, why can't I make it 8 – and so you do, and your on your way to victory. You may want to consider fasting from all you devices too, for they will constantly distract your fast.

*Psalm 34:8 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!*

## **Parable of the Cloth and Wineskins**

**Luke 5:36 Then He spoke a parable to them: “No one puts a piece from a new garment on an old one; otherwise the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was taken out of the new does not match the old.**

**Luke 5:37 And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined.**

**Luke 5:38 But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved.**

**Luke 5:39 And no one, having drunk old wine, immediately desires new; for he says, ‘The old is better.’ ”**

### **Details**

They didn't know anything about sanforized shrunk in those days so that new cloth when it was washed would always shrink. So you would make the garment several sizes bigger than it needed to be and then you'd wash it and get it down to size. But the shrinking of the cloth was always just to be counted on. That is why if you had an old garment, you wouldn't sew a new patch on it. Because the first time you washed it, the new patch would shrink and of course, it would just make the tear worst in the old garment. So it was just something they didn't do. They wouldn't patch a new piece of cloth onto an old garment because it'll just make the tear worse.

The bottles were leather skins and He said you don't put the new wine in the old skins. If you did, it would cause an immediate fermentation process of the old wine that was in the old skin. You pour the new wine in, it would start an immediate fermentation process which would create the gases that would swell and it would burst the old skin and it would all just pour out. So you would put the new juice into new skins, supple leather skins.

It's preserved in the new skin. He is talking to the scribes and Pharisees and they are locked in the old traditional systems. The old traditional religious systems, they're locked into it. And Jesus is saying, Look, I'm bringing new wine but you just can't put it in those old skins. A new piece of cloth but you can't sew it on to the old garment. Otherwise, it will just rip the garment. Or otherwise it will just break the old skins. I believe that reformation of an old religious system is probably an impossibility. Once the old skins get set, they are not able to receive a new work of God's Spirit. Too rigid. Sad but true. But there are so many people like the Pharisees who have been locked by tradition into an old religious system and Jesus said,

### **Not Patching the Old System / God not here to Patch up Your Life**

Jesus was saying I am not here to patch up old system, I am here to do - a fresh thing. Christian God not in your life to patch it up - but to make it new

### **Not here to throw out Old Wine**

And don't mistake this, God loves the old wine, he didn't come to throw away the old wine (the Old Testament), but to fulfill it. God doesn't want to cast these Pharisees away, He still loves them, and he is still calling out to them.

*Matthew 5:17–18 (NKJV) <sup>17</sup> “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. <sup>18</sup> For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.*

### **The Word for Today – Don't Rigid**

But here is the word for us today, and that is that we may not get old and ridged in our relationship with the Lord. Yes Jesus is talking about the Pharisees and how they wouldn't leave the old religious system, and that is applicable to people today who won't come to Jesus because it defies their religious system (maybe some old church denomination), but the application for us who are saved is that we need to examine ourselves and ask, has my spiritual state become, old wine in an old wineskin. Have I quit experiencing Jesus and the Spirit in a fresh new way, do I just keep doing things I have done for the last 5, 10, 20 years, am I stagnant?

**Get out Old Container – Into Something New**

If need be, get out of old container, and break into something new. Maybe that is your theme for this weeks fast!

# Luke 6

## *Jesus – Making a New Sabbath*

### (Luke 6:1-11)

#### **Mission Statement / Sea of Galilee – Harp and Heart**

Jesus has revealed His heart, His mission statement, the reason that He came; to preach the gospel to the poor and to heal the brokenhearted, to set the captives free, and recovery of sight to the blind. He is now teaching and demonstrating His mission statement in the beautiful and fertile area of Capernaum, up at the Sea of Galilee (also called Lake of Gennesaret). Gennesaret means harp, and the Sea of Galilee is shaped like a heart, and what a picture God sends as all the passages we study are God opening His heart to us, playing a beautiful melody of love as if playing a love song on a harp to us.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”

#### **We Ended – New Wine / Collision Course - Sabbath**

Chapter 5 ended with Jesus talking about new wine and old wineskins, placing Himself and the Pharisees on a collision course that would center around their most important tradition: the Sabbath...

*Luke 5:37–39 (NKJV)* <sup>37</sup> And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. <sup>38</sup> But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved. <sup>39</sup> And no one, having drunk old wine, immediately desires new; for he says, ‘The old is better.’ ”

#### **New Thing / New Commandment**

The new wine into new wineskins, Jesus was saying I am doing a whole new thing, I didn’t come to patch you up, but to make you brand new, and it won’t be based on man’s ability, but Christ’s supernatural abilities. Jesus will later say, I’m giving you a new commandment to love one another (John 13:34-35).” A new commandment? Doesn’t it say way back in Leviticus that we are to love God and that we are to love our neighbor? Isn’t that the message, really, of the Scriptures in their entirety? Hadn’t Jesus Himself said that upon these two commandments—to love God and to love people—hang all the law and the prophets? What does He mean a new commandment? Look carefully at what Jesus is saying because it’s radical. Yes, the Old Testament is filled with commandments and exhortations to love. But Jesus here makes everything new when He says, “Love one another as I have loved you.” How did Jesus love them? How does Jesus love us? That’s what’s new. Paul tells us how He loves us when he writes, “Husbands love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it” (Ephesians 5:25). The newness, the unfolding, the fullness of this new commandment is that we are to love in a way that costs us your life—not just loving generally, but loving sacrificially to the place of death. Jesus is demonstrating that heart as He reaches out to people, heals bodies, heals lives, makes people new and whole, and it what He desires to do with us today. And then as we understand and take in, we are to love like Him.

*John 13:34–35 (NKJV)* <sup>34</sup> A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

*Ephesians 5:25 (NKJV)* <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

#### **Pharisees concerned Rules & Traditions / What will Jesus do on the Sabbath – Stage is Set**

The Pharisees don’t have this heart, they are more concerned about their rules and traditions, than loving and looking at the person in need, but Jesus is always looking for the person in need. In our passage today we see a man with a withered hand come into the Temple, the Pharisees are watching to see will Jesus heal on the Sabbath, for they believed that would be unlawful, if He did than He couldn’t be God, and thus the stage is set.....

#### **Jesus Works on the Sabbath**

**Luke 6:1** Now it happened on the second Sabbath after the first that He went through the grainfields. And His disciples plucked the heads of grain and ate them, rubbing them in their hands.

### **Jesus is Alive – Walk with Him**

Christian, Jesus is alive, and you too can walk with Him today. And I don't mean walk as is often spoken of in the spiritual way (I walk with the Lord – I am saved), but I mean, literally walking with Him, just as you and I could leave here now and go for a walk. Jesus is walking with his disciples, they are reaching out and picking some grain, rubbing it in their hands, eating, and .....talking. Wherever they are going, they are going together, walking and talking. Hey Jesus, that was so amazing them lowering the paralytic through the ceiling, and Jesus responds oh what faith, I love their creativity and their persistence. Matthew is walking with Him now (just read that as we closed chapter 5), and maybe he is saying oh I could walk forever, I once sat at a booth ripping people off, and now I am walking You Jesus, I feel so alive. Jesus responds, I love that you are here, tell me about your family, what are they thinking about this 'radical and bold move', Matthew responds well actually they think I'm crazy, oh how I wish they would come walk and talk with you like we are right now. For me personally I love going for walks with Jesus, I love just talking to Him, telling Him what is going on, asking Him questions, and yes.....hearing Him speak to me. I love the peace that comes in the walk, I feel so free and alive, oh what a gift. Sometimes I just walk and listen and sing and/or mediate on a worship song. You can do the same on a drive or sitting in your favorite chair. But we can walk with Him, because He is alive. As I have said before, I love to have a time of fasting, and then at the end go out and have a hamburger with Jesus, just thanking Him for the gift of food, enjoying His fellowship, and just being with a friend. These disciples are enjoying a walk with Jesus, and you can too.

### **Luke 6:2 And some of the Pharisees said to them, “Why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?”**

#### **200 Years Earlier – Abdul – Teaching of the Fathers / No Reaping – Threshing – Winnowing - Preparing**

About 200 years before Christ, they began to add to the rules and regulations as they sought to interpret the law. And they had what they called the “Abdul” which was the fathers and the ideas of the teaching of the fathers and in it they said that it was not lawful to reap on the Sabbath day or to thresh on the Sabbath day. And later it was added that it was unlawful to winnow on the Sabbath day that which was threshed or it was also unlawful to prepare food.

#### **Dry Wheat – Rub in your Hands – Blow On – Eat It**

When the wheat is ready for harvest, it's dry and you can take that wheat and pick it off of the top of the stem and you can rub it in your hands and the purpose of rubbing it in your hands is to get the chaff off of the kernel. You rub it in your hands and then you can blow it and the wheat can actually be eaten just as it is off of the plant. The kernels are hard but not too hard.

#### **Disciples Picked and Ate / Lawful in Deuteronomy**

The disciples as they were going through were picking the wheat, rubbing it in their hands, blowing the chaff away and eating. They were hungry. That was perfectly legal. One of the benevolent laws is found in Deuteronomy chapter twenty-three, twenty-five, and that is, If you're going through the field and you're hungry, you can pick the wheat to eat. You just could not put a sickle to your neighbor's wheat. You weren't to harvest any of it but you could pick it and eat to satisfy your hunger. And so what they were doing was perfectly legal, passing through the field just to satisfy their own hunger, picking and rubbing it and eating the wheat.

*Deuteronomy 23:24–25 (NKJV)* <sup>24</sup> “When you come into your neighbor's vineyard, you may eat your fill of grapes at your pleasure, but you shall not put any in your container. <sup>25</sup> When you come into your neighbor's standing grain, you may pluck the heads with your hand, but you shall not use a sickle on your neighbor's standing grain.

#### **Ever Thought of the Scene – Hiding in the Weeds / Mom was Ablaze**

Have you ever thought of how this might have played out. Jesus and those following are walking through the grain fields, grab some grub, take a bite, and then out of nowhere pops up and out these Pharisees.....ah ha, busted, what are you doing plucking grain on the Sabbath. What were they doing, hiding behind the stalks watching and waiting? Or did they stand at the end of the grain field waiting for Jesus come, and with arms crossed, we saw what you did, you got some explaining to do. Kind of like when you were a kid and you parents waited at the door or window, and as you walked up you knew it wasn't going to be pretty. We had this big picture window in the front of the house and that is where my mother would wait.....so you would see her standing at the window from 100 yards away, and you could tell her face was already blazing red from 100 yards, and the closer you got, the brighter the blaze got. I remember one time my older brother was the one in trouble and as we were walking up to

the house we see mom, fully ablaze awaiting in the window, and I am behind my brother taunting him, you're in trouble, you're getting a beating, and my mom bust through the door and yells at me, what kind of brother are you for keeping your brother out so late.....so when we got to the room my brother is laughing, Ray's in trouble, Ray's getting a beating. Ah memories, and so here are these Pharisees ablaze with fire.

**Luke 6:3 But Jesus answering them said, "Have you not even read this, what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him:**

**Luke 6:4 how he went into the house of God, took and ate the showbread, and also gave some to those with him, which is not lawful for any but the priests to eat?"**

### **Showbread – Changed Weekly / 12 Tribes / David on the Run from Saul / Priest gives it to David**

The showbread was twelve loaves of bread that were put upon this little table in the holy place where only the priests were allowed to go. And every week they would change the loaves of bread. The loaves of bread represented the twelve tribes of Israel. And it was that they might be there in remembrance before God continually. But it was counted to be holy because it had been there before the Lord. But David was travelling with his men, he was actually fleeing from Saul and he came to the tabernacle and the priest who was a friend of David; he went in and told him his problems and so the men were hungry and they were really on the run. The priest didn't have anything but the showbread so he gave it to David and David ate the showbread and the men that were with him to satisfy their hunger.

*1 Samuel 21:6 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> So the priest gave him holy bread; for there was no bread there but the showbread which had been taken from before the LORD, in order to put hot bread in its place on the day when it was taken away.*

### **Pharisees Loved David – a Hero / Jesus points God's law for Benefit of Man**

David, of course, was revered by these men. He was one of the great heroes of the Bible. And Jesus is pointing out that this hero of yours did that which was not lawful to do. What Jesus is pointing out is that God's laws were for the benefit of man. And if you look at the laws of God, you find that they are for the benefit of man. You would all be much better off if you would keep the laws of God, physically, emotionally, spiritually. They are the rules for sound health. Spiritual health, physical health, emotional health. And thus though the law said that only the priest were to eat the showbread, here was a case of human hunger which overrides this prohibition.

### **Disciples Hunger overrode Traditions of Elders / They Reaped – Prepared / Law Intended to Benefit**

The disciples were hungry and their hunger overrode the traditions of the elders which said you were not to reap on the Sabbath day or thresh or winnow or prepare food. And in reality they had done all four. They had picked the corn, they had threshed it by rubbing it in their hands, and then they winnowed it by blowing out the chaff. And actually they were preparing food. So they had violated all four. But hunger overrides, human need. God doesn't mean that the law should prevent us from taking care of basic needs. And that's never the intent or the purpose of the law. The law was intended to benefit man, not to hinder or hurt man.

### **Yes we not Under the Law – There is still Benefit in a Sabbath / Devil makes ya Busy**

Although we are no longer under the Law, and no longer required to keep the Sabbath (since Jesus is our Sabbath rest – we don't have to earn our salvation), there is still great benefit in just taking a day and slowing down, and recharging with the Lord. I personally make sure I have a Sabbath rest in the Lord every morning before I go off and start the hectic day. But there is also benefit in taking a day and just slowing down from rushing and running, overachieving, and overproducing, and just rest your body, spirit, and soul. I warn you to this, if the devil can't make you bad, he will make you busy, because then you won't sit and be still before the Lord, and your mind will always be processing, your body will always be weary, and all those things will keep you from sitting and being still before the Lord, and fellowshiping and loving on Him.

*Hebrews 4:8–10 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. <sup>9</sup> There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. <sup>10</sup> For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His.*

*Psalms 46:10 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!*

### **Many don't want to Rest – be Alone with Themselves**

For many, they don't want to rest, they always want some stimulus, because they don't want to be alone with themselves. They don't want to think about past, present, or future, because none and all those things make them anxious and fearful. But.....verse 5:

**Luke 6:5 And He said to them, “The Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.”**

### **Jesus is making Claim He is God / You can walk with the Lord of the Sabbath**

To claim you are Lord of the Sabbath, would be making the claim that you are God. David was justified in eating the showbread, the Pharisees must have reasoned, because he was an anointed king and prophet. But they failed to realize that so too was the One who stood before them. If you are such you don't want to be alone with your past, present, or future.....look what you miss, being with the Lord of the Sabbath. Jesus says I am the Lord of the Sabbath, when you take that day to rest, you rest with Me, and you rest in Me, and I being the Lord of the Sabbath – will give you rest from those things. Rest in Him Christian, Rest in Him.

*Matthew 11:28–30 (NKJV)* <sup>28</sup> Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

### **Have You Not Read – Jesus doesn't Debate – Gives the Word / Give Word and Wait**

Before moving on to our next story, don't you love that Jesus said, “have you not ever read?”. I love this! Jesus doesn't begin to argue with them philosophically. Instead, He opens the Scriptures to them clearly. “My Word shall not return void,” God declared, “but shall accomplish the purpose for which it was sent out” (see Isaiah 55:11). You might not see the effects right away, but like a time bomb, the Scripture you share will make its way into people's hearts and will eventually be brought powerfully and persuasively to their minds.

*Isaiah 55:11 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

### **Have You Not Read / They counted the Letters- but did not Heed the Words / Read – but Missed Meaning**

“Have you not read what David did?” Jesus asked. So well did the Pharisees know the Scriptures that they could tell you how many letters were in the Old Testament, how many of each letter was in the Old Testament, and where the middle letter in the Old Testament was located. They were thoroughly immersed in the Scriptures. Of course they had read what David did—but that's the point, for although they had read it repeatedly, they had missed the meaning totally. So, too, like the Pharisees, we can be guilty of reading the Word over and over again, thinking we know what it's saying, but missing the very essence of its meaning. The Lord always wants to show us more in His Word than what we presently know, but it takes an open mind and a tender heart to receive it.

*James 1:22 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

*James 1:25 (NKJV)* <sup>25</sup> But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

### **Remember Samuel / Lord listen while I speak – with our own Presuppositions / Ezra prepared Heart**

I think of Samuel. When he heard his name being called, Eli told him to say, “Speak, LORD, for thy servant heareth” (1 Samuel 3:9). Too often, we say just the opposite: “Listen, Lord, while Your servant speaks,” as we approach the Word with our presuppositions or legalistic traditions. In Ezra 7:10, we read that Ezra prepared his own heart to seek the Lord and His law before he taught it to others. May that be true of us as well.

*1 Samuel 3:9 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> Therefore Eli said to Samuel, “Go, lie down; and it shall be, if He calls you, that you must say, ‘Speak, LORD, for Your servant hears.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

*Ezra 7:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel.

## **Jesus Heals on the Sabbath**

**Luke 6:6 Now it happened on another Sabbath, also, that He entered the synagogue and taught. And a man was there whose right hand was withered.**

### **In Capernaum**

We are told in the other gospels that this was the synagogue in Capernaum.

### **Doctor Luke – the Right Hand / I appreciate Uniqueness of Other – Makes me Broader**

Only Luke tells us it was the right hand. Matthew and Mark tell of this incident but you might figure that a doctor would note which hand it was and Luke tells us it was the right hand that was withered. I appreciate the various

uniqueness of each person, they make me a broader and more knowledgeable person. Be careful about surrounding yourself with people just like yourself, you won't be as broad and knowledgeable if you do.

**Luke 6:7 So the scribes and Pharisees watched Him closely, whether He would heal on the Sabbath, that they might find an accusation against Him.**

**Luke 6:8 But He knew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, "Arise and stand here." And he arose and stood.**

### **Jesus knows they are Watching / No Healing on Sabbath / Ox and Donkey**

They are in the synagogue which is a formal setting, the scribes and the Pharisees quite often sat at the front of the congregation. The women were sitting on one side, the men were sitting on the other side. And they were there to make certain that the law was kept. If a question came concerning the law they would ask them as they sat there in these seats of judgment, more or less, to oversee and to make sure everything went according to the law. And so Jesus realizing that they were watching Him and that they were wondering whether or not He would heal this man on the Sabbath day because that was against their traditions. You could not heal on the Sabbath day. You could take whatever measures were necessary to preserve a person's life but nothing towards healing. Had to wait until the Sabbath day was over before you could apply a bandage. You weren't to do anything to heal on the Sabbath day. If human need supersedes and God's laws are for man's benefit, that goes against God's law. In fact, Jesus pointed out, If you have an ox or a donkey that falls in the ditch, because it's a Sabbath day you don't leave it in the ditch and come back tomorrow to get it out. And if you have concern for a donkey that's hurting, how much more you should have concern for men who are hurting.

*Luke 14:5 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup> Then He answered them, saying, "Which of you, having a donkey or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?"*

### **Pharisees associate Jesus with the One Hurting / They knew Jesus would be Interested in him**

And so it is interesting to me to note that the Pharisees and the scribes associated Jesus with the man with a withered hand. That is, they knew that He would be interested in that man. They knew that Jesus could never face human blight without seeking to alleviate it. And here is a man with a blighted, withered hand. And they knew that Jesus would seek to help that man because of his condition. They knew that Jesus was interested in the man there in the congregation who had the greatest need. They understood that about Jesus.

### **So often we Feel we Don't Belong Here / Jesus interested in Person with Greatest Need**

Sometimes we don't understand Jesus. When we come into the congregation of God's people, sometimes we feel like, Oh, I really don't even belong here. We look around and everyone looks so holy and so spiritual and everybody is smiling and I feel so miserable. I really don't belong here. I'm in the wrong place. My needs are so desperate, my needs are so great. These people seem to have it all together. Well if you feel that way, cheer up. Jesus is more interested in you than everybody else. He's always interested in the person with the greatest need. And that man with the greatest need was the one that got Jesus' attention and He was interested in him. They knew that.

### **Jesus and Sick in Same Room – Jesus will find Them**

Put Jesus and a sick person in the same room and they will find each other, because Jesus will come looking for them.

**Luke 6:9 Then Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy?"**

### **To not do Good is Evil**

It's the Sabbath day, granted. "Is it lawful to do good, or to do evil?" You see, if it is in your power to help a person and you refuse to help, that's evil. If it's within your power to save a person's life and you let them go, that's evil. If a person is drowning and you have the capacity to pull them out of the water but you just watch them drown, that's evil. Here was a man who was in desperate need, Jesus had the capacity to help him. And not to help him would be evil. And so He makes them face the issue that demonstrates the folly of their traditions. And of course, they really couldn't respond to that. It was the kind of logic that defied response.

*James 4:17 (NKJV) <sup>17</sup> Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.*

### **Mark's Account – Jesus Angry**

Mark said He was looking with anger. There was fire in His eyes. He was upset that they would withhold from this needy man just because it violated some dumb tradition that they had. And so looking upon them with anger. Hmmmm, Jesus was angry – and to know to do good and not do it, is sin. Think about that Christian, what is it that you know you are to be doing, who is that person that is in need, but you have rules or traditions that you are convinced excuse you from reaching out to them.

*Mark 3:2–5 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup> So they watched Him closely, whether He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him. <sup>3</sup> And He said to the man who had the withered hand, “Step forward.” <sup>4</sup> Then He said to them, “Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?” But they kept silent. <sup>5</sup> And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other.*

**Luke 6:10 And when He had looked around at them all, He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he did so, and his hand was restored as whole as the other.**

### **Stretch Hand is a Command**

Stretch out your hand, was a command.

### **Man could have Argued / Gave Reasons why Couldn't / Moment will to Obey Command - Enabled**

At this point, this man can do one of two things. He can argue with Jesus and tell Him why he can't stretch forth his hand. He could tell Him of the stroke that he had that paralyzed him. Or the injury that he sustained or whatever whereby his hand became withered. And he could tell Jesus all the reasons why I can't do it. Or he can try to do it. He can will once more to stretch forth his hand. Though he had willed many times previously, nothing happened, he can try once more and he can will to stretch forth his hand. And he discovered the moment he willed to obey the command of Christ, though it was an impossible command, the moment he willed to obey, all that was necessary was given him to obey.

### **The Weakness of Our Lives**

Sometimes as the Lord faces the weakness in our life and He commands us to be strong, we so often begin to argue with Him and tell Him why we're weak. How many times Lord I've tried? I just can't do it, Lord. I just have a weakness. And we're giving Him all the excuses why we can't obey. But you will discover if you will to obey, everything necessary to obey will be given to you. That's the neat thing about the Lord. He doesn't command you to do anything but what He will not give you the capacity to do it if you will only be willing to do it.

### **Husbands Love your wives**

“Husbands, love your wives,” the Word says (Ephesians 5:25). “But I can't,” we say. “You don't know my wife. You don't know my situation. I can't. I'm paralyzed.” We can either make our lists of why we can't obey, or we can say, “Lord, You say to love my wife, and I will, knowing that as I do, You will enable me to do that which You've asked of me.” Overcome that hatred in your heart, overcome that addiction, overcome that apathy, overcome that fear.....and when you stretch forth, you will find yourself being enabled.

*Ephesians 5:25 (NKJV) <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,*

**Luke 6:11 But they were filled with rage, and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.**

### **Jesus – Lord of Sabbath & Heals on the Sabbath**

Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath, and He heals on the Sabbath – They discussed amongst themselves what they might do to Jesus, but we here today have had our discussion as well, and we have decided to make Him Lord and Savior, and we have decided to – worship Him!

# ***Jesus - Making a New Nation***

## **(6:12-17)**

### **1 Year of Itinerant / Now time to Organize / New Sabbath – Nation - Kingdom**

For close to a year, Jesus ministered as a popular itinerant Teacher and Healer, and multitudes followed Him. But now the time had come for Him to “organize” His followers and declare just what His kingdom was all about. In this chapter, we see the Lord Jesus establishing three new spiritual entities to replace that which was now “worn out” in the Jewish religion (new wine into new wineskins): a new Sabbath (6:1-11), a new nation (6:12-17), and a new blessing in the new spiritual kingdom (6:17-49).

*Luke 5:37–39 (NKJV)* <sup>37</sup> *And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined.* <sup>38</sup> *But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved.* <sup>39</sup> *And no one, having drunk old wine, immediately desires new; for he says, ‘The old is better.’”*

### **Last Study – New Sabbath / Power to say Stretch Forth Hand / This Week – Picks the 12**

Last week Jesus declared and demonstrated that He is the Lord of the Sabbath, and that the old Sabbath system has been done away with as He makes all things new, as He delivers man from trying to work their way to heaven, but can simply come to Him and be made whole. The Lord of the Sabbath has the power to say to us, “stretch forth your hand”, and if we are willing, if we so desire, He immediately gives us the ability to stretch forth our hand and have victory over that thing that has withered in our lives and be made whole and new. Last week in this chapter Jesus established a New Sabbath, next week in this chapter Jesus will establish a New Kingdom as He teaches on the beatitudes, and this week Jesus establishes a New Nation as He picks twelve disciples who will become His inner-circle, who will later become His twelve apostles (minus Judas), that will lay the foundation for the new kingdom.

### **12 Tribes**

In the old system the Nation was built on the 12 Tribes of Israel, and now God is doing something new and He will build this new Nation off the twelve disciples (Judas will forfeit his position – but God will fill him with another).

*Revelation 21:14 (NKJV)* <sup>14</sup> *Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.*

### **We part of New Nation – Foundations laid here in Chapter 6**

All who have given their lives to Christ are now part of this new nation, and the glorious promises that come with being part of this New Nation, with a New Sabbath, and the New Kingdom. What a glorious promise, and what a glorious Nation to be part of, and we find the foundations of this new Nation here in chapter six, and we are now the ones that Jesus has prayed for all night, that He has chosen, and we are now the sent ones.

*1 Peter 2:9–10 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> *But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;* <sup>10</sup> *who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.*

### ***Selection of the Twelve Apostles***

**Luke 6:11** But they were filled with rage, and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.

**Luke 6:12** Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

**Luke 6:13** And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles:

**Luke 6:14** Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew;

**Luke 6:15** Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called the Zealot;

**Luke 6:16** Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot who also became a traitor.

**Luke 6:17** And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases,

*Verse-by-Verse*

**Luke 6:11 But they were filled with rage, and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.  
Luke 6:12 Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.**

### **They filled with Rage – Jesus departs to Prayer – Gathering Disciples around Him**

Verse 11-12: They were insane; their passion of hatred for Jesus drove them out of their mind. What does Jesus do, he departs to prayer, and He gathers disciples (love) around Him. Here is an example for us when the world and the enemy pressing in hard against us, do what Jesus did, He met with the Father in the intimacy of prayer and fellowship, and then He gathered those who loved Him around Him.

### **Surround Yourself – Envelope – Hedge / World can't stick to You / Love is Oil/Teflon / Don't Isolate**

Surround yourself with love, envelope yourself with love, hedge yourself with love. Do so, and the world can't stick to you. Love is a barrier, love is a Teflon, love is an oil, and soils of the world bounce - slide - and roll off of us. I noticed a tendency in myself that when mean people come against me, I can find myself withdrawing from everyone because I just want to be alone, but so often in my aloneness I stew over what the mean propel or person has done, and I find myself becoming mean. Surrounding yourself with loving people, and like Jesus you build a barrier around yourself.

### **Be the Person to the Other / Seek them Out**

And not only are we to surround ourselves, but we are to come and surround. Come to the person that has an enemy pressing in, come and be that oil of love, that Teflon of love, rally around them so that they may have a barrier of protection. You will rarely know someone is hurting unless you spend time with them, pray for them, search them out at the church, or with a call, or a text.

### **Green Leaf in Times of Drought**

I am reminded of this story, and it refreshes me to dwell on about a group of people who prayed and encircled each other in love:

*About a thousand workers with the China Inland Mission were trapped by the Communist Revolution in China, and every missionary was in deadly peril. One of them, Isobel Kuhn, "slipped over China's back fence" in 1950. From her new perch in Thailand, she anxiously awaited word on the others. One morning in a prayer meeting, a coworker prayed for those left behind, saying "O Lord, keep their leaf green in times of drought!" Isobel's mind flew to Jeremiah 17:8, and she felt God was using that verse to reassure her about her colleagues. That was it! There was an unseen Source of secret nourishment, which the Communists could not find and from which they could not cut them off. One by one, all the missionaries except two slipped from the mainland; and then ... It was July 23, 1953, when we got the news. We were in Base Camp, Chiangmai, North Thailand, and in those hot countries, houses are built more for airiness than privacy, so John's shout rang through every room. "Dr. Clarke and Arthur Mathews are OUT! Safe in Hong Kong!" He had just received the telegram. I was on my way to the kitchen, but I just stood where I was and shouted, "Praise God!" and from each room in the house I heard echoes of the same. Spontaneously we all lifted our voices and sang, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." It was not just that these much-tried brethren, held by the Communists in the farthest corner of northern China, were now at liberty. It was that they were the last of our CIM family to be delivered. Now we could say, "We, the largest Protestant Mission group in China, have all been brought through this Red Sea trial, and no one martyred." Isobel Kuhn later wrote the thrilling story of the escape of the last CIM missionaries from China, titling her book *Green Leaf in Drought-Time*. \**

*Jeremiah 17:8 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, Which spreads out its roots by the river, And will not fear when heat comes; But its leaf will be green, And will not be anxious in the year of drought, Nor will cease from yielding fruit.*

**Luke 6:13 And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles:**

**Luke 6:14 Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew;**

### **Named Apostles – Verb Tense / Follower – Sent One / Actions confirm the Title**

Verse 13-14: from the verb tense it lends to believe that Jesus didn't call them apostles at this moment, but that Luke is just giving us some details that later down the road they will be made apostles. Disciple means follower, while apostle means sent one, and we will see them being sent in Luke 9 which in verse 1 they are called disciples, but in verse 10 when they returned they are called apostles. What is my point? My point is that actions confirm the calling. God called me a teacher, giving me the gift to teach.....then teach. God has called me an evangelist, given me the gift to evangelize.....then evangelize. God has called me a Christian (which means Christ-like), then live like it.....they action will confirm the title, and the title does not confirm the action.

*Luke 9:1 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases.*

*Luke 9:10 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> And the apostles, when they had returned, told Him all that they had done. Then He took them and went aside privately into a deserted place belonging to the city called Bethsaida.*

### **Why these Twelve / What Separated Them? / Maybe you Wonder about Yourself / They were Perfect!**

But have you ever pondered why did Jesus pick these twelve out of all the others (after a whole night of prayer). Was there dozens, was there hundreds, was there thousands to choose from, we don't know, but Jesus picks these twelve out of them all. What was it about these twelve, what separated them from the others, what made them - the one? Maybe you wonder that about yourself, your life, your calling. The answer of why these twelve is - because they were perfect! Absolutely perfect! Not perfect in righteousness or sinless, but perfect as in perfect for what God wanted to do at this time, in this place, in His way. Based on what we will read of them in the months to come, it is obvious that they were not chosen because of their spirituality, gifting, or intelligence..... Sometimes even I go, are you kidding, why would you say that, do that, or go there (Peter cock-a-doodle-do, get behind thee Satan, Thomas I can't believe it not butter, and I won't believe He is alive unless I see the holes myself, and James and John, shall we rain fire down from heaven upon them Lord). All of them shall scatter like mice at the cross, yet they were perfect.

### **Perfect for what God wanted to do at that Moment – In that Time – in that Place – in that Way**

But you see, that is what made them perfect for what God wanted to do at that time, in that place, in His way. I'll use these people for this thing that I am doing because people will relate to them, or they can relate best to the people, they love that region, they love those people. These twelve were perfect for this particular mission, and you will be perfect for whatever particular mission God chooses you for.

### **I can Look Back at what I wasn't Picked For – Thank You Jesus**

I can look back and think of all the missions, ministries, opportunities that I was not picked for, and yes some of them I wanted, some of them I wondered why not Lord, but looking back I can say thank you Lord, I am glad I am not there and I am glad I am here, for had I been there I probably wouldn't be here. Be of good cheer when doors close, be faithful when they open, and when God puts you in a ministry, in a certain place, in a certain environment, just know that you were specifically chosen for that place, for that time, and God considers you "PERFECT" for the job. So wherever He has you, be all there, give your all, and don't keep looking back wondering if you are in the right place, do the right thing.

### **One thing they all Were – Available / Can Jesus pick you Today – or has to Wait**

There is one thing that all twelve were, and that is that all twelve were available. They all made themselves available to God. Christian are you available, can Jesus pray over you and select you today, or is there always something that that you still have to do before you can answer His call, whatever that call may be. I hear ya calling Lord and as soon as I finish that thing up, or get this commitment over with, I am all Yours. How long have you been saying that. These twelve were available, that is the only prerequisite. As with school, you have to fulfill your prerequisite before you can take the next class.

### **Word on Prayer – Prayer gone Bad**

There is a period of time where it looked like God really blew the prayer; He had prayed all night and this is what He came up with. Ever pray deeply and greatly for something, feel that God gave you the answer as what to do, and then when you do it, it seems like you surely must have misheard God? Remember this prayer, and remember that word "PERFECT". That prayer was anything but bad, for His choice took time to develop and come to fruition, but when it did the whole world was turned upside down.

*Acts 17:6 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, "These who have turned the world upside down have come here too.*

### **Dan Finfrock**

In the Calvary Chapel Magazine (Summer 2012 edition), there is a story in there from Pastor Dan Finfrock who travels the world teaching the Inductive Bible Study Method. He recounts the story from when he was set to teach an IBS seminar in Russia some 20 years ago. They made all the arrangements (through much planning and prayer I know because I was part of two of his seminars some 20 years ago myself in Russia). Well they had it set to teach 200 Russian pastors the IBS, but the very day before they got word that the local church they had partnered with to organize the seminar cancelled on them, because certain superiors in that church accused Calvary Chapel of being a cult. Dan and his group had already invested a large sum of money in this seminar for travel expenses, room expenses, and renting the facility to host the seminar, all which was nonrefundable. Well one of the local ministers said that they would go to the highways and byways and invite everyone they could, and on the day of the seminar, a whole 12 people came (4 men and 8 woman). Dan wanted to cancel, but the local man said no continue on. So Dan says he reluctantly agreed, but his heart was discouraged and not fully engaged. But on day 2 of the 4 day seminar this woman just breaks out sobbing and Dan says let's take a break and goes to talk with her, and she says she did not know God but as they studied the Scriptures the Word convicted her of her sin, and right there Dan led her to the Lord. He said as wonderful of the moment it was, he was still depressed and discouraged. He kept thinking of all the money they had spent for such few participants. Then on day 3 another woman busts out crying, he said wow seems like the only thing I can well is make woman cry. Well they take a break and this woman says she was not a believer but as they studied the Word she became convicted of her sin, and right there Dan leads her to the Lord. Dan says as he prayed with her, he felt the Lord speaking to him right there, Dan I am God, and I will do what I desire to do even if it is not cost-effective to you. Dan said I had been frustrated and discouraged because his plans to reach 200 pastors had not worked out, but he saw that God had other plans in store for him. Christian how often that is us, we know we hear from the Lord to do something, we begin to envision it, but then as we get into it it doesn't turn out how we thought it should, and we begin to question if we heard God correctly, we begin to look at ourselves as the problem, that somewhere along the way we didn't hear Him correctly or we didn't do something correctly, and now we are in a mess. God.....doesn't pick losers, and who He picks.....Perfect. Just continue on Christian, remain available, remain faithful, and do what God had called you to do.

### **BTW**

By the way, Dan returned to this area one year later, and during a break a woman came up to him whose face had the joy of the Lord all over her, and it was one of the woman he led to the Lord in the seminar of 12 people. She said, since you had brought me to Christ, I have since in the past year led my mother, brother, and ten of her best friends to Christ. Christian, God.....doesn't pick losers, and who He picks.....Perfect. Just continue on Christian, remain available, remain faithful, and do what God had called you to do.

### **God Love You**

God loves you, He is always for you, and if you ever doubt or wonder, just remember what Jesus had said to these bunch of misfits, right before He departure, right before they would make up the new nation, wonder if they were doing the right thing as they faced so many trials and resistance, and that was the summation of it all.....the Father loves you because you love Me.

*John 16:27 (NKJV) <sup>27</sup> for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God.*

### **Luke 6:15 Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called the Zealot;**

#### **The Zealot**

Simon the Zealot – the Zealots were a group of Jews whose sole purpose in life was to overthrow the Roman government. Some of these guys tried to influence through politics, but most tried to do it through guerrilla tactics. They carried clubs under their coats and would whack every roman they say in the head. Some carried daggers, and would assassinate top leaders (political or businessman). Can you image the first board meeting these twelve had, Jesus probably had Matthew (the once Roman Tax Collector) and Simon (the Zealot) sit on opposite ends of the table.

#### **Zealous – a word Feared in Christianity Today**

Zealous means full of zeal, passion. There is a word today that Christians fear to be called, and that is “zealous”. It brings on a negative connotation, an association of being fanatical and radical. Misguided zeal is dangerous, but guided and directed zeal, that is pure power.

### **Jesus was full of Zeal**

Jesus was full of zeal, He was passionate about the thing of the Father:

*John 2:13–17 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business. <sup>15</sup> When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. <sup>16</sup> And He said to those who sold doves, “Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!” <sup>17</sup> Then His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up.”

### **Zeal is the very Nature of God**

Zeal is the very nature of God. The most sent Christmas card every year needs to give the full verse so we can be reminded that God is zealous, and when His fire is burning within us we should be too.

*Isaiah 9:6–7 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

### **Pastor Rebuke**

But today zealousness is associated with being obnoxious or over the top, and Christians are afraid to be labeled that. I remember talking to a Pastor after being saved for just a few years, and I was telling him I was witnessing to this guy, going here and going there, trying to tell anyone who would listen about Jesus, and his response to me was – well no one would ever accuse you of not being zealous, but he said with a smirk and a condescending tone that I knew he was rebuking me. I felt ashamed, foolish, like I was embarrassing God, I thought the Book of Acts stuff was still for today, I didn't know I was supposed to be all quiet and unassuming. I didn't know I was supposed to keep all this great news bottled up within me, I loved to talk about Him and His greatness, I was young in the Lord I didn't know any better. I didn't know I should pour all my passion into my career, or into my hobby, or sports team. I was young, I didn't know any better!

### **Christ doesn't change who You are / Just how you Think**

Don't listen to the frozen chosen; don't buy their watered-down Christian life – live for Christ today. People, who had an addictive life before Christ, imagine the same zeal you once had for drugs now for Jesus. Christ doesn't change how He made us, He just changes how we think. Someone who is stubborn, apply that stubbornness for not being willing to move on the absolute things of God. The bold person, apply the boldness with the gospel. The host, the entertainer, invite the hurting over and do it with the same zeal you did it in the world. Those who went looking for adventure and thrill seekers, take that same zeal and see what kind of trouble the Lord can get you in ☺.

### **What's Wrong with That**

So really, what is wrong with being zealous.

### **What are you Zealous For**

Christian, what are you zealous for, what is your passion, what excites you, what burns in your heart?

### **How do you Become Zealous**

How do we become zealous, the example is before us, and the example is simple, we walk with Jesus just as these disciples did. Their zealousness turned the world upside down.

*Acts 17:6 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, “These who have turned the world upside down have come here too.”

### **Zealousness in the Scriptures**

1. Christ an example of. Ps 69:9; Joh 2:17.
2. Godly sorrow leads to. 2Co 7:10,11.
3. Of saints, ardent. Ps 119:139.
4. Provokes others to do good. 2Co 9:2.
5. Should be exhibited

- a. In spirit. Ro 12:11.
- b. In well-doing. Ga 4:18; Tit 2:14.
- c. In desiring the salvation of others. Ac 26:29; Ro 10:1.
- d. In contending for the faith. Jude 1:3.
- e. In missionary labours. Ro 15:19,23.
- f. For the glory of God. Nu 25:11,13.
- g. For the welfare of saints. Col 4:13.
- h. Against idolatry. 2Ki 23:4-14.
6. Sometimes wrongly directed. 2Sa 21:2; Ac 22:3,4; Php 3:6.
7. Sometimes not according to knowledge. Ro 10:2; Ga 1:14; Ac 21:20.
8. Ungodly men sometimes pretend to. 2Ki 10:16; Mt 23:15.
9. Exhortation to. Ro 12:11; Re 3:19.
10. Holy-Exemplified
  - a. Phinehas. Nu 25:11,13.
  - b. Josiah. 2Ki 23:19-25.
  - c. Apollos. Ac 18:25.
  - d. Corinthians. 1Co 14:12.
  - e. Epaphras. Col 4:12,13.

**Luke 6:16 Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot who also became a traitor.**

**Traitor – Sell Out / Story Man / Like an Apple – they Represent a Choice**

Verse 16 - traitor means to sell out, to betray, smote, slander, and in some languages it means to be a "story man" - someone who tells stories about another. I think Judas Iscariot represents the world that we live in, and that is that there are often "story men" in our circle of life; people who will tell misguided stories, half-fact stories, all which lead and fuel people to turn against us. And, as hard as this is for us to believe, because it appears that Satan wins, is winning, and God is powerless, the fact is that they are instruments in God's hand. These "Judas" represent a choice (like the fruit in the Garden), and people now have a choice to choose from. Do they believe "the story", will they search out the truth, will they seek the Lord for His discernment, or will they follow what is most appealing to their flesh, that is most agreeable to them, without seeking out the truth. I am thankful for the "Judas", because they bring choices, and then it is made clear what a person truly believes, the "story" or the "Word (that became flesh and dwelt among us)".

**Won't Defeat the Judas without Zeal**

Without zeal, the Judas' will have victory every time, we must zealously battle against them. Not in defending ourselves, but in the Jesus example, with prayer (that prays all night), with the Word, and with love. Epaphras is a picture of zealous for us, he fervently prayed for the brethren, with great zeal. It is this zeal that prays that the leaf remains green in the time of drought.

*Colossians 4:12-13 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. <sup>13</sup> For I bear him witness that he has a great zeal for you, and those who are in Laodicea, and those in Hierapolis.*

**Luke 6:17 And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases,**

**Level Ground**

Verse 17 - they all stood on level ground – Immediately after Jesus picked these twelve the message is clearly sent, we all stand in level ground, there is no person in Christ who is elevated over another, regardless of title, successes or failings, recognition or anonymity, we all stand on level ground. May we remember that as we look at the person no one knows their name, and may we remember that as we stand with the person everyone respects and admires, may we live, remember, treat each other as we are all on level ground.

**3 Words**

Perfect – Zealous – Equal.....three words for us today. Amen!



## ***Jesus – Making a New Kingdom*** (6:17-49)

**Luke 6:20** Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said: “Blessed are you poor, For yours is the kingdom of God.

**Luke 6:21** Blessed are you who hunger now, For you shall be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, For you shall laugh.

**Luke 6:22** Blessed are you when men hate you, And when they exclude you, And revile you, and cast out your name as evil, For the Son of Man’s sake.

**Luke 6:23** Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.

**Luke 6:24** “But woe to you who are rich, For you have received your consolation.

**Luke 6:25** Woe to you who are full, For you shall hunger. Woe to you who laugh now, For you shall mourn and weep.

**Luke 6:26** Woe to you when all men speak well of you, For so did their fathers to the false prophets.

### **4 – Mission / 5 – Demonstration / 6 – New Work**

Jesus at the end of chapter 4 gave His mission statement (Luke 4:18-19), the reason of why He came, to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to set at liberty the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind. In chapter 5 we saw Him demonstrating that in word and deed with healings and great compassion upon the hurting, by preaching and proclaiming forgiveness of sin can be had through Him. At the end of chapter 5 Jesus said that you cannot put old wine into new wineskins (Luke 5 :37-39), and He was saying that He didn’t come to patch up the old religious system, nor try to patch up mankind, but that He came to do something totally new, totally fresh, and totally out of this world. Christian He did not come to patch you up, to limp you along, to get you through this life by the skin of your teeth, but He came to make you totally new, give you a new power, a new passion, and a new life that is not part of this world, in fact it is out of this world. Now here in chapter 6 Jesus is tearing down the heart of the old religious system (the Sabbath), and He declared He is the Lord of the Sabbath, and that man will find rest in Him, not religion. Then Jesus in our last study selected His 12 apostles, and showed us He was making a new Nation, as the old nation was built off the twelve tribes of Israel, this new Nation, this new wine, would be built off the twelve Apostles (who would proclaim a message of salvation through grace). And in our passage today Jesus is building a whole new Kingdom, and it is out of this world, it behaves completely opposite of this world that we live in today, and every day we see it even more clearly of how different Jesus’ “constitution” of Christian living is compared to how the world lives and treats others today.

**Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)** <sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”

**Luke 5:37–39 (NKJV)** <sup>37</sup> And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. <sup>38</sup> But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved. <sup>39</sup> And no one, having drunk old wine, immediately desires new; for he says, ‘The old is better.’ ”

### **Sermon on Mount – at Gennesaret / Harp and Heart / Foundation**

We know this passage today as the “Sermon on the Mount”, as Jesus tells us how we are to live and treat one another. He gives this message on the beautiful plain up there in Capernaum, near the Sea of Galilee (also known the Lake Gennesaret). Gennesaret means harp, and the Sea of Galilee is shaped like a heart, and what a picture God sends as all the passages we study are God opening His heart to us, playing a beautiful melody of love as if playing a love song on a harp to us. This passage is foundational for Christian living, last week Jesus laid the foundation of the new Nation, and today He lays down the foundation of how people are to live in that new Nation, under Him the King of the Nation.

### **3 Geographic Locations**

Christian, there are three geographical locations that we as “disciples”, followers of Christ, should return to often. Just as the Children of Israel would return to the Jerusalem for the Feasts of the Lord to remember what they meant, and how they were to live, we too have some geographical places to return to, to help us keep our focus on what

Jesus means, and how we are to live. One, is an old dirty manger in an old unimpressive town called Bethlehem. It is there that we remember that our Holy God left the perfection and purity of heaven, stepped into this sin filled dirty world, willing to take on human flesh, so that He might walk amongst man to show them the way, the truth, and the life. The other place is a hill in Palestine, where He (the perfect and sinless) God would drag a cross up the hill (your cross and my cross – our hill and our punishment), so He could say “It is done!”, enter into the joy of the Lord, here is the door by which you can enter into a personal and intimate relationship with Me. Come through the cross and have life. Well the third location that we as Christians need to return to often is this “plain” in Capernaum.

*Luke 6:17 (KJV 1900)* <sup>17</sup> *And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judaea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases;*

### **We need to be Reminded**

We need to come back here often because we need to be reminded that we are part of a new Nation, that has a new way of living, and that way is nothing like the way the world is living. When the world mistreats us, uses us, abuses us, we need to always remember that we are not of this world, nor are we to respond and live as this world, but we are to respond (internally and externally) as Jesus teaches us here in this sermon. Often times as people come and tell me what is going on in their lives, how they have been mistreated by others (Christians and Non-Christians), I tell them to go back to this geographical spot and hear the teaching of Jesus again, hear Him say to them,

*Luke 6:20* *Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said: “Blessed are you poor, For yours is the kingdom of God.*

*Luke 6:21* *Blessed are you who hunger now, For you shall be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, For you shall laugh.*

*Luke 6:22* *Blessed are you when men hate you, And when they exclude you, And revile you, and cast out your name as evil, For the Son of Man’s sake.*

Let’s go verse-by-verse

### **Jesus Heals Them All**

**Luke 6:17** **And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases,**

**Luke 6:18** **as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed.**

**Luke 6:19** **And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all.**

### **Original Jesus Movement**

Jesus is uniting; Jesus unities the north and the south of Israel (Judea and Jerusalem), the Jews (Judea and Jerusalem) and the Gentiles (Tyre and Sidon), the sick and the whole. He is uniting Romans and Jews, tax collectors and zealots, rich and poor, the beautiful and the common. This is the original Jesus movement. What a beautiful sight this must have been, businessmen in suits hugging hippies with long hair who haven’t bathed in a month. People simply coming together and enjoying Jesus, and thus enjoying each other because the love that emanates from Jesus is contagious.

### **Worship**

All the different dialects coming together, but speaking one common language, that language of love. What I have found, and I am sure you have too, and that is if you spend any time with Jesus, your heart just naturally begins to sing out, for your heart can’t contain His love and His goodness. Can you imagine what that worship must have sounded like? People just hanging out, then someone starts to sing one of the psalms and the person next to hears and their heart is stirred and moved, and they begin to sing, and then so on and so on. I can only imagine what heaven is going to be like.

### **Chris Tomlin Video**

Here is a glimpse of heaven now, maybe even this hill in Capernaum then – Chris Tomlin – How Great is Our God

### **Jesus demonstrates Power and Compassion / Concern of Calvary Movement**

It is significant that after Jesus called His 12 Apostles, and before He preached this great sermon, He took time to heal many needy people. This was a demonstration of both His power and His compassion. Jesus it says came down and stood on level ground with them, not standing above the people preaching and departing, but on level ground reaching and loving. It was also a reminder to His newly appointed assistants that their job was to share His love and power with a needy world. One of my greatest concerns today in the Calvary Chapel movement is that that

teaching and its power is so preeminent, that the people and compassion is forgotten. We can teach, say amen, see ya next week. But Jesus, He pours Himself out to the people, He touches them, He has compassion for them, He looks into their eyes and listens to their needs, and then after that He teaches (in power and love). May all us who are students of the Word, may we never forget to look into the eyes of the hurting, to give ear to their voice, to reach a hand out and touch, arms to hold, and a heart of compassion for them. Then teach, and watch how that teaching takes on a whole new meaning and power.

### **New Kingdom / Geographical Location / Repeat Sermon**

So Jesus after demonstrating that this new Kingdom is outward and not only inward, that this new Kingdom reaches out, touches, loves, full of compassion, will now teach about how we are to live in this new Kingdom, apart from the example that the world sets, that we once lived, that our old sin nature still raises up and demands (me, me, me – it is all about me). Jesus teaches a radical new way to live and think. By the way, I say come back here often to this geographical location, how we need to “be reminded often” . . . . . you see many think this sermon is the Sermon on the Mount (same one given in Matthew 5-7), but I see enough differences in Matthew’s account and Luke’s account to see that they are different sermons at different locations. Right from the start we have one given on a mount and another given on a plain, but as we read through the account we even see differences in the words. My point, I believe Jesus had a sermon that He continually preached, everywhere He went, and this is the main sermon that He preached. Why, because just as Luke 4:18-19 was His mission statement, Luke 6:20-49 was His message statement; this is how I want you to live.

### **BTW – Greatest Sermon ever Preached**

By the way, this is the greatest sermon ever preached, so I won’t be doing an exhaustive in-depth exposition on them. Jesus is the Master teacher, He made the complex simple, and as we look at His sermon today, it explains itself, and there is no need to expound deeply on it, we just need to hear it and decide if we are going to live it.

### **Read Backwards – Parable of the Foundations**

I want to read somewhat backwards today, as we will see Jesus is building up and culminating and telling us that these things that He is speaking are the foundation of His Kingdom:

*Luke 6:46–49 (NKJV)* <sup>46</sup> “But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say? <sup>47</sup> Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: <sup>48</sup> He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. <sup>49</sup> But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great.”

### **Stand the Flood**

Do these things and you will have a foundation that will stand against the floods of this world, you who “listen” will not be shaken, for you will stand like a solid rock. Do you want to stand as a rock in this world today, then remember the words that Jesus will speak to us today, and live them out and apply them daily.

### **Continuing Backwards – Parable of Blind Leading Blind**

Continuing backwards, now how to lead others, all based on what he will say in this teaching:

*Luke 6:39–45 (NKJV)* <sup>39</sup> And He spoke a parable to them: “Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch? <sup>40</sup> A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher. <sup>41</sup> And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye? <sup>42</sup> Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me remove the speck that is in your eye,’ when you yourself do not see the plank that is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother’s eye. <sup>43</sup> “For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. <sup>44</sup> For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush. <sup>45</sup> A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

### **Who are the Blind**

Who are the blind leaders, the leaders who don’t live according to verses 20-38, according to this foundation of how we are to be living under this New Sabbath, New Nation, and New Kingdom.

## ***The Beatitudes***

**Luke 6:20 Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said: “Blessed are you poor, For yours is the kingdom of God.**

### **Verse 20 – Towards His Disciples / World can’t Live these Things**

Verse 20 will begin with, “His disciples”, Jesus isn’t preaching a sermon to the world, but to those who call themselves disciples, followers of Christ. We can’t expect the world to treat us like the things we will read, because the world can’t, it isn’t in them to do so. Many have shades and shadows of them because they were created in God’s image, but to truly be able to live them out we have to have more than an image of God, we have to fully have God and He has us.

**Luke 6:21 Blessed are you who hunger now, For you shall be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, For you shall laugh.**

**Luke 6:22 Blessed are you when men hate you, And when they exclude you, And revile you, and cast out your name as evil, For the Son of Man’s sake.**

**Luke 6:23 Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.**

**Luke 6:24 “But woe to you who are rich, For you have received your consolation.**

**Luke 6:25 Woe to you who are full, For you shall hunger. Woe to you who laugh now, For you shall mourn and weep.**

**Luke 6:26 Woe to you when all men speak well of you, For so did their fathers to the false prophets.**

### **Inward Condition (20-26) / Outward Living (27-38)**

Verses 20-26, are the inward condition of the heart, and verses 27-38 are the outward living of the inward condition.

#### **4 and 4**

Four “Blessed”

- *Blessed are you poor*
- *Blessed are you who hunger*
- *Blessed are you who weep*
- *Blessed are you when men hate you*

Four Woes’

- *Woe to you who are rich*
- *Woe to you who are full,*
- *Woe to you who laugh now*
- *Woe to you when all men speak well of you*

Notice how they are perfect counters to each other:

- *Blessed are you poor - Woe to you who are rich*
- *Blessed are you who hunger- Woe to you who are full,*
- *Blessed are you who weep - Woe to you who laugh now*
- *Blessed are you when men hate you - Woe to you when all men speak well of you*

### **Church of Laodicea**

I couldn’t help but think of the Church there in Laodicea when I was reading this passage, as that church gave us a real life example in the scriptures of Christians who were once hungering and thirsting after the things of the Lord, but then got full of riches and forgot the Lord. The city of Laodicea was the banking center of the region. Consequently, it had ample money to spend on entertainment—as evidenced by the thirty thousand-seat amphitheater whose ruins still stand. They started off on-fire but all the comforts and riches of their land made them comfortable and forgetful. Please understand this, please remember the context, Jesus is pouring His heart out, He is singing a beautiful melody, and this passage today (not Revelation 3) is a message of heaviness, but a message of how to be relieved of the burden, how to get back to living in the Light and the Love, the unspeakable joy and riches

that come when we are living in the manner we were designed to live – for we are not of this world, we are part of a new Nation and a new Kingdom. These words are a call back to, a reminder of, a life of power, love, and freedom. **Revelation 3:14–22 (NKJV)** <sup>14</sup> “And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: <sup>15</sup> ‘I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. <sup>16</sup> So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. <sup>17</sup> Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— <sup>18</sup> I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. <sup>19</sup> As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. <sup>20</sup> Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. <sup>21</sup> To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. <sup>22</sup> “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’ ’ ”

### **They became Content / Return to 3 Geography / Be Zealous and Repent**

They were rich, they became content, and they didn’t even know it. They needed to come back to this geographical location, all three of them, (Bethlehem – Jerusalem – the Plain) and remember. Be zealous and repent. Repent means to return, go back to, and as we tie these passages together, we see the place to go back to is this foundation for Kingdom living, these beatitudes, the place of promised blessing, when we were.....poor, hungry, wept, and so different were we that people of the world were blinded by the God emanated from us, and it burned their eyes.

- Notice how they are perfect counters to each other:
  - *Blessed are you poor - Woe to you who are rich*
  - *Blessed are you who hunger- Woe to you who are full,*
  - *Blessed are you who weep - Woe to you who laugh now*
  - *Blessed are you when men hate you - Woe to you when all men speak well of you*

### **Get your Appetite Back**

Are you content, or do you still hunger and thirst for God as you once did, do you feel poor or rich, do you weep for the hurting or have you found yourself to be numb to their pain. Do people know you are different, or are you blending right in? How do I get back to that place that I once was you may ask, like when you were first saved, you need to get your appetite back (blessed are you who hunger), and how do we do that, Jesus tells us simply right here.

#### **Blessed are you poor,**

##### **For yours is the kingdom of God.**

Remember those 3 locations, remember the God who came to Bethlehem, the God who went to Jerusalem, and the God who is teaching and speaking to you from this plain – you are not of this world, and you will be with Me for all eternity. Go back – remember that there is the God who was willing to leave heaven for you, then willing to leave Holiness for you (as He took on your sin). Spend time in the Kingdom with the King, and your appetite will return, as you can’t help but break forth into praise.

#### **Blessed are you who hunger now,**

##### **For you shall be filled**

Get filled, in prayer, of the Word, through service, and by fellowshiping with other saints (like they are doing here in this passage up on the plain).

#### **Blessed are you who weep now,**

##### **For you shall laugh.**

Go find people who are hurting, invest your life in them, associate with their pain, share their pain, try to relieve their pain, and when you do you will see how blessed you really are, you will see how heaven is our release, and you will put your eyes on heaven, and be released from the grips of this earth.

#### **Blessed are you when men hate you, And when they exclude you, And revile you, and cast out your name as evil, For the Son of Man’s sake.**

##### **Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.**

The Lord is saying I see it, I see what they are doing to you, they are doing to you just what they did to Noah, Moses, Jeremiah and Malachi. When people come against you, remember that God sees, and just as He stood by those prophets rejected, He stands by you. That brings me a great appetite because I know I am on the right path.

## Verses 27-38

Now the outward actions towards others. I won't go much further than just reading them, for they speak for themselves clearly.

### **Rules of Kingdom Life**

**Luke 6:27** “But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,

**Luke 6:28** bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.

Opposite of the world, not of this world, so radical it can only be part of the New Kingdom, and done through the power of the King. Now, if you don't have the appetite of the things we had just read, it will not be possible to do these things here.

**Luke 6:29** To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either.

This isn't saying we are to be punching bags, it is saying we are not seek retaliation, to get even, that is the way of the world, but in God's Kingdom we are not to be people of revenge and get even.

**Luke 6:30** Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask them back.

In this new Kingdom that Jesus is establishing, people were to hold their possessions loosely, and not have their possessions hold them. In God's new Kingdom, His followers were to be looking to meet the needs of others, rather than amassing fortunes for themselves.

**Luke 6:31** And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise.

In this new Kingdom, we are to be the initiator, not the responder, and we are to do, regardless if we get the “back unto you”. As we had mentioned, this message is broken into two tables, an inward and upward connection (to God – the vertical), and the second table is an outward and onward connection (to man – horizontal). It is the same principal and model Jesus gives when He says love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, and soul, and love your neighbor as yourself. It is the same principal and model of the 10 Commandments as that is divided into the same two tables. We can't treat others in love if we don't have that vertical connection, hence why the world is what it is today; but when we do, we simply love first. . . .treating others as we would want to be treated (not lying about them, not hating them, not taking their possessions, not envying what they have, etc).

**Matthew 22:35–40 (NKJV)** <sup>35</sup> Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, <sup>36</sup> “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” <sup>37</sup> Jesus said to him, ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ <sup>38</sup> This is the first and great commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ <sup>40</sup> On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

**Exodus 20:1–17 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> And God spoke all these words, saying: <sup>2</sup> “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. <sup>3</sup> “You shall have no other gods before Me. <sup>4</sup> “You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; <sup>5</sup> you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, <sup>6</sup> but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. <sup>7</sup> “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain. <sup>8</sup> “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. <sup>9</sup> Six days you shall labor and do all your work, <sup>10</sup> but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. <sup>11</sup> For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it. <sup>12</sup> “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you. <sup>13</sup> “You shall not murder. <sup>14</sup> “You shall not commit adultery. <sup>15</sup> “You shall not steal. <sup>16</sup> “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. <sup>17</sup> “You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's.”

**Luke 6:32** “But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.

**Luke 6:33** And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.

**Luke 6:34** And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back.

Jesus is saying “so what” if you can do what the world does, but I am calling you to live outside of this world – now!

**Luke 6:35** But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.

**Luke 6:36** Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

**Luke 6:37** “Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.

Read that again – Read that again – ok just one more time lets read that again. Can you, yes – will you is the real question. Do I really need to say anything more on this, is there anything left to say..... all that is left is the decision in my heart if I will. Will I chose to live this new Kingdom living now?

**Luke 6:38** Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”

You will never out give God, whether that is financially, in service, or love – God will always give back to you exceedingly more than you ever gave. Test Him on this, He wants you to call Him on this one – so let’s take Him up on this challenge and we will be living “Kingdom Living Now”.

### ***Parable of the Blind Leading the Blind***

**Luke 6:39** And He spoke a parable to them: “Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch?

**Luke 6:40** A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.

**Luke 6:41** And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye?

**Luke 6:42** Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me remove the speck that is in your eye,’ when you yourself do not see the plank that is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother’s eye.

**Luke 6:43** “For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit.

**Luke 6:44** For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush.

**Luke 6:45** A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

#### **Leaders Lead**

Leaders can only lead to the extent they will apply verses 20-38 unto their lives.

### ***Parable of the Two Foundations***

**Luke 6:46** “But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?

**Luke 6:47** Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like:

**Luke 6:48** He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock.

**Luke 6:49** But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great.”

**This is the Foundation**

Verses 20-38, they are the foundations for the living in the New Kingdom. May we as a people build upon the Rock.

# Luke 7

## Compassion

### 7:1-17

#### Overview chapters 4-6

In chapter 4 Jesus gave us His mission statement, to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to set at liberty the captives. In chapter 5 He tells us He is doing a whole new thing, that you have to put new wine into new wineskins; He is telling us that He didn't come to patch up the old religious system, nor to patch us up and limp us along until we get to heaven, but to make us new and make us whole through Him. We finished chapter 6 last week and saw Jesus making a new Sabbath (as He is the Lord of the Sabbath – man can have rest through Him), we saw Him making a new Nation as He picks the twelve, and then we saw Him making a new Kingdom, as He gave us the heart of His Kingdom, which was a heart that is to love the Lord God with all our heart, mind, and soul (the Vertical Relationship) and then to love our neighbor as ourselves (the Horizontal Relationship). In that new Kingdom we are to be a people who are loving our neighbors, weeping with them, and ministering to them. We are not a people who are to be critical nor judgmental.....and no sooner has Jesus finished this sermon on the plain, that He gives us examples of those things right here in chapter 7. We are going to see His great compassion in this chapter.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”

*Luke 5:37–39 (NKJV)* <sup>37</sup> And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. <sup>38</sup> But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved. <sup>39</sup> And no one, having drunk old wine, immediately desires new; for he says, ‘The old is better.’ ”

#### Compassion

Compassion has been defined as “your pain in my heart.” My personal definition of compassion is being so moved by something that you can't just walk past it, you must stop and get involved – and that is what we will see Jesus do here in chapter 7. What pain our Lord must have felt as He ministered from place to place! In this chapter alone, Jesus is confronted with the miseries of

- a cheerless centurion,
- a weeping widow,
- a perplexed prophet,
- a heartbroken harlot.

In each case, Jesus shows His heart of compassion toward them, which blesses me greatly because I know He cares about me in the same way. Jesus helped them all, because compassion does not measure: it ministers. Bernard of Clairvaux said, “Justice seeks out only the merits of the case, but pity only regards the need.” It was compassion, not justice, that motivated the Great Physician who came “not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Luke 5:32). Let's meet these four hurting people and see our Lord's responses to their needs.

*1 Peter 5:7 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

#### Pairs

Along the way in our study today as we look at the cheerless centurion and the weeping widow, we will see “pairs”, and they will give us contrasts and conclusions of God's great works and ways:

- 2 Philosophies Presented
- 2 Authorities Speak
- 2 Crowds Collide
- 2 Suffers Meet
- 2 Only Sons come Face-to-Face
- 2 Enemies Face-Off

## **A Centurion's Servant is Healed**

*Luke 7:1–10 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Now when He concluded all His sayings in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum. <sup>2</sup> And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die. <sup>3</sup> So when he heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant. <sup>4</sup> And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving, <sup>5</sup> "for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue." <sup>6</sup> Then Jesus went with them. And when He was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, "Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof. <sup>7</sup> Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. <sup>8</sup> For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." <sup>9</sup> When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!" <sup>10</sup> And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick.*

**Luke 7:1 Now when He concluded all His sayings in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum.**

**Luke 7:2 And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die.**

### **Centurions in the Scriptures**

Centurions are mentioned four times in the New Testament... As we will see, this centurion is a man of humility and faith.

- We have this centurion in our passage today whose faith Jesus will marvel at – the only person specifically to do so in all the Scriptures – thus why we want to study him closely today so we too may make Jesus marvel.
- It was a centurion on the hill of Calvary who said to Jesus, "Truly this was the Son of God" (Matthew 27:54).
- A centurion named Cornelius was the first Gentile to be converted and baptized in the Spirit (Acts 10).
- A centurion named Julius befriended Paul and assisted him on his journey toward Rome (Acts 27).

The Jews didn't like the Romans in general and centurions in particular. Yet the New Testament paints each of these centurions in a positive light.

### **Serviceman**

For you who are in the military, here are four great examples on how God wants you to be as man or woman serving in our military. People of great faith, defining and declaring who is the Son of God (you have the same liberty to be open about your faith as those who celebrate the lifting of "don't ask don't tell), people living in a baptized life of obedience to God, and serving in the ministry wherever you go.

**Luke 7:3 So when he heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant.**

**Luke 7:4 And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving,**

**Luke 7:5 "for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue."**

### **Jews hated Romans – but not this Roman / He did not Insulate himself from others Pain**

In the Gospels and the Book of Acts, Roman centurions are presented as quality men of character, and this one is a sterling example. The Jewish elders had little love for the Romans in general and Roman soldiers in particular, and yet the elders commended this officer to Jesus. He loved the Jewish people in Capernaum and even built them a synagogue. He loved his servant and did not want him to die. This centurion was not a Stoic who insulated himself from the pain of others. He had a heart of concern, even for his lowly servant boy who was dying from a paralyzing disease (Matt. 8:6).

### **Great Humility – to ask Jew for Help**

We are impressed not only with this man's great love, but also his great humility. Imagine a Roman officer telling a poor Jewish rabbi that he was unworthy to have Him enter his house! The Romans were not known for displaying humility, especially before their Jewish subjects.

### **Example of Leadership – Giving/Humility/Compassion**

He was a man of both humility and compassion, yet he was in (as he earned) a position of leadership. Another great example for all who serve in any type of leadership, whether that be on the sports field, in the student club, at the work place, that leaders would be people of giving, people of humility, and people of compassion for others.

**Luke 7:6 Then Jesus went with them. And when He was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, “Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof.**

## **2 Philosophies Presented**

### **Earning & De-Earning**

So here we see two philosophies presented. One philosophy is coming before God and seeking His favor based on merit, and the other is coming to God recognizing that there is no merit man could offer before the Holy and Awesome God. The Jews come, a perfect picture of religion, asking Jesus to do something based on what man has done. They say Jesus he is worthy of a blessing because he built us a synagogue and treat us properly. The centurion comes with the true and correct approach and philosophy, and that is that there is nothing man can do in his own works before a Holy God, and therefore can only come through God’s grace, mercy, and works.....and that is for us today the finished work of the cross. Here is a beautiful part of all this, if we can’t earn it on our merits, then we can’t lose it on our merits, so we need not strive to earn God’s love, we simply receive it.

Amazingly, once we come to that place that we simply receive it, there is nothing we have to do to earn it, then we find ourselves so free that we can’t help by respond by doing wonderful things in His name.

*Titus 3:5 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup> not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,*

**Luke 7:7 Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. But say the word, and my servant will be healed.**

**Luke 7:8 For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.”**

**Luke 7:9 When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, “I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!”**

**Luke 7:10 And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick.**

## **2 Authorities Speak**

### **Centurion understood Authority – Power of Spoken Word**

One who was accustomed to having his commands obeyed without question, the centurion would have understood the power of the spoken word. He tells a man take that hill and the man does, he tells a man stand that post and he stands, he tells that man sound the trumpet to charge and all charge. He had the authority to send a messenger, and the words of the messenger were treated as if the centurion himself was standing there giving the word. The centurion’s word had the backing of not only the Roman Army, but the Roman government itself. It is a beautiful picture too of our God, He need not stand physically before us, He can send a messenger, but when that word is spoken, it has authority behind it, it has power behind it.

### **2 Marveled / Faith Honors God – Religion quenches Faith**

This centurion was one of two people in the entire New Testament of whom Jesus marveled concerning their faith. The other was a Syro-Phoenician woman. He marveled at the faith of a Gentile; and in Nazareth, He marveled at the unbelief of the Jews (Mark 6:6). These two Gentiles lacked the stories, the oracles, the heritage, and the history of the Jews. Instead, they simply had faith to believe Jesus’ authority. One of the ways to kill faith is to hang around religious people. Religious people will explain to you why your prayers aren’t answered, why your faith just won’t work. Sometimes it’s the Gentiles—those who take the Word at face value—whom the Lord loves to honor. The Jews had their theology refined, but it was the Gentiles who had faith who caused Jesus to marvel.

*Matthew 15:28 (NKJV) <sup>28</sup> Then Jesus answered and said to her, “O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire.” And her daughter was healed from that very hour.*

**Mark 6:6 (NKJV)** <sup>6</sup> *And He marveled because of their unbelief. Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching.*

### **Napoleon**

The story is told of Napoleon courting a maiden for marriage. This was the time of chivalry and dowry's, and Napoleon asked the father of the maiden to name his price for the dowry. The father's sum was astronomical, and yet Napoleon agreed and gave his Minister of Finance the command to pay it. The Minister of Finance came and said unto Napoleon do you realize the astronomical price that is being asked, are you sure you want to pay it. Napoleon replied, "this man honors me by asking such a price, for he believes me rich enough to pay it". Christian, in much the same way we honor God when we believe He is rich enough to answer even our most extreme and astronomical requests. We display great faith in believing that He can provide it, that He can cover it, that He is rich enough to meet our need.

### **What will you Ask? / What Mountain thrown into Sea**

If you can do it in your own strength and energies, God will allow you to. But what is it that you will be so bold in faith to ask God to do, something so big that He will marvel that you ask (believing He can do it)? What mountain will you ask to be thrown into the sea, and believe that He can do it. Lord, you know that situation I am right now, I need You to move a mountain. Lord the mountain is too high for me to climb, but not too hard for you to move. Lord this addiction, this resentment, this fear, this financial situation, this illness, this marriage, this relationship.....

**Matthew 21:21 (NKJV)** <sup>21</sup> *So Jesus answered and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' it will be done.*

### **Great Faith couple with Great Compassion / Does your Faith bless Others**

I should point out, that the centurion's great faith was coupled with his great compassion. I think there is key there to unlocking great faith, and that is having great compassion upon the situation. Lord I ask not only for myself, or for selfish gain, but I ask on the behalf the hurting that you would move through my request. The ill servant was healed because of centurion's faith – Christian does your faith bless others?

### **Christian – must First be Under Authority – before Exercise Authority**

Christian, if you want to have authority you must first be under authority. Woe to anyone who tries to exercise authority without first being under authority. In this area of faith we must be under the authority of the Word of God, before we can speak the word of God. I can't speak or claim the authority of the word unless I am first willing to live under its authority. But once I am under the authority for the Word I can speak and claim its authority in the world that I live. That is why we have to be in the Word, reading it and praying it, living it and loving it, and thus we can claim all the promises of it for our lives.

**2 Corinthians 1:20 (NKJV)** <sup>20</sup> *For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.*

**Matthew 21:21–22 (NKJV)** <sup>21</sup> *So Jesus answered and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' it will be done.* <sup>22</sup> *And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."*

**1 John 3:22–23 (NKJV)** <sup>22</sup> *And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.* <sup>23</sup> *And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.*

### **A Widow's Son is Raised**

**Luke 7:11–17 (NKJV)** <sup>11</sup> *Now it happened, the day after, that He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a large crowd.* <sup>12</sup> *And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her.* <sup>13</sup> *When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep."* <sup>14</sup> *Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried him stood still. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise."* <sup>15</sup> *So he who was dead sat up and began to speak. And He presented him to his mother.* <sup>16</sup> *Then fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen up among us"; and, "God has visited His people."* <sup>17</sup> *And this report about Him went throughout all Judea and all the surrounding region.*

**Luke 7:11** Now it happened, the day after, that He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a large crowd.

**Luke 7:12** And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her.

## 2 Crowds Collide

### **Nain means Beautiful / Beauty on the Surface**

Nain means beautiful, and we read of a beautiful story, but we also see a message woven into our lives that there are beautiful places and beautiful people, but underneath the outward are people hurting and grieving. All seems beautiful on the outside, but inside is barrenness, loneliness, and sadness.

### **Nain 25 Miles from Capernaum / Buried same Day**

Nain was about twenty-five miles from Capernaum, a good day's journey away, yet Jesus went there even though He was not requested to come. Since the Jews buried their dead the same day (Deut. 21:23; Acts 5:5–10), it is most likely that Jesus and His disciples arrived at the city gate late in the afternoon of the day the boy died.

### **Jesus puts Himself on your Path**

Two crowds met. We can only marvel at the providence of God when we see Jesus meet that funeral procession just as it was heading for the burial ground. He lived on a divine timetable as He obeyed the will of His Father (John 11:9; 13:1). The sympathetic Saviour always gives help when we need it most (Heb. 4:16). What a contrast between the crowd that was following Jesus and the crowd following the widow and her dead son. Jesus and His disciples were rejoicing in the blessing of the Lord, but the widow and her friends were lamenting the death of her only son. Jesus was heading for the city while the mourners were heading for the cemetery. Spiritually speaking, each of us is in one of these two crowds. If you have trusted Christ, you are going to the city (Heb. 11:10, 13–16; 12:22). If you are “dead in sin,” you are already in the cemetery and under the condemnation of God (John 3:36; Eph. 2:1–3). You need to trust Jesus Christ and be raised from the dead (John 5:24; Eph. 2:4–10).

**Luke 7:13 When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, “Do not weep.”**

## 2 Suffers Meet

### **Jesus is the Man of Sorrows**

Two sufferers met. Jesus, “the Man of Sorrows,” could easily identify with the widow's heartache. Not only was she in sorrow, but she was now left alone in a society that did not have resources to care for widows. What would happen to her? Jesus felt the pain that sin and death have brought into this world, and He did something about it. *Isaiah 53:3–4 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> *He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.* <sup>4</sup> *Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.*

### **Compassion – Your Pain in my Heart / Jesus man of Sorrow – Anointed with Gladness**

Compassion is your pain in my heart. It's a quality sadly lacking in our society, but one Jesus exemplified constantly. He is called the Man of Sorrows because He took the pain of people into His own heart. And yet the irony is that Hebrews 1:9 tells us He was anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows. How could He be the Man of Sorrows and yet anointed with the oil of gladness above any other human being who has ever lived—radiating such joy that multitudes would be drawn to Him? These are two qualities that seem contradictory—until we remember the words He taught us when He said, “Blessed, or happy, are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted” (see Matthew 5:4 / Luke 6:21). One of the keys of happiness is to allow sorrow to penetrate your heart. Eastern mysticism totally rejects this viewpoint. A foundational principle of Buddha's teaching was to avoid pain and sorrow, for if mankind would enter into the state of detached feeling, of nirvana, there would be no more jealousy or envy, no more wars and fighting. This thinking has affected us more than we know. Having permeated the '60s culture, it was Eastern thought that caused us to say, “I am a rock. I am an island,” as they sang along with Simon and Garfunkel. Jesus, however, came on the scene and annihilated that mentality by saying, “Happy is the man not who detaches himself, but who mourns, who is heartbroken, for he is the one who will be comforted.” “Comfort” is an old English word containing the same root as that of the word “fortify.” In other words, Jesus said that the one who is mourning will also be the one who is fortified. In the Garden of Gethsemane, so deeply was Jesus mourning that blood burst from His forehead. And yet Luke tells us that even as He was agonizing in prayer, an angel came and comforted, sustained, and fortified Him (Luke 22:43, 44). When is the last time I have been at the

place of being pained in prayer for someone else's problem, someone else's sin? Could it be that I am not comforted by the Comforter or the angelic presence because I am not doing what Jesus did? Blessed are they who mourn, who plunge into life and feel the pain of life. They shall be comforted. Are you unhappy? Do you feel comfortless? Take seriously what Jesus said. It's an irony. It's a mystery. It runs crosscurrent to the thinking of our society. And yet the key to happiness is to mourn for others, to carry someone else's pain in your heart.

*Hebrews 1:9 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions."

*Luke 6:21 (NKJV)* <sup>21</sup> Blessed are you who hunger now, For you shall be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, For you shall laugh.

*Matthew 5:4 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted.

*Luke 22:43–44 (NKJV)* <sup>43</sup> Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. <sup>44</sup> And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

### **Calvary Refuge**

My heart for this church, as us as individuals, and us corporately as a church body is to have and exercise this type of compassion for each other, and to the community around us. We call ourselves Calvary Chapel, but I am not sure that truly reflects my desire of this church. I want this place to be a place of refuge, a fortress that people can run into, a cottage they can be refreshed and comforted in. May we be a people who make a place of refuge for the hurting to come to, a fortress that will give them protection from the battering of the world, a place of love and compassion that when anyone and everyone walks in, they know there is a God who cares, and a people here to care.

**Luke 7:14 Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried him stood still. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise."**

### **Do not Weep – Quite a thing say at Funeral**

Do not weep – now that is quite a thing to say to someone who has just lost their child, quite a thing to say at a funeral procession, quite a thing to say to a woman who is now a widow and left on her own. In this cultural and day, the heat of the Middle East, they would bury their dead on the same day they died, and thus we see this widow is experiencing the unexpectedness of death just hours prior.

### **Anytime say Something – Implying He is Doing Something**

But Christian, Anytime the Lord says something – He is implying that He is going to do something.

### **Give Thanks – Unless all Things Work for Good / Do we have Faith of Centurion to Believe This**

He wouldn't tell us to give thanks for all things if He didn't intend to work all things together for good. Do we have the faith of the centurion to believe such things?

*1 Thessalonians 5:17–19 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> pray without ceasing, <sup>18</sup> in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. <sup>19</sup> Do not quench the Spirit.

*Romans 8:26–28 (NKJV)* <sup>26</sup> Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. <sup>27</sup> Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. <sup>28</sup> And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

**Luke 7:15 So he who was dead sat up and began to speak. And He presented him to his mother.**

## **2 Only Sons come Face-to-Face**

### **Destined to Die – Destined to Live / Jesus remembers Father's Face before He Left Throne / Present Back**

*Two only sons met.* One was alive but destined to die, the other dead but destined to live. Jesus can relate to this son, and He can relate to this mother. I know the pain it grieves your mother to lose her son, as I remember the look on My Father's face when we parted ways, and I came into this world, no longer seeing each other face-to-face, and knowing the dreadful day that would come as I would take on the sins of the world and He would have to watch His only Begotten Son be beaten, spit upon, mocked, and then crucified. I also know the joy that the son brings a mother, and the joy you were to her. The two will meet face-to-face, speak (what we do not know), and then Jesus

will present him back to his mother, and what a moment of joy it would be. What a moment it must have been when Jesus ascended into heaven and joined His Father, imagine that embrace – welcome home Son, and Jesus would say and I brought friends with me (all the dead in Christ risen from the grave).

### **3 People Raised from Dead in NT**

3 people rose from the dead in the New Testament Scriptures by Jesus:

- The Widow's Son
- Lazarus
- Jairus's Daughter

*John 11:43–44 (NKJV)* <sup>43</sup> Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" <sup>44</sup> And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go."

*Luke 8:54–56 (NKJV)* <sup>54</sup> But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Little girl, arise." <sup>55</sup> Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat. <sup>56</sup> And her parents were astonished, but He charged them to tell no one what had happened.

### **Good Indicator Person Brought to Life / Speak – Eat - Walk**

A good indicator if a person has been brought back to life, is they will speak, eat, and walk. A person who has been brought back to life spiritually will be affected in how they talk, how they walk, and what they eat. They will have an appetite for the Word of God, and they will speak differently from the world, and where they walk will not be in the ways of the world.

**Luke 7:16** Then fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen up among us"; and, "God has visited His people."

**Luke 7:17** And this report about Him went throughout all Judea and all the surrounding region.

## **2 Enemies Face-Off**

### **Last Enemy - Death**

*Two enemies met.* Jesus faced death, "the last enemy" (1 Cor. 15:26). When you consider the pain and grief that it causes in this world, death is indeed an enemy, and only Jesus Christ can give us victory (see 1 Cor. 15:51–58; Heb. 2:14–15). Jesus had only to speak the word and the boy was raised to life and health. Jesus is sending the early warning shots to death, hell, and Satan – your days are coming to an end.

*1 Corinthians 15:20–28 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. <sup>21</sup> For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. <sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. <sup>23</sup> But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming. <sup>24</sup> Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. <sup>25</sup> For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. <sup>26</sup> The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. <sup>27</sup> For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under Him," it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. <sup>28</sup> Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

### **Response – People Glorified God**

The response of the people was to glorify God and identify Jesus with the Prophet the Jews had been waiting for (Deut. 18:15; John 1:21; Acts 3:22–23). It did not take long for the report of this miracle to spread. People were even more enthusiastic to see Jesus, and great crowds followed Him (Luke 8:4, 19, 42).

# The Dungeon of Doubt

## (7:18-23)

### Overview chapters 4-6

In chapter 4 Jesus gave us His mission statement, to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to set at liberty the captives. In chapter 5 He tells us He is doing a whole new thing, that you have to put new wine into new wineskins; He is telling us that He didn't come to patch up the old religious system, nor to patch us up and limp us along until we get to heaven, but to make us new and make us whole through Him. We finished chapter 6 last week and saw Jesus making a new Sabbath (as He is the Lord of the Sabbath – man can have rest through Him), we saw Him making a new Nation as He picks the twelve, and then we saw Him making a new Kingdom, as He gave us the heart of His Kingdom, which was a heart that is to love the Lord God with all our heart, mind, and soul (the Vertical Relationship) and then to love our neighbor as ourselves (the Horizontal Relationship). In that new Kingdom we are to be a people who are loving our neighbors, weeping with them, and ministering to them. We are not a people who are to be critical nor judgmental.....and no sooner has Jesus finished this sermon on the plain, that He gives us examples of those things right here in chapter 7. We are going to see His great compassion in this chapter.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."*

*Luke 5:37–39 (NKJV) <sup>37</sup> And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. <sup>38</sup> But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved. <sup>39</sup> And no one, having drunk old wine, immediately desires new; for he says, 'The old is better.'* "

### Compassion

Compassion has been defined as “your pain in my heart.” My personal definition of compassion is being so moved by something that you can't just walk past it, you must stop and get involved – and that is what we will see Jesus do here in chapter 7. What pain our Lord must have felt as He ministered from place to place! In this chapter alone, Jesus is confronted with the miseries of

- a cheerless centurion,
- a weeping widow,
- a perplexed prophet,
- a heartbroken harlot.

In each case, Jesus shows His heart of compassion toward them, which blesses me greatly because I know He cares about me in the same way. Jesus helped them all, because compassion does not measure: it ministers. Bernard of Clairvaux said, “Justice seeks out only the merits of the case, but pity only regards the need.” It was compassion, not justice, that motivated the Great Physician who came “not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Luke 5:32). Let's meet these four hurting people and see our Lord's responses to their needs.

*1 Peter 5:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.*

### Today's Verses

Let's stand to read today's verses.

*Luke 7:18–30 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things. <sup>19</sup> And John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to Jesus, saying, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?" <sup>20</sup> When the men had come to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, 'Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?' " <sup>21</sup> And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight. <sup>22</sup> Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them. <sup>23</sup> And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."*

### John's Question's are Answered

**Luke 7:17** And this report about Him went throughout all Judea and all the surrounding region.

**Luke 7:18** Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things.

### **Imprisoned for doing the right Thing**

John is in prison at this point, probably has been for about 10 months if you try to do the math of all the events as we cross reference the events through the other three gospels. John the Baptist was in Herod's dungeon because he dared to call the king on the carpet. You see, while visiting his brother, Herod lusted after his brother's wife so greatly that he forced his brother to divorce her so that he himself could marry her. Although the gossip columnists of the day were fascinated, John was infuriated. A prophet of righteousness, John came down on Herod like a scorpion in the desert. Stung by his indictments, Herod ordered John imprisoned.

### **Hell on Earth / Time Ticking in his Mind / Where is He? / Jesus was Passionate – Cleansed Temple**

Now understand this, prison for a man of the wilderness that is hell on earth. Another hell on earth for this man is that he can no longer do what he was made for, what his passion was, preaching about the "Coming One". John is shut away, in a dark damp dungeon, his voice silenced, and time is now ticking in his mind. I'm sure when he was first imprisoned, John thought the One who calmed the storm, who brought the dead back to life, who cleansed the temple would surely spring him (for Jesus was passionate – Jesus was John's type of man, full of zeal just like John). But it didn't work out that way. Days passed. Weeks went by. And John was left wondering. "Go ask Jesus if He really is the One," he said to his disciples, "or are we to look for another?"

*John 2:13–17 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business. <sup>15</sup> When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. <sup>16</sup> And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!" <sup>17</sup> Then His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up."

### **The Dungeon of Doubt / Why isn't God Doing what I think He should Be**

John is in the Dungeon of Doubt; how about you, have you ever ben there, maybe even there now wondering where God, the God of passion and zeal, the God of righteousness, what is He doing, why isn't He doing, when will He be doing? Does your dungeon question God's compassion, His holiness? If you are, you are not alone, and actually you are in some pretty amazing company, for even the great forerunner of the Messiah had his doubts and struggles. John doesn't question if Jesus is sent of God, John is questioning why Jesus isn't doing what John thinks He should be doing. How often do we do that? I'm saved through Your work on the cross, I know you are God, I know my eternity is secure, but right now Lord I am wondering why you are doing what You are doing, or better said, not doing what I think You should be doing. We don't doubt Him, we just doubt what He is doing?

### **Jesus Teaches Us Today**

And so before us today is one of the most needful passages in all the scriptures, because who here hasn't (who is right now) wondering why God isn't doing something on our behalf right now, why is He making us wait, why hasn't He come through, why are we still in this dungeon, why aren't we enjoying the freedoms of faith?

- Why am I still single?
- Why am I so lonely?
- Why is my marriage struggling?
- Why am I in this financial strain?
- Why isn't my ministry blooming?
- Why don't I have close friends?
- Why am I ill?
- Why is my job so difficult?
- Why do I have to be where I am right now?

How Jesus responds to John is needful for us, this story is given to us so when we are in our "Dungeon of Doubts", we can see beyond the bars, we can hear beyond the silence, and we can feel beyond the cold.

### **Verse 23 – Satan setting a Trap**

And here is the heart of this message; Jesus in verse 23 says "blessed is he who is not offended for my sake". That for offended is our English word "scandalize" which means to stumble, to set a trap. Jesus is saying to John, and us, these doubts are traps (set by Satan), and he is desiring to trip us up, to set a trap and take us captives. And my how I have seen people enter doubts about God and His ways and they become paralyzed, they become imprisoned, they are walking and breathing but inside they are suffocated and paralyzed, they are living half-lives because of their

fears and doubts. Jesus says blessed (happy) is the person who is not offended because of Me, who is not tripped up by what is going on in their lives, or as much so – what isn't happening in their lives.

*Luke 7:23 (NKJV) <sup>23</sup> And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."*

### **Remember John's Past / Such Revelation / Speaks power of Circumstances**

Imagine who is doubting.

- John was filled with Holy Spirit in the womb.
- John baptized Jesus in the Jordan, saw the heavens open, heard the Father say this is My Son in whom I am well pleased.
- John saw the Spirit descend upon Jesus like a Dove – and said that the Spirit testified to him that Jesus was the Messiah.

You would think if any person, John, the one who received so much revelation from God, could have doubts of faith. This story speaks to us of how powerfully circumstances can work against our faith. John is having doubts of why God is doing what He is doing in his life; and so it is with us, of when the circumstances of our life are not lining up as we think they should, we challenge God (and every challenge of God is doubt), and so we doubt Him and His wisdom, of why He allows this to happen and continue in our lives.

### **John not Doubting Power – Just its Use**

John isn't doubting Jesus has the power, he is doubting why Jesus isn't using that power. He is getting reports of all the things Jesus is doing (raising the dead and healing lepers), and he wonders why He isn't using that power for his advantage. Maybe you have seen God's power, you are watching Him do mighty deeds (ELSEWHERE), and you are now wondering how you (a passionate follower – a faithful follower – someone who isn't in sin) can be where you are at. The biggest thing you are struggling with is not what God can do, but why He isn't doing it.

### **In Trial we can Be More Concerned what isn't Happening – and Miss What is**

*Verse 18 - Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things. -* The prisoners are supposed to be set free, but John hasn't. So often in the midst of our dungeons, we can get more concerned with what is not happening, than what is happening, and we miss out on what is happening. There are awesome things happening, blind see, lame walk, and the gospel is being preached - but for John the only things he sees is the prison door, and he sees that it is still closed.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."*

**Luke 7:19 And John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to Jesus, saying, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"**

**Luke 7:20 When the men had come to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, 'Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?'" "**

### **Just a Point – The Repeat Verbatim / Today the Message is changed by the Messengers**

Just a point before moving on, and that is do you notice that John's disciples repeat John's directions verbatim, they rephrase it exactly the way John said it, they didn't add to it, nor take away from it, but delivered the message exactly as John had spoken it. There is a powerful example here for us as disciples of Christ, and that is that we are to do the exact same thing. We are simply messengers of the One we follow, and we are simply to deliver the message, without adding to it, or taking away from it. Today more than any time in the history of Christianity, the followers of Christ feel a need to change the message, to soften it up, to make it more palatable, and in return the message is getting distort and confused.

### **John's question would be Offensive to Jesus / Imagine someone asks You / We must Verbatim the Message**

John's question, is quite offense if you get right down to it. Verse 17 and report of Jesus went all around, Jesus had declared in 4:18 that He is the Promised One, His works are a mirror of everything He spoke of in 4:18, and yet John would ask, are You the One or do we look for another. Imagine John's disciples going to Jesus, saying to each other, I think Jesus is the Messiah, you think Jesus is the Messiah, to ask this question to the Messiah could be real offensive. Imagine if someone came to you and said, hey you profess to be a Christian, but are you really a Christian, I have watched your changed life, I have watched you ministering to others, I have watched you be

mocked and ridiculed for your profession and have not reacted with wrath, but are you really a Christian. You probably would be a little offended by that question wouldn't you? Well, good example for us, as followers of Christ, when we deliver His message, just deliver it exactly as He gave it to us, even if we anticipate that it may offend someone. Example – hey friend, I just want you to know that God says, repent therefore and be converted so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord – NOT, hey friend, God understands your struggles, and your special circumstance, and He wants you to come to Him for times of refreshing by going to church, and after church we are going to have a potluck too and you will really like Sherri's homemade cupcakes.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

*Acts 3:19 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

### **World Changing the Message Today / Be Worried about Offending God**

The message is being changed daily in our world, even the church leaders now are trying to make it more palatable and un-offensive, but the fact is, it is offensive. Below is an snippet from a NYT Bestseller that basically says hell isn't real. Wow, that makes the Christianity so much more palatable, but only to the unrepentant. We need worry about the taste of it; we need only serve the plate as God prepared it. Too many men are worried about offending people, and have zero worry of offending God.

**Excerpts from Rob Bell's Love Wins: A Book About Heaven, Hell, and the Fate of Every Person Who Has Ever Lived (Reached #2 on NYT Bestseller List)**

*"A staggering number of people have been taught that a few select Christians will spend forever in a peaceful, joyous place called heaven, while the rest of humanity spends forever in torment and punishment in hell with no chance for anything better. It's been clearly communicated to many that this belief is a central truth of the Christian faith and to reject it is, in essence, to reject Jesus. This is misguided and toxic and ultimately subverts the contagious spread of Jesus message of love, peace, forgiveness, and joy that our world desperately needs to hear."*

*"At the center of the Christian tradition since the first church has been the insistence that history is not tragic, hell is not forever, and love, in the end, wins."*

### **Only exact Words will Change Lives**

Let these words dwell in your heart concerning this matter, for it is only the word delivered exactly as God delivered it to us that will change lives. People are fooled when they think a palatable message will help and benefit a person. The person who think they are being helpful are actually the complete opposite, they become destructive and harmful to the person who is heading for danger (or hip dip in it).

*1 Thessalonians 2:13–16 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe. <sup>14</sup> For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they did from the Judeans, <sup>15</sup> who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men, <sup>16</sup> forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up the measure of their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

### **Back to John / I would Doubt Too**

So back to John, my doubts would have been spiking if I was John, I know myself well enough. John gets the honor of pointing at Jesus and being the one who got to say, behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Hey we are cousins, we grew up playing together, our mothers are like best friends. Me and Jesus are close, but consider this that when John got thrown in prison that we are told in another gospel account that not only didn't Jesus come to see rescue, in fact Jesus didn't even come to see him, in fact Jesus went the other way and left town. Ever feel like that, that not only isn't Jesus answering you, but he has left you and gone the other way. Hang with me on the story, and you'll see where Jesus is and what He is doing.

*Matthew 4:12 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee.

### **Notice John asks Question directly to Jesus / We can Ask Everyone but Jesus**

Notice that John asks the question directly to Jesus. Often we make the mistake when we have a question during a trial or hardship that we ask everyone else but Jesus. We will ask friends, we will ask family, we will ask the coworker, the clerk at the supermarket, check with Google, we ask everyone but Jesus. Along that same line we will look for the answer in media, on the internet, listening to some self-help guru,.....asking and seeking everyone but Jesus. John goes right to Jesus with his question.

### **Greatest Danger is to keep Question Bottled Up**

However, the greatest danger is when we have a question, and we keep that question to ourselves. John doesn't make that mistake and may we not either. For in so doing we set a foothold for Satan to work. We have a question, we have a doubt, and then when the heat of a trial kicks in, that question and those doubts arise, and start to play on our thoughts, and they grow stronger and stronger each time. Got a question, take it to Jesus. Beware, Satan wants to set a trap, to trip you up, so take your question to Jesus immediately.

*Luke 7:23 (NKJV) <sup>23</sup> And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."*

### **He is our Dad**

God loves to answers questions, He is our Dad. Happy Father's Day Dad! I love answering Camden's questions, I love it when he says "what is this", "how come dad", I love it when he calls me dad. We have a Heavenly Father, and He loves it when we ask Him questions, and He loves it when we call Him Dad.

*Verses 21 -22 is Jesus' answer.*

**Luke 7:21 And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight.**

**Luke 7:22 Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them.**

### **Jesus doesn't answer Immediately**

Notice, Jesus doesn't immediately answer (verbally that is), it will be an hour before He answers. So these disciples ask the question, and no doubt expecting a response right then, but Jesus doesn't respond but instead starts laying hands on people, praying for people, moving through the crowd touching and healing, pouring His compassion out upon all the hurting. I picture these two disciples following Him around, Jesus looking at them like He is going to respond, but then moves on to heal, then looks at them again like He is going to respond, but then moves and gives sight to a blind man, then looks at them as if to respond, but then lays His hands on a lame man and says arise and walk, then looks at them again as if to respond, and then cast a demon out of man, and this goes on for an hour, and then He finally stops and looks at them and then answers, "go tell John everything you have seen and heard....."

### **God answers by Showing us What He is Doing / Go Back to what Your do Know**

God answers our questions immediately, but it not always verbally immediately, as He takes us back to what He is doing, what He has done, and then will build on what He will do. I remind myself that when I am faced with things I do not understand I always go back to what I do, and that is that God loves me, He sent His only Son to die for me and my offensive sin, and that the thoughts He has for me are thoughts of peace and not of evil to give me a future and a hope.

*Jeremiah 29:11 (NKJV) <sup>11</sup> For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.*

### **Don't be Afraid to Take Question to Jesus – But be Ready for His Answer**

Don't be afraid to take your questions to God, but you must be willing to accept His answers. His answers may not be the answers you desire, but they are His perfect answers.

### **See How He does Answer – Back to the WORD**

So Jesus didn't immediately answer, He did, and do you see how He answered. He took John back to the Word. All that John was told was a confirmation of the Word. Jesus is quoting prophecy of the Messiah, and how you would know who was the Messiah, because the Messiah would do these things. Jesus is referencing to Isaiah 29, 35, 42, and 61.

*Isaiah 29:18–19 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> In that day the deaf shall hear the words of the book, And the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness. <sup>19</sup> The humble also shall increase their joy in the LORD, And the poor among men shall rejoice In the Holy One of Israel.*

*Isaiah 35:4–6 (NKJV) <sup>4</sup> Say to those who are fearful-hearted, "Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, With the recompense of God; He will come and save you." <sup>5</sup> Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. <sup>6</sup> Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert.*

### **Jesus bringing John back to the Bible – Not his Circumstances**

What Jesus is doing for John is bringing John back to the Bible for His faith in the Messiah. John wants to base his faith on his circumstances, but the problem with that is that circumstances change every day, but the Word never changes. The Word of God is our only firm foundation for us to stand on.

### **Jesus saying – I fully meeting Expectations of the Messiah – as Prophesied**

Jesus is saying John I may not be meeting your expectations at this very moment, but I am fully and wonderfully meeting the expectations of the prophetic scriptures spoken concern the Messiah. John I am who I am, not based on the difficulty before your current circumstance, but based on the Word of God., the Holy Scriptures. The Word of God is the more sure thing, it supersedes our sensitivity, it trumps our trials, it counters our circumstances.

*2 Peter 1:19–21 (KJV 1900)* <sup>19</sup> We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: <sup>20</sup> Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. <sup>21</sup> For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

*Christian, what saith the scriptures, not what saith the circumstances.*

### **God answers by Showing us What He is Doing / Go Back to what Your do Know**

When I am faced with things I do not understand I always go back to what I do, and that is that God loves me, He sent His only Son to die for me and my offensive sin, and that the thoughts He has for me are thoughts of peace and not of evil to give me a future and a hope. I know these things to be true because this Bible is true, it is perfect!

*Jeremiah 29:11 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

**Luke 7:23 And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.”**

### **Jesus loves John – Don’t be Stumbled by what I have Allowed or am Doing / Christian don’t Stumble**

Jesus loves John, and He encourages John by saying John blessed is the man or woman who is not stumbled by Me on how I am using you, or what I have allowed to come into your life. Christian don’t be stumbled by what God is doing in your life right now, don’t fall away from God over it.....He knows what He is doing, He is very good at what He does, and time will bear that out in your life.

### **Just what John Needed to Hear to make it to the Finish / Times Trial – Times to Turn to Bible**

This word is just what John needed to hear to make it to the finish, to finish well and to finish strong. When we come into times of trials, times of difficulties, they are times to turn to the Bible! Turn to it for clarification and understanding. Sadly it is in the trials and the hardship that Christians will abandoned the Bible, turn to the world for counsel, try to figure it out on their own, or turn away in anger and disgust. Jesus used the Word of God to answer John’s doubt, Jesus bought John back to the Word for his faith in Jesus that Jesus is the Messiah. He does the same thing for us. Peter said that he say Jesus’ miracles personally, he was there on the Mount of Transfiguration, yet even all the things he saw, he said the prophecies of the scriptures are more sure.

*2 Peter 1:16–21 (KJV 1900)* <sup>16</sup> For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. <sup>17</sup> For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. <sup>18</sup> And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. <sup>19</sup> We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: <sup>20</sup> Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. <sup>21</sup> For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

**Why?**

Why then God, why not intercede and save the day.

### **Lodgepole Pine**

This week throughout Colorado and New Mexico forest fires are burning out of control. Yet even as these raging fires consume the forest, something is quietly going on to prepare their very renewal. You see, there is an unusual species of Evergreen called the Lodgepole Pine that grows in great numbers throughout Northwest America, especially in Yellowstone Park. A fascinating aspect of this Pine is the uniqueness of its cones. Lodgepole Pine cones may stay on the tree for years before they fall off – and, even when they do fall, they will not open to release their seed...until they are in the presence of intense heat! What could explain this remarkable ecological foresight?

God, having designed nature, even in its fallen condition which includes devastating forest fires, has providentially prepared for their subsequent renewal by designing a Pine tree whose reproduction requires the agent of its own destruction...fire! So, even as trees, wildlife, and all living things are being destroyed in a forest blaze, the seeds of renewal are also being released for the "resurrection" of forest life...because, of course, since their seeds are actually released by the fire, the Lodgepole Pines are the first to grow in an area that's been burned! In each of our own lives, there are areas that need to be, or are already being burned up -- consumed by the "Refining Fire" of God's Holy Spirit. Yet God has also provided for a renewal in us...a "seed" of something brand new, which can only be birthed by intense heat. This new seed, however it manifests in our lives, represents the resurrection life of Christ, which emerges in the presence of His purifying fire. So the Lodgepole Pine is a picture for us, of resurrection and hope in the midst of fiery trials. Let's endure our fiery trials with great hope, allowing Him to consume everything in us which does not serve His Glory! With so much work to be done -- we must not despise the cleansing process -- even if it means a lot of heat!

### **Heat Opens Opportunities**

The Heat opens opportunities.

### **Boll weevil Monument**

The Boll Weevil Monument in downtown Enterprise, Alabama, United States is a prominent landmark and tribute erected by the citizens of Enterprise in 1919 to show their appreciation to an insect, the boll weevil, for its profound influence on the area's agriculture and economy. Hailing the beetle as a "herald of prosperity," it stands as the world's only monument built to honor an agricultural pest. The boll weevil was indigenous to Mexico, but appeared in Alabama in 1915. By 1918 farmers were losing whole cotton crops to the beetle. H. M. Sessions saw this as an opportunity to convert the area to peanut farming. In 1916 he convinced C. W. Baston, an indebted farmer, to back his venture. The first crop paid off their debts and was bought by farmers seeking to change to peanut farming. Cotton was grown again, but farmers learned to diversify their crops, a practice which brought new money to Coffee County.

### **Thomas Edison**

Thomas Edison invented the microphone, the phonograph, the incandescent light, the storage battery, talking movies, and more than 1000 other things. December 1914 he had worked for 10 years on a storage battery. This had greatly strained his finances. This particular evening spontaneous combustion had broken out in the film room. Within minutes all the packing compounds, celluloid for records and film, and other flammable goods were in flames. Fire companies from eight surrounding towns arrived, but the heat was so intense and the water pressure so low that the attempt to douse the flames was futile. Everything was destroyed. Edison was 67. With all his assets going up in a whoosh (although the damage exceeded two million dollars, the buildings were only insured for \$238,000 because they were made of concrete and thought to be fireproof), would his spirit be broken? The inventor's 24-year old son, Charles, searched frantically for his father. He finally found him, calmly watching the fire, his face glowing in the reflection, his white hair blowing in the wind. "My heart ached for him," said Charles. "He was 67--no longer a young man--and everything was going up in flames. When he saw me, he shouted, 'Charles, where's your mother?' When I told him I didn't know, he said, 'Find her. Bring her here. She will never see anything like this as long as she lives.'" The next morning, Edison looked at the ruins and said, "There is great value in disaster. All our mistakes are burned up. Thank God we can start anew." Three weeks after the fire, Edison managed to deliver the first phonograph. How awesome it is for us when a trial burns away all our past failures, and we become known by the faith we possessed in our trial.

### **Go back to What He has Done / Above – Base Faith on Word / Word outlive Circumstances**

*God is at Work – Trust in It.* But when you doubt what He is doing, go back to what He has done; but above all, base your faith on the sure thing, the word of God. Our faith is never to be based on our physical circumstances, but God's unchanging word. God's word will outlive our circumstances, and not only that God's word will outlive the heavens and the earth, God's word will have the final say in each and every one of those circumstances in our life. The world will not have the final say, the Devil will not have the final say, no one will have the final say – only God's word will have the final say.

*Matthew 24:35 (NKJV) <sup>35</sup> Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.*

### **When Doubting – Take Questions to Jesus – Be prepared to go to Word**

So when we are faced with the doubts in life, take your questions to God, and then be prepared for Him to take you to His word.

## ***Ditching the Doubt*** ***(Luke 7:24-35)***

**Luke 7:18–35 (NKJV)** <sup>18</sup> Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things. <sup>19</sup> And John, calling two of his disciples to *him*, sent *them* to Jesus, saying, “Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?” <sup>20</sup> When the men had come to Him, they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, ‘Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?’ ” <sup>21</sup> And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight. <sup>22</sup> Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that *the* blind see, *the* lame walk, *the* lepers are cleansed, *the* deaf hear, *the* dead are raised, *the* poor have the gospel preached to them. <sup>23</sup> And blessed is *he* who is not offended because of Me.” <sup>24</sup> When the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? <sup>25</sup> But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed those who are gorgeously appareled and live in luxury are in kings’ courts. <sup>26</sup> But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. <sup>27</sup> This is *he* of whom it is written: ‘Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, *Who will prepare Your way before You.*’ <sup>28</sup> For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.” <sup>29</sup> And when all the people heard *Him*, even the tax collectors justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John. <sup>30</sup> But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him. <sup>31</sup> And the Lord said, “To what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and what are they like? <sup>32</sup> They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, saying: ‘We played the flute for you, And you did not dance; We mourned to you, And you did not weep.’ <sup>33</sup> For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon.’ <sup>34</sup> The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ <sup>35</sup> But wisdom is justified by all her children.”

### **Prayer**

#### **Picking up from Last Week / John in Prison for Doing Right Thing – Facing Doubts**

We are picking up our study from last week; John the Baptist (the forerunner of Christ Himself) has been imprisoned by King Herod for calling the King out and telling him that marrying his brother’s wife is sin, and that the king must repent. Well as you can imagine a king isn’t going to take those things well, and he retaliates against John and cast him into a horrible prison cell. John is in prison for doing right, for being faithful to his calling as a prophet to the Nation. And we ended last week’s study with John now facing doubts in his life, wondering where Jesus was, why Jesus hadn’t come into save the day, wondering why Jesus has left him in this prison (probably for about 10 months now). John doesn’t doubt that Jesus has the power to free him, John is question why Jesus isn’t using that power to aid John. John is in the “Dungeon of Doubt”. Well maybe you have been there, maybe you even now are going through some type of hardship and you know Jesus has the power, that He is God, but you are questioning why He isn’t using that power to aid you, questioning how a God of love can allow a faithful follower such as yourself to continue in the pit, the dungeon, you are in.

#### **Last Week (18-23) – Don’t base Faith on Circumstances – But the Word**

Jesus in our verses last week (7:18-23) tells John not to base his faith on his experiences or circumstances, but to base his faith on the Word of God, for the Word of God changes not, the Word will outlive and last John’s experience and circumstances, in fact the Word of God will outlast the heavens and the earth. Jesus said John don’t base your faith on your circumstances, nor your man-made expectations of what God should do and be like.

**Matthew 24:35 (NKJV)** <sup>35</sup> *Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.*

#### **Whole Event Happened Publically – Pickup with John’s Disciples Leaving / People Wonder about John**

Now this whole event happened publically; John’s disciples had asked Jesus the question publically, and Jesus then answered the question publically. We pick up our story where John’s disciples leave with Jesus’ answer to him (22-23). What Jesus says next John doesn’t hear, and we will talk why that is, and although John doesn’t hear these wonderful words Jesus speaks about him, all the people who heard the question asked by John’s disciples do. You

see these people are going to have questions in their minds just like John, they will be wondering did John do something that disqualified him for ministry (is that why he is in jail), is Jesus upset with John, was John's ministry in the wilderness genuine, were his baptism valid, what do we do with the ministry of John the Baptist.

*Luke 7:22–23 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> *Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them. <sup>23</sup> And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."*

### **Important for Us – Why didn't Jesus Spring John from Prison / Prove don't mess God's Kids**

And importantly for us (as it was for them), why didn't Jesus spring John from the prison, and prove to all that God doesn't and isn't going to stand for anyone touching His servants.

### **Jesus is going to talk behind John's Back**

So John's disciples are gone, and Jesus is going to talk about John behind his back. If ya ever want to know how to talk behind someone's back, here is a great example of how to do that. Jesus will say nothing but great things about John.

### **Ditching the Doubt**

John is in the Dungeon of Doubt, but God uses him to speak to us when we are in our Dungeon of Doubt, and I pray by the end of our study today, you will go from the Dungeon of Doubt, to Ditching the Doubt.

**Luke 7:24 When the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?"**

### **John's Ministry less than Year / People made the Trek – Hear Powerful Message**

As we gather all the gospel accounts we see that John's public ministry was only about a year. John didn't have a long ministry, but it was a powerful ministry. People were coming from all over the place to hear his message, to receive his message, to repent and be water baptized. People were traveling days to make it out to the wilderness place that John was preaching and when they left they went and told others, and those people made the trek themselves to hear this powerful speaker with the powerful message.

*Luke 3:3 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> *And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins,*

### **Jesus confirms Powerful Ministry / Jesus said John had Guts – Not Popular Opinion / MEN COURAGE**

Jesus confirms John's ministry was with power, it was bold, it was unapologetic, John spoke the truth and let the chips fall where they will. When people came out they didn't go out to see a man who was blown by the winds of popular opinion, swayed by what was acceptable and palatable at the time, but a man who had guts and courage, a man who was the one making the wind that was moving people, not the other way away. John was a man's man, - men lets be men, lets lead our homes, let's be leaders in the workplace, let's be known as man of courage, men who don't back down. Men are too sensitive today, the church needs more men who will pick up swords and go to war.

### **Think John would like to Hear these Words? / Word was Enough – Word has to be Enough**

Can I make a point here before moving on, and that is that wouldn't you think that John would have loved to hear these words, you would think they would give John strength and power to make it to the end, yet Jesus doesn't say these words until after John's disciples leave. Why, because Jesus gave John all that he needed to make it to the end, to power through his doubts, to have strength to stand for what he was facing and what was coming next (which would be death). Jesus gave him the word, and the word was enough. How often I meet people (been there myself) where the word is giving in their trial, but it wasn't enough, they needed more, they wanted an experience, they wanted something more, and the problem is..... that the word wasn't enough, and when the word isn't enough, then nothing will be enough. But when the word is enough, then there is nothing more needed.

*Luke 4:4 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> *But Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.' "*

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

### **Danger of Needing Continual Affirmation / Youth be Aware / God considers Value worth Dying For**

And.....there is a great danger in needing continual affirmation. There are some people that if they are not constantly told they look good, or continually called, or often invited, they get distraught or depressed. What a

weapon Satan uses against our youth (male and female) as so many continually seek affirmation from others. never content in what God thinks of them, but always needing to hear someone tell them they are beautiful, they are accepted, they are in the in-crowd. So what happens is they spend their whole waking moment seeking out affirmation from others, and it robs them of time they could spend growing in the Lord, reading his Word, serving in the ministry, have true Christian fellowship. Youth, God thinks you are of such value, He would die for you. Good luck on getting one of those people you seek to hear affirmation from even go out of their way for you. And here is the thing, it even happens with young adults and older adults, because it can be something they never grow out of, because they never grow in the Lord.

### **When Counseling – Few Words**

Can I also add this when you come to counsel someone, sometimes when we come to comfort and counsel a person in a hard time, we can actually talk too much. We can say so many words that they cloud or make obscure the words that really had the impact, the words that were straight from the Lord and the words that the Lord intended for them. We can add so many additional words, thinking we are being kind and comforting, but actually dilute the power of the words God had for them. So in all cases of counseling, be sensitive to the leading of the Lord, and speak only the words He has for them.

**Luke 7:25 But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed those who are gorgeously appareled and live in luxury are in kings' courts.**

### **Didn't see Man of Luxury / John chose Path Lord Laid / Used Talents for God – How about You**

You didn't see a man in luxury. Jesus is making a very striking comment, and that is that John could have lived in luxury. had John just kept with the family trade, he too could have been a priest of Israel, and with his power and charisma, his boldness and passion, he would have risen to the top and he could and would have been well respected, esteemed, and paid, but John chose the path the Lord directed him on. John used his gifting (talents) exactly for what God directed him to use them, even if it meant he didn't get the life of luxury and ease. Christian, what are you using your God given gifts and talents on? Are you using them to give you a life of ease, or are you using them for His glory sake. Oh being a respected worker is great, being known as a great worker and an honest worker and a dedicate worker is great, and when people say - and he/she is a Christian, that is great. But what do you do with that gift and talent after your 9-5? Are you too tired and busy thereafter to use those gifts for the Kingdom sake? Are your gifts for your luxury? Will today's message make a change in your life today, will you, do you, see that your talents are a gift from God?

*Matthew 25:20–23 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> "So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' <sup>21</sup> His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' <sup>22</sup> He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' <sup>23</sup> His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

**Luke 7:26 But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet.**

**Luke 7:27 This is he of whom it is written: 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.'**

**Luke 7:28 For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."**

### **Quoting Malachi**

*Malachi 3:1 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> "Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming," Says the LORD of hosts.

### **Greater than Daniel –Elijah / Only John got to say – The Lamb of God**

Greater than Elijah, Jeremiah, Daniel, that is pretty powerful statement. For you see all the other prophets got to speak of the coming Messiah, but only John got to point at the Messiah, and say "Behold the Lamb of God".

*John 1:29 (NKJV)* <sup>29</sup> The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

### **Greatness was his Message – John was Faithful to deliver it Too / You can be a Great Prophet**

See the greatness of the man John, was his message. His message was the message of repentance and for the people to prepare their hearts to receive their King. John as a man was great because the message he delivered, and that

message was given to him from the Lord..... and John was faithful and obedient to deliver the message that was delivered unto him. Christian you too can have a great and powerful ministry, and all it takes is a finger to point, and say Behold the Lamb of God. We too can now proclaim the same message as John did, and when we do, we are in the greatness of John's ministry, because the power was and is in the message. Point, in the Sunday school class, point in your home, point in your conversations at work or over coffee with a friend, and you will have a ministry as powerful as John's.

### **This what Jesus thinks of John / Maybe John thought he had Blown It / Jesus affirms John's Ministry**

This is what Jesus thinks of John. What we can think of ourselves is so different from what Jesus thinks of us. Maybe John was thinking Jesus was upset with him, that he had done something wrong and Jesus was done with him, maybe John totally thought he had blown his ministry and calling and hence why he is in jail – but Jesus is saying John is the greatest prophet of all time, and he has been faithful to his calling. No greater prophet..... that is quite a statement considering Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Daniel, all the great prophets of the Old Testament. Jesus says there were none greater than John. So no one listening to Jesus could think anything less of John for his doubts.

### **Born of a woman – Born Again**

Born if a woman speaks of the first birth, born into the kingdom speaks of the second birth (to be born-again).

*John 3:3 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."*

### **Why are you Greater than John / Greater than works – is Position (Bride) / My Wedding Ceremony**

Why are you greater than John the Baptist? Because everyone who has committed themselves to Jesus, are His bride. At that time, John was a great prophet, honor was due him for that, but Jesus is saying there is much much greater than my followers works, and it is their position, and that is the position of the Bride. At my wedding I had guests, I had groomsman and bridegrooms, there was even a best man and a maid of honor, but at my wedding there was only one bride. There was one that had a special position far beyond all others, and truly it was the reason I showed up at my wedding. If Renee had called me that morning and said I won't be there tonight, I wouldn't have said well I am still going because I want to see all the other people all dressed up, and enjoy a night of dining and conversation, no if my bride wasn't showing up neither would have I. Jesus is saying the least in the kingdom is greatest because they are My Bride. His Bride, His passion, His choice, His love.

### **I Jesus take You My Wife**

I Jesus, take you to be my wedded wife, my bride To have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness or in health, to love and to cherish 'till death do us part. And hereto I pledge you my faithfulness.

### **This what Jesus says about John – he Moves My Heart / He says the Same about You – Even if Distant**

Jesus is saying about John, I am ever so proud of him, He moves my heart with his guts and faith, I love to watch him stand for My glory and not waver on the truth of the Word. He says the same about you, as you move his heart when you stand for Him just as John did. Even when it looks like maybe He isn't with you, not standing beside you, God is saying here is what I think of My love, and they move My heart, and I am so proud of them.

**Luke 7:29 And when all the people heard Him, even the tax collectors justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John.**

**Luke 7:30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.**

### **People may Wonder if John's Ministry was Invalid – Jesus validates It**

So here's something very important to see and understand, and that is that many people would be wondering if John's ministry was invalid because of the fact that he was in prison. So everyone who have been baptized by John ministry could have question if the ministry was valid and their experience was real and true. So Jesus's statement is validating and justifying the ministry of John the Baptist.

### **Religious Leaders Rejected It /The Sinner Receives It**

For the religious leaders they didn't want John's ministry to be validated or justified because they rejected his message of repentance they rejected his message that the Messiah was coming and that every man needed to prepare their heart to receive their King. Nothing has changed in 2,000 years as still today as the religious or self-righteous, or self-made-man rejects the message, because they don't feel (nor will admit) that there is something wrong with them, and it is sin, they can't and won't admit they are a sinner, or they refuse to turn from them their sin because they want to continue in their sin. But the person who is broken over their sin, the person who knows in their heart they are sinners and have offended the Holy God, when they hear the message they gladly receive it.

### **Maybe been Some Time since you Really Reflected on That – Be a Worshipper**

Hey maybe it has been some time since you “gladly received it” – remember it today Christian, go back to that day that He saved you, and how your heart was lifted up, how it felt like you were walking on air, when you knew that you were free and forgiven. Celebrate and enjoy today – just as if it was yesterday.

*Luke 7:47 (NKJV) <sup>47</sup> Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.”*

### **Jesus Validates John's Ministry – Sends Important Message – No One is Immune / John Forerunner Martyrs**

So Jesus is validating John's ministry, He is saying that all John said and did is true, and those who had followed it were wise. And a very important message of Jesus that He is sending here is that even the greatest Prophet's not immune to persecution or hardship. John was the forerunner of Jesus Christ, but he was also the forerunner of every saint who was martyred for the name of Jesus Christ. Imagine if Jesus would have released John the Baptist from prison for speaking the truth, he would have sent the message to everyone thereafter that God will rescue you out of your hardship, and therefore there would be no worries of being a follower of Jesus Christ. When Stephen and Acts chapter 7 spoke with such boldness and was martyred for his faith he knew exactly what could happen and yet he still spoke with passion for the loss as he spoke the words of truth. Today there are still thousands do people martyred for Christ, yet how many find strength in the story of John the Baptist.

### **Disciples Watching**

Remind you, guess who else was watching this whole story transpire, and that was the 12 disciples (and other near disciples), all who will give their life for Christ (bar Judas). Church history says that

- Matthew was burned alive (covered with pitch and tar), but never recanted his account.
- Mark was dragged behind horses and died of the wounds,
- Luke was hung on an olive tree until he died,
- Peter crucified upside down,
- James (the greater – Book of Acts) was beheaded,
- James the (lesser) was thrown off the temple and when his body landed they beat him with clubs,
- Bartholomew was skinned alive,
- Andrew was crucified but preached to his tormentors until he died,
- Thomas was impaled,
- Jude was shot through with 18 arrows,
- Phillip was crucified.
- Matthias was stoned and then beheaded.
- Simon the Zealot was crucified.
- Antipas of Pergamum (revelation 2:12) was roasted to death in a brazen bull.
- John was boiled and banished to the Island of Patmos in his late 90's (but he didn't die because of it).

Many of them saw their families tortured and killed because they continued to preach the Resurrection. All of them could know their fate because they all watched John endure and be faithful to the end.

### **Persecute Church**

Our brothers and sisters who are part of the persecuted church around the world. There are 60 Nations where the Gospel is forbidden to be preached; and of those 60 Nations it is said there are around 200 million believers – thus their life is in constant danger because of their faith in Christ. Although no one truly knows how many Christians are martyred for their faith each year, tens of thousands is a low estimate by those who research persecution, with some saying as high as 150,000 per year. We will never know the true number until we reach heaven and meet them

there. One thing I am sure they (the martyred for Christ) will tell us today if we could hear them, “the sufferings of the world are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us”.

*Martyrs of Christ are never buried.. they are sown....*

### **Millions strengthened John’s witness / Doubt we Realize the Seed we Sow in our Trials**

Millions of faithful martyrs to the end, and how many of them gained strength by John the Baptist. I doubt anyone of us truly realizes the seeds of faith that we plant when we go through hardship, as people are watching us and gaining strength by watching us continue on and not quit. We may waver, have our doubts like John, but we continue on until the end and people are empowered and energized by our trial and that we didn’t quit on Jesus and Jesus didn’t quit on us.

### **Donna’s Funeral**

I went to a funeral this last week of a dear friend of mine. She was only 52, excellent health, no health issues. She was a mother of four, married to my dear-dear brother Tom for 35 years. She was known and loved by all in the church we went to together. She used her homemaking gifts to bless so many in the church, she was on the worship team and had a beautiful voice, and five years ago her and Tom went out to plant a church. Age 52, being used by the Lord to bless so many, and then a life cut short. What timing for me as I considered on the life of John, and then have a real-life John right before me. We were all shocked, we were stunned, I talked with many of my friends and we were stunned, but..... We were not defeated. That funeral was God-soaked, loved filled the room, worship extended to the throne room, it was three hours long, and half of it was worship, and nobody wanted it to end, we were truly basking in the glory of God, we were getting a taste of what she was fully enjoying in its fullness, to be in the presence of Our God, out of these fallen bodies, full of distractions and failing, and she is enjoying His Holy presence – nonstop.

### **The Gospel was Preached**

The Gospel was preached that night, and I know many received the Lord. The nonbelievers got to see something, that they would have never seen otherwise, and that was the reaction of so many people who professed Christ, and now they were stunned, but the world got to witness hundreds come together not to be defeated, but to be energized and ignited of the remainder that heaven is true, and we are just passing through, and one day we will put off these tents and inhabit perfectness. Donna lived a faithful life unto the Lord, and her death became a seed for many others to receive the same gift she has, eternal life.

### **Jesus Criticizes His Generation**

**Luke 7:31 And the Lord said, “To what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and what are they like?**

**Luke 7:32 They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, saying: ‘We played the flute for you, And you did not dance; We mourned to you, And you did not weep.’**

**Luke 7:33 For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon.’**

**Luke 7:34 The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’**

**Luke 7:35 But wisdom is justified by all her children.”**

### **Jesus gives a Parable of Kids Playing / John Harsh – Jesus Grace / Smokescreen – Didn’t Like Message**

Jesus gives a parable that gives a rebuke of those who rejected both John’s ministry, and now Jesus’ ministry. So Jesus gives the parable of kids playing, and those kids who didn’t want to join in and play with the other kids and the game they were playing. Let’s play wedding – and they say no, let’s play funeral – and they say no. Nothing could please them. He uses that example of the people who would say they didn’t like John’s message because he was too harsh, and they didn’t like Jesus’ message because He gave too much grace. They could say what they wanted but it was all a smokescreen, it wasn’t about that, they rejected both John and Jesus because they did not like the message they spoke. They tried to put up smoke and mirrors, but Jesus makes it clear that he sees through it, and He blows it away, and it has gone up in smoke.

### **They had Question & Challenge – But wouldn’t seek the Truth**

Jesus is drawing a comparison for us in that the Jewish leaders they were making every excuse to doubt Jesus was the Messiah. But John's doubt were reason enough for him to seek out the truth, to find the answer regardless where the search would take him. For many people today nothing will please them, they will make up every reason not the

accept that Jesus is the Messiah, they have question after question, challenge after challenge, but they won't search the scriptures at whatever the cost, because they won't search it out, and the reason is because they don't want to truly know the answer, because then they will have to pay the price, whatever that may be.

### **People try to Seem Wise – But Fools / Excuse for not Following God**

These people tried to make it look wise what they were saying, but it was simply fools wisdom. They tried to make it look wise, but Jesus says it is simply foolish, fool's wisdom. People today will say they won't follow the Lord because they have met Christians and they are hypocrites, or they went to church and nobody talked to them. It is all a smokescreen, and God says He sees through it.

*Proverbs 14:33 (NKJV)* <sup>33</sup> *Wisdom rests in the heart of him who has understanding, But what is in the heart of fools is made known.*

### **Wisdom produces Offsprings**

*Luke 7:35 But wisdom is justified by all her children.* - Wisdom produces offspring's, wisdom births. There is the wisdom of the Lord, there is the wisdom of the world, there is foolish wisdom, there is wise wisdom. The wisdom of the world is birthed by fellowshipping with the world, the wisdom of the Lord is birthed by fellowshipping with the Lord. Foolish wisdom is birthed by hanging out with fools, and wise wisdom is birthed by eating and partaking in God's Word.

### **Wisdom not Wisdom because it Declares itself to Be /**

Jesus is saying that wisdom is not wisdom because it declares itself wisdom, wisdom is wisdom based on the person it produces.

### **World thinks Itself Wise**

The world thinks itself so wise with its liberal wisdom, yet why does it bring so much destruction? Why do they think sex before marriage is wise when 80% who do so end in divorce? Why is it considered development when youth are told it is ok to engage in sex before marriage, yet 50% contract a sexually transmitted disease? Alcohol, drugs, abused prescription medication – rampant in the USA. The number of people in the USA who are on anti-depressants has doubled in the last decade. Yet we are the land of the American Dream, how can people be depressed when they are living the dream? The wisdom of the world is failing, it has failed. But look at the person who simply takes and applies the wisdom of God, and look what God produces in them and through them. Regardless of their educational background, their environment, their income level, their age – always it (God's wisdom) produces a supernatural quality of life in the person. And that quality of life testifies to the wisdom of God, behind His word. His Word produces a peaceful life, a content life, a holy life, a freeing life, a Christ like life.

### **It works – because that how we Designed / All is Flowing to Throne of God**

The reason it works out so well is because it is the way God intended life to be lived, not as the world's wisdom promotes. When we live according to God's wisdom as He declares and describes in this Word, we are in alignment with God, we are in alignment with the world we live in, we are in alignment with each other. All of this world is flowing in one direction, and that is the throne of God, as every man will come before the throne the God (some for acceptance and some for condemnation) but all will come before the throne. Living in the wisdom of God, means I am in the flow, any other wisdom means a person is trying to swim against the current, fight against the flow, which regardless still takes them before the throne of God.

### **World's Wisdom says Ditch Jesus / Jesus delivers John from Doubt through His Word / word Sufficient**

The world's wisdom would doubt and question how Jesus handled this situation with John, the world's wisdom would say John ditch Jesus, this is foolish, tell Herod you recant, and you can be in penthouse living a life of luxury, and that would be the world's wisdom. But we began back in verse 17, John was in the Dungeon of Doubt, but Jesus doesn't free him from the prison, but He frees him from his doubts, and it is all based on Jesus saying to John (in essence) My Word is sufficient, for all your questions and all your trials, come to My Word, and you will be able to Ditch your Doubts, because in My Word I will give you peace that I am God, that you are My Bride, and I am with you every step of the way. The Lord's wisdom brings life, the abundant life. John will endure to the end, and

millions will gain strength from his obedience. Jesus confirms to us all through his story that His wisdom produces godly character, and that His wisdom is proved out in the people (His children) who follow Him.

**Seek out His Wisdom**

Seek out His wisdom Christian, seek it with all your heart, you will find it in His Word, and there in His wisdom you will find rest for your soul, a refuge in time of need, and a path on which to walk that will lead you to the Throne of God.

## ***Forgiven Much, Loves Much*** **(7:36-50)**

### **Mission Statement / Contrasting Stories/People /**

Jesus has given His mission statement, that He has come to heal the brokenhearted, set at liberty the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and to preach the gospel (good news – God will forgive your sins) to the poor. Well in our story today God puts two stark contrasts against one another, a woman with a shameful past that is known throughout the whole town, and a fine upright well respected man who is known well throughout the same town. One is known for her sin, the other known for his holiness, one is receives jeers, the other receives cheers. However, both are captives, both are imprisoned, and at the end of the story, only one is set free.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”

**Luke 7:36–50 (NKJV)** <sup>36</sup> Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee’s house, and sat down to eat. <sup>37</sup> And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at the table in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, <sup>38</sup> and stood at His feet behind *Him* weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped *them* with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed *them* with the fragrant oil. <sup>39</sup> Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw *this*, he spoke to himself, saying, “This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman *this is* who is touching Him, for she is a sinner.” <sup>40</sup> And Jesus answered and said to him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” So he said, “Teacher, say it.” <sup>41</sup> “There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. <sup>42</sup> And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?” <sup>43</sup> Simon answered and said, “I suppose the *one* whom he forgave more.” And He said to him, “You have rightly judged.” <sup>44</sup> Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped *them* with the hair of her head. <sup>45</sup> You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. <sup>46</sup> You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. <sup>47</sup> Therefore I say to you, her sins, *which are* many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loves little.” <sup>48</sup> Then He said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” <sup>49</sup> And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?” <sup>50</sup> Then He said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.”

### **Go Into Peace / Step into Freedom – new Life / The other is still Imprisoned**

The literal translation of verse 50 Jesus saying to this woman, “go into peace”, step into peace, it is done, the war and struggle within you is over, you are stepping into peace, you are stepping into freedom, the prison door is open, you the captive are set free, walk into new life. But only one of the captives step into peace, the other is still imprisoned, still bound up, still warring, and still without rest.

### **Difference is 1 Word – Forgiveness / More than Salvation Message – Do You Remember that Day**

The difference of the two lives in this story come down to one word “forgiven”, it is what separates liberty from captivity, sight from blindness, and liberty from depression. Forgiven means, let go, to send away, to pardon, to set free. This story is more than a message on salvation (of how a person can have peace and a personal relationship with God), but it is a message for every person who has asked Jesus Christ to come into their life, and to be their Lord and Savior, for even for those who have done so, this message is a call from God to come back to that place of “do you remember that day when you fell at His feet and cried out with tears of joy – thank you for saving me”, “Lord thank you for not seeing my past, but my future”, for not seeing a blemish, but a spotless Bride”, “that You would love me enough, to ask – will you marry Me?”

### **Easy to Forget / To-Do List, Cares of World, Busyness**

It’s easy to forget this great forgiveness, it is easy to get caught up in the to-do list, the business of life, the cares that are pressing in upon us ..... but God in His goodness gives us a story like this to remind us, to refresh us, and to revive us.

## ***A Woman Anoints Jesus' Feet***

**Luke 7:36** Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat.

### **I Love to eat with Jesus / Grab a Meal with Him this Week**

I can't wait to eat with Jesus face to face, but I know I've said it many times before, but you can eat with Him today, you can enjoy having a meal with Him. I love to get away, and get alone, and open my Bible, and get my lunch, and sit down with Him. I invite Him to join me, just as we would enjoy a meal, and we fellowship. You see I love food, eating is one of the most pleasant things in all the world to do for me, it is a place of great enjoyment. When I am done with breakfast I start to think what I will be eating for lunch, and after lunch I look forward to dinner. Eating is a place of great joy for me - so doesn't it make sense to share a meal with Jesus, to invite Him to come to one of my most favorite places. I dedicate that time together, where my thoughts are on Him, I am thinking about Him, I am engaging Him in two-way conversation. I don't cruise the web, or check my email, it is just me and Him. You see it is a sure win, a pure blessing, I know it will be sweet fellowship because I am already in a place that pleases me, and when He come it only gets sweeter. So, have a meal with Jesus this week, it will be sweet I am sure.

### **He eats with People in the Scriptures / Because He wants to show Himself to Person – to be Understood**

By the way - He wants to eat with you, we see through the scriptures He never turned down a meal, even with people who were hostile towards Him He would come dine with - why, because He wants to show Himself to that person, He wants them to understand Him and what He is like. I am sure without a doubt, that the most misunderstood person in the whole world is Jesus. People think He is this, they think He is that, yet they have never really sat down to get to know Him. They think He hates these types of people, and He is angry with this Nation over here, and He doesn't understand this, or can't relate to that. But then there are some in there misunderstanding who think He winks at this, and says well you can't help yourself in that, and they equally misunderstand Him. Jesus never throughout the scriptures turned down an invitation to dinner, and in some instances He even invited Himself over (Zachaeus – Luke 19), because He wants show Himself to all people, every person, so that they may know Him and understand Him, and so they may hear what is on His heart and His passion and love for them personally.

### **Simon invites Jesus – but not out of Warmness of Heart**

So Jesus is invited for dinner at this Pharisees home, but as we read and develop the story, we will see that this religious person hadn't invited Jesus for dinner out of the warmness of his heart, but it appears to find fault in Jesus. But for you, invite Jesus over for dinner, and He will warm your heart.

**Luke 7:37** And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil,

**Luke 7:38** and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil.

### **Not same Mary**

Do not confuse this event with a similar one involving Mary of Bethany (John 12:1–8), and do not identify this woman with Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9; Luke 8:2) as many continue to do, this is a totally different woman and event. The importance of this is that if we do confuse this event, it throws the whole timeline of the book of Luke off, and the danger of that is that that puts us in the final week of His life, and we are way off from there.

### **Customary of the Day**

Now it was customary in that day for outsiders to hover around during banquets so they could watch the “important people” and hear the conversation. Since everything was open, they could even enter the banquet hall and speak to a guest. This explains how this woman had access to Jesus. He was not behind locked doors. However in that day women were not invited to banquets.

### **3 Sided Table**

Tricleddom is a three sided table. Kind of a u-shape so someone can walk down the middle and serve the food. It was only several inches off the floor, and you sit at the table you laid at the table (I like that), so you reclined around the table on pillows, leaning on one arm and dipping food with the other.

### **A Prostitute**

*Luke 7:37 And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner* – From the context of the story this woman is a prostitute. The bible does not speak well of prostitutes, and here is who is before the feet of God Himself, the Holy and Pure God..... here is a woman who has wrecked marriages, destroyed innocence, maybe transferred diseases.

*Proverbs 6:24–26 (NKJV)* <sup>24</sup> To keep you from the evil woman, From the flattering tongue of a seductress. <sup>25</sup> Do not lust after her beauty in your heart, Nor let her allure you with her eyelids. <sup>26</sup> For by means of a harlot A man is reduced to a crust of bread; And an adulteress will prey upon his precious life.

*Proverbs 7:10–18 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> And there a woman met him, With the attire of a harlot, and a crafty heart. <sup>11</sup> She was loud and rebellious, Her feet would not stay at home. <sup>12</sup> At times she was outside, at times in the open square, Lurking at every corner. <sup>13</sup> So she caught him and kissed him; With an impudent face she said to him: <sup>14</sup> “I have peace offerings with me; Today I have paid my vows. <sup>15</sup> So I came out to meet you, Diligently to seek your face, And I have found you. <sup>16</sup> I have spread my bed with tapestry, Colored coverings of Egyptian linen. <sup>17</sup> I have perfumed my bed With myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. <sup>18</sup> Come, let us take our fill of love until morning; Let us delight ourselves with love.

*Proverbs 23:26–28 (NKJV)* <sup>26</sup> My son, give me your heart, And let your eyes observe my ways. <sup>27</sup> For a harlot is a deep pit, And a seductress is a narrow well. <sup>28</sup> She also lies in wait as for a victim, And increases the unfaithful among men.

*Proverbs 29:3 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> Whoever loves wisdom makes his father rejoice, But a companion of harlots wastes his wealth.

### **But she is Broken / Matthew 11:28 – Luke 4:18**

Yet here she is broken, repentant, believing that Jesus will and has forgiven her. The woman knew she was a sinner and gave evidence that she was a repentant sinner. If you check a harmony of the Gospels, you will discover that just before this event, Jesus had given the gracious invitation, “Come unto Me . . . and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28–30). Perhaps that was when the woman turned from her sin and trusted the Saviour. Her tears, her humble attitude, and her expensive gift all spoke of a changed heart. She heard the promise of rest, she knew His mission statement, that He had come to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, and to set at liberty the captives, and to proclaim the Year of Jubilee (that all debts are cancelled), and she believes it is real, that not only can Jesus do it, but she can have it. Lots of people believe Jesus can do it, but they can’t believe that He would do it for them. She really believes this promise is true and it is hers to claim. I hope you will today too.

*Matthew 11:25–30 (NKJV)* <sup>25</sup> At that time Jesus answered and said, “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes. <sup>26</sup> Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. <sup>27</sup> All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. <sup>28</sup> Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

### **Luke calls her a Sinner – not a Prostitute**

*Luke 7:37 And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner* - Luke calls her a woman who was a known sinner, he doesn't refer to her by her trade or specific sin (either a prostitute or a woman who was known for her sexual immorality), Luke (under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit), simply refers to her as a sinner. Luke remind you is writing a post account, he was not there as an eyewitness himself, he is simply recording what an eyewitness had told him. But what I appreciate her is that the Holy Spirit is retelling the story through an eyewitness, and it get recorded as she is a sinner, not the specifics that she was a prostitute, she was an adulterer, a fornication, a home wrecker, or the specific details as described in proverbs about a woman of such lifestyle. I am glad when I refer to my past that I only have to quantify it by saying I was sinner, and not have to specify for to you all my specifics, all my shame. And here this woman is only referred to as a sinner, and her legacy isn't her past sin, but her present devotion.

### **Imagine when Luke gets Circulated**

Imagine all those years later when this letter is released (maybe 25-35 years later), and someone reads it, and they go find her and tell her hey you are in the letter, that day at Simon's house is recorded for all to read. How her heart must have sank, oh my past has caught up to me, all that I will now be known as is a prostitute and I will never outlive that. And then she reads the account and she is on level plane with all others reading the account – “a sinner”. God is so good, He wipes our past out, and gives us new life.

*Psalms 103:12–14 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. <sup>13</sup> As a father pities his children, So the LORD pities those who fear Him. <sup>14</sup> For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.

### **Consider her Life / I95 Billboards – Someone’s Daughter**

Luke 7:38 and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head – Consider her life, consider who she was and who Jesus is; When I lived in Florida I use to drive this certain stretch of road, and maybe you have too, and for about 50 miles, there are billboards every mile, about 50 in total, advertising for a strip-club, and it only showed the face of the girls (because the law prohibited anything else), but there was a face the size of a billboard and next to it was words that said, come see me. It was all a call to the lonesome trucker. I remember always looking at a face and my thought was, this 20 year old girl was someone’s daughter, maybe had her father wrapped around her finger, she had her own bedroom decorated with stuffed animals, and posters of her favorite boy band, and now this is her life. I doubt her dad drives that stretch of road, he probably takes the side road.

### **Once daddy’s Girl – known by All / Every Encounter she grows Cold – Becomes a Shell**

And like this woman, who was once a girl, she goes from being daddy's little girl to being known by the whole town. This woman at Jesus' feet, once played at her dad's feet and now she is known through all the town. And with every encounter she becomes more callous and more cold, weeks into months, into years, and she no longer feels. She is not capable of love, she not capable of emotion, she no longer responds to touch, because her senses are so callous. Every man’s look, every man’s flattery, every man’s smile were all emptiness to her, they only meant what was coming next, and nothing more, she was an object, and not a person to them. So she becomes unattached, she detaches herself from human touch, and just become a shell of a person, a prisoner within her own body.

### **Jesus looks into her Eyes / That Look says I will Forgive You – Receive You / Flood Gates Open**

She makes her way to the feet of Jesus, and as I have said many times before, I believe Jesus never missed an opportunity to look into someone’s eyes, because once someone did, they would never be the same. And as this woman bows before Jesus, He looks into her eyes, and that look said it all to her – I will forgive you, I will receive you, and the years of holding back all emotions, the flood gates open, and all the years of tears withheld, now pour forth like a river in flood season.

### **Not what she had expected – No Towel**

I believe this is not what she had expected (to wash His feet), she came to anoint Him or give Him her bottle of oil, but she had no idea that the flood gates were going to open, for if she had she would have brought a towel, but she hadn’t planned on this happening and she did the best she could with what she had, and that was the hair on her head. Her tears began to fall like raindrops in the dust, streaking his soiled feet. She had not meant for this to happen! And she had no towel. So the poor woman did the best she could by unloosing her long hair and wiping clean the Master’s feet. And as Jesus’ dirty dusty feet become clean, she see what forgiveness does, it makes all things clean, all things new, and those washed feet tell her the same story of her life – now clean and forgiven.

### **Fragrant Oil – from India / Year Wages / Saved for Wedding Night – Opened Bottle with Husband**

Luke 7:38 ..... and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. – Then she anoints his feet with the oil. This fragrant oil was often prepared from the roots and stems of an aromatic herb, usually from northern India. It was an expensive perfume, imported in sealed alabaster boxes or flasks which were opened only on special occasions. This woman’s lavish gift expressed her love and thanks to Jesus for Himself. It is estimated that a bottle such fragrant oil was worth a year’s pay, and most woman had such a bottle that they brought into their marriage, and the bottle was opened on the wedding night with her husband, as a woman gave herself (and virginity) to her husband.

### **Still Meant something to Her / Hadn’t Sold It – nor threw It in Disgust / Kept it – Still had Hope**

She brings to Jesus the one thing that still meant something to her. She hadn’t sold it, she didn’t throw it off the wall in disgust as she considered her life, after the last man, and the man before him, and the man before him, but she kept this bottle because somewhere in her heart was still this hope of love.

### **Every time gave Piece of Self Away / What thought Could never Happen Again – Love / She loves Again**

Every time she gave herself away she gave a piece of herself away, and with that piece was a piece of her emotions, to the point she had none left to give. But Jesus brings her new life, and what she thought could never happen again, what she thought was gone forever, love..... she finds herself able to love again. She may not have even planned on anointing His feet, she may have brought just to give it to Him, to say here please take this and sell it and use it for Yourself and Your ministry. I don't have anything of worth but this, but I want You to have it, please take it, and thank You for forgiving me, for setting me free with Your promise. But when she saw Jesus, when He went from being a distant and far off God to God who was near, when she was able to touch Jesus, when she was able to kiss Jesus, the flood gates of her once hard and callous heart were let loose, and she finds herself free to love again, free to live, free to laugh again.

### **Jesus will do the Same for You**

Jesus will do the same for you today if you feel that is you, that your life is so hardened and empty, wasted and barren, Jesus can give you not only new life, but new love.... you can love again, and live again.

### **House filled with Fragrance / Every Person could Experience her Devotion**

The house was filled with the fragrance. This woman's act of devotion filled the room, there was a fragrance that emanated the whole house, and every person could smell it and experience it themselves. So too it is when we do the same for Jesus, when we break open our hearts in worship this whole room gets filled with a sweet fragrance of love, so much that everyone can enjoy and experience it.

### **7 Things About Worship**

- 1.) Worship doesn't look around, it looks at Jesus, it doesn't care what anyone else thinks or sees.
- 2.) Worship is not calculated, it is spontaneous, she came ill prepared, but her heart rejoiced when she saw Jesus and came into His presence.
- 3.) Worship comes even as a sinner. Don't wait to worship after you are doing well, go as a sinner to worship, and you will leave and do well.
- 4.) Worship is humble, worship comes to Jesus' feet, recognizes His holiness, and man's unworthiness.
- 5.) Worship skips the mind, and flows from the heart, for worship can seem to make no sense, until one experiences worship personally. When I first got saved I didn't show up at church until worship was over, I thought 45 minutes of singling was wasted time, it wasn't until I skipped my mind and what I thought made sense, that I finally became a worshipper of God.
- 6.) Worship is costly, she pours out her whole bottle of costly perfume, and I bet you she wished she had more to give. And so when we worship it goes beyond just the singing, worship would include [our service](#) unto Him, and when we serve Him we serve Him with all we have. Worship includes [our giving](#), saying I give unto You Lord, I thank You for the opportunity to invest in what you are doing. We worship Him with [our words of gratitude in our prayer](#) time as we give Him thanks for all He has done for us. In all those forms of worship it is us giving pieces of ourselves away to Him. By the way, if you feel your worship is dry, I would encourage you to get out your prayer journal, or go for a walk, and do nothing but list all the things you are thankful for, and as your list records you will find yourself lifting into praise and worship. I was walking earlier this week and passed a coworker the same age as me who just had his eye removed because of cancer. I stopped and embraced his hand and looked into his eye and said it is a great day to be alive is it not, and he of course with a smile on his face said, indeed it is. To give thanks for life, for our children, our spouses, our provisions, our fellowship, that we have each other, that we get to meet together this week, and then to consider also - Jesus looked upon us with favor and said, you move My heart, be My Bride. Life is good.
- 7.) Worship is priceless. You can never place a value on worship, because whom we are worshipping is priceless, therefore so is our worship. This act of worship, the woman is giving Jesus herself. That is what worship is, it is the giving of ourselves to Him, it is us saying although I don't have much, what I do have I give to you.....and I give all of myself to you. Hence, worship is priceless.

### **How do I stir Up this Type of Worship?**

I just taught on what worship is, not really teaching on how to worship. I don't think you can really teach on worship, for worship is something that comes from the heart, it is something that can't be taught. How then do I reach this height of worship as we seen here by this woman, by remembering where God has brought us from, and what He has saved us from, and the price paid by Him for us. Go back to the communion table and remember.

**Luke 7:39** Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, “This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner.”

### **Simon no Heart for Woman / Judge and Jury**

Look at this heart of Simon, he has no concern that she is going to hell (according to his theology). Simon was judge and jury.

### **Unacceptable to let Hair Down**

What this woman did was socially unacceptable, because a woman was to loosen her hair only in the presence of her husband. The Talmud says that a woman could be divorced for letting down her hair in the presence of another man. So grave was the offense that the rabbis put a woman’s loosening her hair and uncovering her breasts in the same category. The guests and the onlookers were in intense shock, but Jesus allowed and received her act, for act is pure love and devotion.

### **Simon the Scholar – but Didn’t know Isaiah 61 / Only 1 Knew they were Captive & who could set them Free**

Simon was the Bible scholar, but he didn't know and understand this Isaiah 61 that Jesus referenced as His mission statement. There were two captives in the room (this woman and Simon), but only one knew they were captive, and only that one knew who could set her free.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”

### **The Parable of the Two Debtors**

**Luke 7:40** And Jesus answered and said to him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” So he said, “Teacher, say it.”

### **3 Things**

Notice three things here,

- 1.) First, Jesus knows the thoughts of every man and there is no hiding what is in our heart .
- 2.) Secondly, Jesus doesn’t force Himself upon a person (He asks to speak to Simon), He respects your free-will.
- 3.) Thirdly, Jesus wants to speak to Simon, Jesus wants the opportunity to correct wrong thinking, deep misunderstanding, and errant theology. Change Simon’s name and insert yours (Ray I have something to say to you) – that will perk your ears up, but a person still has to say, Teacher say it. Anytime you find yourself in a Dungeon of Doubt, anytime you find yourself critical of another person, quiet yourself and you will Jesus saying, Ray I have something to say to you. Will you be willing enough to say, Teacher say it? Or will you turn your ear away because you know you don’t want to hear what He says, because it may mean you have to change the way you think.

*Psalm 139:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off.

**Luke 7:41** “There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty.

**Luke 7:42** And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?”

**Luke 7:43** Simon answered and said, “I suppose the one whom he forgave more.” And He said to him, “You have rightly judged.”

**Luke 7:44** Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head.

**Luke 7:45** You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in.

**Luke 7:46** You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil.

### **The whole Room Filled with Fragrant**

As Jesus would be saying this the whole room was still experiencing the sweet smell of the oil she had poured out.

**Luke 7:47 Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.”**

### **4 things**

I see four things that reveal if our heart is cold.

- 1.) Washing Feet - A person is not serving Jesus (washing His feet), as Jesus would see when we do it unto the least of these we do it unto Him.
- 2.) A kiss on the Cheek - Jesus isn't made welcome in the home. Oh He may be invited in, but He is not greeted, He is not made to feel at home. There is no reading of His word, no speaking of Him, no talking to Him, that is for church, but not here.
- 3.) Anointing His Head – not going to spend or waste good oil on Him, I need to save that for myself.
- 4.) Her sins are Many – a cold heart no longer sees a person as a precious soul before God, but only their sin, and judgment is passed, not a plate to come and dine with them.

*Matthew 25:40 (NKJV) <sup>40</sup> And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'*

**Luke 7:48 Then He said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”**

**Luke 7:49 And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?”**

### **Forgiveness not Automatic**

Although Simon thought he was right before God, Jesus is making it clear that he is not, nor is Simon forgiven of his sins, only this woman gets pronounced forgiven.. Precious folks, God's forgiveness is not automatic; we can reject His grace if we will. I am reminded of the story, in 1830, a man named George Wilson was arrested for mail theft, the penalty for which was hanging. After a time, President Andrew Jackson gave Wilson a pardon but he refused to accept it! The authorities were puzzled: should Wilson be freed or hanged? They consulted Chief Justice John Marshall, who handed down this decision: “A pardon is a slip of paper, the value of which is determined by the acceptance of the person to be pardoned. If it is refused, it is no pardon. George Wilson must be hanged.” If you have never accepted God's pardon, now is the time to believe and be saved, for salvation is freely offered, but it must also be freely received.

*2 Corinthians 6:1–2 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. <sup>2</sup> For He says: “In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you.” Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*

**Luke 7:50 Then He said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.”**

### **Go into Peace**

Go into Peace – And so this woman walks into peace, peace with God, and peace in her life, just as Jesus said she could. Another picture and promise of His mission statement to all:

*Matthew 11:29 (NKJV) <sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”*

### **Simon saw a Sinner – Jesus saw a Woman**

Simon saw a woman, a sinful woman, whereas Jesus saw a soul, a precious soul. Do you know that is what Jesus sees when He looks at you? He isn't looking at the sinner, but the precious soul that is before Him. And Jesus wants to have this type of intimate relationship with you, and He beckons you to come unto to Him, that He will receive you, just as you are, and as you walk with Him in this intimacy He will form and fashion you into what He sees, not what you may see in the mirror of your mind when you think of yourself, not what the world may see, but what He sees. It begins by coming to His feet receiving His forgiveness, and beginning an intimate relationship with Him.

*Let's Celebrate Communion Together.*

# **Luke 8**

## **The Fire of Faith – The Word of God!**

### **(8:1-21)**

#### **Jesus Ministering in Galilee / Displaying His Heart and Power**

Jesus is continuing His public ministry in the region of the Sea of Galilee; He is displaying both his heart and His power, and many people are forsaking all to follow Him, Jesus is preaching and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. He is healing broken hearts, he is setting those captive to sin free, the blind see (both physically and spiritually), and He is telling all who would receive it, that they can have new life, new life, a new beginning in Him, that there is hope in this world and beyond this world.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”*

#### **Parable of 4 Soils**

As we will read today in the parable of the four soils, all those promises are for those who have an ear to hear, who are willing to not just hear God’s word, but to heed God’s word.

#### **End 7 – Your Faith Saves You**

We ended chapter 7 with Jesus telling the woman who had just come to Him with the repentant heart, that her faith has saved her, and she can “go into peace”. She now had peace with God regarding her sin that separated her from Him, and she has the peace of God regarding she can rest from her worries, the Lord will lead her new life.

*Luke 7:50 Then He said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.”*

#### **Major Theme Luke 8 - Faith**

One of the major themes in Luke 8 is how to get faith and use it in the everyday experiences of life. In the first section, Jesus laid the foundation by teaching His disciples that faith comes through receiving the Word of God into an understanding heart.

*Luke 8:8 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold.” When He had said these things He cried, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”*

*Romans 10:17 (NKJV) <sup>17</sup> So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

#### **Theme Luke 8 – Is Faith**

In the second part, He put them through a series of “examinations” to see how much they had really learned. Most of us enjoy Bible study, but we wish we could avoid the examinations that often follow the lessons! However, it is in the tests of life that faith really grows and we get closer to Christ.

*Luke 8:24–25 (NKJV) <sup>24</sup> And they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, “Master, Master, we are perishing!” Then He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water. And they ceased, and there was a calm. <sup>25</sup> But He said to them, “Where is your faith?” And they were afraid, and marveled, saying to one another, “Who can this be? For He commands even the winds and water, and they obey Him!”*

*Luke 8:48 (NKJV) <sup>48</sup> And He said to her, “Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace.”*

#### **How is Your Faith?**

How is your faith Christian? Is your faith stronger today than last week, month, year? Do you feel you are on-fire, just an ember, or is the flame out? How is your passion for Christ? Are you just meandering through life, or do you feel you have a clear purpose, a specific calling, do you feel that you can actually make a difference.

#### **The Word is Faith**

The word that ignites all these things is the word faith. First comes forgiveness (last week’s study), and that passion lights the fire, and faith keeps its burning. How do I keep that faith burning, Jesus tells us real clear here in our passage today. Let’s kindle the fire, let’s put away all the distractions, let’s wake up, let’s not go through some routine today, let’s get some wood for the fire and fan the flame.

## **Certain Women Minister to Christ**

**Luke 8:1** Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him,

**Luke 8:2** and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities—Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons,

**Luke 8:3** and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance.

### **Many Following – These Called out Specifically / Woman all had Same Thing in Common**

So with Jesus are the twelve disciples, and these specific woman. There are more following Jesus as we have seen, but Luke is make specific mention of who is with Jesus for the readers understanding. Luke wants us to see that the disciples continually followed Jesus, that they had forsaken all and were with him continually, not just when they had some spare time on their hand. And these certain woman were with Jesus, and they all had the same thing in common, they were all touched by Jesus (either healed of evil spirits or some physical illness).

### **You can Always tell whose Been Touched / I Personally Thank God for His Kingdom / Had it All**

You can always tell the person who has been touched by Jesus, because they always want to be around Him, in His presence, serving Him and watching Him work. I personally thank God for His kingdom; for 27 years I lived apart from His kingdom, I had all the kingdom of this world had to offer living on the beach, polished motorcycle, jet ski, good job, the nightlife into the morning as the party never stopped, but deep inside me I was empty. I would leave the party and look into the mirror and look right into the depth of my soul and it was black and empty. Oh sin was fun for a season but then it became vanity, then bondage, then hopelessness. But one day Jesus passed by my home, actually right into my bedroom, and He touched me, called me into His kingdom of light, and for the first time I could see perfectly clear (my sight was restored to what truly was silver and gold, not trinkets and Bobbitt's. My captive heart was set free, my broken heart was made whole and new, the lifeblood of Christ flowed through me and I knew real hope, and real love.

### **Provided out of Substance – freely Gave / There at Cross & Resurrection**

So these woman are following alongside of Jesus, they are ministering to Him and the disciples. Notice it says they provided for Him from their substance. Many commentators believe that these woman were wealthy, and they may have been, but I don't necessarily think that is the point here; I believe the point is that they provided for Jesus out of their own possessions, they freely gave to Jesus, their hearts were so moved by His touch that they willingly followed Him, served Him, and gave of their possessions to Him. We know that Mary Magdalene would be there at the cross and resurrection, Joanna would be there after the resurrection.

*John 19:25 (NKJV) <sup>25</sup> Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.*

*Luke 24:8–10 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> And they remembered His words. <sup>9</sup> Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. <sup>10</sup> It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles.*

### **Fully Grasp these Woman / Imagine Jesus had to Prepare Own Meals / Imagine Blessings of Meal Ready**

I don't think we fully grasp the value of these woman until we step back and consider the environment. Imagine if Jesus had to make tents to provide for Himself, imagine, imagine if Jesus had to go to the market Himself, prepare, cook, and cleanup his own meals, imagine how diminished His ministry would have been. But now imagine that He has these precious woman doing all this for Him, imagine Jesus awakes in the morning and goes off to His prayer time, and when He comes down from prayer there is breakfast waiting for Him, and imagine after a long day of preaching and ministering, exhausted and famished, He comes back to the base camp and there is a meal waiting for Him. Joanna means "Gift of God", and God gives Himself gifts, and they are people such as Joanna, Mary, and Susanna. As we have said before, Jesus loves involving us in the ministry, in what He is doing, because we come with what we give, and it is us that He truly desires, it is us He wants to fellowship with. What a blessing for these woman to watch lives being changed, to hear the stories retold over some good schwarma, and to know they were a part of what God was doing.

### **Christian get Involved / Greater Passion – Greater Understanding / These Woman had Great Soil**

Christian get involved in what Jesus is doing, and you will understand what He is doing in this world, you will have a greater passion for the cross, and a better revelation of the resurrection. These four soils we study next, you can

see why these woman bore much fruit as the last soil, because they were not distracted by the cares of the world, they were walking with Jesus, and they were serving Him, so word of God had great soil to take root and grow in.

### **Note on Judas**

One last note, I think it is of importance, and that is that these woman gave of their possession, as did others, and who was it that held the money - it was Judas. Think Jesus knew that Judas was dipping his hand in the box, of course. Yet all along, all the time, Jesus is giving Judas opportunity to repent, even all the way up to the Garden that night as he doesn't call Judas thief, but friend. Jesus is so patient with us, and with that person, may we not lose patience with that person either, don't give up on them, no matter how far they have gone, don't give up on them, let them know you still consider them friend, regardless of what they have done to you. Am I saying to let them rip you off and take advantage of you – seek the Lord and ask Him, He may say no, He may say yes, but the main thing is to never give up on them, let them know they are friend to the end, regardless of what they have done.

*John 13:29 (NKJV)* <sup>29</sup> For some thought, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus had said to him, "Buy those things we need for the feast," or that he should give something to the poor.

*Matthew 26:48–50 (NKJV)* <sup>48</sup> Now His betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him." <sup>49</sup> Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed Him. <sup>50</sup> But Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come?" Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him.

## **The Parable of the Soils**

**Luke 8:4** And when a great multitude had gathered, and they had come to Him from every city, He spoke by a parable:

**Luke 8:5** "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it.

**Luke 8:6** Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture.

**Luke 8:7** And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it.

**Luke 8:8** But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold." When He had said these things He cried, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

**Luke 8:9** Then His disciples asked Him, saying, "What does this parable mean?"

**Luke 8:10** And He said, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that 'Seeing they may not see, And hearing they may not understand.'

**Luke 8:11** "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

**Luke 8:12** Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

**Luke 8:13** But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away.

**Luke 8:14** Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity.

**Luke 8:15** But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.

### **Shift in Teaching / Used to Draw Interest / Para – Alongside = Ballo – to Cast / Story+Truth**

Here in chapter 9 we see a change in Jesus' teaching, as He will begin to teach in parables. The use of parables was the way people communicated when they wanted to arouse curiosity and excite interest. They wouldn't use guitars or humor, but rather they would use parables—little stories with big messages. The word "parable" comes from parabole in Greek. The Greek word para means "alongside," while ballo means "to cast, or to throw." Thus, the word "parable" means "casting alongside." Parabolic teaching places a story alongside a truth or a principle. As you study parables, realize this: The lost and the lazy will not understand them, but for those who are interested in truth, they are wonderfully illuminating.

### **Much Debate**

There is often much debate on the parables concerning Jesus' statement "seeing they will not see, and hearing they will not hear". Some have said that if Jesus talked clearly, His words would be so persuasive that even people who did not want to be converted would be converted against their will. Others have said that only if the Holy Spirit reveals it could a person understand it, if not they can't understand it. Well, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday,

today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8).....and today he pleads with all men every where to come to Him, when He said Come to Me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give You rest (Matthew 11:28), He said it with passion and fire in His heart, for He wishes that none should perish and all seek repentance (2 Peter 3:9). Paul tells us that the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men (Titus 2:11-14). That word for appear could literally be translated “epiphany”, where the light goes on. Jesus reveals Himself, He wants people to understand Him and His Word

*Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*

*Matthew 11:28–29 (NKJV)* <sup>28</sup> *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* <sup>29</sup> *Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*

*2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> *The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*

*Matthew 12:31 (NKJV)* <sup>31</sup> *“Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men.*

*Titus 2:11–14 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,* <sup>12</sup> *teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,* <sup>13</sup> *looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,* <sup>14</sup> *who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.*

### **Ask and He Clarifies**

In fact, anyone who asks, Jesus will answer, for He wants us to understand His word so that we might lead fruitful and abundant lives.

*Luke 8:9–10 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> *Then His disciples asked Him, saying, “What does this parable mean?”* <sup>10</sup> *And He said, “To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that ‘Seeing they may not see, And hearing they may not understand.’*

### **Power of Parable – Timeless / Quantum Physics**

The power of the parable is that it is timeless, here we are 2,000 years later and it still has meaning and application to us. We still farm, and we still plant, and thus this parable is timeless. So too with putting the lamp under the bed, we understand that. Thankfully Jesus didn’t say the kingdom of heaven is like quantum physics, and each energy element is proportional to its frequency, and a man with an atom smasher came to divide the particle.....Jesus spoke in plain terms so everyone could understand what He was conveying, and the Holy Spirit is prodding the heart to receive what is being said.

*John 16:8–9 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> *And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:* <sup>9</sup> *of sin, because they do not believe in Me;*

### **Great Debate 2 – Who is Saved / Which Heart do you Want?**

The other great debate that goes on with this passage is the questioning of which person is saved. Clearly not the first heart because it says they are not saved, clearly the fourth heart because they bear fruit, but what about two and three. So the debate about the person who went forward at an altar call, was on-fire for a short period, but then trials came and they walked away and haven’t been back since – are they saved, were they ever saved? How about the third heart that went beyond that, they still profess to believe, but are all caught up in the world, all business about the cares and materialism of the world, have little or no time for the things of the Lord, but every now and then show up at church, they still profess Christ as Savior, but there is no fruit to display such words –are they saved. The great debate, the great question, but the question for you here today is.....which heart do you want to have, how deep do you want to plant, how much fruit do you want to bear?

### **Make Call Election Sure**

As for the salvation question, the Bible says to make your calling and election sure. Do you want to be sure, Jesus tells you how to be sure today.

*2 Peter 1:10–11 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> *Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;* <sup>11</sup> *for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

### **Salvation Looks Like Something / Parable Lamp – Salvation can be Seen**

Jesus is saying that He is not hiding the word from anyone, it is in plain sight to see (just as a lamp on a table shining is), and Jesus wants everyone to see and understand His word, and He is not trying to keep it from anyone.

And . . . . . that life of salvation will look like something, it will shine, it will be seen. The mistake is made looking at the parable of the soil in and of itself, and then look at the parable of the lamp in and of itself, but they really are joined together, it is the same thought, topic, and teaching is continuing on. Notice in verse 18 Jesus says to “take heed how you hear”, the same theme He made in the parable of the soils, in that he who has an ear, let him hear. So, the person who hears God’s words and does them, it will be seen and known by all because they too will see it for themselves, there is not doubts or debating. And that light shining will result because someone took the word God spoke, they will read it or hear it, and they will do it. Jesus says take heed how you hear, and He tells us how to hear in the parable of the soils that we will cover today.

*Luke 8:16–18 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> “No one, when he has lit a lamp, covers it with a vessel or puts it under a bed, but sets it on a lampstand, that those who enter may see the light. <sup>17</sup> For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light. <sup>18</sup> Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him.”

### **If You Professed – But now Nothing**

Let me just be real bold, if you are offended by what I am going to say next I do not apologize, and if you are offended, you have to ask yourself why – so let me say this, if you have no fruit in your life that reflects Christ, if you raised your hand and professed Christ but absolutely nothing changed in your life, if you profess Christ but are still engaged in habitual sin that you refuse to repent of, then you are not a child of God. Jesus says in verses 19-21, which is all part of the same topic and teaching, perfectly designed by the Holy Spirit as He laid out this gospel account, the person who is in the family of God, are the ones who hear the word of God, and do it. This word “do it” in the Greek means to “do it”.

*Luke 8:19–21 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> Then His mother and brothers came to Him, and could not approach Him because of the crowd. <sup>20</sup> And it was told Him by some, who said, “Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see You.” <sup>21</sup> But He answered and said to them, “My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it.”

### **What kind of Heart do you Want?**

What kind of heart do you want to have? Jesus tells us how to have the abundant fruit bearing heart here in Luke chapter 8. How far are you willing to go to have that heart?

### **Ravi Zacharias**

Ravi Zacharias tells the amazing story of a young Christian in Vietnam. He writes, “I was ministering in Vietnam in 1971, and one of my interpreters was Hien Pham, an energetic young Christian. He had worked as a translator with the American forces, and was of immense help both to them and to missionaries such as myself. Hien and I traveled the length of the country and became very close friends before I returned home. We did not know if our paths would ever cross again. Seventeen years later, I received a telephone call. ‘Brother Ravi?’ the man asked. Immediately I recognized Hien’s voice, and he soon told me his story. Shortly after Vietnam fell, Hien was imprisoned on accusations of helping the Americans. His jailers tried to indoctrinate him against democratic ideals and the Christian faith. He was restricted to communist propaganda in French or Vietnamese, and the daily deluge of Marx and Engels began to take its toll. ‘Maybe,’ he thought, ‘I have been lied to. Maybe God does not exist. Maybe the West has deceived me.’ So Hien determined that when he awakened the next day, he would not pray anymore or think of his faith.

The next morning, he was assigned the dreaded chore of cleaning the prison latrines. As he cleaned out a tin can overflowing with toilet paper, his eye caught what seemed to be English printed on one piece of paper. He hurriedly grabbed it, washed it, and after his roommates had retired that night, he retrieved the paper and read the words, ‘Romans, Chapter 8.’ Trembling, he began to read, ‘And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him. . . for I am convinced that nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.’ Hien wept. He knew His Bible, and knew that there was not a more relevant passage for one on the verge of surrender. He cried out to God, asking forgiveness, for this was to have been the first day that he would not pray. . . . After finding the Scripture, Hien asked the commander if he could clean the latrines regularly, because he discovered that some official was using a Bible as toilet paper. Each day Hien picked up a portion of Scripture, cleaned it off, and added it to his collection of nightly reading. . . . What his tormentors were using for refuse — the Scriptures — could not be more treasured to Hien.” Eventually he was released from prison and fled to Thailand. Today he is a businessman in the United States, a radiant Christian and a living testimony to the power of God’s Word and its transforming power.

## **What kind of Heart do you Want?**

What kind of heart do you want to have? Jesus tells us how to have the abundant fruit bearing heart here in Luke chapter 8. How far are you willing to go to have that heart?

The four heart conditions, the four soils.

### **1.) Wayside – Trampled & Birds**

**Luke 8:5** “A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it.

**Luke 8:12** **Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.**

### **Seed is Word of God / Preprogrammed**

The seed is the Word of God, and the seed is good, there is nothing wrong with the seed, the issue is with the soil. The seed is preprogrammed to produce what God programmed into it. A tomato seed is preprogrammed to produce a tomato plant, which will produce tomatoes. A grass seed produces grass, and an apple seed produces apple trees, and the seed of the Word of God produces life – but like all the other seeds, only if it is planted in good soil. The issue is not the seed, the issue is the soil that it lands in.

**Luke 8:11 (NKJV)** <sup>11</sup> “Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

### **Soil is Concrete**

The soil of the wayside is a compacted and hard soil. The soil is compacted hard because it is continually being trampled on as people walk upon it, and it becomes as hard as concrete. Large gardens all have paths through them so the farmer can walk through them, and sometime when they cast the seed they fell on the path. When they did, they couldn't break through the hard soil and just lay on top, and the birds would have a free meal.

### **Satan = Pride**

So Jesus says His word comes, the person's heart is so hard that the word can't penetrate, and then Satan comes and takes it away. Satan plucks it quickly because if rain came, the ground could soften, and the seed could take root. I believe this parable ties hard hearts and Satan together so we can see what causes the hard heart, and that is anything that is tied to Satan, means pride. The person with the hard heart is prideful, they refuse to agree that they are not perfect, they refuse to agree that they are fallen, they refuse to believe that there is one greater. Their pride keeps them from saying Jesus I need You.

### **2.) Rocks – Withered Sun & Lack Moisture**

**Luke 8:6** **Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture.**

**Luke 8:13** **But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away.**

### **Modern Evangelism**

The message of salvation sounds so great, but people think it means no more trials or pain in their lives, and when it happens they say forget this. That is the problem with modern preaching today, it tells people to come to Jesus and you day will be brighter and your teeth will be whiter, and when things turn dark they say see ya. But, go back to verses 1-3, and when a person that has truly been touched by Jesus, a person who sees their sin and Jesus gift of salvation, they will follow Him wherever He goes. Forgiveness is the passion that lights the fire, and faith is what keeps it burning. Never forget your sin, and His sacrifice for it.

### **Same Sun makes it Grow / Trials will Come**

The second group is comprised of those who say, “Amen” to the Word—but when the hour of temptation comes, or, as Matthew's Gospel says, “the sun begins to shine,” they wither (see Matthew 13:6). The problem with the plant withering under the heat of the sun is not the sun, for the same sun could make the plant healthy and prolific. No, the problem is the shallowness of the root system. All too often, we try to shield people from the sun, insulate people

from the heat, shelter people from problems. That's all wrong. The sun, the heat, the trial, the difficulty will make them grow. That's why James says we are to count it all joy when we fall into various trials (James 1:2), and why Peter said we are not to think it strange concerning the fiery trials that come our way to purify our faith (1 Peter 4:12).

*James 1:2 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup> My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,*

*1 Peter 4:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you;*

### **Don't Shield People from Sun**

If you desire to truly help people, the key is not to try to shield them, but rather to say, "This trial is causing you to cave in and give up because your roots are too shallow to draw from the water of the Word. You're sporadic in your study. You're inconsistent in your worship. Your prayer is hit and miss. Tend to your root system and you'll overcome." We spend most of our time trying to figure out how to give people sunscreen for their noses when we should be dealing with the root systems of their hearts.

### **3.) Thorns – Choked Out**

**Luke 8:7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it.**

**Luke 8:14 Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity.**

### **Definition of Thorns**

What is the definition of thorns; cares, riches, and pleasures. The word there for cares carries the idea of being distracted. So whatever it is that distracts you robs you. What has distracted you from the Word of God this week, how about last week, and the week before that? If there is a pattern there then I think you need to make some adjustments to rid that distraction from your life. Riches means an abundance of possessions, it goes beyond needs, and into materialism – which is the great seductress of America. And pleasures, is where we get the word hedonist, which is a person whose life is devoted to the pursuit of pleasure and self-gratification.

### **Youth walking Away**

Why do I think so many of our youth are walking away from the Lord after being raised in godly homes, because they are buying the lie of riches and pleasures of life, and they think they have Jesus insurance and they will see Him in heaven, but as for today, the things of the world are much more appealing. The problem is....

*Luke 8:21 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> But He answered and said to them, "My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it."*

### **Statistics**

USA TODAY article - Seven in 10 Protestants ages 18 to 30 — both evangelical and mainline — who went to church regularly in high school said they quit attending by age 23, according to the survey by LifeWay Research. And 34% of those said they had not returned, even sporadically, by age 30. That means about one in four Protestant young people have left the church

Seventy percent of Protestants age 18 to 30 drop out of church before age 23 and give multiple reasons for their departure.

#### **Why they leave**

- Wanted a break from church: 27%
- Found church members judgmental or hypocritical: 26%
- Moved to college: 25%
- Tied up with work: 23%
- Moved too far away from home church: 22%
- Too busy: 22%
- Felt disconnected to people at church: 20%
- Disagreed with church's stance on political/social issues: 18%
- Spent more time with friends outside church: 17%
- Only went before to please others: 17%

#### Reasons cited by the 30% who kept attending church:

- It's vital to my relationship with God: 65%
- It helps guide my decision in everyday life: 58%
- It helps me become a better person: 50%
- I am following a family member's example: 43%
- Church activities were a big part of my life: 35%
- It helps in getting through a difficult time: 30%
- I fear living without spiritual guidance: 24%

Source: LifeWay Research survey of 1,023 Protestants, conducted April and May 2007. Margin of error is plus or minus 3 percentage points.

#### **Only Problem**

Youth, don't buy this lie of America or Satan. Guard your hearts, and don't be deceived:

**Luke 8:21 (NKJV)** <sup>21</sup> *But He answered and said to them, "My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it."*

**Hebrews 3:12–15 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup> *Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; <sup>13</sup> but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. <sup>14</sup> For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, <sup>15</sup> while it is said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."*

#### **Distraction my Battle / Problem with Stuff / Self-Gratification is Slippery Slope**

For me, the distraction is my number one battle. How about you, what is your biggest battle? The problem with having stuff is that you have to take care of it. You have to fix it, clean it, polish it, worry about it, and then spend more money to maintain it. This isn't an indictment against having nice stuff; it is when stuff has you. You got nice stuff, enjoy it, if that stuff has you, sell it (or donate it to the church – haha). The pleasures of life, the danger there is the word "self" in the self-gratification, because once a person seeks to please self rather than God, they are on their way down into the slippery slope.

#### **Today – those who will Fall Away**

I am not just teaching a bible study, I am making a plea here, Christian.....he who has an ear let him hear.

#### **4.) Good Soil – 100 Fold Crop**

**Luke 8:8** *But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold." When He had said these things He cried, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"*

**Luke 8:15** *But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.*

#### **Farming is Farming**

Nothing has changed in 2,000 years, farming is farming, even a city-slicker knows the principals of farming. So God gives us a spiritual principal for us to apply our taking in the word of God.

- **Find a Place in the Sun** – the first thing you need to do is find a spot that is in direct sunlight. You need the sun to grow any type of produce. So too we must get ourselves in His rays of marvelous light, daily.
- **Make the Ground Fallow** – We have to turn up the ground, make it loose to receive the seed so it isn't like the hard soil. So we open our time in the word with prayer, worship, adoration for Him, and our hearts become fallow ground for the seed to plant deep.
- **Clear the Soil** – every garden needs to have the rocks picked out of it, the weeds pulled out. Confess your sins, let nothing hinder your time in the word, let no birds of the air come and pluck the seed away.
- **Be Patient** – every farmer knows the seed takes time to sprout, grow, mature, and then bear fruit. Don't get tired of gardening, consider your heart a garden, cultivate it like a garden, treat it like a beautiful garden, and watch what God will do with it. Don't worry if the fruit isn't immediate, know that it will come, for the word of God is preprogrammed to reproduce.
- **Keep Watering** – the only thing we can do in the patience season is to keep watering (with the word), and keep the Son-Light shining.

**Ephesians 5:26 (NKJV)** <sup>26</sup> *that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,*

#### **Closing Story – John smoked Me**

The preacher stood on the street corner preaching to anyone who would listen. A man approached him who looked like he had lived on the street forever. "Can I help you" asked the preacher. "I think you can" said the bum. "Would you like me to tell you about Jesus?" "No." "Would you like me to pray for you?" "No." "If you don't want me to tell you about Jesus, and you don't want me to pray with you, how can I help you?" "You can give me your Bible." "Why would you want my Bible if you have no interest in knowing more about Jesus?" "I noticed that the pages of your Bible are very thin; I can use the pages to wrap a cigarette (or a joint)." Wisdom came suddenly to the preacher, who said, "I'll give you the Bible, if you will agree to read a page (of the Bible) before you smoke it." The bum agreed, took his new Bible, and left. The preacher thought he had seen the last of the bum, but he could get another Bible. Several months passed, and the preacher was on the street corner once again. A man came up to him dressed in a three piece suit. "You don't know me, do you?" said the man. "No. I've never seen you in my life." "Yes you have. I'm the man you gave a Bible to (about four months ago)." The preacher couldn't believe his eyes and ears. "What happened? Tell me what happened." "Well, I smoked Matthew, and then I smoked Mark, and then I smoked Luke--and then John smoked me."

### **The Word is Pure Power**

The word of God is pure power, both to the saved, and the unsaved. Christian keep it and bear fruit with patience. *Isaiah 55:1–13 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> "Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price. <sup>2</sup> Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And let your soul delight itself in abundance. <sup>3</sup> Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you— The sure mercies of David. <sup>4</sup> Indeed I have given him as a witness to the people, A leader and commander for the people. <sup>5</sup> Surely you shall call a nation you do not know, And nations who do not know you shall run to you, Because of the LORD your God, And the Holy One of Israel; For He has glorified you." <sup>6</sup> Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near. <sup>7</sup> Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon. <sup>8</sup> "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. <sup>9</sup> "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. <sup>10</sup> "For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater, <sup>11</sup> So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it. <sup>12</sup> "For you shall go out with joy, And be led out with peace; The mountains and the hills Shall break forth into singing before you, And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. <sup>13</sup> Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress tree, And instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree; And it shall be to the LORD for a name, For an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

### **Parable of the Lamp**

**Luke 8:16** "No one, when he has lit a lamp, covers it with a vessel or puts it under a bed, but sets it on a lampstand, that those who enter may see the light.

**Luke 8:17** For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light.

**Luke 8:18** Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him."

Salvation looks like something, and other can see it.

### **Christ's True Brethren**

**Luke 8:19** Then His mother and brothers came to Him, and could not approach Him because of the crowd.

**Luke 8:20** And it was told Him by some, who said, "Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see You."

**Luke 8:21** But He answered and said to them, "My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it."

Jesus says His true family are the ones that hear the word of God, and does them.

# Fear & Faith (The Storms of Life)

## (8:22-40)

### Video - Storms

#### Last Study – Sower & Seed / Romans 10:17 / God gives Disciples Opportunity to Exercise Faith

Today's passage, the Storms of Life. In our last study on the sower and the seed, we saw the power of the word of God that is received into a heart that is fertile ground so that heart (ground) can produce abundant fruit. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God (Romans 10:17), and immediately after our passage on hearing the word of God and doing the word of God, the Word that produces faith, God will give the disciples opportunity to exercise their faith, put some shoe leather to their faith, to prove out whether they truly believe what Jesus says.

And, He does the same for us.

*Romans 10:17 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

#### How often we Read and Walk Away / God gives us Opportunity / Storm – Over not Under

How often we read something, God speaks something to us, and we say amen to that, or we may say I hope so-and-so heard that, and then we walk on our way; but the Lord has a way, to immediately or shortly thereafter, give us the opportunity to exercise what we just heard Him speak. In our first story today, Jesus says to His disciples, "Let us cross over to the other side of the lake", but when the storm arises they totally forget that Jesus said "us" and "over", and they think "they" and "under", and Jesus will respond to them in the midst of their storm, "where is your faith".

*Luke 8:22 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> Now it happened, on a certain day, that He got into a boat with His disciples. And He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side of the lake." And they launched out.

#### Faith in Storm Important – Immediately after faced with Demons / Disease then Death – then Sent

Faith in the storm is important for these disciples because after this storm they will come face to face with demons (Legion – sent into the herd of swine) (26-40), then immediately after that disease (the woman with issue of blood for 12 years) (41-48), and then after that death (Jairus's Daughter) (49- 56), and then in chapter 9 they will be sent out on their own. They will need faith, and we too need faith as we face the challenges of storms, evil, disease, and death.....and then are sent out to lead and help others be equipped to face the same.

#### He Wants to Grow Us / Knowledge is not Faith / Law School – Bar Exam / Bible College - Unemployment

God wants to grow us, He wants to put our faith into action, so that it can be solidified in us. I remember when I finished Bible College, I had a ton of knowledge, and God immediately wanted to turn that knowledge into faith. *Knowledge is not faith, knowledge lived out is faith.* When you are done with Law school, when you are done with Medical school, you have to take (and pass) the Bar/Board Exams before you can practice, before you can apply your knowledge unto others. Same with us, as God says great knowledge, now let's apply it to you personally first, and then after that you can apply to other's people's lives. For me, after Bible College I went into a 9 month period of unemployment, I got to really process through how much of that knowledge I really believed, whether I truly believed God was for me, whether God loved me, whether He would provide for me. He did, and I passed the Bar Exam, and God continually allows circumstances into my life *to turn the knowledge into faith.*

#### Training Ground

I, we, gain great understanding on how to do so by passages as the one that is before us today, so let's get equipping, for we come here to fellowship, we come here to worship, and we come here because this is our training ground to prepare us for the storms and trials of life. In the study of the 4 soils, we read of the second soil that springs up quickly, but when the storms of life come (whether trials or temptations) they fall away, and come here week after week to train, strengthen, and grow so when the storms of life come, we are still standing.

*Luke 8:13 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away.

#### Opening Prayer

#### Thankful to be Part of Family / Celebrate It / If Don't Know Him Personally

We pick up here today in verse 22, as we ended our last study with Jesus saying My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God, and do it. That is a most amazing family to be a part of, that He, God, the One who created the heavens and the earth – simply by speaking them into existence, God the One who formed us in our mother’s womb – like a tapestry Psalm 139 says, God the One who would say “It is Finished”, as He was willing to take the beating, the scourging, and then the cross, to say they are Mine. It is an amazing family to be part of, it is a wonderful family to be part of, I love having Him as my Father, and I love having you as my brothers and sisters. Christian, may we celebrate this good news today, remember what we have, what has been given, and where we are going – gang we are going to heaven, and we will see Him face-to-face, but even now He is here among us, worshipping and moving in our midst. What a wonderful family to be part of us. If you have not come into His family, may you hear His heart at this very moment calling out to you, crying out to you, He loves you and wants a personal and intimate relationship with Him. It is a relationship that I am ever thankful for, and 21 years later, one that I have never considered leaving, because there is nothing this world can offer that remotely compare to His love and presence in my life.

*Luke 8:21 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> But He answered and said to them, “My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it.”*

## ***The Storm is Stilled***

**Luke 8:22 Now it happened, on a certain day, that He got into a boat with His disciples. And He said to them, “Let us cross over to the other side of the lake.” And they launched out.**

### **Certain Day**

I like this, Luke said “now on a certain day”. It is like, wow I have to tell you a story about this certain day, it was wild, it was crazy, pull up a chair and be ready to be blown away. On one certain day Jesus calmed a storm, cast out demons from this possessed guy, healed a woman with a chronic illness, and raised a 12 year old girl from the dead, it was an amazing day. This quite a statement considering there were days where he healed lepers, the blind, paralyzed..... So what is the deal here Luke, were those things becoming normal everyday stuff? Beloved, Our God is so amazing, and the things He does in our lives and others, every day is an amazing day with Him, we just need to be around Him so we can see them, when we read the gospels we are reading true life stories!

**Luke 8:23 But as they sailed He fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water, and were in jeopardy.**

### **Jesus is Exhausted / Hey – Having Trouble Sleeping (Jesus Example – Even Howling Winds)**

Jesus is exhausted after a long day of early morning prayer, ministering to the hurting, and serving others. Hey if you are having trouble sleeping, try this Jesus formula, and I think you will be so exhausted that even howling winds and raging storms won’t keep you awake.

### **Sea 7 by 15 / Couple Hours to Cross by Boat**

The Sea of Galilee is really a lake, but anyways, it is about 7 miles wide and 15 miles long. They are heading across, so that is about 7 miles, and that is a good row if you consider how long that would take you to walk. So if it takes us on the average of 3 miles an hour to walk, and let’s say that is the same average to sail a boat 2,000 years ago filled with at least 13 people, this is a 2 hour boat ride.

### **600 Below sea Level – Mount Hermon Rising Above / Cold Air Descends / 10-20 Foot Waves Recorded**

The Sea of Galilee is about 600 feet below sea level, and rising above it is Mount Hermon (so it creates a valley, a bowl shape). Mount Hermon which at times can even have snow on it, so when the cold air descends from above and meets the warm air of the Galilee region, it can produce some pretty good storms. They have recorded waves as high as 20 feet when these storms stir up. I use to scuba dive a lot and even at six feet I was sick, I just wanted to get off that boat, and I can’t imagine what 10, 15, 20 foot waves.

### **Jesus says be Muzzled – Same Wording to quiet the Demon / I think this Storm by Satan / Looks Opportunity**

Now Jesus will say to the storm, Peace, which literally means to be muzzled, which is the same wording He used when rebuked the demons back in chapter 4. It leads me to think that this storm was unleashed upon them by Satan. This wasn’t a happen chance storm, but a directed storm by Satan as he sees his opportunity to sink the whole ministry and mission. Satan is an opportunist, as he says what a perfect setup. Now the Lord has the final say on what Satan can unleash upon us in terms of the physical realm of natural disasters, but I do give warning to all those

who put themselves in compromising positions by their own choice, and that is that there is no guarantee of limitation. Satan is always looking for an opportunity to take you down, and you need to continually be on guard. **Luke 4:35 (NKJV)** <sup>35</sup> But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" And when the demon had thrown him in their midst, it came out of him and did not hurt him.

**1 Peter 5:8–11 (NKJV)** <sup>8</sup> Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. <sup>9</sup> Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. <sup>10</sup> But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. <sup>11</sup> To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

### **In Storm because Obedience / Don't Beat Self Up / Don't Beat others Up**

But please note this, they are in this storm because of their obedience, because they are as close to Jesus as you can get, and they are in a storm of their life. We can get into a storm and think it is because we are not close to Jesus, we are being rebuked and chastened, but here we see that there are storms of life even when we are as close to Jesus as we can get. Christian there are storms in our life, even when we are in obedience, and we can see when we cry out to Him, that He is there. And please when you see someone in a storm of life, don't assume they are in sin and rebellion, but may be in it because of obedience. When they call out to Jesus, He may very much respond to their storm by sending you to comfort them.

**Luke 8:24** And they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" Then He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water. And they ceased, and there was a calm.

**Luke 8:25** But He said to them, "Where is your faith?" And they were afraid, and marveled, saying to one another, "Who can this be? For He commands even the winds and water, and they obey Him!"

### **3 Things**

Three things I want you to see in this story.

#### **Seasoned Fisherman – Greatest Confidence / Job – Relationship – Health / Allow to Look to Him**

First - This boat is filled with seasoned fisherman, yet they are filled with fear. God will often take you to a place in your walk where He will show you that even in the place of your greatest strength and confidence, given the right conditions, even there you will fail. We can become so confident in a certain skill or ability that we think we can be just fine without Him, so much so we stop asking Him for help and guidance in that area. Maybe that is your job, you are the best at it, and everybody at work tells you that you are. Maybe it is your fitness, you are so strong and healthy you forget to thank Him for it, or maybe even look down on those who aren't as fit and healthy as you. Maybe it is a relationship and you feel it is all secure, and you are just fine the way it is, and no need to seek the Lord or ask Him to be intimately involved in it. The Lord will often allow, or bring, a storm to that area of confidence in our lives to allow us to see that even in our places of strength we need to be continually looking to Him to keep and lead us.

#### **Facts don't Change in Storm / Everyone got in Boat to Start / Storm came they Forgot**

Secondly - The facts don't change in a storm, what Jesus said still applies, regardless how the circumstances or environment changes. Jesus said let's get in the boat and go over to the other side, and no one disagreed with that word, no one said I am not getting in the boat because I don't believe you love me enough to get me to the other side. They all got in the boat, because they all had trusted Jesus. But when they storm came they forgot the words. Christian, the facts don't change just because the storm comes.

**Luke 8:22 (NKJV)** <sup>22</sup> Now it happened, on a certain day, that He got into a boat with His disciples. And He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side of the lake." And they launched out.

#### **Jesus more Concerned Get out of Storm – then Through / In Storm we Learn about Him / Power Creation**

Thirdly - Jesus is more concerned with what we get out of the storm than us getting out of the storm. In the storm we see things and learn things about Jesus that we never could have or would have apart from the storm. They got to see Jesus have dominion over the winds and the waters. To have dominion He had to be their creator because only the creator has dominion over the creation. Had they not entered the storm, they would not have seen this power.

**Colossians 1:16 (NKJV)** <sup>16</sup> For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

#### **Faith Trusts God's Will – Our Problem we don't Trust His Will / Look back at Past Trials**

Faith trusts God's will. Our problem is that we don't trust His will. Lord I know You say you will provide for me, but my concern is that You will only meet my needs and not my wants, and therefore I am filled with anxiety. Lord You say all things work together for good, but what if it is my pain for someone else's gain, I don't want pain right now. To that thought I ask you this, you are still standing today are you not. I highly doubt that anyone here today is entering their first ever trial/storm in their life. For us, we have been through multiple, and we are still standing are we not? Has He not take us over, not let us go under, and therefore is not the past proof for today? Sometimes God calms the storm, but most of the time He lets it rage - and calms us! Don't be discouraged when you have to turn your fears over to God, again and again. That's how trust is learned.

*Romans 8:28 (NKJV) <sup>28</sup> And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.*

### **They Made It – Just Wet / Parable of Shallow Soil / Real Life Teaching**

They made it over, they just made it over a little wet. Jesus just got done teaching about the soil that is shallow and when the storms come, the trials come, the person bails out. Jesus is giving a real life teaching and example on how we are to handle these such trials, we call out to Him

*Luke 8:13 (NKJV) <sup>13</sup> But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away.*

### **He does not Abandon in Storm / Waves & Water didn't wake Him – their Cry Did / Cry & Peace with Come**

Remember this, God cares for you, He does not abandon you in your storm. Notice the winds, the waves, the water, the rolling boat did not wake Jesus up, it was the voice of the ones He loved that awoke Him. Cry out to Him, He is near, and He hears. Cry out to Him, and He will speak to you. And the God who even the winds and the sea obey Him will come and enter into your storm, and bring calm and a peace. He will do that when we go to Him in the storm. Sometimes God calms the storm, but most of the time He lets it rage - and calms us! Don't be discouraged when you have to turn your fears over to God, again and again. That's how trust is learned.

### ***Demons are Cast into Swine***

**Luke 8:26 Then they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee.**

**Luke 8:27 And when He stepped out on the land, there met Him a certain man from the city who had demons for a long time. And he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house but in the tombs.**

### **Satan wants to Attack – Physical, Mental, Emotional**

Satan looks to maim, cripple, or destroy in all three areas of the physical, the mental, and the emotional.

### **Mark's Account – Cutting and Chains / All have Roots in Demonic**

Read below Mark's account of this man. Notice a couple things here, and that is that cutting self, and all this skull and crossbones are all demonic, they all have their roots in demon presence. Separate yourself from them.

*Mark 5:2-5 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup> And when He had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, <sup>3</sup> who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no one could bind him, not even with chains, <sup>4</sup> because he had often been bound with shackles and chains. And the chains had been pulled apart by him, and the shackles broken in pieces; neither could anyone tame him. <sup>5</sup> And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and cutting himself with stones.*

**Luke 8:28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!"**

**Luke 8:29 For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness.**

**Luke 8:30 Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him.**

**Luke 8:31 And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss.**

**Luke 8:32 Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter them. And He permitted them.**

### **Legion = 6,000 / 6,000 to 1 / How Mighty is Your God / One Word - Go**

A legion consisted of six thousand men in a Roman Legion Army. What are the demons compared to Jesus? It is 6,000 to 1, and at one word they are defeated. Every one of us in this room today fears demons, the last thing we

want to face is a demon, and that is just one, imagine 6,000 coming against us. Jesus takes on 6,000, and defeats them all with a word “Go”; how mighty is your God?

**Matthew 8:32 (NKJV)** <sup>32</sup> *And He said to them, “Go.” So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water.*

### **Abusso – Bottomless Pit / Demons know the Bible and Time**

The abusso, also called the bottomless pit—the place where demons who were particularly evil were incarcerated—would appear to be somewhere beneath the sea. Matthew’s account says the demon asks Jesus if He was going to deal with them before the time, which is a reference to the last days when Satan is bound and thrown into the bottomless pit for 1,000 years. The demons know there is a time, and there is a place, where they will be dealt with. Satan knows time is short, and he is going to be moving a breakneck speed – so be on alert Christian.

**Matthew 8:29 (NKJV)** <sup>29</sup> *And suddenly they cried out, saying, “What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?”*

**Revelation 20:3 (NKJV)** <sup>3</sup> *and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.*

### **Satan’s Head Games**

We can actually learn a lot about some of Satan's strategies in spiritual warfare by studying the military strategies of some of the warriors of old. In his book *Head Game*, author Tim Downs writes:

*Psy-ops stands for Psychological Operations, a form of warfare as old as the art of war itself. An early example of this can be found in the battle strategies of Alexander the Great. On one occasion when his army was in full retreat from a larger army, he gave orders to his armorers to construct oversized breastplates and helmets that would fit men 7 or 8 feet tall. As his army would retreat, he would leave these items for the pursuing army to discover. When the enemy would find the oversized gear, they would be demoralized by the thought of fighting such giant soldiers, and they would abandon their pursuit.*

Satan likes to play head games with us, too, often leaving us demoralized by fear or doubt. We assume Satan is bigger or greater than he really is. And the quickest way to thwart our Enemy's psy-ops is to gaze upon the greatness of our God, remember 6,000 to 1.

**Luke 8:33** **Then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned.**

### **Required by Preaching License / Deviled Ham**

This is the place where I have to say here is the first mention of “deviled ham” , and that the pigs were so overwhelmed by all this that they committed sui-cide. I know, I know, but you see it is a rule, we have to sign a piece of paper agreeing to say these things when we get our preaching license. Every time we talk about the religious group in the bible called the Sadducees, who didn’t believe in the resurrection, we have to say “because they didn’t believe in the resurrection, they were sad you see”. And when the disciples gathered in the upper room and were in one accord, I have to say that it proves they drove a Honda because they were all in one Accord. It’s just a rule, we have to say to keep our preaching license, I didn’t make the rule up, I just have to comply to it.

### **OT – no Pig / Chose Profit over Purity – Goods over God / No Change in 2,000 Years**

In the Old Testament God restricts the Jewish people from eating pig. God was setting them apart, He was making them different from the rest of the world. But here we find swine in a Jewish region, and it appears to have been big business and big money. These people chose profit over purity, and goods over God. Nothing changed in 2,000 years.

**Leviticus 11:7 (NKJV)** <sup>7</sup> *and the swine, though it divides the hoof, having cloven hooves, yet does not chew the cud, is unclean to you.*

### **This is all Part of Faith / Challenge to Old Nature / Honesty on Taxes – Truth - Law**

This is all part of “the faith”, and it is a challenge, our nature has a hard time trusting, but faith (trusting the Lord) records our Income Tax returns honestly, faith tells the truth even when it may get us in trouble, faith obeys the Lord, even when it may cause us to not have all that we want, whether that is financially, relationally, or vocationally.

### **Some Things need to be Trashed / Old Albums – Magazines - Movies**

As for some things, there is a place for some of our things, and that is in the deep, of the trash will do. Maybe you use to listen to a certain type of music, movies, or read certain types of magazines, wore certain types of clothing,

and then you gave your life to the Lord. Now you look on your shelf and see hundreds (maybe thousands) of dollars of stuff that you know is not pleasing to the Lord; TRASH IT, don't pass them on, don't leave them on the shelf, don't try to recoup your money on Ebay, simply trash them into the deep. God will bless and reward you for doing so, and take note of this story and realize there is a spiritual realm behind them, and they need to be removed asap.

**Luke 8:34 When those who fed them saw what had happened, they fled and told it in the city and in the country.**

**Luke 8:35 Then they went out to see what had happened, and came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid.**

#### **This is what Jesus will do in Any Life / Somewhere man Opened Self to this Realm**

This is what Jesus will do in any person's life who will come to Him. Somewhere in this man's life he had opened himself up to the influences of Satan, maybe it was through drugs (the word for sorcery in Galatians 5 is pharmacy – as drugs opens a person up to the occult realm) and alcohol, maybe it was through occult practices, and this man's life was no longer his own. You really don't have to be as far out there as this man is to live a life that is no longer your own, a life that is under the control and influence of another world.

*Galatians 5:19–21 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, <sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, <sup>21</sup> envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

#### **But Jesus Met Him – Released Him / Do the Same for Us**

But this man has now met Jesus, and by the Word of God, He became the child of God, just like that in an instance, and God will do the same for anyone here today who desires the same.

**Luke 8:36 They also who had seen it told them by what means he who had been demon-possessed was healed.**

**Luke 8:37 Then the whole multitude of the surrounding region of the Gadarenes asked Him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. And He got into the boat and returned.**

#### **Towns People more Afraid / My Parents were Afraid**

The townspeople were more afraid of a man sitting at the feet of Jesus than they were of a man possessed by demons. I know for myself personally when I got saved my parents were afraid, they literally thought that I had lost my mind. They couldn't understand how I could change so radically and dramatically, and it scared them. It was sometime later that my brother told me I almost destroyed the whole family because they were all fighting over whose fault was that I lost my mind.

#### **We see the First Soil – Seed Picked by Satan**

What do we see here with these town's people, we see the first soil, the hard heart that Satan plucks the seed from. These people had God Himself right before them, speaking to them, and Satan plucks the seed and they say leave us Jesus, we would don't want You messing up our business and profits, we like our lives just the way there, living them as we please, so please leave.

*Luke 8:11–12 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. <sup>12</sup> Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

#### **Demons confirms Jesus is God / Professing Jesus not enough for Salvation**

The demons will confirm that Jesus is God by this event, but it is not enough for the town people to believe He is God. Professing Jesus is God is no more salvation than

*James 2:19 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!

#### **Town not Celebrating man's Deliverance / Upset Business Destroyed / 2,000 Years – Bald Eagle**

Amazing that they aren't celebrating that this man has been delivered; they are more upset that business is destroyed. Nothing has changed in 2,000 years as people are more concerned about saving the bald eagle than saving the baby in the womb. You can go to jail for killing an eagle, but abortions are a personal choice.

#### **Leave – and Jesus Does / We must stand in Gap / Harvest America – Bus Stop - Personal**

The towns people ask Jesus to leave, and He does. So too any Nation that will ask Him to leave, He will. We must stand in the gap and pray for Nation. Will you join us for our weekly prayer meeting? Would you get involved in

Harvest America with Greg Laurie and Harvest Crusade? We have a great opportunity here because we have the bus stop right out in front of us. We can share Christ non-confrontationally by saying hey here is some reading material for the bus ride, and then if God opens the door we can share more. They are going to read it because they are sitting on a bus with little else to do. We can even take candy or sandwiches or drinks to the bus stop with us to refresh them also. And, the most you have is 15 minutes and then the bus comes, so even if things are not going so well, it is limited to how long.

**Luke 8:38 Now the man from whom the demons had departed begged Him that he might be with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying,**

**Luke 8:39 “Return to your own house, and tell what great things God has done for you.” And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.**

**Luke 8:40 So it was, when Jesus returned, that the multitude welcomed Him, for they were all waiting for Him.**

### **This is Story that Sent me East**

This story of this man is the story that sent me here. I just finished Bible College, I had several opportunities out on the West Coast, one of them was to become the Dean of Men at the school, and to start to teaching at the Bible College. Another was with Promise Keepers, another was to be an assistant pastor at a church, and another was to spend one year shadowing a senior pastor at his church in everything he did from counseling, to weddings, to preaching, to administration, it was a great opportunity. So the morning after graduation I was in the laundry room at 6am doing laundry and reading the Bible and praying for direction on what to do next, and I came to this passage as part of my through the Bible reading, and when Jesus said go back to your family and tell them what great things I have done in your life, the Lord spoke to me saying and that is what I want you to do. That meant coming back to the East Coast. I pulled my clothes out of the dryer, went back to my room and packed, loaded up my car, swung by the school office and decline the job, and started to make my way back home. God confirmed to me along the way that He had plenty of men who would minister in California, but few on the East Coast. So here I am.

### **God will Leave His Witness**

God will leave His witness, even when He is asked to leave, and that witness is you and me. Maybe you don't feel like much of a witness, but let me point out to you who the first evangelist was in the Bible, and that was either this man or the woman at the well who had a lifetime of relationship issues as she was married five times. Interestingly, Paul the greatest theologian of all time, every time he got an audience with the kings and nobles, he didn't preach a theological message, he simply shared his testimony. We have a testimony, and God will use your story, and your passion to reach the lost. So you have a story, but do you have a passion. I go witnessing as much for the lost as I do for myself, because every time I share Christ I am remembering how He saved me, and I remember what I was and where I was going, and how messed up I was. Go share Christ with someone; it will bring passion back into your life.

### **Conclusion / Storms stilled by Faith / Devil defeated by Faith**

The storms are stilled by faith. The devil is defeated through faith. Faith is the key.

### **Faith and Fear sail into Harbor / Don't Let Fear Anchor / Feed Faith – Fear will Starve**

Faith and fear will both sail into the harbor of your heart. Don't let fear anchor there. How? Feed your faith and your fear will starve. Stay in the Word. Give your heart to the Word. Fill your mind with the Word and you will overcome the fears that attack you incessantly.

# *Jesus will Stop for You*

**8:41-56**

## **Video – If our Bible could Speak**

### **We Come – We Know It Does / Luke 4 – Mission Statement**

We come here week in, and week out, because we believe God does speak to us through His Word, and it is here in His Word that we get to know Him more, know His thoughts towards us, know His passion towards, and know His plans that He has for us. Jesus gave His mission statement, His heart, back in chapter 4, and we for the last several weeks have been watching Him display His mission statement in both power and compassion.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> *“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”*

### **Last Study – Storms and Devil / This Study Disease and Death / Contrast Woman & Jairus**

Last week we saw Jesus have dominion and power of the storms of life, and the works of the devil, and in our passage today we see His dominion and power of disease and death. We will look at Jesus healing a woman with a flow of blood for the last twelve years of her life, and Jairus’ twelve year old daughter is dying, and will die before the story ends. The contrast here is interesting, for it shows the variety of people who came to Jesus for help:

- The man’s name is given (Jairus) but the woman is anonymous.
- Jairus was a wealthy leading citizen, but the woman was a lowly person who had spent all her money trying to get well.
- Here was a man interceding for his child and a woman hoping to get help for herself, and both came to the feet of Jesus.
- Jairus had been blessed with twelve years of joy with his daughter, and now might lose her, while the woman had experienced twelve years of misery because of her affliction, and now she was hoping to get well.

### **Wherever you Are – Jesus knows Where you Are / Puts Himself on Your Path / To Him like never Before**

Wherever you may fall in these two extremes, the Lord knows where you are, He knows your situation, and He is putting Himself on your path to meet with you and for you to meet Him in a way you have never known or experienced before. Jesus stops for you, He doesn’t pass you by, but stops to be personally and intimately involved in your life, your crisis, your joys, and your sorrows.

## ***A Woman is Healed***

**Luke 8:41** And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And he fell down at Jesus’ feet and begged Him to come to his house,

**Luke 8:42** for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age, and she was dying. But as He went, the multitudes thronged Him.

### **Synagogue – 586BC – Every Neighborhood / 10 Leaders – 1 Ruler / Jairus Risks it All**

Jairus was the ruler of the synagogue. Before the year 586 B.C., virtually all Jews lived within one hundred miles of the temple, so they all worshiped there. But in 586 B.C., the Jews were carried away into Babylon and held hostage for seventy years. No longer able to worship in the temple, they established synagogues in every neighborhood with ten or more Jewish men. The synagogue then became the place of assembly for the Jews where they would worship and study the Scriptures. They would place a long pole in front of that building or location and it was a sign to all that this is where a synagogue was (it is where we get our idea of a steeple on a church – a sign of this is where people meet to worship and study the Scriptures) Each synagogue had ten leaders, called elders. Of those ten, one was elected by the other nine to be the ruler. The ruler of the synagogue was a man of tremendous importance. Not only was he in charge of the synagogue, but he would also settle civic disputes within the neighborhood. Synagogue rulers had power and prosperity, influence and impact. Jairus was such a man. Yet he was willing to risk it all and come to Jesus because death had crept into his family, even if the rest of the religious leaders, those other 9 elders,

all the congregation said “you what”, this man Jesus does those things by the help of the devil, He is a cult, you have lost it.

### **Desperation will Change your Theology / Jairus was there when Jesus healed Withered Hand**

Desperation will change your theology. So often we want to be shielded from pain and suffering, and how we want to shield others from it, and yet how coming to the point that there is no one or nothing that can help us, in brokenness and desperation we lay all things down (our pride, our self-sufficiency, our errant theology) and reach out to Him, cry out to Him, beg of Him to come to our rescue. Jairus was ruler of the synagogue, he would have been there when Jesus back in chapter 6 came in and healed the man with the withered hand (on the Sabbath). Jairus would have been part of the “they” who were filled with rage, and discussed what they were going to do to Jesus. Desperation will change your theology.

*Luke 6:6–11 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> Now it happened on another Sabbath, also, that He entered the synagogue and taught. And a man was there whose right hand was withered. <sup>7</sup> So the scribes and Pharisees watched Him closely, whether He would heal on the Sabbath, that they might find an accusation against Him. <sup>8</sup> But He knew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, “Arise and stand here.” And he arose and stood. <sup>9</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy?” <sup>10</sup> And when He had looked around at them all, He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he did so, and his hand was restored as whole as the other. <sup>11</sup> But they were filled with rage, and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.*

### **Daughter 12 / Luke’s Gospel / 12yrs Laughter & Joy / Suddenly death at the Door**

Luke tells us that Jairus’ daughter was twelve years old. For twelve years, his daughter had brought light and laughter into his home, until suddenly, she was taken with sickness and was at the point of death. Power and prosperity meant nothing now, as they things would be put into their proper perspective – my true riches is dying. I can imagine his wife, pleading with him, do something. His wife looking to him for answers, that is my daughter, do something, you are the ruler of the synagogue, you meet with God on behalf of the people, met with him now to get help for my girl. Yet even as the ruler of the synagogue, he would feel powerless and helpless. So he embarks out to find the One all the country side is talking about, the miracle worker.

### **Daddy’s Little Girl / Imagine his Journey to Jesus – Remembering Her / Running – Smile – Daddy!**

She was his little girl, his daughter, no doubt as he made his way towards Jesus, hoping and praying for a miracle, he was remembering her running to him when he came home from work, arms flung wide open, big smile on her face, yelling daddy, daddy. He would remember the pictures that she would make for him in Saturday School. The coffee cup that said, “My Hero”, the t-shirt that said “best daddy in the world”.

### **Wanting to Hear those Words – I Love You / Camden / Heavenly Father**

Remembering and missing those words she would speak to him, I love you daddy, oh to hear those words again. My Camden is 6 years old now, such a long way from the 2 weeks in ICU (especially those first 3 hours). Now as I get face to face with him, I talk to him, his face lights up, big smile, I tell him I love you Camden, and he has that wonderful smile, and how my heart melts when I hear those words back, I love you daddy. To think of Jairus, how his heart hurt and grieved to hear those words again from his little girl, I love you daddy. You know, how our Heavenly Father wants to hear those words from us, how they melt His heart, to hear us say I love you Daddy.

### **Parents – Slow Down / Father says the Same to Us**

Can I make a side-point with you parents, slow down and cherish every moment you can with your children today. My baby is growing like spring grass. I say Camden slow down, you are growing too fast for your daddy, but I know I can’t slow Camden down from growing, but what I believe I hear the Lord speak to me is this, “Ray you can’t slow Camden down, but you can slow yourself down”. I can’t slow him down, but I can slow myself down. I don’t want to miss a day of him, for you only get this day once; and parents for you and for me I pray we enjoy and cherish every moment we possibly can. By the way, that is what the Heavenly Father wants to do with you also.

### **People’s Reaction to Death / Ghandi – British Scientist**

You know, much can be learned from the way people react to death closing in on themselves or on someone close to them. Fifteen years before his death, Mahatma Ghandi wrote: “I must tell you in all humility, that Hinduism as I know it entirely satisfies my soul. It fills my whole being, and I find a solace in it that I find nowhere else.” Three weeks before he died, however, he made this last journal entry: “My days are numbered. I am not likely to live very much longer. Perhaps a year, maybe a little more. For the first time in my fifty years, I find myself in the slough of

despond and in total depression.” When Jairus came face-to-face with death, he knew what to do. He went to Jesus. He ran the risk of losing his prominent position, his wealth, and his reputation in order to save his daughter’s life.

There was a British scientist, very skeptical of religion, but well aware of the reality of death. So he embarked on his research on life after death. His name was GB Hardee. He approached the subject from 2 fronts when he examined the religions; first, has anyone ever overcome death, and if so, did they provide a way for me to do the same. He said, I checked the tomb of Buddha and it was occupied, I check the tomb of Confucius and it was occupied, I checked the tomb of Mohammed and it was occupied, I check the tomb of Jesus and it was empty. So I said to myself, there is one who conquered death, so I asked the second question, did He make a way for me to conquer and overcome death. So I opened the Bible and I discovered that He said, because I live, so too shall you live. So here is a man faced with death, faced with his mortality, became a believer.

*John 11:25 (NKJV)* <sup>25</sup> Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.

### **Jairus – Willing to Risk it All/ Prominence – Power – Possessions / Knew of Miracles of Messiah**

Jairus was willing to risk his prominence, his possessions, his power, because the religious leaders were not fans and supporters of Jesus. Jairus knew the price it would cost to come to Jesus, but he was willing to risk it all. Jairus knew of Jesus’ miracles, as word of Him was spreading abroad, healing lepers, calming storms, casting demons out of people. Jesus was doing all that was prophesied that the Messiah would do.

*(Malachi 4:2 NKJV)* But to you who fear My name **The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With healing in His wings; And you shall go out And grow fat like stall-fed calves.**

*(Isaiah 53:5 NKJV)* But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

*(Isaiah 35:4 NKJV)* Say to those who are fearful-hearted, “Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, With the recompense of God; He will come and save you.”

*(Isaiah 35:5 NKJV)* Then the eyes of the **blind** shall be opened, And the **ears** of the deaf shall be unstopped.

*(Isaiah 35:6 NKJV)* Then the **lame** shall leap like a deer, And the **tongue** of the dumb sing. **For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert.**

### **News of Jesus – Filled the Countryside / Jesus will stop for You / Jesus Singularly Seeks You**

Oh how he wanted to see streams of life in the barren desert he was now living. News of Jesus was flowing through the land, there is a man who has compassion for the hurting, a man who had a heart for the hurting, and a man who had the power to do something about it. Jesus will come to his daughter; Jesus will stop for the woman in the midst of the crowd, and I want you to know that today if you are hurting, for whatever reason, that Jesus will singularly seek you out to meet and minister to your need, for He has compassion for the hurting. He has compassion for people, and has the credentials to do something about it, for He is the King, and the King has come. Jairus comes to the One with compassion, and the credentials to do something about it; he was willing to risk it all. But along the way they get interrupted.

**Luke 8:43 Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any,**

### **Culture – Being Punished by God**

The culture of the day believed that a woman with a flow of blood was being punished by God; the Talmud taught that if a woman had an affliction such as this it was because there was immorality in her life. She has the stigma of an adulteress.

### **Leviticus 15 – Cut-off / Luke – Spent all Money / Garbage Dump / Outside the Window / Temple**

Her life was no different than the leper we studied she by the Law (Leviticus 15) would be cut-off from society. She could not be employed, she probably had to go to the garbage dump scrounge for food because the other gospels tell us she spent all her money and inheritance on doctors to no avail. Having an issue of blood she could not be employed by anyone because everything she touched would be considered unclean. That means she couldn’t be around her husband, she couldn’t touch her children, she lived a life of isolation, outside the window of the home looking in, watching her family eat Christmas dinner at the table, passing the food one to another, in front of the fire with candles flickering on the table; she had no one, and she wasn’t even allowed to go to the Temple to worship

because she was unclean. She probably even thought and felt that God was upset with her, abandoned her. She felt no one loved her, no one cared for her.

*(Leviticus 15:25 NKJV) 'If a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, other than at the time of her customary impurity, or if it runs beyond her usual time of impurity, all the days of her unclean discharge shall be as the days of her customary impurity. She shall be unclean.*

*(Mark 5:25 NKJV) Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for twelve years,*

*(Mark 5:26 NKJV) and had suffered many things from many physicians. She had spent all that she had and was no better, but rather grew worse.*

### **Every Fad – Quack / The Talmud**

Every fad, every quack, every promise, she is there – she is desperate, she only wants to be made whole again so she can be with her family, so she can hold her children, so she can lay next to her husband. Or maybe, she has none of those things, she may be lonely, she can have no relationships because her issue of blood makes her unclean. So every fad, quack, and promise she is writing a check for hoping this one will be the one, but at each turn, only disappointment and more despair. Here are some of the prescriptions the quacks would have prescribed her, and then charged her for – for according to the Talmud a woman with an issue of blood was to;

- Take an ostrich egg and burn it, then take the ashes and put in a linen cloth and then apply to her female area.
- Eating Persian onions boiled in wine
- Take a barley seed found in the dung of a white female donkey and insert in her female area.

### **Anemic and Weak / Adultery**

After twelve years of bleeding she must be extremely anemic, extremely weak, and emotional spent knowing the stigma of being considered an adulteress.

### **I Met Her 1000 times / Maybe your Neighbor**

I know this woman; I met her a thousand times in my life, I met her in every State I have lived in. She may even live on your street; she may even be your next door neighbor, someone who is hopeless, desperate, yet distant and all alone.

### **Notice Parallel / 12yrs Full of Life – Dying / 12yrs verge of Living**

Notice the parallel: A twelve-year-old girl, full of life, light, and laughter, was suddenly dying, and a woman, who, for the same twelve years, full of darkness, disease, and depression, was on the verge of being healed.

### **She had Heard something about Jesus**

But she had heard something about Jesus, and was willing to slip into this crowd to reach Him, and she won't be disappointed, nor will you who ever push through to reach Him.

**Luke 8:44 came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped.**

### **Belief Power in the Hem / The Ribbon of Blue – Connection to Heaven**

In this day, it was believed that there was certain power in the hem of a garment belonging to a rabbi or spiritual leader. God had given commandment for men to have a blue ribbon (a picture of heaven) through their garment to remind them of God's commandment, but over the years they had totally perverted to mean they were holy – but Jesus's ribbon was true. She saw the ribbon of blue thread, she had heard about Him somewhere along the way, and she said to herself here is a Man with a connection to heaven, and "If I could just touch the hem of his garment." This woman probably didn't have the strength to wrestle Him in faith, or to grab hold of Him in belief. Yet she knew if she could even just lightly touch Jesus, she would be healed.

*Numbers 15:37–41 (NKJV) <sup>37</sup> Again the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>38</sup> "Speak to the children of Israel: Tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a blue thread in the tassels of the corners. <sup>39</sup> And you shall have the tassel, that you may look upon it and remember all the commandments of the LORD and do them, and that you may not follow the harlotry to which your own heart and your own eyes are inclined, <sup>40</sup> and that you may remember and do all My commandments, and be holy for your God. <sup>41</sup> I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD your God."*

### **By Way – People should see our Border of Blue**

By the way, when people look at us, they should see the blue ribbon through us, they should know there is something different about us, and they should know it is because our relationship to Him. They should see something different about our lives as compared to others.

**Luke 8:45 And Jesus said, “Who touched Me?” When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, “Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, ‘Who touched Me?’ ”**

**Luke 8:46 But Jesus said, “Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me.”**

**Luke 8:47 Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately.**

### **Jesus knows when Faith Touches Him**

Jesus asked, “who touched me?”. All the people pushing in and around Jesus as He performs His miracles, the disciples said all these people pushing in around you, yet you ask who touched you? You see, people push, faith touches. Jesus knew when faith had touched Him.....if only I can touch Him, then I shall be made well.

### **Faith releases Power**

Faith releases God’s power; literally and physically.

### **Tells Jesus the whole Story / He wants to hear Your Story**

It says she tells Him the reason for touching Him; imagine her telling the story, remembering all the years of pain, and Jesus is listening. Beloved, Jesus wants to hear your story, He understands this fallen world, He knows your pain, and He wants to share your pain, He wants you to touch Him so you can transfer your pain, and He can transfer His power into your life.

**Luke 8:48 And He said to her, “Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace.”**

### **Calls her Daughter – Only one in Gospel / You are not Forgotten / More than Healed when Touched by Jesus**

Jesus calls her daughter. The 12 year old girl was Jairus’ daughter; this woman is Jesus’ daughter. This is the only time Jesus calls anyone daughter in Scripture (at least the only recorded time), no doubt for this specific illustration of His caring for those who are hurting, outcast, and hopeless. Jesus says you are more than healed, you are loved, you are known, you are not alone, you are not outcast, you are not without family, you are not without a God, you are not outside of the Temple, for you are My daughter, and I am all those things to you, and you to Me. She was more than healed, way more than healed, and that is what happens when Jesus touches us.

### **Word is Endearing / Imagine them after 12 Years**

This word for daughter is an endearing word, it could literally mean sweetheart. Imagine hearing those words after 12 years of not being touched, not being embraced, and not being looked upon as valued.

### **Jesus Looks into Her Eyes / Looks into Your Eyes**

And as I always say, I know Jesus never missed an opportunity to look into someone’s eyes, and imagine as He looks into her eyes after these 12 long years and she hears, daughter, sweetheart, be of good cheer. He looks into your eyes today, and speaks into your heart, My sweetheart.

### **Luke’s Gospel – Go in Peace / Go from Doctor – Disappointment – Hopelessness**

Jesus said go “into peace”. After 12 years, from doctor to doctor, disappointment after disappointment, from hopelessness to hopelessness, Jesus says go into Peace.

### **Jesus not Afraid to be Touched – He can Handle It / Ceremonially Unclean / Camden Spewing**

Peace from the problem and peace with Jesus. Jesus isn’t afraid to touch you, as we spoke with the leper, or be touched by you, in the case of this woman. Jesus can handle your thing, whatever it may be. He isn’t afraid to touch or be touched, He is not turned off by you, He can handle whatever it is that needs to be dealt with. Bring it to Him. People would be saying to Jesus in this situation, just like the leper, You are touching something that will make you ceremonially unclean, defiled, but Jesus didn’t care, He touched anyways. When Camden throws up on me I don’t hold him away from me and say take him Renee, oh how gross. No I hold him closer, are you ok baby,

as I wipe his mouth with a towel or my shirt I am not thinking of his spit-up, but how my baby is doing. That a picture of Jesus, He takes all that we spew upon him, sometimes that is sin and shame, sometime it is heartache and despair, and He takes it all, drawing us closer, holding us tighter, soiling His robe, and He says are you ok My child, as He wipes us clean, and comforts our needs.

### **Maybe But Don't Feel Him / Reach Out / Make the Effort – Unbelief- Busyness – Entertainment – Activities**

Perhaps you say, "I would love to have Jesus touch me, but I don't feel His touch." Then be like this woman. If you're not feeling His touch upon you, reach out and touch Him. Have you made the effort to press through the crowd of unbelief, of busyness, of entertainment, of activities—the crowd of all that stands between you and the Lord? Press through and say, "I just want to touch the hem of His garment. I know if I can touch Him, I'll be helped."

### **The Expended Energy to Break Through / Poor theology – Incomplete Knowledge / Father Honors**

This woman expended the energy to break through the crowd and touch Jesus. Was her theology correct? No. Was her knowledge complete? No. She was acting out of superstition. But the Lord didn't say, "Since your theology is all messed up, or you haven't read 3 chapters and prayed today, I won't help you." No! He's a Savior, a Father who heeds the cries of His children, even though their phrases are amiss, or their theology's not right. God honors the person who in desperation is seeking to touch Him.

### **Think Jairus – Impatient / Ever feel that Way – Why Blessing There – Not Here / Jesus Lessons**

Now, do you suppose by this time, Jairus was growing a little impatient? "Come on, Lord. My daughter is dying, and You're talking to some lady who's touched Your garment?" Do you ever feel that way? "Lord, I see You're blessing this person and You're blessing that person. Great! But, Lord, what about me?" I suggest to you that in seeing the healing of this woman, Jairus was being prepared for the healing of his own daughter, for before they made it to Jairus' home, word will come that his daughter has died.. You see, whenever the Lord delays in moving and seems to be working in other people or in other places, be observant of where He is working and what He is doing because therein lies lessons for you as well. Keep your antennae up, your eyes wide, and your journal open to record information the Lord knows you will need shortly.

### ***Jairus's Daughter is Raised***

**Luke 8:49 While He was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher."**

#### **She died without Me**

Imagine his thought, my angel, my sweetheart, in her greatest hour of need I wasn't there, she died without me being there. I risked it all to get to Jesus, my job, my wealth, my reputation, I risked it all and now I have lost the most precious thing in my, my daughter, my sweetheart. Is this what I get for falling down at the feet of this Jesus?

#### **Esther in Israel**

I heard a story recently about a girl who was part of Calvary Chapel who lived in Israel, her name was Esther. Her husband was deathly ill, one of her two sons had leukemia and was deathly ill, and they were on financial fumes. Her father was an extremely wealthy man in Israel, he was the wealthiest man in his community in Israel, and had an estate in New England, and he would buy up mansions around his house and knock them down so he could have more open land around his mansion. When she came home and told him about Jesus, he said he no longer has a daughter named Esther, and put her out of his life to never talk to her again. Even when she called, she would always be told by servants that he did not want to talk to her. You see with one denial she could have had all the wealth back. Jairus would have lost it all. What does it cost us to follow?

**Luke 8:50 But when Jesus heard it, He answered him, saying, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well."**

#### **Don't Trouble the Master – Jesus says to You "Trouble Me"**

He had been told not to trouble the Master, but he will be glad that he did. Listen friends don't let anyone ever tell you not to trouble the Master, don't believe that story that He is too busy for your small concerns, he desires to be intimately involved in every detail of your life. Go trouble the Master. Because He wants you to hear Him say in everything, don't be afraid, I am here.

**Luke 8:51 When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go in except Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the girl.**

**Luke 8:52 Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, "Do not weep; she is not dead, but sleeping."**

**Luke 8:53 And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead.**

**Luke 8:54 But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Little girl, arise."**

**Luke 8:55 Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat.**

**Luke 8:56 And her parents were astonished, but He charged them to tell no one what had happened.**

### **Matthew's Account / Who are these Minstrels / They had a Handbook**

In Matthews account, he tells us there were professional mourners there. Who were these minstrels? In Jesus' day, when someone died, the bereaved would hire professional mourners and wailers. Even the poorest of families would hire two minstrels, two flute players, and one screamer. But the wealthier one was, the more mourners he would hire. Because Jairus was so wealthy, there were perhaps twenty, fifty, perhaps even one hundred people at his home weeping, wailing, and mourning. Then Jesus arrived. "Give place," He said. "Make way. The maid is not dead. She sleeps." Matthew writes, "And they laughed him to scorn." It wasn't a chuckle; it was a deep belly laugh. It wasn't a giggle; it was a guffaw. After all, they had been with her. They had checked her pulse. They had watched her die. No doubt about it, she was gone. These professional mourning's even had a handbook on how to mourn. There was a list of 39 rules on how you were to rip your clothes. If the person was direct family you were to rip your clothes right over your heart, if you were a relative you were to rip your shirt over your shoulders, and if you were a distant relative or friend you would rip it around the waist. So if you came into the room you could tell who was who.

*(Matthew 9:23 NKJV) When Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the flute players and the noisy crowd wailing,*

### **They Mocked – We Professionals / Think have it all Figured Out**

They mocked Jesus, they ridiculed Him, they basically are saying, "we know what death looks like, we are professionals, we do this for a living, you are such a fool to say she only sleeps, it is done and there is not changing it", they are saying. How many people think they got it all figured out, that what it is, it is, and God cannot do anything about it. They are the ones who are playing the fool, and they will be mocked and laughed at by Satan, who said you fell for the lie, you thought you had it all figured out, yet you were only playing the part of a fool.

### **Death in Different Context / Funeral of Butterfly / 1 Cor 15 – Metamorphosed / Worm for Wings**

Jesus put death in an entirely different context when He said, "Don't worry. She's not dead in the way you think. She's simply sleeping." Imagine a funeral taking place in the church with hundreds of caterpillars all dressed in black marching slowly down the floor of the amphitheater, carrying the cocoon of their beloved, departed brother. Meanwhile, a beautiful butterfly is fluttering above them, looking down in utter disbelief. "What are you guys mourning for?" he shouts. "I've been metamorphosed!" In 1 Corinthians 15, when Paul says we shall be changed, "metamorphosed" is the Greek word he uses. When we die, we get rid of these caterpillar costumes and become the butterflies we long to be, we trade the worm for the wings.

*(1 Corinthians 15:51 NKJV) Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed;*

*(1 Corinthians 15:52 NKJV) in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

### **Jesus touches the Dead – Not Afraid**

"Give place," Jesus said. "She's not dead. She's asleep." Then He went in and took her by the hand. To a Jew, touching a dead body was defiling. It was like touching a leper. But Jesus was not afraid to touch defiled people. And He's not afraid to touch you.

### **She arose and Ate / Jairus – Nain's Son - Lazarus**

It says after she arose Jesus said give her something to eat, and she ate. The Scripture records three accounts of people who were raised from the dead by Jesus: Jairus' daughter, the son of the widow who lived in the city of Nain, and Lazarus.

- Following her resurrection, Jairus' daughter was hungry.
- Following his resurrection, the widow's son began to speak.
- Following his resurrection, Lazarus came forth walking and they took his grave cloths off of him.

*(Luke 7:14 NKJV) Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried him stood still. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise."*

*(Luke 7:15 NKJV) So he who was dead sat up and began to speak. And He presented him to his mother.*

*(John 11:43 NKJV) Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!"*

*(John 11:44 NKJV) And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go."*

### **Same 3 Characteristics / Hunger – Talk Differently – New Clothes & New Places**

I suggest to you the same three characteristics are found in those who have been spiritually resurrected and born again, for as we have been saying – Salvation looks like something, you can see it in the person.

- Like Jairus' daughter, they hunger for the Word, the spiritual manna of the Scriptures. Bible studies are no longer a bore, but something we hunger and thirst for. We hunger after better things.
- Like the widow's son, they talk differently. The things they enjoy talking about are no longer what they once were. We love to talk about the Lord, and quit talking about certain things that only produced dead.
- Like Lazarus, they walk differently, no longer bound by sin. No longer going to those places that had no life.

### **For Believer Today – Mockers will Say / Jesus moved Mockers – Before Moved in Daughter**

Also, for the believer today, know this, whenever Jesus wants to work in your situation, there will be mockers, saying, "It's not going to happen. What a joke. The Lord's not going to help you. He's not even real to you. He doesn't care anything about you." And these little voices inside of us, the voices of unbelief, of demons, or even of well-meaning friends, say, "Grow up. Don't expect a miracle." The laughers, the scorers, and the mockers were moved out before Jesus went in. Move out the mockers, gang. Believe the promises of God, quote Scripture, rejoice in advance, and anticipate His blessing, and when those mockers come into your life, move them out, don't give them audience, separate yourself from their counsel, from being on the inside of your walls, you tell them you'll have to wait outside, while I wait on the inside with Jesus, watching and waiting for Him to move.

### **Jesus Restores Life**

So Jesus, restoring life. Restoring Jairus' daughter who had brought 12 years of light and joy into the family, and restoring life unto this woman who for 12 years lived on the outside looking in. Two daughters, two mighty moves of God. Jesus showing His compassion, and His credentials.

### **He has not Changed in 2000 Years**

And for each and every one of us here today, He has not changed in 2,000, nor will He change in the next 2,000 years – He deeply desires to come to you, with passion in His heart, to say – "Don Not be Afraid – Only Believe".

### **Jesus will Give Himself in Every Storm**

What Jesus will always bring into every trial and storm of your life, Himself! I don't know why some are healed and some are not, I wonder why any are healed at all since we live in this fallen world. What I know through all my trials is that they always leave me wanting more of Jesus and less of this world, they make me see how fading and fleeting this world is. Three years ago my son was diagnosed with autism, and I can honestly say to you that I have never asked God to heal him, but only that God's will be done, because I trust God that much that He knows what He is doing. Healing my son may be the worse thing that could ever happen to him. Through all these three years of trials, I have come to know Jesus more now, then ever before, and He has given me a peace which passes all understanding concerning the matter. So too will He do for you in your storm.

### **No Storm – Good / Know Him More / Take a Walk with Him**

If you are not in a storm or trial, good for you. But I hope you have seen through our study in chapter 8 the great compassion and concern God has for His sons, His daughters, that is you, you are His sweethearts, and He loves you beyond your deepest understanding, but I hope over these past two weeks, your understanding has grown deeper. Maybe today would be a great day to go for a walk and think these things through.



# Luke 9

## Now it is Time

### (9:1-9)

#### Video - Worthless

#### Then He Called

Chapter 9 begins with the words, “***then He called*** His twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases. He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick”. You never know when God is going to give you a chapter break, a new beginning, a shift in your life..... a shift in His expectation of you. God is saying to the disciples, as He is saying to us, you have been watching, now it is time to start living it.

#### 29 Weeks – 8 Chapters / Reveals Heart – Displays Power / Review what we Saw

If you have been with us for the last 29 weeks (chapters 1-8 for you reading the notes online), that day, is today. For eight chapters God has been revealing His heart towards us and all men, He has displayed to us both His power and compassion. Consider what we have seen our compassionate Savior do over these last eight chapters:

- He declared His Mission statement (Luke 4:18-19)
- Heals a Leper (5:12)
- Heals a Paralytic (5:16)
- Tells us He is starting something totally new (new wine into new wineskins) – 5:36
- Heals the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath (6:6)
- Calls the 12, even with all their warts (6:12)
- Teaches the Beatitudes, how His Kingdom is to operate, which is in love (6:20)
- Heals the Centurion’s servant (7:1)
- Raises the Widow’s Son in Nain from the Dead (7:11)
- Allows the prostitute to anoint His feet (7:36)
- Stills the Storm (8:22)
- Cast demons out of Man in Gadarenes (8:26)
- Heals the woman with issue of blood for 12 years (8:41)
- Raises Jairus’ daughter from Dead (8:49)

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”

#### A Mission Statement of Love and Compassion – With Power to Do It

His mission statement is a mission statement of love, of compassion, a care for those who are lost, those who are hurting, those who are forgotten, and those who are captive to their sin. He says I have come to set you free, I have come to comfort you, I have come to love you, and I have the heart to do it, and I have the power to do it.

#### Chapter 9 brings Shift

For eight wonderful and glorious chapters we have seen His precious heart, his deep love, His awesome power.....and now in chapter 9, the whole book shifts. For eight chapters God says here is my heart, here is what I think towards you..... but then here in chapter 9, with a clear and dramatic shift;

- We will see an increase in confrontations with the religious leaders of the Israel.
- Jesus has been showing His heart, now He will let there be no mistake of His holiness.
- God starts to speak us (His disciples – His followers), and now this is what I am requiring of you.
- Jesus will begin to, and continually develop for the rest of this Gospel, the “Cost of Discipleship”.

*Luke 9:23–26 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. <sup>25</sup> For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? <sup>26</sup> For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father’s, and of the holy angels.

### **Christian – What brings you here Today?**

So Christian, what is it that brings you here today? Is it to know Him more? Do you want to be made into the likeness of His image? If so, then the weeks and months to come, right here in His word, will challenge you to do just that. But I ask you today, right here and right now, make that commitment to Him, ask Him right now, Lord through Your Holy Word, change me, take me, higher, deeper, wider – that I might become more like You, and live a life that is separated and different from this world I live. Christian, how about right here, right now, TODAY!

### ***Twelve are Sent to Preach***

**Luke 9:1 Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases.**

**Luke 9:2 He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.**

### **The Kingdom of God is Beautiful / He loves His Citizens – Approachable King**

The Kingdom of God, it is a beautiful kingdom, it is a wonderful kingdom, because He is the sole King of that Kingdom. He loves the citizens of His Kingdom, He protects them, He provides for them, He walks with them, he talks to them, He isn't distant from them, He is not lofty and unapproachable, He is a wonderful King, and that why the Kingdom is so wonderful, because He is the King of that Kingdom. I am thankful that He has allowed me to be part of His kingdom. I look forward to its fullest fulfillment when I we be done with this earthly kingdom that I now sojourn through.

### **Sends with Power – But Sends them with what He Displayed in 8 Chapters / Ambassadors**

Jesus sends them with the power and authority, but He is sending them out with more than that, He is sending them out with what he has displayed to them in this past eight chapters. When a person sends another person to represent them, we call them ambassadors. An ambassador has to understand that they no longer represent themselves, but the person or country (kingdom) they belong to. They now represent a nation, a kingdom, they represent all the people of that kingdom. So when in that foreign land it is import that they conduct themselves in a way that is consistent with the king and kingdom they are representing.

### **Personal Life cannot mar the Message**

So the disciples can go out with this power and authority, they can go out with the message, but if their personal life or personal handling of themselves is contrary to Jesus, then they misrepresent both Jesus and His Kingdom, then they mar the message. Jesus has displayed His heart, His Passion, His compassion, and when He sends us, we as ambassadors are to reflect and exercise that same heart. Jesus has displayed His purity and holiness unto the Father in heaven, and we as ambassadors are to reflect and exercise our lives in the same manner – else we mar His message, we misrepresent His character.

**Luke 9:3 And He said to them, “Take nothing for the journey, neither staffs nor bag nor bread nor money; and do not have two tunics apiece.**

### **Travel Light – Trust Him for Provisions**

Jesus is telling them to travel light, and to trust Him for their provision.

### **Mark's Account / Staffs Plural / Different types of Staffs**

***Neither Staffs*** - We need Mark's account to give us clarity. In Mark's account it says to take a staff, here in Luke's account it says not to take “staffs” plural. It is not a contradiction, it is clarity for us, that Jesus is saying don't take an extra, just one will do. There were short staffs, long staffs, medium staffs. Long were used to walk with and defend from a distance, short were used for more hilly terrain, and used for close quarters defense. Jesus is saying, just take one staff, and don't bog yourself down with multiple possessions.

**Mark 6:8-9 (NKJV)** <sup>8</sup> He commanded them to take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bag, no bread, no copper in their money belts— <sup>9</sup> but to wear sandals, and not to put on two tunics.

### **Staff Represents a Journey / Our Life a Journey – We are Sojourners**

A staff represents a journey. Throughout the Old Testament we read people who went on journeys took a staff with them (Abraham, Moses, Aaron). As Christians our life is one big journey. Christians should be sojourners,

knowing that this earth is not our home. We are not to get comfortable in this world, but we are to be the salt of the world.

**Hebrews 11:8–10 (NKJV)** <sup>8</sup> By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. <sup>9</sup> By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; <sup>10</sup> for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

### **Never a Dull Life**

If you want an exciting life - enter into the service of the Lord. Your life will never be dull. I never left the East Coast before I got saved. 9 years after being saved, I had been half way around the world and 35 states. Kids say there life is boring, well then go make it exciting, step out and do something for the Lord. Men and woman going through mid-life crisis, go step out and do something for the Lord and your life will be anything but boring. As I say, if your Christianity is boring, then it is your fault, because Jesus is anything but boring.

### **No Begging**

**No Bag** - the word used here for bag is “a beggars bag”. God is clearly saying servants of His are not to beg for money. Too often Christian ministries portray God as being broke. Ohh if you don’t give this week, then we are going to have to shut down. What are the non-believers thinking - I’ll tell you, “Boy if God can’t provide for His own program, how is He going to take care of me.” Freedom comes to the minister when he accepts that it is God’s work, and all he is there for is to be a vessel.

### **Walk of Faith / Either called or Not**

**No Bread**, - A walk of faith, don’t take a year’s supply of food. When God says go, then go. Some people say when I have 200K in the bank then I’ll be a missionary. You are either called or you’re not

### **Walk of Faith / Tough Living on Faith / Work is based off the Call not the Cost**

**No Money** (No copper in their money belt - Mark’s Account) - He didn’t say no money belt, just no money. Obviously somebody was going to give them money to put in the money belt. Jesus was calling this men into a walk of faith. The same holds true for us today. But let’s face it, walking in faith isn’t easy. I like what Mike Macintosh said, “it’s not easy living by faith, it’s hard enough living off our paychecks.” When we live off of our reasoning, then we paralyze God’s work because we start to determine what God can and can’t do (what He desires to do) based on the cost, not the call.

### **Sandals – Mark’s Account**

**Wear Sandals** (Mark’s account) - I think it is interesting He specifically said sandals in Mark’s account.

**Ephesians 6:15 (NKJV)** <sup>15</sup> and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

**Romans 10:15 (NKJV)** <sup>15</sup> And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!”

### **Be ready to Preach / Every Step Preordained / Offensive in Spiritual Warfare / 20Years – Walked Away**

Jesus is saying to us, everywhere you go, be ready to proclaim the Good News. When we put our shoes on in the morning, we are to know that every step I take has been preordained by God, and He is putting me on the path that He desires so that whoever I come across, God purposed it - so that they can see the Light of Christ in me.

Ephesians 6 is the passage on spiritual warfare, and God is saying that sharing Christ is one of our defenses against Satan and his warfare. Share Christ, speak of how good He has been to you, share scriptures, share your testimony, present the Gospel, and you are in direct communion and remembrance of Him, and you will not be drawn away into the cares and distractions of the world. There is a theme that I have seen now for twenty years, and all the people who walked away from the Lord, or drifted into the state of being lukewarm, all them (bar none) had at some point quit witnessing, quit speaking out about Christ, and especially for youth they became embarrassed about Him. Share Christ, and you have pure weaponry against the Devil and his attacks, for you are not on the offensive and not the defensive.

**Ephesians 6:10–13 (NKJV)** <sup>10</sup> Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup> Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

### **Go Mobile – Life is Carry-On / Stuff weighs you Down**

**Do not have two Tunics** - God is saying be mobile, don't get tied down with stuff. Life is to be carry-on. I hate traveling with a bunch of stuff. I have to watch it when I set it down, I have to drag it all around the airport, the weight tires me. I like to just throw a bag over my shoulder and go. No waiting for baggage claim, or long lines - just hop and go. Don't get bogged down with a bunch of material possessions, you will find that you have to take care of them. The more you have, the more time they will consume from you, thus less time to do the things of God. Material possessions are not sin, just be careful that they don't cause you to stumble and weigh you down in this world.

**Luke 9:4 “Whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart.**

### **Be Grateful – Don't Look to Upgrade**

Jesus is saying be grateful for and to whoever shows you hospitality, and don't be looking to upgrade. You can imagine they go into a town and some modest family invites them to stay with them, maybe in a one room home with no air conditioning, but then they perform a miracle, bring a healing to a wealthier person, and that person says you must stay at my house tonight and we are having steak and lobster, and pancakes for breakfast. The Lord is saying kindly refuse and stay with the first family, for to leave would hurt their feelings, and to stay will warm their heart. Sadly today many people (whether in ministry or not), continually think and take the “better offer”. Something I told my son continually growing up, if you were invited and accepted to do something with a friend, maybe something modest like spend the night and play video games, don't change that plan just because some called an hour later with tickets to the football game or theme park. Trust the Lord has you where He wanted you, and thus why He presented the later offer, because He knows you would choose that over the former, and thus miss what He wanted to do there.

**Luke 9:5 And whoever will not receive you, when you go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet as a testimony against them.”**

### **Hostility & Rejection / Rejection doesn't constitute God is not In It**

These two verses (4-5) are saying they would encounter both hospitality and hostility, both friends and enemies. Why is this important to point out? If we enter the ministry with our preconceived ideas, and then they don't work out the way we thought they would, we think God is not in it, or we messed it up, and then we want to quit. God is telling us ahead of time that not everybody is going to like us.

### **Cultural Thing / Don't make them feel Ok – Let it Ring in their Ears**

*Shake the dust off your feet* – Shaking the dust off the feet was a cultural thing at this time, when they Jews traveled outside the land of Israel into Gentile land to do business, when they came to the landmark indicating they were coming back into the Holy Land, they would take their sandals off and shake the dust off them because they didn't want to bring Gentile dust into the Holy land and defile it. If the disciples shook the dust off their feet when they left the city, they were in essence saying this land, this city, these people are defiled, and not right with God. Our application today, Jesus is saying when the person rejects, don't ease their conscience, don't give them any indication that they are “ok”, Jesus is saying make your statement clear that they are not ok. I know we don't want to be confrontational, we don't want to start a fight, but we must for their sake make sure they understand that they don't know God personally and are not going to hell. I think we can do that in love and compassion by telling them, look I care for you, I don't want you separated from God, and I don't want you to go to hell, please consider these things I have said, seek them out and search them out for yourself. And just maybe your encounter and your words will keep ringing in their ears and they will go seek Him. But if we make them feel they are ok, and all is well, they we do a tremendous disservice to them. Jesus wouldn't let them feel all is well if it was Him physically standing there, and we as His ambassadors must represent Him accurately.

### **Sight & Sound**

Now some will get hostile and upset, and to that I say good, that means God stirred something up in them, and just maybe that agitation will lead them to go seek Him out. I remember I was at Sight and Sound watching a wonderful play of Noah, and after the show everyone was warm and loving, and I began to talk to the guy next to me, looking forward to praising God with a brother and having a kindred spirit of fellowship. He was well advanced in age, probably in his 80's. Well I ask him where he goes to church and he tells me at the Mormon temple. Well, what was I to do. I gently and kindly told him that I care for him and thus why I want to tell him that Jesus is the only

way, and not via Joseph Smith. Well in a split second, in a flash, this gentle and kind, distinguished a well-dressed man, turns 20 shades of red, and tells me to go to hell, and that I am going to burn in hell. I think when I shook the dust off my shoes some definitely got in his nostrils, because he was highly agitated. No doubt talking about me all the way home – Good!

**Luke 9:6** So they departed and went through the towns, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

### **Preached Repentance**

What did they preach? They preached Repentance.

*Mark 6:12–13 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> So they went out and preached that people should repent. <sup>13</sup> And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them.

### **False Converts / Pathetic Preachers**

They didn't preach about here's the way to peace and happiness (which it is, but they are only by-products of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ). If a minister is not preaching Repentance on a regular basis, or if the minister does not preach repentance when giving a salvation message, I believe that person should not be preaching. Failure to preach repentance makes false converts. If you tell people that they have to turn from their sin if they are to have relationship with Christ, then you will see their true heart condition. For if a person has to give up their sin in order to be saved, many say no thanks I enjoy me sin too much. The tragedy is that many preacher are afraid to offend people by telling them they are in sin and they have to turn from sin; so they leave it out of the message so everybody will like them - shame on them. The disciples went out and preached that people should repent.

**Luke 9:7** Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by Him; and he was perplexed, because it was said by some that John had risen from the dead,

**Luke 9:8** and by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others that one of the old prophets had risen again.

**Luke 9:9** Herod said, "John I have beheaded, but who is this of whom I hear such things?" So he sought to see Him.

### **Herod was king / Jesus Fame has Spread to the Top**

Herod is the king of Israel. The fame and notoriety of Jesus has spread from the town of Nazareth, through the little churches (synagogues), from the common man, the religious leaders, and now has reached to the palace of the king.

### **People Confused who Jesus Was**

Herod and many others, they still didn't know who Jesus was. People today still don't know who He is.

- ***John the Baptist*** - a great teacher and preacher. Many today say that of Jesus. They say Jesus was a great teacher, taught how we should live together, but He was not God. They put him in the group with Confucius, the Dai Lama.
- ***Elijah*** - The great miracle worker, Performed many great signs and wonders. People today look at people performing great miracles, but miss the miracle maker - the King of Kings. People can look at the universe and rather than worship the creator, they worship the creation.
- ***Prophets*** - A prophet is one sent of God, but was not God. The Muslims, JW's, and Mormons, say Jesus was a great prophet, but not God Himself.

### **Herod Desired – but Never Did**

*Verse 9 - So he sought to see Him.* Herod desired to see Jesus, but he never followed through with it. Jesus is about 2 - 2.5 years into His public ministry at this point, He has about 1 – 1.5 years left, but over that 18 months Herod will not make it out to see Jesus. Maybe he was too busy with work, maybe he was distracted by his illicit affair with his brother's wife, maybe it was gladiator season and he was at the games. He had desired to see Jesus, but never made the effort to go see Jesus. Do you know anyone like that? I really would like to know more about this Jesus, I am going to go see Him, meet with Him, but they never do. Could that be you today?

### **Herod enters a Christless Eternity**

Herod will eventually see Jesus, it will be all during the mock trial and sentencing of Jesus. Herod says to Jesus perform me a trick, do something to wow me, but the worse answer in all the Bible as far as I am concerned, Jesus answers him not, not a word, nothing. And Herod will go into a Christless eternity. He did not seek Jesus out when

it was in his heart to do so, and obvious his heart had reached a point of no return. What it profits a man if he gains the whole world yet in the end loses his own soul;

**Luke 9:23–26 (NKJV)** <sup>23</sup> Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. <sup>25</sup> For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? <sup>26</sup> For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father’s, and of the holy angels.

## ***Jehovah-Jireh (The-Lord-Will-Provide)*** (9:10-17)

### **8 Chapters / Reveals Heart – Displays Power / Review what we Saw**

For eight chapters God has been revealing His heart towards us and all men, He has displayed to us both His power and compassion. Consider what we have seen our compassionate Savior do over these last eight chapters:

- He declared His Mission statement (Luke 4:18-19)
- Heals a Leper (5:12)
- Heals a Paralytic (5:16)
- Tells us He is starting something totally new (new wine into new wineskins) – 5:36
- Heals the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath (6:6)
- Calls the 12, even with all their warts (6:12)
- Teaches the Beatitudes, how His Kingdom is to operate, which is in love (6:20)
- Heals the Centurion's servant (7:1)
- Raises the Widow's Son in Nain from the Dead (7:11)
- Allows the prostitute to anoint His feet (7:36)
- Stills the Storm (8:22)
- Cast demons out of Man in Gadarenes (8:26)
- Heals the woman with issue of blood for 12 years (8:41)
- Raises Jairus' daughter from Dead (8:49)

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

### **A Mission Statement of Love and Compassion – With Power to Do It**

His mission statement is a mission statement of love, of compassion, a care for those who are lost, those who are hurting, those who are forgotten, and those who are captive to their sin. He says I have come to set you free, I have come to comfort you, I have come to love you, and I have the heart to do it, and I have the power to do it.

### **Chapter 9 brings Shift**

For eight wonderful and glorious chapters we have seen His precious heart, his deep love, His awesome power.....and now in chapter 9, the whole book shifts. For eight chapters God says here is my heart, here is what I think towards you..... but then here in chapter 9, with a clear and dramatic shift;

- We will see an increase in confrontations with the religious leaders of the Israel.
- Jesus has been showing His heart, now He will let there be no mistake of His holiness.
- God starts to speak us (His disciples – His followers), and now this is what I am requiring of you.
- Jesus will begin to, and continually develop for the rest of this Gospel, the "Cost of Discipleship".

### **Not for the Faint Hearted**

Our studies from here on out will not be for the faint in heart, for the Lord is going to challenge us to lay our lives down, to walk-the-walk, not just have some talk. The Lord wants to make disciples, who are living solely for Him. Are you up to this calling? Is this the life you desire to live? Fire, ice, lukewarm.....for us here today, we begin a journey of fire! That journey will require us to fully trust Him to provide and meet our needs. For many people, the reason they won't follow after Him is because they don't trust Him, they don't believe that He can provide for them, and thus they feel they have to take matters into their own hands. Jesus makes it clear in our passage today, that is the furthest thing from the truth. Christian, you can trust Him today, tomorrow, and forever.....so give Him yourself, all of yourself, and watch what He will do with your life once it is in His hands.

*Luke 9:23–26 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. <sup>25</sup> For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? <sup>26</sup> For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels.

**Luke 9:10** And the apostles, when they had returned, told Him all that they had done. Then He took them and went aside privately into a deserted place belonging to the city called Bethsaida.

### **Imagine Excitement – Retell the Stories**

Remember they were given power to heal, and cast out demons. Can you imagine the stories they told Jesus? The excitement in the air, they were fired up I am sure. If you have ever been a part of a ministry where you have seen God do great and mighty things, you are full of excitement when you retell the stories.

*Luke 9:1–3 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. <sup>2</sup> He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. <sup>3</sup> And He said to them, “Take nothing for the journey, neither staffs nor bag nor bread nor money; and do not have two tunics apiece.

### **Told all they had Done**

*Verse 10 - when they had returned, told Him all that they had done* - It says they told Jesus all they had done; did you catch that? Jesus pulls up a chair and says tell me all the stories. Here is a key of why we serve others, yes we call it ministering, but a more appropriate word would be partnering. We are partnering with Jesus, we a part of what He is doing, and there is a beauty of after we are done for that day and time of partnering, to come and tell Him all that had happened. He loves to hear it, He loves to hear our stories, and there is a tremendous sweetness in the fellowship of telling Him all about what had happened. Too often we serve, and say duty done, and it is done. But Jesus wants us to serve, duty done, then sit with Him and share all that happened. It is during that time of sharing with Him that He will encourage us, He will skill us by speaking to us of what else we can do in that ministry, how we can do something more effectively, or what to do next time to keep the ministry fresh, but above all He just sits and smiles, saying well done My good and faithful servant. Folks, find a ministry to get involved in, so you can have this special time with the Lord sharing all that happened while you served.

### **They must have been Exhausted**

Jesus said to them set yourself apart, Rest. The disciples had just been on the greatest missionary journey of their life. They ministered to all kinds of people, battled demonic spirits, they must have been drained. Remember they didn't take food or money with them, they were living day by day. The Lord says to them lets rest.

### **Who Touched Me / Bethsaida – House of Provision**

Knowing power had been drawn from Him, Jesus asked, “Who touched Me?” (Luke 8:46). So, too, knowing His disciples had need of replenishment and refreshment following their season of ministry, He took them to Bethsaida, or, “the House of Provision.” Whether your ministry be to a congregation, Sunday-school class, family, or your friends at school, it is extremely important to allow the Lord to escort you into quiet times and solitary places in order to recharge the batteries of your faith. It has been said, if you don't come apart for a time of rest and refreshment, you will fall apart.

*Luke 8:46 (NKJV)* <sup>46</sup> But Jesus said, “Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me.”

### **Lord wants us to Rest**

The Lord wants us to rest, to get refreshed. Our human bodies need rest. If you run yourself 100 mph 7 days a week, sooner or later you are going to breakdown. So rest for you may be to go to bed early one night, or find a quiet place to pray and read the Bible, or just you and your family take a relaxing walk, or just sit around and enjoy fellowship with other brother and sisters.

### **Short Rest – 5,000 Coming / Resting & Representing**

Their rest will be short, as the multitude will follow them, and Jesus will say let's go minister to them, and we will read the account of the feeding of the 5,000. The “Time is Now”, Jesus is displaying to them and us, there is resting in Him, then there is the calling to be Ambassadors, and that comes with a cost, but resting and representing – that is the Christian life He calls us to, and it is a wonderful life at that. Some people error on the side of all they want to do is rest in the Lord, and have no desire to represent Him and go out minister; other error on the side in that all they do is ministry, and they become so busy they never stop to rest in Him. The balance is resting and representing, equal parts.

**Luke 9:11 But when the multitudes knew it, they followed Him; and He received them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who had need of healing.**

**Can Never Bother the Lord – Never Interrupt Him / Can he Interrupt Me?**

Isn't it nice to know that you can never bother the Lord. He is never interrupted by us, He is never put off by us, but is always ready to receive us and meet us. Can we say the same thing about Him, can He interrupt us, are there times where we are put off by Him, maybe what He is asking or requiring of us? Well not Jesus, He is never put off by us, He loves to receive us and meet with us.

**Mark's Account – Full of Compassion / Jesus can't just Walk By**

We see the nature of our Savior, full of compassion. What does it say in verse 34 of Mark's account of this same story? When He saw the multitude he was moved with compassion. Why was He moved? Because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And what did Jesus do? He began to teach them, and not just a few things, but many things. Compassion is seeing something that so moves you, that you can't just walk by, you have to get involved and do something to help the situation. Jesus can't just walk by us, He can't just look upon our needs, He has to, His heart moves Him to, stop and get involved. We have a gentle, loving, wonderful, precious Shepherd, who is always coming to us. I hope you know that today.

*Mark 6:34 (NKJV) <sup>34</sup> And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things.*

**Five Thousand are Fed**

**Luke 9:12 When the day began to wear away, the twelve came and said to Him, "Send the multitude away, that they may go into the surrounding towns and country, and lodge and get provisions; for we are in a deserted place here."**

**What would Jesus do Without our Counsel**

How funny, what would Jesus do without them, without us, giving Him counsel? Wow, thanks guys I didn't even realize that it was late, did I go over my 30 minute allotment for My sermon, I didn't even realize that we were in a deserted place and didn't have food. "What am I doing being God when I have you twelve with Me".

**Sound Noble**

The disciples sound noble here but there are probably around 15,000 people (since we are counting 5,000 men, easy to add at least one woman and one child to that number), and you are not going to find lodging and food for 15,000 people in that region in that day. Basically they were saying send them away and let their problem be their problem and not our problem.

**We Think it is Wise Counsel – Really just us not wanting to get Involved**

Sometimes we think we are giving wise counsel of why we can't get involved, but in reality it is just we are looking for a way out of having to get involved, because the would require us to exercise faith, and be inconvenienced (interrupted) from what we want to do. At this point these disciples have had quite the past few weeks, and they were (and still are) looking for a break.

**Luke 9:13 But He said to them, "You give them something to eat." And they said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless we go and buy food for all these people."**

**Luke 9:14 For there were about five thousand men. ....**

**Mark's Account – 200 Denari / Jesus' Ministry met Daily / Gayle Erwin**

Mark's account says they calculate that this would cost 200 denari, which is about a year's worth of wages. So they tell Jesus the nearest MacDonald's is 2,000 years away, and anyways we don't have enough money anyways. One thing this tells me is that Jesus' ministries wasn't abounding with an abundance of money, and that is a good example for us as a church in that we see we need to do what Jesus did, and that is meet with the Heavenly Father every morning and ask for the provisions of the church daily. Pastor Gayle Erwin says churches should demolish their church building and give all their money away every ten years so they have to always be going back to that place they first were seeking the Lord for every need the church has. Many times once a church become established

and settled, they can find themselves just running on routine and not the spirit, not seeking the Lord but checking the checkbook to see if they can or can't do this ministry or that mission trip.

**Mark 6:37 (NKJV)** <sup>37</sup> *But He answered and said to them, "You give them something to eat." And they said to Him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give them something to eat?"*

### **God's Financial Advisor / Money can Paralyze Ministries / Patriots Plaza**

We see here they calculated the cost to be 200 denari, and said we can't meet the need based on the checkbook, and hence they become God's financial advisors. We do that, we can advise God on what can and can't be done based on the checkbook. No one can be more guilty of that than me because my job in the secular world is business management. Money can paralyze a ministry, money can make people say God is not in because the money is not there, or think God is in it because the money is there, and all the while God never said go there and do that. I am not sure where all this is going for our building we are looking to move into; but I hired a Contractor to manage the project, before I went forward on signing the lease I had them evaluate all the County codes, and all the work that would need to be done to meet the codes, and they gave me a worse case quote that I felt we could manage (even though I felt the chances of worst case scenario was unlikely). So based on that information I went forward with the lease because I was very pleased with our monthly rent. Well two weeks ago I get a new quote from the Contractor and the quote doubled, not 10%, not even 25%, but 100%. Double! And guess what, we got all of worst case scenario and then some. I told the Contractor how did you miss it by 100%. I also said if I had that information I would have never gone forward with this lease. Those words rung in my ears shortly thereafter, because I would have said God is not in it had I had those numbers. I would have based what God wanted to do on what the checkbook and wisdom of man best reasoned. God will provide for this church, and God will put us exactly where he wants us to be so we can glorify His, and none of these things shall move me or discourage me nor panic me, because God loves us, God loves the people of this community, and God is simply looking for an opportunity to reach people in need, and do it in such a way that everyone knows it was Him and Him only, and He will provide. He is doing something in each and every one of our lives that is so beyond what we can imagine, and He says don't let your human reasoning get in the way of that, look to me, draw near to me, and watch Me do it. Church, don't resources or reasoning keep you from stepping out in faith.

### **You Feed Them – Sets up to Exhaust the Options / But wants us Part of Solution / I Finally out of Options**

*Verse 13 - Jesus says, you give them something to eat.* He first sets it up that they are not the answer. We have to come to that place first in all our dealings (personally or ministerial) that we can't do it. So then we can come to the place where we look to Him to solve the problem. Jesus wants us to be part of the need, but He doesn't want us to have to figure out the solution on our own. This week in dealing with our building issue with the County of not getting zoned, for the first time concerning the matter I said "Lord I do not know what to do", and I actually knew it was true. I have said it before in my prayer, Lord I do not know what to do, and although I had said it, in the back corner of my mind I knew I had some other options that I could possibly play out (I got to hurry up and get this prayer done so I can start working on my next option). But this week, I came to the place I have no idea what to do, and I know all the options are exhausted, and I totally have no idea what to do.

### **What's in Your Hand**

Beloved, what are five loaves and two fish? It is nothing. But take those five loaves and two fish and put them into the hand of Jesus, and look what they become. Beloved, don't say I have nothing to offer, look Lord I only have a few talents, and a few abilities, what is that in light of all the needs that are before us. God simply says give me what you do have, don't tell Me about what you lack, but what you have, and I will use that.

- Moses what's that in your hand...a rod...great I'll use that...lets go talk to pharaoh.
- David what's that in your hand...a rock and a sling...great I'll use that...lets go kill a giant.
- Peter, James, John what's that in your...a net...great I'll use that...lets go catch some men.
- Matthew what's that in your hand...a pen...great I'll use that...write this down, the greatest story ever told..

**Luke 9:14** For there were about five thousand men. Then He said to His disciples, "Make them sit down in groups of fifty."

**Luke 9:15** And they did so, and made them all sit down.

**Sit Down – This is Faith / They never Read the Story**

Jesus tells the disciples to tell them to sit down in groups of fifty, and the people were probably asking why, and I wonder what the disciples answered (just sit down and you'll find out soon enough). This is an exercise of faith, obedience, because they have no idea what is coming next, remind you they have never read this story before. There is often a time between the doing and the seeing, and it takes trusting Him in doing what He says, and then it takes trust in waiting on waiting to see what He is going to do. It takes no faith to see, but it is all faith to say "sit".

**Luke 9:16 Then He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the multitude.**

**Luke 9:17 So they all ate and were filled, and twelve baskets of the leftover fragments were taken up by them.**

### **Saying Grace / When God prays on our Behalf**

Here is where we get our principle and practice of giving thanks before we eat; but I want you to see something as deep, and that is that when God prays on our behalf, provisions will be met, and your God will be working for you.

*Romans 8:26–27 (NKJV)* <sup>26</sup> Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. <sup>27</sup> Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

### **Next Verse – Romans 8:28**

The next verse we all know, is Romans 8:28, that all things work together for good. I think 8:28 means more to us when we consider that it is at the end of, and in the context of, that the Spirit is interceding on our behalf.

*Romans 8:28–30 (NKJV)* <sup>28</sup> And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. <sup>29</sup> For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. <sup>30</sup> Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

### **The Verb – Present Perfect Tense / When God's Hands Move for You**

It says and He broke the bread and gave the bread, and the verb tense for the word there for "broke" and gave in the Greek is in the present perfect tense, which means "to continually break, and "to continually give". There is a miracle of creation happening here, as each time He broke the bread the bread replenished itself in His hands. When God's hands move for you, mighty things are going to happen for you. I want you to see a deeper spiritual meaning in this story, for in every miracle in the Bible there is a spiritual application for us, and that is that Jesus is the "Bread of Life", and every time He broke the bread and gave the bread we see a picture and promise of Jesus continually giving Himself to all who will receive Him. Jesus gives us the picture and promise of Himself continually giving, and giving, and giving, and this is the God who calls you His son/daughter, this is the God that is you Father in Heaven who loves you and cherishes you – who wants to give Himself to you.

*John 6:35 (NKJV)* <sup>35</sup> And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

**Luke 9:17 So they all ate and were filled, and twelve baskets of the leftover fragments were taken up by them.**

### **All Filled – Fattened / Thanksgiving**

They all ate to they were abundantly filled, the word can mean "fattened", it is what we call Thanksgiving!

### **Only Miracle all 4 Gospels / Need to be Reminded Again-Again**

Miracle indeed; interestingly this is the only one of Jesus' miracles that is recorded in all four gospels, the only one. Reason being because this is a lesson that we His disciples need to learn and be reminded of, again and again.

### **Christian when Faced with Impossible – Why we Spend all that Energy / He King of this Kingdom**

Christian, when we come face-to-face with impossible situations, why do we spend all that time and energy trying to figure it out on our own, coaching God in many cases, when what we need to do is turn over the limited resources we have to Him, and say Lord this is your problem, for I am your problem, for I am a citizen in Your Kingdom, and You take care of all the needs of those who are part of Your Kingdom.

### **Jesus bought Us – We His Possession**

Jesus has bought us, with a tremendous price, and we are His possession and He will take care of all that is His.

## The Name of God – The Becoming One

Jesus demonstrates the He will provide. In the Old Testament when Moses asked the Lord who shall I tell the Children of Israel (who were in bondage of slavery in Egypt at the time) sent me, basically what is Your Name. God said tell them “I Am who I Am” has sent you. That name translates into, the “becoming one”, is coming for them. God is the Coming One”, and He wants to become to us all that we need, both physically and spiritually. *Exodus 3:14 And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”*

## Names of God

Through the Old Testament God uses compound names to display His nature and character to us, to show us, to speak to us all that He want to become to us. Beloved, this is your God, the God who loves you and cares for every detail of your life.

- Jehovah Jireh - (Genesis 22:14) - The Lord God our Provider / The Lord that Sees
- Jehovah Raphah - (Exodus 15:26) - The Lord God our Healer
- Jehovah Nissi - (Exodus 17:15 - The Lord God our Banner
- Jehovah Shalom - (Judges 6:24) - The Lord God our Peace
- Jehovah Ra - (Psalm 23:1) - The Lord God our Shepherd
- Jehovah Tsidqenuw - (Jeremiah 23:6) - The Lord God our Righteousness
- Jehovah Shammah - (Ezekiel 48:35) - The Lord God our Ever Present One
- Jehovah Maccaddeshcem - (Leviticus 20:8) - The Lord thy Sanctifier
- Jehovah-Sabbaoth - (1 Samuel 1:3) - The Lord of Hosts/Army/Power

## Get your Need into His Hands / Good Shepherd who Cares for You – Moved with Compassion

Christian get your problem/needs out of your hand and into His. Get that stronghold out of your hands and into His, get your marriage out of your hands, get your wayward child out of your hands, get your financial problem, get your health problem, get your sin problem, out of your hand and into His. Whatever impossible situation you find yourself in today, place it in God’s hand and praise Him in advance for what He will do, trusting that you are his, and that He is yours, and He will take care of His precious and prized possession, and that is You, because he is a Good Shepherd that is moved with compassion over your circumstance, and His heart moves Him to get involved in our need (but only if we allow Him and ask Him to). That same power that Jesus used to feed the multitude is available today to meet our physical and spiritual needs. Praise the Lord.

## Jehovah-Jireh / Genesis 22

One last word, and that is the context of Jehovah-Jireh is found in Genesis 22, and we see it is a beautiful shadow/picture of God the Father providing Jesus for the sins of the world. The very same mountain Abraham would take Isaac, is the same mountain (Golgotha) that 2,000 years later Jesus would be crucified, and “God Provided” Himself the Lamb for the sins of the world.

**Genesis 22:1–14 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” <sup>2</sup> Then He said, “Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.” <sup>3</sup> So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. <sup>4</sup> Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. <sup>5</sup> And Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you.” <sup>6</sup> So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together. <sup>7</sup> But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, “My father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” Then he said, “Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” <sup>8</sup> And Abraham said, “My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.” So the two of them went together. <sup>9</sup> Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. <sup>10</sup> And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. <sup>11</sup> But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” So he said, “Here I am.” <sup>12</sup> And He said, “Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.” <sup>13</sup> Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. <sup>14</sup> And Abraham called the name of the place, The-LORD-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, “In the Mount of the LORD it shall be provided.”

## Spare not His Son

For He who did not spare His only Son, will freely give us all things.

**Romans 8:31–32 (NKJV)** <sup>31</sup> What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?



# Who Do Men Say that I Am

## (9:18-26)

### Pick up Cross

Today we come into the passage of Scripture that

*Luke 9:23–26 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. <sup>25</sup> For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? <sup>26</sup> For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father’s, and of the holy angels.

### 8 Chapters / Reveals Heart – Displays Power / Review what we Saw

For eight chapters God has been revealing His heart towards us and all men, He has displayed to us both His power and compassion. Consider what we have seen our compassionate Savior do over these last eight chapters:

- He declared His Mission statement (Luke 4:18-19)
- Heals a Leper (5:12)
- Heals a Paralytic (5:16)
- Tells us He is starting something totally new (new wine into new wineskins) – 5:36
- Heals the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath (6:6)
- Calls the 12, even with all their warts (6:12)
- Teaches the Beatitudes, how His Kingdom is to operate, which is in love (6:20)
- Heals the Centurion’s servant (7:1)
- Raises the Widow’s Son in Nain from the Dead (7:11)
- Allows the prostitute to anoint His feet (7:36)
- Stills the Storm (8:22)
- Cast demons out of Man in Gadarenes (8:26)
- Heals the woman with issue of blood for 12 years (8:41)
- Raises Jairus’ daughter from Dead (8:49)

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”

### A Mission Statement of Love and Compassion – With Power to Do It

His mission statement is a mission statement of love, of compassion, a care for those who are lost, those who are hurting, those who are forgotten, and those who are captive to their sin. He says I have come to set you free, I have come to comfort you, I have come to love you, and I have the heart to do it, and I have the power to do it.

### Chapter 9 brings Shift

For eight wonderful and glorious chapters we have seen His precious heart, his deep love, His awesome power.....and now in chapter 9, the whole book shifts. For eight chapters God says here is my heart, here is what I think towards you..... but then here in chapter 9, with a clear and dramatic shift;

- We will see an increase in confrontations with the religious leaders of the Israel.
- Jesus has been showing His heart, now He will let there be no mistake of His holiness.
- God starts to speak us (His disciples – His followers), and now this is what I am requiring of you.
- Jesus will begin to, and continually develop for the rest of this Gospel, the “Cost of Discipleship”.

### Not for the Faint Hearted

Our studies from here on out will not be for the faint in heart, for the Lord is going to challenge us to lay our lives down, to walk-the-walk, not just have some talk. The Lord wants to make disciples, who are living solely for Him. Are you up to this calling? Is this the life you desire to live? Fire, ice, lukewarm.....for us here today, we begin a journey of fire!

*Luke 9:23–26 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. <sup>25</sup> For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? <sup>26</sup> For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father’s, and of the holy angels.

## **Peter's Confession of Faith**

**Luke 9:18** And it happened, as He was alone praying, that His disciples joined Him, and He asked them, saying, "Who do the crowds say that I am?"

**Luke 9:19** So they answered and said, "John the Baptist, but some say Elijah; and others say that one of the old prophets has risen again."

### **People Confused / All thoughts Fell Short**

Jesus had just performed the mighty miracle of feeding the 5,000, but people were still confused on who Jesus was; some thought He was a great teacher (like John the Baptist), maybe a miracle worker like Elijah was (as they had just saw a tremendous one), or one of the Old Testament prophets (who came to tell the people of Israel how they were to live). Are rather high remarks and regards, but notice all greatly fell short of who He is, for He is God.

### **Still Confused Today / Difference is Living Epistles to Read**

People were confused of who Jesus was then, and they are still confused of who He is today. People are confused on who He is because they don't read this Bible (in its entirety and in its context), and thus they are confused on who He really is, and they miss out on His heart for them, and His ways for them. But the difference today from 2,000 years ago is that Jesus has left His Ambassadors on the earth to represent Him. We are His Living Epistles. **2 Corinthians 3:2-3 (NKJV)** <sup>2</sup> You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; <sup>3</sup> clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.

### **We Ambassadors – bring Clarity to who He Is / Represent Him Accurately – In His Mission Statement**

We are living epistles, we are ambassadors, and people who are confused about Jesus should see clarity of who He is by looking at our lives. In all that we speak, and in all that we do, for our words and actions reveal what is in our heart. We have spent chapters 5-8 learning of His heart and mission statement, and how we are to represent Him. This is His heart, He is moved with compassion, He calls us to be His ambassadors and to represent Him accurately and exactly, and that is with compassion, love, holiness, and truth.

**Luke 4:18-19 (NKJV)** <sup>18</sup> "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

### **Polarized / Every Tweet & Post / Think & Tweet – Faces and Facebook**

Can I give you something to consider in light of all that is happening in our Country, and now the massive use of social media, "think before you tweet", think of faces before you Facebook. Will your 140 characters draw people to Christ or drive them away. Think of the faces who will read your Facebook posts, and consider where they are at with the Lord, and will your post draw them to Him, or away from Him. Everything you post must be in accordance with Luke 4:18-19, and if it is not, then I say as Ambassadors of Christ you have no right to post it. This Chick-fila thing has polarized our Country. Homosexuals feel hated by the Christians, and many Christians really do hate homosexuals. Why would they ever want to investigate Jesus Christ if they start with the position that Jesus hates them. Yet tweet after tweet, post after post, words being spoken that left in their 140 characters sound anything but like the heart of Christ.

### **Start Your Post**

How to start your tweet or post:

- "I care too much to not share this truth with the homosexual", equals 59 characters of your 140.
- "God's ways are to protect and provide for everyone", equals 43 characters of your 140.
- "God loves you, cares deeply for you", equals 35 characters of your 140.
- "He designed us, He knows what is best for us", equals 44 characters of your 140
- "He died for you to have you, not divide you", equals 43 characters of your 140.

### **Posting to More than Friends – Apply His Mission Statement in Every Tweet**

You are not posting to your friends only, you are posting to the whole world to read, regardless of they are on your friends list or not, because people repeat and forward. Apply His mission statement into every tweet and post, display His heart, His compassion, and His passion, (and then His truth), in every "send".

**Luke 9:20 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered and said, “The Christ of God.”**

### **Peter answers Correctly**

Peter answers correctly, You are the Christ of God, the Promised One, and in Matthews account it adds that Peter said, the Son of the Living God.

*Matthew 16:15–16 (NKJV) <sup>15</sup> He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” <sup>16</sup> Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”*

### **Every Person Must Answer**

Every person must answer this question before they die, “who do you say that I am”.

### **When Person Recognizes – What a Life it Becomes**

When a man, a woman, recognize that Jesus is God, that His Word is life, His ways are perfect, what a life it becomes. Here is the story of someone in our fellowship who ask himself the question of who Jesus was.

### **John P. Testimony**

A couple weeks ago, Emil and I talked and he mentioned how I should ask Ray to give my testimony regarding my conversion and full acceptance of Christ. I thought about and just like most other things we think aren't urgent, it was something I put it on the back burner.

*On July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2012*, I had to drive myself to the ER, with my blood pressure going through the roof. They kept me overnight, and ran me through a gauntlet of tests. I had with me my Bible, and have read some verses, but the thoughts of what was going on really preoccupied me, so say the least. I was laying in the bed, and was having one of my many discussions with Jesus. I told Him that I was scared, and wasn't ready to leave my children just yet. Having lost my father when I was 13, I didn't want that for my kids. I said I really need to be there for them and that I didn't think my ministry with them was complete. I prayed, and told Him what was on my heart. And I also prayed and agreed that whatever He decided was best, and that it is all left in His hands. But I was not sure of something. It was a coming to terms moment. I asked if this was all He really expected of me, and if my purpose here was complete. I asked what I was supposed have done, and did I do what He wanted me to do.

The neurologist came in the next morning and told me I experienced a TIA, which is a very mild stroke in patient talk. I never heard of it, but upon further looking into this, it's never a good thing as it is a precursor of what may eventually come. My close friend works at Anne Arundel General Hospital and is a research hound. He asked practioners and the basic agreement is that I'm far more prone to a full blown stroke and without treatment and a dramatic alteration in my lifestyle now, I will most likely have this again, but will most likely be worse. Even with whatever changes I make and how dramatic I make them, I am still prone to a stroke. So now what was on the back burner is now standing before you. And my ability to stand and talk to you all is a clear indication that He's not done with me. And this first step is to ensure my testimony will not go the grave with me. If even just one person eventually accepts Christ because of what He has worked with and done through me, and that was His only purpose with me, then I leave here mission accomplished.

So my story goes back to my father. He was a workaholic, and never really spent with us kids as he would come home for a while, eat dinner, shower up and go out to the bar. He would work 6 days a week as a manager of an Italian restaurant, and his only off day was Tuesdays, so weekend time was out of the question. He was diagnosed with colon cancer in '78. During his treatment, my father started going back to church. He would ask us if we wanted to go, and as there were other young people there, we said sure. During services my father would be on the altar, and would pray with hands up, and would lay hands on people during alter calls. It would be years later, as late as last year, as a matter in fact, that watching him do that would impact me. The cancer would eventually overtake him, and my dad died in 1980.

I still went to church, but eventually stopped going shortly afterward. I really didn't think much about the need to go to church any longer, but it didn't stop my dialogue with God.

Fast forward to college. I started to go to college on a whim (that story for another time), and had taken some writing courses. One such assignment was a really fun one. We had to go back in time to right before we graduated high school, and talk to ourselves. What would you tell yourself with what you know now. I really had a blast, and if I ever find that story, I'll let anyone who's interested have a read! But the one line that the 'future me' told the 'past me' that really stood out was right when they were departing. Future me turned back and said to the past me to never lose my faith.

I was not going to church at the time, and didn't have a relationship with Christ, and thinking about it now makes me think He was there all the time, Past and Present. As I went further into college, I began to read a lot of secularist philosophy, and I began to challenge what I had thought I had known about God and His Word. I could say I was opened minded as I had the Bible and would use it to compare with all the worldly philosophical and scientific minds and go from there. This self-proclaimed, and self-righteous, agnostic embraced the phrase 'the jury is still out as far as God's place in the Universe is concerned'. The Bible eventually became for me little more than print on paper. It had little meaning for me then.

Fast forward to 2003. Working with a major telecom company and married with 2 kids. I would often drive to work with the radio off, and I would 'soft' pray. You know, the 'credit card' prayer where I would ask for something and I'd 'pay Him back sometime soon'. I would also think a lot of God. I tried and tried to wrap my head around Him, and never came close. It was on one sunny afternoon while driving in silence, on Rt 40 Northbound that I was thinking about God, and that how imperfect our math is, and how limit our language is, and we don't have much of a baseline for the truths with the little 't's that we couldn't even begin to tackle the Truth with the big 'T'. On that morning, I finally said: "You are beyond any possible way that we can ever fully describe or even fully understand You". And in that very moment, I felt a faint sliver of contentment knowing that He is something I will never fully figure out. And the very next moment, the most soothing and sweet voice, distinctively male, spoke over my right shoulder, near my ear, asking "Now do you see?". It's at this point that usually reminds me of the song 'What if God was one of us', specifically the verse:

*'If God had a face what would it look like  
And would you want to see  
If seeing meant that you would have to believe  
In things like heaven and in Jesus and the saints and all the prophets'.*

It's a dividing point. Speaking from the secularist mind, if He's there, and I see Him, then everything about what is written has to be true, and there is no way you can bend it or hide from it, and no attorney is going to get me an acquittal. I didn't have to see Him. I just heard Him, like I hear anyone else speak, as clearly and as audibly as now. I felt convicted. I was terrified. I immediately broke down, clutching on the steering wheel for life, and not even wanting to look over my right shoulder. Like Adam, I hid. I ran. I drove into the office, and just packed it away as deep as I possibly could and immediately immersed myself in the regular routine of daily work. I wanted to forget about this as fast as it happened. I never spoke about this to anyone for years.

So fast forward to 2009. Married, with 4 children, working for a mortgage broker, and the money is just not there. There was also conflict in our marriage, and no matter what I tried to do, I just couldn't make things better. I used to say that God brought me to my knees to make me realize going my own way wasn't going to work. But it wasn't God. It was my own pride that led me away from Him. My separation is what brought me to my knees.

It was in November and we were staring down the Holiday season approaching fast. We didn't have money to buy a turkey for Thanksgiving much less think about Christmas gifts. On one particular mild November Sunday, my 3 oldest kids were all calling for me to jump with them on the trampoline. If you don't know me, I'm the type who is the 'trampoline-type' of dad, the type that doesn't mind being ridiculous for the laughter of little ones. My kids were constantly saying 'Jump Daddy! Jump with us!'. Usually, I did. But this one particular day, my wife and I were fighting, and although I climbed into the trampoline, I just couldn't get on my feet to jump. I just laid there, and the little ones just jumped around me. Shortly afterward, my wife called the kids in as they were heading over to her parents' house for the day. The kids left the trampoline to get ready to leave, and I just laid there, looking up at the sky. I felt so incredibly alone, and so insignificant and so like I just played the very card in my deck. I didn't have anything left in me. Still lying on the trampoline, I looked up in that sky, and with a defeated sense of defiance, I called out to God. I told Him I know I heard Him in the past, but I got to know that He's still there, and right now. I

need a sign not tomorrow, but today, right now. I didn't hear anything this time. Or see anything. And after seeing the van drive off with my family to a place I wasn't invited, I just got up, and made my way back into my house.

Okay, I thought, "Maybe not today - Maybe not me". I don't know and it's just not in me to fight anymore. I made my way into a silent living room, with toys still scattered and just sat down on the couch in silence. The curtains were still closed, so it was dark, and I was alone, and didn't know what to do anymore. About maybe five minutes later, I saw my older sister Jean through the split in the curtain, and she knocked on the door. Jean lives about 20 minutes away, and doesn't pass through my area without a reason. Jean is an avid Believer, and as a non-believer, it was sometimes nice to see her, and sometimes the feeling of defending the pending onslaught of bible-beating was in order for the day. I answered the door, and she looked at me, and asked how I was doing. I just said come in, and went back to the couch. She did, we got to talking, and she listened patiently to what I unloaded on her. After a couple minutes of silence, she asked: Don't you think it's time to let Him in?"

I thought: Great, another thing on my plate. I have so much stuff to do already, and now I have to worry about being with Jesus and doing all the things I gotta do for that. I said I'm just not ready, I've got too much to do, and I can't right now, but I will. We talked a little more and she asked again, this time telling me He wants me, baggage, warts and all. And again, I refused as I just couldn't see how I could be a good Christian with all my failures going on around me.

But with each time my sister asked, I started feeling like my resistance was weakening. I eventually found myself off the couch and sitting on the floor. I've gotten to the lowest point of my living room, and my life. And I finally looked around the room, and thinking about everything I have and the thought came to me: *"Is what I have right now so terrific that I can't let Him in my life to share it?"*. I finally said, ok. And with my sister praying over me, I accepted Jesus, the Son of God, as my Savior. My sister and I talked more afterward, and she left me with some books (I still had a Bible or two collecting dust around the home), and she left. I never said anything to my wife at that time, or anyone else. I just started reading the Bible, and some commentaries.

About a week or two later my wife came home with flier she pulled from an announcement board at Giants in Severna Park. It was an invitation for a birthday for Jesus at some place in Pasadena. It was something for the kids to do for free, and I was looking for a church to start going to, so I thought this looks like a good idea. The first person I met was Emil. He struck as one of the sweetest guys in the world, and he was trying to get the place decorated in a hurry. I asked to help and he let me. I also met Sandy, and she was helping with the kids, and when it went in full swing, I just stepped back and watched everything, and it felt like I wanted to see these same people again. It started to snow, and I looked out one of the windows with an assurance that I haven't felt in a long time. And a little joy...

It was about time to go, and I was collecting things, a very nice lady asked if I met Ray. He had just arrived and I thought she was introducing me to the sergeant at arms, all pumped up and all. We spoke briefly and I had to leave. I took with us the gift of the Jesus Movie, and also the invitation to Calvary Chapel Church, and well, here I am...almost 3 years later. What He's done for me since then has been amazing, and He's brought me in a place that I can talk to Him every day and there is a joy I experience that I've never had before I accepted Him.

*So my story continues.* And for anyone reading or listening to this now, who ever thought you had to 'know' that you were 'right' before accepting Jesus, or are waiting for this one piece of information that will solidify your conviction in Him before you accept Him, I walked in your shoes, and I came to understand that we are indeed the clay pots trying to figure out the potter who made us. – *John P*

### **Every Person Must Answer – Who do you Say He Is?**

Every person must answer this question before they die, "who do you say that I am". What sayest you?

**Luke 9:21 And He strictly warned and commanded them to tell this to no one,**

**Luke 9:22 saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day."**

**Jesus always spoke of Resurrection when Spoke of His Death / The Power of Gospel is in Resurrection**

One thing to note throughout the Scriptures is that every time Jesus spoke of His death, He also spoke of His resurrection. Jesus never spoke of His death without His resurrection. We need to apply that same principal when we share with people about Him, for anyone can die, but only God could raise from the dead. The resurrection is proof that God the Father accepted the sacrifice, the trade, that Jesus took our place in death, He took our penalty for breaking God's Holy Law. And that power that raised Christ from the dead is available to work in our lives, and is a demonstration that He has the power to change our lives.

*2 Corinthians 5:20–21 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup> For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

*Ephesians 1:18–20 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, <sup>19</sup> and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power <sup>20</sup> which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

### **Don't Tell Anyone about Death / 12 months from Cross / Jesus Preparing their Hearts**

So Jesus isn't saying don't tell people I am not the Christ, but don't tell them that I am going to be killed. Right now this is private information for the disciples only, Jesus is preparing them for the cross which is about 12 months away at this point. Jesus is preparing their hearts and mind of this concept first, because they will be the ones that will carry the gospel forward after the cross, and He wants them to say on the other side of the cross that Jesus said this would happen, and He said He would raise again on the third day, so they could comfort those who mourned after His death.

### **Protecting their Faith – In Advance**

But Jesus isn't just preparing them to comfort and protect others faith, but He is doing the same for them. God always is doing that in your life whether you realize it or not; He is preparing you well in advance of things to come, before they come, so when they come, you are prepared and you don't lose faith, you don't lose hope.

### **True Cost of Discipleship**

**Luke 9:23** Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

**Luke 9:24** For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.

**Salvation is Free.....but Discipleship will cost you your life!**

### **4 Things a Disciple Does**

Jesus gives four things a disciple is to do:

- **Desire to Come** - If anyone desires to come – Jesus says "if a person desires to", He leaves it up to them if they want to come, as He doesn't force anyone to come. Discipleship starts with a decision.
- **Deny Self** – means to forget one's self, lose sight of one's self and one's own interests.
- **Take up the Cross Daily** – means more than it does today, but when a person picked up a cross in those times they carried it to their death, and they carried it through the most crowded streets, and they were put on display of their guilt. And notice the word daily, as it is a call for moment-by-moment, not a one-time profession.
- **Follow Him** – Where did Jesus go? To do the will of the Father, even to the point of death. But notice, that Jesus never spoke of His death without speaking of His resurrection, and notice that He doesn't speak to His disciples to die to self until after He spoke of His death and His resurrection, for the only way a person can die to self and live unto Him, is through His death and His resurrection power. How do we follow Jesus, by studying this Bible and following Him through it, and seeing what He did, and applying those principals to our lives personally and daily.

*Philippians 1:21 (NKJV)* <sup>21</sup> For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

### **Are You a Disciple?**

Based on these four, would you consider yourself one of His disciples?

**Luke 9:24** For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.

**Luke 9:25 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?**

**Luke 9:26 For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels.**

### **3 Stumbling Blocks to Discipleship**

Jesus gives three stumbling blocks that will keep people from becoming a disciple.

- **Self Will** – trying to do things our way, our will be done, regardless of God's word.
- **Worldly Gain** – trying to get all we can out of this world. I am reminded of the story of the evil king who called his blacksmith to his throne, and said he wanted him to make the strongest and shiniest chain man has ever seen. The blacksmith was thrilled to be given such a task by the king himself, he proud that the king recognized his talents and worth, and diligently set off to make such a chain. He made the chain strong and he made the chain shine with the sweat of his brow. When he brought it to the king the king immediately said no it is too long, shorten it. So the blacksmith shortened it and brought it back, and the king immediately again said too long, shorten it. This went on several more times over several more weeks, until the chain was only a few feet long. The man brought it to the king and showed him once again, and the king said perfect! Then the king said now chain one end to my throne, and the other to your ankle, and give me the key. So it is as we fight and sweat for worldly gain, placing all our efforts and hopes into it, only to find ourselves in the end chained to it, no longer free, bound to a throne that is not of the good king, but the evil king. Paul would say (Phil 3:8) that all the things of this world are dung. Do you what dung is, it is what remains after all the good has been extracted. The good are all the things of God and His word, the remains, are the things of this world that enchain us keep us away from Him. God knows how we are designed, thus He knows what is best for us. The world puts value on the things that are not, and considers valueless the things which are (the things of God), the world puts value on the things that are opposite of God, while demoting and denouncing the things and people of God. This world has nothing for you, why struggle to gain it?
- **Ashamed of Him** – because they care what the world thinks of them. I'd rather be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord, then an exalted prince in this world.

*Luke 22:41–42 (NKJV) <sup>41</sup> And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, <sup>42</sup> saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done."*

*Philippians 3:8 (KJV 1900) <sup>8</sup> Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,*

*Psalms 84:10–11 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God Than dwell in the tents of wickedness. <sup>11</sup> For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD will give grace and glory; No good thing will He withhold From those who walk uprightly.*

### **If Jesus is not God – then live it Up**

If Jesus is not God, then live for all you can get out of this world, because why be good, why deny self, why go without, when in the end we go into the ground. But if Jesus is God, if He is who He says He is, then there is only one way to live, the way He said for us to live. There is no in between!

- **Desire to Come**
- **Deny Self**
- **Take up the Cross Daily**
- **Follow Him**

### **When Person Recognizes – What a Life it Becomes**

When a man, a woman, recognize that Jesus is God, that His Word is life, His ways are perfect, what a life it becomes.

# *The Transfiguration*

## *(9:27-36)*

### ***The Transfiguration***

**Luke 9:27** But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the kingdom of God.”

#### **Pickup v.27 / Comes after 2 Stunning Statements**

We pick up our study here in verse 27, the passage of scripture before us where Jesus will literally change in appearance (He will glisten and shine – from the inside out), and we will study why and what it means to us. This transfiguration comes shortly after Jesus made two stunning statements to His disciples; one being that He would die, but raise again on the third day, and two – that all who would follow Him would have to die to themselves.

*Luke 9:20–22 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered and said, “The Christ of God.” <sup>21</sup> And He strictly warned and commanded them to tell this to no one, <sup>22</sup> saying, “The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.”

*Luke 9:23–26 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. <sup>25</sup> For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? <sup>26</sup> For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father’s, and of the holy angels.

#### **Last Study**

In our last study we saw:

4 Requirements to be a Disciple:

- *Desire to Come*
- *Deny Self*
- *Take up the Cross Daily*
- *Follow Him*

3 Stumbling Blocks that Keep people from becoming Disciples:

- *Self-Will*
- *Worldly Gain*
- *Ashamed of Jesus and His Word*

#### **I’m Going to Die – Pierce the Heart / Their Friend / I Have Cancer**

Jesus saying He was going to die would be shocking; these disciples who had been with Him for close to two years would be stunned. And, the manner of death that He would die would pierce their heart. This is Jesus, they recognize who He is (God in the flesh), but this is Jesus – their friend, someone nearer than a brother. They walked together, they laughed together, they confided in Him, they absolutely loved Him. And now, He for the first time He tells them that He is going to die, and not just any death but a violent death at that. Maybe you have been there, many of you have I know personally, that moment in time when someone oh so dear to you came to you and said, “it is cancer”, and your world just seemed to rock, jolt, shake, time seems to stop, you can actually feel gravity pressing in upon, your mind races 1,000 miles an hour, yet is not moving. You hear what they are saying but your mind can’t comprehend it totally. What do you mean, you look great, are you sure, there must be some mistake. Immediately your mind goes into rescue mode, as you think of cures and escapes from the destructive disease. This is Jesus, the one in whom they loved saying in essence, “I have cancer”, and they are stunned.

#### **Shock 2 – And you Must Die Too / Not Conquering King – but Suffering Savior**

But then, if the shock wasn’t enough, Jesus brings the awe, and He says “and you must die too”. Wait, wait Jesus we thought you came to establish Your Kingdom on earth, remember the Sermon on the Mount, we thought you came to overthrow the tyranny of the Roman Empire – Conquering King remember? Their mind can’t grasp that it is “Suffering Savior”.

### **Now the Transfiguration – See Jesus Glory / Glimpse of Resurrection / Why you can Sell Out**

So this next event, the transfiguration, is vital in their understanding and ours even today. Jesus will show them a glimpse of what is to come by and because of His dying, of Him being the Suffering Savior. They will see Jesus in glory, literally and visibly, the radiance of God emanating from Him. Jesus will give them a glimpse of the resurrected life that He said would be, and that we would have, they would see the life to be in Heaven. Jesus will show them, and show us, why we can sell-out for Him, why we can live fully devoted to Him, and say no to the temporary pleasures that this world has to offer.

**Luke 9:28** Now it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, that He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray.

### **The Lord will let us Struggle / Keep Walking and Talking – He will Show / Mind-Time Invested**

Jesus give them eight days to struggle with these statements. He does that for them, and will do it for us, so we can fully process the issue, see the gravity of the situation, and then His clarity of that struggle will be more meaningful and powerful. So don't despair if you are seeking answers and clarity on a particular issue in your life, keep walking with Him, talking with Him, and keep your eyes and ears open tuned in to Him, for He will speak and bring clarity. In fact He is so good to us, He will even awake us to make sure we don't miss it, as we will see these three sleeping in the prayer meeting, but they will be awoken to see and hear. I know in my personal life (work or home), it is when I am struggling to understand something, that no one is telling me the answer, that I invest a lot of mind-time thinking everything through to come to an understanding and application. And once I get it, I really got, it is in me, and I can apply it readily and I can teach others how to apply it themselves.

**Luke 9:29** As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe became white and glistening.

**Luke 9:30** And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah,

**Luke 9:31** who appeared in glory and spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

### **Transfigured – Metamorphous / Matthews Account**

In Matthew's account it says Jesus was "transfigured", and the Greek word there is "metamorphoo", it is where we get our word "metamorphous". It means to change into another form. We use the word when we speak of a caterpillar changing into a butterfly. When metamorphous happens, it happens from the inside out. Jesus is changing from the inside out, and is radiant; there is an out-shinning from Him.

*Matthew 17:2 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup> and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.*

### **Moses – the Law / Elijah – the Prophets**

With Him are Moses and Elijah, and Moses throughout the Scriptures represent the Law (as the Commandments of God were given through him), and Elijah represents the prophets (and the prophets all pointed to the coming Messiah).

### **Decease – Exodus / What will Happen in Jerusalem? – Death & Resurrection / Jesus Fulfills – Matt 5:17**

The Greek word for "decease" is exodos. I like that word as a description of death. And who better than Moses to talk about an exodus (the one who led the children of Israel from the bondages of slavery – and here Jesus will lead all who will come from the bondages of sin and death)?! They are talking about what is going to happen in Jerusalem, which is the cross, but also the resurrection. They talked about what was going to be accomplished in Jerusalem, and that was that Jesus would be the fulfillment of the promised Messiah that was forth told by the prophets, and that Jesus would confirm that the Law of God is good, and it is His holy standard by which all men will be judged. The Law condemned us, just as Moses delivered it, but Jesus could deliver us from that judgment just as the prophets declared He could and would.

*Matthew 5:17–20 (NKJV) <sup>17</sup> "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. <sup>18</sup> For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. <sup>19</sup> Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>20</sup> For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.*

### **Notice – They are in Perfect Unity**

Notice something here, and that is that Moses, Elijah, and Jesus are in perfect unison, there is no tension or contention between the three of them, they are in perfect unity. The Law shows man's guilt, and the Messiah offers man a way to escape the penalty of that guilt, which is eternal separation from God (spiritual death).

**Romans 3:20 (NKJV)** <sup>20</sup> *Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

**Galatians 3:19–20 (NKJV)** <sup>19</sup> *What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. <sup>20</sup> Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one.*

### **Why Picture Unity Important to Us / People will Argue**

Why is this important to us, why is this picture of unity between the Law, the Prophets, and the Messiah? Because people will argue today that the Law has passed, we are no longer under it, it is all grace and thus no worries of keeping His commands and obeying His words because He understands and forgives (not so, Matthew 5:17 – John 15:22). Others will argue that we are still under the Law, and if you mess up then you probably are not saved (not so, 1 John 1:9). These three are in perfect unity, and the unity says the commands of God are still His ways we are to live, but there is grace to cover our failings, and power to give us victory over our failings (Romans 6:1-4).

**Matthew 5:17 (NKJV)** <sup>17</sup> *“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.*

**John 15:22 (NKJV)** <sup>22</sup> *If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.*

**1 John 1:9 (NKJV)** <sup>9</sup> *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

**Romans 6:1–4 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? <sup>2</sup> Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? <sup>3</sup> Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? <sup>4</sup> Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

### **Let there be no Confusion / Jesus Stunned Them – I Die & so Too Must You**

Listen, let there be no confusion, when Jesus stunned them by saying not only am I going to die, but you have to also, He was absolutely serious. Salvation is free, but discipleship (to follow Him) will cost you your life. If you are a disciple, there is no in-between living. You are called to die to yourself, your self-wants, your personal gains, and you are to be led by Him, and thus His Word is how you are to live (every word of it). There is no in-between. If you think you can disobey God's word because grace will cover you, you deceive yourself. Jesus for eight chapters shows His heart and compassion for us, He allows the prostitute to touch Him, He desires to touch the leper, the outcast, the shamed, He declares His mission statement (Luke 4:18-19) of love and compassion for the lost and hurting; but here in chapter 9 we see a dramatic shift, and from this point on Jesus starts His march towards Jerusalem, and nothing will stop Him from accomplishing all things in Jerusalem. And, now He tells all that desire to be disciples, let nothing stop you from following Me.

**Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)** <sup>18</sup> *“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”*

### **Cost of Discipleship**

4 Requirements to be a Disciple:

- *Desire to Come*
- *Deny Self*
- *Take up the Cross Daily*
- *Follow Him*

3 Stumbling Blocks that Keep people from becoming Disciples:

- *Self-Will*
- *Worldly Gain*
- *Ashamed of Jesus and His Word*

**Luke 9:23–26 (NKJV)** <sup>23</sup> *Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. <sup>25</sup> For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? <sup>26</sup> For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels.*

## **No In Between / Salvation - Discipleship**

Beloved, there is no in-between, it is all or nothing!

*Salvation is Free – but Discipleship will cost you your Life!*

### **Jim Elliot – at 22**

I am reminded of what Jim Elliot said (who was martyred for his faith in the mission field of Ecuador): “*He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep, to gain what he cannot lose*”. He said that because so many of his friends challenged him for being so bright and intelligent and that he was throwing it all away by becoming a missionary. What is so powerful is that he wrote this and he said this at the age of 22. He also wrote “*Lord, take my blood, my life, my all, just let my life account for something*”. At 22 years old. He also wrote in his journal, “*Lord I ask not for a long life, but for a full one like yours*”. At 22 years old. How about we say that today? How about we ask the same to the Lord today and see what He will do over the next few months as we study this book?

### **Here is why you Can**

And in the next verses, here is why we can live as such, because our future is secure and sure.

**Luke 9:32 But Peter and those with him were heavy with sleep; and when they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men who stood with Him.**

**Luke 9:33 Then it happened, as they were parting from Him, that Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah”—not knowing what he said.**

**Luke 9:34 While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were fearful as they entered the cloud.**

**Luke 9:35 And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!”**

### **Let’s make Memorial – Didn’t know what to Say**

Peter says let’s stay here, this is awesome place to be, let’s make a memorial and just hang out here and remember the awesome day we have had. Peter missed the point that Jesus must descend this mount, in order to climb another mount, and accomplish all things in Jerusalem.

*Luke 9:20–22 (NKJV) <sup>20</sup> He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered and said, “The Christ of God.” <sup>21</sup> And He strictly warned and commanded them to tell this to no one, <sup>22</sup> saying, “The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.”*

### **For All who have Relocated**

Well, I think it appropriate for me to make this point seeing that we have so many new people here at the church who have relocated because of work. Look I know how different this area is from where you came from, and I know how wonderful it was where you were before, but God wants you to hear these words, don’t stay back there and build a monument. Don’t stay back there remembering how great it was, what a moment it was, and how special it was, because God now wants you to go down from the mountain, and pour yourself out to the people below. I love looking at the picture of Yosemite Falls that I took while I was there, as God spoke to me clearly about it, and said this is the life I want you to live, climb the mountain with me to meet with Me, and then pour yourself out like a waterfall to the world below. Be gushing rivers of living waters that you drank in from Me while we communion on the mount.

*John 7:38 (NKJV) <sup>38</sup> He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”*

### **Jesus could have Walked into Heaven**

Now.....I believe this transfiguration, this glowing, was the original intent of the Father for each of us. That is, I believe that had man lived perfectly without sinning in the Garden of Eden, we too would have been transfigured at some point and taken directly to heaven. But that’s not what happened to Adam and Eve. And that’s not what happens to you and me. We sin, so we die. We don’t glow; we rot. We don’t shine awesomely; we start to fall apart physically because the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). At this point, Jesus could have launched straight into heaven. But He didn’t. He would go down the Mount of Transfiguration in order that He might climb the Mount of Calvary in order to die for you and me.

*Romans 6:23 (NKJV) <sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

### **The Glory of God through the Ages**

Jesus denied Himself glory, so that we might see and have His glory. This glory goes deep, and has such a meaning for each of us. The glory of this transfiguration has been seen before:

- **Pillar of Glory** - Israel first saw this when they left Egypt and headed for the Red Sea. “By day the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night” (Exodus 13:21). God palpably demonstrated his presence by a pillar-shaped cloud that radiated a fiery luminosity upon the setting of the sun. It was spectacular, to say the least!
- **Moses and God’s Glory** - The most intimate encounter with this glorious cloud in the Old Testament was experienced by Moses when he received the Law on stone tablets for the second time (Exodus 33–34). Originally Moses had dashed the stone tablets to pieces when he found Israel worshipping a golden calf (cf. Exodus 32:19). Afterward Moses, profoundly discouraged, would regularly go into the “tent of meeting” to seek God, and the pillar of cloud would come down and stand at the entrance of the tent (cf. Exodus 33:7–11). On one occasion Moses prayed, “Now show me your glory”—and God did (cf. Exodus 33:18). As Exodus 33–34 recounts the story, Moses again chiseled out two stone tablets and ascended high on Sinai, where the Lord came down in the cloud. God then closeted Moses in a cleft in the rock, covered with the divine hand, and the dazzling glory of God passed by while the voice of God proclaimed his own goodness (cf. Exodus 33:19–23; 34:5–7). When God’s luminous presence had passed by, the divine hand was lifted, and Moses saw the Lord’s back (cf. 33:23). Moses saw the afterglow of God’s presence. Smitten, Moses remained there forty days without eating or drinking as he inscribed the Law as God dictated it (cf. Exodus 34:28). When Moses descended Sinai holding the two tablets, he was unaware that his face was radiant with God’s glory (cf. Exodus 34:29–35).
- **Tabernacle Glory** - Of course, Moses’ radiance soon began to fade, and in time God created two successive physical repositories for his glory. The first was the tabernacle, a tent so minutely prescribed in Exodus that every fiber, texture, color, and shape was made according to a divine blueprint that God told to Moses. The glories of the tabernacle conclude the book of Exodus, with the Shekinah glory, in the heart of the pillar, hovering over the tent: “Then the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. Moses could not enter the Tent of Meeting because the cloud had settled upon it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle” (Exodus 40:34, 35). The glory lodged in the heart of the tabernacle, the Holy of Holies, where Aaron entered only once a year with the blood of the Passover lamb.
- **Temple Glory** - As the centuries passed, the tabernacle was lovingly assembled and reassembled by the Kohathites, Gershonites, and Merarites and transported from place to place in the wilderness and during the wars for Canaan and then the settlement. The time finally came for Solomon’s great temple to be built. Second Chronicles tells us, when Solomon finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. The priests could not enter the temple of the Lord because the glory of the Lord filled it. When all the Israelites saw the fire coming down and the glory of the Lord above the temple, they knelt on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave thanks to the Lord, saying, “He is good; his love endures forever.” (7:1–3; cf. 1 Kings 8:10, 11). As Solomon lifted his arms to Heaven, he prayed, “But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!” (1 Kings 8:27). Solomon knew that God could not be contained by the universe, but he also knew his glory was there—luminous and good in its moral beauty.
- **Ichabod—No Glory** - But Israel’s history sadly reveals that men came to use the temple to glorify themselves rather than God. The tragic irony is that this began with Solomon himself, as we see in the reaction of the queen of Sheba to the magnificence of the temple, when the queen of Sheba saw the wisdom of Solomon, as well as the palace he had built, the food on his table, the seating of his officials, the attending servants in their robes, the cupbearers in their robes and the burnt offerings he made at the temple of the LORD, she was overwhelmed. She said to the king, “The report I heard in my own country about your achievements and your wisdom is true. But I did not believe what they said until I came and saw with my own eyes. Indeed, not even half the greatness of your wisdom was told me; you have far exceeded the report I heard.” (2 Chronicles 9:3–6). The temple, created to be a house where God’s glory was manifested, had degenerated into a prop for human glory. Over the years, despite some bright spots, the slide continued until some 400 years later seventy elders of the house of Israel assembled in the temple—each in front of his own painted idol and each offering incense to it (cf. Ezekiel 8:7–16). The very walls of the temple had been painted with “all kinds of crawling things and detestable animals and all the idols of the house of Israel” (v. 10). The glory was about to leave the temple! Ezekiel’s vision in chapter 10 records

that unforgettable departure. Four awesome cherubim (angels of God's presence) assembled on the south side of the temple. Each had four faces and four wings, so they could move in any direction without turning. Beneath each angel there was a turning wheel completely filled with eyes (v. 12). These were called the "whirling wheels" (v. 13). In the expanse above the angels was something that looked like "a throne of sapphire" (v. 1). As the cherubim took their places on the temple's south side, the Shekinah glory filled the inner court, then rose above the cherubim engulfing the sapphire throne (v. 3). Then the glory moved to the door of the temple's threshold, filling everything with "the radiance of the glory of the LORD" (v. 4). The roar of the cherubim's wings was "like the voice of God Almighty when he speaks" (v. 5). "Then," as Ezekiel tells it, "the glory of the LORD departed from over the threshold of the temple and stopped above the cherubim. While I watched, the cherubim spread their wings and rose from the ground, and as they went, the wheels went with them. They stopped at the entrance to the east gate of the LORD's house, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them" (10:18, 19). As Ezekiel's eyes moved upward, he saw the four spinning wheels rotating ominously, and over them the four winged cherubim suspended, their wings drumming the air like colossal hummingbirds, and above them floated the dazzling glory of God. The glory was moving slowly away to the east and upward from the city where it had lingered above the Mount of Olives—and then it was gone (cf. 11:23)! Ichabod!—the glory had departed (cf. 1 Samuel 4:19–22). For the next 600 years, though the temple was destroyed and rebuilt and rebuilt again, and though godly men and women came and went, the glory was not seen once!

- **New Testament Glory** – But now we come to the delicacies of the New Testament, especially as they are presented in Luke's Gospel. On a cold winter's night the trembling hands of a carpenter, wet with the blood of birth, held his steaming son in the starlight. "And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified" (Luke 2:8, 9). The glory had returned in the person of Jesus Christ and was reflected in the panorama of an announcing angel! As the shepherds cowered under the dazzling radiance, a vast company of magnificent angels in festal array outshone the winter constellations. They were "praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest ...'" (v. 13). Ichabod ("the glory has departed") was replaced by "the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). There were flashes of his glory at the Advent. But during the next thirty years, as the Son quietly approached his bar mitzvah and grew into the full maturity of his manhood, the glory was veiled. Even after he began his public ministry there was no manifestation of the Shekinah glory. But as his ministry progressed there was an intensifying revelation of who he was. Luke 8–9 successively shows him as the Lord of nature calming the storm, Lord of supernature casting out a legion of demons, Lord of life healing the sick and raising the dead, Lord of creation feeding the 5,000, and the Messiah of God as announced in Peter's great confession.
- **Peter's confession—"The Christ of God"** (v. 20b)—answering Jesus' question, "Who do you say I am?" (v. 20) was supremely wonderful. But Jesus' enigmatic warning—"The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life" (v. 22)—filled them with confusion, as did his hard words about their having to bear crosses themselves (cf. vv. 23–26). But at the transfiguration of Christ his self-revelation would peak—and with it, his disciples' encouragement.

### **Every Disciple – Will be Metamorphous / We are Temple of Living God**

And now everyone of us who are His disciples, we will one experience this same metamorphous, whether by age, accident, or circumstance of the Rapture, and we will be physically transformed (1 Cor 15:51-53). But as much so, right now, we can experience His glory in us, we can be metamorphosed from the inside out, we can have the power live the "disciple life" that He calls, because the Old Testament Temple has been restored, because we are now the temples of the Living God, and therefore since He dwells in us, that means the glory of God, the Shekinah Glory dwells in us.

**1 Corinthians 15:51–53 (NKJV)** <sup>51</sup> Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— <sup>52</sup> in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. <sup>53</sup> For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

**2 Corinthians 6:16 (NKJV)** <sup>16</sup> And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people."

**Luke 9:36 When the voice had ceased, Jesus was found alone. But they kept quiet, and told no one in those days any of the things they had seen.**

### **Remained Quiet – Lots to think About**

They remained quiet, told no one, imagine trying to explain that one. They have a lot to think through, they have had quite the last week; feeding of the five thousand, Jesus saying He will suffer a violent death but then raise again on the third day, and that they were called to die themselves, and then they see the metamorphous of Jesus.

### **The Transfiguration Happened – Will Happen Again / How do we Apply this Today?**

The transfiguration is true, it is real, it happened, and it will happen again and again to each of us in this room. That leaves us a lot to think about. What does it all mean to us, how do we apply it, how does it change us from the inside out right now today?

### **Jesus says Follow Him – Where do we Follow? / Down the Hill to Jerusalem / Hostile World Waiting**

Jesus says if anyone wants to come after Me, deny themselves, pick up the cross daily, and follow Me. Where do we follow Jesus from when He leaves this mountain top, all the way to Jerusalem, the rest of this book is a march on to Jerusalem. Jesus will face hostile opposition from the religious leaders, and then endure the cross at their hands. How could Jesus leave that mountain top, because he knew the metamorphous was real, and that the resurrection would be true too.

### **His Teachings are Radical – Because what He knew was True / Teachings opposite of the World**

That is why His teaching are and were so radical, because He knew these things to be true. These teachings of His are so opposite the world,

- as the world says get, and Jesus says give,
- the world says fill yourself up, and Jesus says empty yourself out,
- the world says lookout for number one, Jesus says be last,
- the world says live for yourself, Jesus says die to yourself.

All these can be summed up into one phrase from the Sermon on the Mount, and that is the meek shall inherit the earth. Do you want to inherit the world right now, be meek, be gentle, be yielding; meekness means power under control. Jesus had all power of the universe at His disposal, yet He had it all under control. How could Jesus come down from that mountain knowing what awaited Him, how did He not fight back? Because He knew He was right in His Father's sight, He knew that He was God's Beloved Son, and He knew the resurrection, the metamorphous would be real and true.

*Matthew 5:5 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup> Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth.*

### **Listen to His Son / You Do not have to Fight**

Listen Beloved of God, listen to His Son speak to your heart today, you do not have to fight anymore. You don't have to fight in your marriage anymore, you don't have to fight for gain at work, you don't have to fight with your family, you don't have to fight with this person or that person, you can just lay all of it down, trust and know that you are God's Beloved, that He is working a metamorphous in you, He is changing you from the inside out right now because He dwells in you, because you are the temple of the Living God. Jesus took the disciples up on the hill so they could see what He experienced, then they would see why and how He could and would not fight back, and that they too could live in that same peace and power.

# *True Greatness*

## **(9:37-62)**

### **Pivotal Chapter / Displayed His Power and Compassion / Now what it is to be Disciple**

Luke chapter 9, a pivotal chapter in this Gospel account. Jesus for 8 chapters has been displaying His heart, His compassion; He has healed the sick, raised the dead, and told sinners their sins are forgiven. He has displayed His mission statement that He declared in chapter 4. And now here in chapter 9 He is addressing what it is to be His disciples, He is clarifying that that salvation is indeed free, but discipleship will cost you your life.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”

### **The 12 aren't Getting it Yet / Position & Power, Ease & Comfort / Seeking & Serving, Denying & Dying**

It is going to take the disciples some time to “get-it”, they are thinking since they are His right hand men, that this means “position and power - ease and comfort”, and Jesus will set the definition clear, it is not “position and power – ease and comfort”, but “seeking and serving – denying and dying”. The disciples in our passage today will argue over who will be the greatest in Jesus’ Kingdom, Jesus will define what true greatness does.

*Luke 9:46 (NKJV)* <sup>46</sup> Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be greatest.

### **5 Things of True Greatness / How Great do you want to Be?**

True greatness we will see in our passage today:

- Goes to Battle for Others
- Stoops down to the Least
- Is Non-Denominational
- Is Gentle
- Is Willing to Sacrifice

So Christian, how great do you want to be? Jesus wants you to be great, He doesn't want you to just get through this life, He wants you to be great in this life. It is not just ok to desire greatness in this life, it is God's expectation of you; however we must understand His definition of “True Greatness”.

### ***Demoniac Son is Healed***

**Luke 9:37** Now it happened on the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, that a great multitude met Him.

**Luke 9:38** Suddenly a man from the multitude cried out, saying, “Teacher, I implore You, look on my son, for he is my only child.

**Luke 9:39** And behold, a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly cries out; it convulses him so that he foams at the mouth; and it departs from him with great difficulty, bruising him.

**Luke 9:40** So I implored Your disciples to cast it out, but they could not.”

**Luke 9:41** Then Jesus answered and said, “O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here.”

**Luke 9:42** And as he was still coming, the demon threw him down and convulsed him. Then Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the child, and gave him back to his father.

### **Picture coming down to World that Needs Him / Hopeless without Him / Lord wants to Send us Down**

Jesus has just left the mountain top experience of the Transfiguration. The picture that we see here is that when Jesus comes down from the mountain He comes down to a world that needs him, that is lost and dying, and is hopeless without him. You see Christian we can't stay up on the mountain tops forever, because there's a world this lost and dying down in the Valley, and the Lord wants to send us down to them to meet their needs, to minister to them, and the show them that there is a God in heaven who cares.

*Luke 9:29 (NKJV)* <sup>29</sup> As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe became white and glistening.

### **Convulses the Boy – Greek Wrestling / Growing up in Pennsylvania WWF / Satan wants to Hurt Us**

Verse 39 – convulses him - that word is a Greek word, that was used as a wrestling term. This word is so fitting that it's a wrestling term because that's exactly what Satan wants to do he was to wrestle with us. We wrestle not against

flesh and blood but against principalities and powers. When I was growing up as a kid we couldn't get enough of the world wrestling Federation, we would watch it on Saturdays and go out and wrestle the yard, we would jump off of the roof on the each other, we would act like we were breaking chairs over each other's backs, we would pick each other up and body slam each other, we would even do suplex on each other. Yet we were having a good time, and we took it easy on each other so we never hurt each other, but that's not what Satan wants to do to us. Satan is not messing around, this is no game to him, he isn't in it for the fun, he simply wants to hurt us.

*Ephesians 6:12 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

### **Parents get the Visual Picture / Satan wants to Maul – Spiritually Slam – Incapacitate / Victory Belt**

Hey parents, get the visual picture in your mind that that's what Satan wants to do to your child. He wants to hurt your child, he wants to maul your child, he spiritually wants to body slam your son or your daughter. Just like on the television he wants to make them incapacitated, he wants to hold his victory belt over his head with 1 foot on your child's chest as they are laid out on the mat.

### **This is a Heartbroken Father / Watching the Beatings Over-Over / Somewhere Boy Opened Self Up to Occult**

This is a heartbroken father, how many times he watched his son get thrown into the fire, foam at the mouth, scream in agony. It is my theological belief that a person can only become demon possessed by opening themselves to the occult things. Somewhere along the line this son started to dabbling the occult things, whether that was through dungeons and dragons, drugs and alcohol (Galatians 5), reading the occult book, watching the occult movies, jokingly getting involved in the Ouija board, or just willingly and knowingly start to seek after the things of darkness. Somewhere along the line this boy did just that, and now demons have control over him, and all his father can do is watch in hopelessness. Can you imagine the heartbreak of the father, how many times he must've question what he did wrong, what he could have done differently, wishing and weeping himself to sleep every night.

### **Bring your son Here**

*Verse 41 – Bring your son here* - Jesus says in this father, bring your son to me. Parents, bring your children to Jesus. There is nothing so big in your child's life Jesus can handle it.

### **Disciples problem was Unbelief / Lack of Fasting & Prayer Contributor to Lack of Faith**

Their problem (the disciples) was unbelief. And we can see that a contributor to unbelief is lack of fasting and prayer. Our job is to enter into and fasting and prayer for them.

### **True Greatness – Goes to Battle for Others**

True greatness goes to battle for others (family or not).

### **Pray in Faith – Means we Believe Prayer Matters**

Prayer attaches us to heaven, fasting detaches us from the earth. We want to be detached from this world and the visual proofs we see that we consider faith, and be attached to God and His promises. Christian, to pray in faith means we believe that prayer matters. Let's be honest, and if we were truly honest with ourselves, we would admit that we do not pray because we do not actually believe that prayer matters. If we truly believe that we can move mountains because of prayer, that our prayers somehow change the course of Countries and People; nothing would stop us from prayer.

### **We do Not Fast – because if Doesn't Matter / Sacrifice is too Great / What are you Willing to Sacrifice**

And, we do not fast because we don't believe that fasting matters, and/or that the sacrifice is too great. One meal, one day, yet we won't make the sacrifice. Jesus says that His disciples must deny themselves. What are you willing to sacrifice in order to have this this faith Jesus says we can have, and this power that He promises we can exercise.

### **When we Believe It – We will be People of Power / Must be a Lifestyle – Never know when Demon Waiting**

When we truly believe that prayer and fasting matters, we will become a people of pure power. We need to make prayer and fasting a lifestyle, it has to be something that we do regularly, because we will never know when we may be faced with a demon in our day. We need to be ready then, we won't have the luxury to retreat and have a time of prayer and fasting, we have to fast and pray regularly and be ready to respond at a moment notice.

*James 5:13–18 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. <sup>14</sup> Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. <sup>15</sup> And the prayer of faith will

*save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. <sup>16</sup> Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. <sup>17</sup> Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. <sup>18</sup> And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.*

### **Must be Lifestyle – Because Satan wants to Overwhelm You / Pray – don't Analyze / Pray with Purpose**

It has to be a lifestyle for us because Satan wants to overwhelm you. Satan will not wait when you got the armor on, he waits until you are in your Pajamas or bath robe. Can I also add this piece of counsel, and that is pray with purpose, be focused on what you are praying, and pray about it, don't think about it. The problem with thinking about it is that we can start to try to reason things out, analyze things, relive things, and the next thing we know we are not talking to God but to ourselves. And, along those lines of praying with a purpose, I don't think you will ever go wrong praying the Scriptures. Want to pray for wayward kids you have, pray Ephesians 1 or 3 for them, and pray believing it, and there will be power and faith flowing, because you are praying the Word of God (Romans 10:17).

**Romans 10:17 (NKJV)** <sup>17</sup> So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

**Ephesians 1:15–23 (NKJV)** <sup>15</sup> Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, <sup>16</sup> do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: <sup>17</sup> that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, <sup>18</sup> the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, <sup>19</sup> and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power <sup>20</sup> which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup> far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. <sup>22</sup> And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, <sup>23</sup> which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

### **True Greatness – Goes to Battle for Others**

True greatness goes to battle for others (family or not).

### **Prayer for Wayward Children**

I know there are many parents in this room who have wayward children. Ray Comfort's new book (How to Bring Your to Christ) states that 88% of the children raised in evangelical homes will leave the church at the age of 18 never to return. This is war! Let's pray for our wayward children right now, and let's pray for the ones that are still walking with Him because we know Satan wants to maul them too, and is at working trying to get a foothold in their lives right now.

- The Revelation of the Knowledge of You
- The Eyes of Understanding Opened
- Their Hope and Calling
- The Riches of Your Inheritance
- The exceeding Greatness of Your Power towards Them

### **Audio Post**

Parents – I have posted Ray Comfort's audio teaching on this subject, and you can listen to it on our website.

### **Prophesies His Coming Death**

**Luke 9:43** And they were all amazed at the majesty of God. But while everyone marveled at all the things which Jesus did, He said to His disciples,

### **Majesty of God – Beautiful Phrase / Splendor and Glory / Majestic King – who is in Love with You**

They were all amazed at the majesty of God – The majesty of God; what a beautiful phrase. Majesty means, splendor, beauty, royalty, mighty power, greatness, magnificence. This is who our God is, He is majestic, so beautiful and so powerful, and He is in love with us. The majestic God loves you

### **We know True – Because Word says So / Peter saw Transfiguration – But Word more True**

And how do we know that He does, because His Word says that He does. Peter had just seen, was an eyewitness of "His majesty" up on the Mount of Transfiguration, he writes about it in his epistle, but he still says even though I saw it, even though I heard it (this is My Beloved Son), there is still something greater than what I seen and heard, and it is what I read..... for the Word of God is confirmed (and that word means sure, trusty, of force, stable,

and true). Look the world could be falling in around us, the waves may be filling the boat, doubts and despair may fill us, but always this Word of God is sure, and we can open it and read it, and know that every word God speaks to us and about us is sure and true. And that word says “I love you, I am for you, and I will never leave you”.

**2 Peter 1:16–21 (NKJV)** <sup>16</sup> For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. <sup>17</sup> For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” <sup>18</sup> And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. <sup>19</sup> And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; <sup>20</sup> knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, <sup>21</sup> for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

**Revelation 1:4–5 (NKJV)** <sup>4</sup> John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, <sup>5</sup> and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

**Hebrews 13:5 (NKJV)** <sup>5</sup> Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

**Romans 8:31–32 (NKJV)** <sup>31</sup> What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

**Luke 9:44** “Let these words sink down into your ears, for the Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men.”

**Luke 9:45** But they did not understand this saying, and it was hidden from them so that they did not perceive it; and they were afraid to ask Him about this saying.

### **Why Say this After Demon Encounter? / Wants them Know – He won’t Deliver Himself**

Why do I think Jesus speaks these words immediately after this event? Because He wants the disciples to know that although He has the power of the demonic realm, that He can deliver a person from the grips of the devil, when it comes to Himself, He will not deliver Himself from the grips of the Evil one, because then He couldn’t save us ultimately.

**Matthew 27:42–43 (NKJV)** <sup>42</sup> “He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. <sup>43</sup> He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”

### **Help my Tormented only son / Heavenly Father will Allow Jesus to be Tormented**

This father says Lord help my only begotten son, he is continually tormented by the evil one, please help him. The father begs Jesus to save his only son. And your Heavenly Father because of His great love for you, was willing to allow His Only Begotten Son to be tormented by the Evil one, to be whipped with 40 lashes, to be punched in the face, to be spit upon and mocked, then striped of His clothes and hung upon a cross for 6 tormented hours there on a hill in Palestine, for you and for me.

### **Can we Trust Him – Yes / Follow Him and Word – for they are Faithful and True**

Can we trust Him with our lives fully – YES! We can follow Him and His words, and know they are faithful and true.

## **True Greatness**

**Luke 9:46** Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be greatest.

### **Funny Guys – Just defeated but argue over Greatness / Army vs Football Team**

These guys are funny they want to be great; they think they are great, but they couldn’t even cast out the demon. We can so overestimate our spirituality. If I had been alive 2,000 years ago when Jesus walked the earth, I would have so been picked as one of His apostles, I have all the characteristics He was looking for (dense, foot-in-mouth disease, self-seeking). Sometimes Christianity looks to me more like a football team rather than an army. We are to be an army, we are to be looking out for every last man, willing to make sacrifices for our fellow soldiers; but so often it seems more like a football team where you have your superstars (Tom Brady, Ray Rice, Ray Lewis), and they are the face of the team, rather than one of the eleven on the field, and one of the 53 on the team. Jesus will dispel the superstar mentality out of the church by picking up a little child.

**Luke 9:47 And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a little child and set him by Him, Luke 9:48 and said to them, “Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. For he who is least among you all will be great.”**

### **They Argue – Jesus Stoops / Dirty Diapers / How Great do you want to Be? – How low will you Stoop?**

So as they battle over who be the greatest, Jesus answers with something greater than words. Jesus stooped down picks up a child and I lap says whoever receives this little child, whoever ministers to the children, whoever changes the dirty diapers, they will be the ones who are great in the kingdom of God. No great reward by ministering to children here on this earth, so recognition, but in the Kingdom of God, He is well pleases – because there is a great war on for our children. So Christian how great do you want to be in the kingdom of God, because Jesus makes sure that you get plenty of opportunity to be great if that is truly what you desire. How low are you willing to stoop?

### **True Greatness**

True greatness we will see in our passage today:

- Goes to Battle for Others
- Stoops down to the Least

**Luke 9:49 Now John answered and said, “Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow with us.”**

**Luke 9:50 But Jesus said to him, “Do not forbid him, for he who is not against us is on our side.”**

### **John still Doesn’t Get It – Changes the Subject**

So Jesus just gets done saying you want to be great to receive and minister to the little kids. Notice that John doesn't answer that nor respond to that direct point; rather he changes the subject to say something that makes him look very spiritual.

### **They can’t cast demons – But Attack those that Can / Jesus says don’t Attack other Denominations**

The disciples could not cast demons out we just read, but now they are getting on people who can. Jesus says if they are not against us, then they are on our side. Don’t rebuke, put down, or fight – against this denomination or that denomination, because they do things a little different, or emphasize this or deemphasize that a little more differently than you do.

### **True Greatness**

True greatness we will see in our passage today:

- Goes to Battle for Others
- Stoops down to the Least
- Is Non-Denominational

### **Consider this – Others Could cast Demons / Jesus picked 12 because they were Perfect**

Consider this, and that is that the apostles could not readily cast demons out but these other (non-apostles) could. The 12 apostles were rebuked for be faithless and lacking in fasting and prayer. Christian do you know why Jesus picked these 12? Jesus picked these 12 because they were perfect, but that perfection was that they were perfect for what God wanted to do in that time, in that place, and in that way. The Lord picked people we could relate with, people with all their warts and flaws, and shows us what he can do with a man or a woman who will commit their lives to Him. If I was Jesus I would have picked those other guys, because obviously they had faith, obviously since they could cast demons out they were men of prayer and fasting. That is who I would have picked, they wouldn’t have fallen asleep during the Transfiguration, they wouldn’t have fallen asleep in the Garden of Gethsemane, they wouldn’t have scattered at the cross neither I suspect because they were men of faith. Jesus picks these 12 to be apostles because they are a perfect representation of us, our weakness and failings, and he says if I could change the world with them, I can change the world with you.

### **Samaria Rejects Christ**

**Luke 9:51 Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem,**

### **The King is on the March to Jerusalem / Nothing will Deter Him / You can Trust Him**

The march is on to Jerusalem, a King is going to war, but this battle He will fight all alone, but nothing will deter Him from the battle in Jerusalem because He considers me worth the price. How low He was willing to stoop for me is unfathomable. Can I trust Him – YES!

**Luke 9:52 and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him.**

**Luke 9:53 But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem.**

**Luke 9:54 And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, “Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?”**

**Luke 9:55 But He turned and rebuked them, and said, “You do not know what manner of spirit you are of.**

**Luke 9:56 For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives but to save them.” And they went to another village.**

### **If Jesus was Sarcastic**

Jesus shall we rain fire down; if Jesus was sarcastic He would have said sure guys, that sounds so much like My mission statement doesn’t it? Let’s rain fire, lets tell them turn or burn.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”*

### **John is on a Roll / Blows off Diapers – Rebuked for Rebuking – Now wants to Rain Fire**

John is on a roll here today. He totally blows off the idea of changing diapers, he is still trying to make his case for the greatest in the Kingdom. So after arguing about wanting to be greatest, he gets rebuked for telling off those guys because they weren’t part of his denomination, and now he gets rebuked for wanting to rain fire down from heaven upon the people of Samaria. John is totally on a roll here this day. It could even be said that John is “on-fire” this day.

### **Some want to show how On-Fire they Are – Burning People Up /**

Some people want to show how on-fire they are for God by burning up other people. Lighting them up, laying judgment and condemnation upon them, because it always makes them look spiritual when others are shown in the light of their faults. Jesus says you don’t know what manner of spirit you are and that is, be gentle, be kind, live the mission statement of Christ.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”*

### **True Greatness**

True greatness we will see in our passage today:

- Goes to Battle for Others
- Stoops down to the Least
- Is Non-Denominational
- Is Gentle

### **Church History – The Apostle of Love**

But get this, church history will tell us that John will later be known through the whole Christian community as the apostle of love. It was said that when he was in his 90 and going to churches to speak, that he would simply get up and say, little children love one another, and then sit down. The message was simple and clear. So Christian don’t give up on yourself nor get down on yourself if you still have some fiery tendencies in you, for you just keep walking with the Lord and He will change you, transform you (from the inside out), into His image. He who began a good work in you will be faithful to complete it.

*Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;*

### **Go to Another Village / Norway**

Verse 56 - And they went to another village. – Just a good ministry principal, when you get rejected in one place, just pick-up and go to another. Eventually you will find fertile ground because there is a world that is just looking for an answer, as they see this world is not the answer. I was in Norway 6 years ago doing street ministry, and over a 3 day period I was able to give out a total of 4 gospel tracts and CD's that had the gospel on it. I was ministering in and around the city center, and riding the trains – and a total of 4 tracts in 3 days. Then one night while on the train I stood before the metro map and said, I am getting off at that stop and see what the Lord will do. What happened next was simply amazing – 100 tracts and CD's in like 40 minutes. As I would be sharing with one group, another group would come over and join in. Here is what was amazing, it all started when I was walking up the stairs from the train platform, these young girls were passing me, and they looked into my hands and said “what's that, can I have one”. And then people just started to literally swarm me. So, when we are rejected in one town, just get up and go to another, because eventually you will find fertile ground.

### **Now Verses 57-62 / Jesus Reiterates True Discipleship / It Comes with a Cost**

Well, verses 57-62, Jesus will once again reiterate the true disciple, and the cost to being His disciple. Chapter 9 is a momentous shift in this book, as the Lord says here is what I have done, now here is what you are to do. The summation is, salvation is free, but discipleship will cost you your life. These next six verses God clearly spells out to us, there is a price to pay to follow Him,

### ***True Cost of Discipleship***

**Luke 9:57 Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, that someone said to Him, “Lord, I will follow You wherever You go.”**

**Luke 9:58 And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.”**

### **Comfort**

Jesus is saying that following Him may cause uncomforted, we may not have all that that the world has because we are not to be investing in this world as the world does. Jesus is the King, He has a throne, yet when on mission here at earth He didn't have a comfortable bed, a spacious house, and the ease and comforts that others did. We who are His disciples may have to forsake some of the comforts of life in order to stay “on mission” for Him. It will be worth it, you won't regret it. Following Him may not be the most comfortable life, but it will be the best life.

**Luke 9:59 Then He said to another, “Follow Me.” But he said, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.”**

**Luke 9:60 Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God.”**

### **Financial**

At first this sounds like the guys father just died and he wants to go to the funeral and Jesus says no follow me. What is happening here is that this young man is saying after my dad dies I will follow you. Jesus says no, follow me now. See after his dad dies this young man will receive his inheritance and then he will be financially secure (so he thinks). Jesus is saying don't let money keep you from following Me, and don't let overtime pay, and career path keep you from serving Him.

**Luke 9:61 And another also said, “Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house.”**

**Luke 9:62 But Jesus said to him, “No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”**

### **Separation**

This third person wants to see what the family and friends think of his radical plans to follow Jesus. Jesus says to him that his family approval is not what he is to be seeking, but he is to be seeking first the kingdom of God. Lots of people want to do great things and radical things for Jesus, but then when they see their family thinks it is extreme, that they are over-zealous, the person tones it down, cools it off, least others think they are fanatical. Jesus says be fanatical.

### **True Greatness**

True greatness we will see in our passage today:

- Goes to Battle for Others
- Stoops down to the Least
- Is Non-Denominational
- Is Gentle
- Is Willing to Sacrifice

### **There is an Urgency**

In all three of these examples, you can sense the urgency that is being applied – Jesus says now, not tomorrow; come now, least you will never come.

### **Bows his Head**

Jesus is making the point that in the natural environment the fox always has a den to go into, the birds of the air always have a nest to rest in, but He makes the point that he has nowhere to lay his head. Jesus is making the point that he is not in his environment, therefore he has no place to rest (bow) his head in this foreign environment that he is in. The statement that he has nowhere to lay his head, we see that the Samaritans did not receive him, there was no room at the inn for him, after he healed the man who was filled with the demons the whole town asked him to leave, we will see that the religious leaders will not receive him, even his disciples will forsake him at the cross, and then on that fateful hour he will cry out and even God the Father will not hear Him as he cries out, My God, My God why hast thou forsaken me. But the next time we see this phrase “bow his head”, it is after He said “It is Finished”, and then He bowed His head. The only time and place that He found that He could bow (rest) His head was on the cross after He had finished the work that the Father had given Him.

*John 19:30 (NKJV) <sup>30</sup> So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.*

### **Can we trust Him**

Can we trust Him with all of our lives, every area of our life, every word that He speaks to us either in prayer or through His Word – absolutely yes and amen!

### **True Greatness**

True greatness we will see in our passage today:

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# Luke 10

## *True Joy (Go – Woe – Know)*

(Luke 10:1-24)

### **David Sharp – Mount Everest**

The story, an open secret in the crowded nylon city of Mount Everest base camp, trickled out from the high Himalayas: A British mountaineer desperate for oxygen had collapsed along a well-traveled route to the summit. Dozens of people walked right past him, unwilling to risk their own ascents. Within hours, David Sharp, 34, was dead. The tale was shocking, an apparent display of preening callousness. Sir Edmund Hillary, who was on the team that first summited Everest in 1953, called it "horrifying" that climbers would leave a dying man. But in the small world of modern high-altitude mountaineers, there was barely any surprise at all. That, in part, reflects the dangers inherent in climbing to a place where temperatures are so low that skin can freeze instantaneously and oxygen levels can barely sustain life. When things go wrong, there is little chance of rescue.

### **40 People Pass Him / Commercial Expeditions**

But, many climbers add, Sharp's death also reflects something else: a changed ethic in what was, until a couple decades ago, a tiny community where only the most experienced climbers would be found that high on a mountain -- and where a dying climber would be abandoned only when a rescue threatened other lives. In Sharp's case, about 40 people are thought to have walked past him as he sat cross-legged in a shallow snow cave. The few who stopped to check on him -- and at least one team did give him oxygen -- said he was so near death there was nothing that could be done. "We've been seeing things like this for a very long time," said Thomas Sjogren, a Swedish mountaineer who helps run ExplorersWeb, a Web site widely read by climbers. "The real high-altitude mountaineers, the top people in the world who are doing new peaks and going to mountains you don't know much about, most of these people have become completely disgusted by Everest." The top mountaineers "often help each other," said Sjogren, who has made many Himalayan climbs. "If you know him or you don't know him, it doesn't matter: you try to help him until he's confirmed dead." But many of today's Everest climbers are on commercial expeditions, some paying tens of thousands of dollars to guides who are under fierce pressure to get their clients to the summit.

### **Lydia Bradley – Got to Know the Risk**

"The sheer pressure of numbers and accessibility to these mountains [have] changed the kind of people who go," said Lydia Bradey, a 44-year-old New Zealander who in 1988 became the first woman to summit Everest without supplemental oxygen. As a result, Bradey said in a telephone interview, Everest climbers may be forced to decide whether to jeopardize their once-in-a-lifetime investment to help a dying person.

*"If you're going to go to Everest ... I think you have to accept responsibility that you may end up doing something that's not very ethically nice," she said. "You have to realize that you're in a different world."*

### **Is the Church much Different?**

What a shocking story, we sit in disgust that people could choose their personal achievement over a human life, but I challenge you to consider this, so much in the church today people are ascending the mountain enjoying the fellowship with each other and the Lord all the while continually passing people who are perishing. Could we be accused of being as cold and callous as they were? I preach not at you today, but at myself first and foremost.

### **True Greatness end Chp 9 / Chp 9 Transition**

Last chapter we ended with "True Greatness", as Jesus explained and described how to be great in His Kingdom, and we saw that is it quite opposite of what the world considers greatness. Chapter 9 was a transitional chapter, for after eight chapters of seeing the heart and passion that Jesus has for man, chapter 9 begins a shift as Jesus says unto man, now here is what I require of you. This is what I am, now this is what you shall be. This is what I have done, now this is what you shall do.

**Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)** <sup>18</sup> *"The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."*

## **True Greatness**

True greatness we will see in our passage today:

- Goes to Battle for Others
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## **The Calling is no Light Calling / Salvation is Free – Discipleship will Cost Life**

The calling into discipleship is no light calling, it comes with great cost, as we have developed over the past weeks (salvation is free – but discipleship will cost you your life).

## **Cost of Discipleship**

4 Requirements to be a Disciple:

- *Desire to Come*
- *Deny Self*
- *Take up the Cross Daily*
- *Follow Him*

*Luke 9:23–24 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.

## **True Joy**

Last week we ended with True Greatness, and this week the Lord will speak to us about “True Joy”, and if we read it close enough, we will see that He is not only speaking to us about True Joy, but also what brings Him True Joy.

## **Outline True Joy**

- True Joy – Go (10:1-9)
- True Joy – Woe (10:10-16)
- True Joy – Know (10:17-24)

## ***Mission of the Seventy***

### **True Joy – Go (10:1-9)**

**Luke 10:1** After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go.

### **Genesis 10 – 70 Nations**

I find the number seventy interesting, for, based on Genesis 10, the Jews held that all of the nations of the world were seventy in number. Thus, in appointing seventy disciples, it was as if Jesus was saying, “Go into all the world—into every nation, region, country, and culture—and preach the Gospel.”

### **Not whole world go to Church – but whole Church go to World**

God did not say that the whole world will go to church but did say the whole church should go to the world

*Matthew 28:18–20 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

**Luke 10:2** Then He said to them, “The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.

**White – Ready to Rot**

In another gospel account Jesus said that the fields were white; when we starts taking on a white color that means it is close to rotting. Rather than get into a deep theological reasoning about God sovereignty and man's responsibility, I will just go to the simplicity of what is being said here, and that is there is a time when a person is ripe for the Gospel, they are ready to hear it and receive it, and if that time is missed, then they can be missed. Jesus is saying reach them now, share with them now, for a week or a month, or a year from now they may no longer be open to receiving the Lord.

*John 4:35 (NKJV)*<sup>35</sup> *Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!*

### **To Harvest – Not Sow / People Riper than we Think / First step in Evangelism is Believe Someone Rip**

Notice Jesus sent the seventy not to sow seed, but to bring in the harvest. I have found that people are ripe for the picking a lot more often than we think. A most important step in evangelism is to actually believe that people are ready and wanting to receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Whether it be Satan or our flesh weakening shy away from sharing the gospel because we believe that nobody actually wants to receive it. It is a wonderful work of Satan to keep us from sharing the good news, but Jesus tells us in his word that there are plenty of people wanting to receive him.

### **Problem – Large Harvest – Few Workers / What to Do? – Pray / Guess who He will Send**

Notice, evangelism is not only a privileged work, but it is a problematic work due, first of all, to the immensity of the task. Yes, the harvest is great, but so, too, the laborers are few. In this, Jesus paints a picture of massive fields ripe for plucking, but with only a few workers laboring. So what are we to do? We're to pray that the Lord of the harvest would send forth laborers into the field. And after following the injunction of verse 2 to pray, don't be surprised if you are then called to obey verse 3—to go! Pray for the Lord to harvest souls in your neighborhood, and guess who He's going to call on to do it. Pray seriously for the area of the world to which your heart is drawn, and guess who He will send!

### **Word is Mind of God – Prayer is Heart of God**

The Lord says to pray, and then tells them (us) to go. Now I don't want you go too far on some deep theological point-counter point; but follow me through on this. Jesus spoke and say the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few (and the disciples heard what He had said – but didn't go, not say send me). Jesus then says pray, and after they do, He says go, and they all go. Here is my point, the words of God give us the mind of God, and prayer then gives us the heart of God. They could never have gone out as His Ambassadors, His representatives, His witnesses, had they not first had His heart. They would have gone out with fire and brimstone, but instead they will go out in love, gentleness, and kindness.

**Luke 10:3 Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves.**

### **Think of the Imagery**

I would think the imagery they got in there minds are the same as I think. I think of wolves, dripping saliva from their mouths, head down, circling an innocent lamb, and I see it is just a matter of time before the wool starts to fly. Gee, thanks Jesus they must have thought, that is very comforting to know. But they do go..... because verse one and two, Jesus says I send you.

### **Expect Attacks – But go Out in Gentleness**

Not only do we see the intensity of the task of evangelism, but also the inevitability of the attack. When Satan sees you are serious about harvesting—whether it's where you work, on your street, or across the sea—you can be sure he will launch an attack against you. "I'm sending you as lambs," Jesus said. Lambs are even more vulnerable than sheep. He didn't say, "I'm sending you forth as hunters against the wolves," or even, "I want you to be super-sheep (Lambo) marching militantly or organizing politically." No, He simply said we are to be lambs walking in humility because in so doing, the reflection of Jesus can be seen most clearly. We will go out with His mission statement in our heart, and in our actions. Anytime you are going to go do an evangelistic outreach, make sure you spend time in prayer before the Lord, don't go until you have His heart in your heart.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)*<sup>18</sup> *"The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."*

**Luke 10:4 Carry neither money bag, knapsack, nor sandals; and greet no one along the road.**

**There is an Urgency / We are Never Prepared – Don't wait to Be / Trust in Him to Provide**

We see the immediacy of the call. "Don't carry purse or money or shoes," Jesus said. "Don't stop and dialogue with people. Just get going. I will provide for you through people who open their doors to you." We who are called to be ambassadors will never feel adequately prepared. But if you wait until you're ready financially, educationally, or relationally, you'll be sitting here ten years from now, for there will always be something saying, "Not now, not yet, not you." Jesus is telling them to trust in Him to provide.

**Go and Go Now – Do It and Do It now**

Jesus says don't greet someone along the roadway. He isn't saying don't be polite, but He is saying to get on station to where He has directed them to go. Don't stop by and chat with your neighbor, or swing by for one last meal with the guys, get going because the harvest is white, you may miss the opportunity of the person who is ready, and now is the time. Has God told you to write a letter, has God told you to go visit a friend to share the gospel, to go on a mission trip to some place. Then Go, and go now, do it, and do it now!

**They go Out in Pairs – Christian find a Partner / More with 35x2 than 70x1**

Jesus sends them out in pairs so they can encourage and spiritually support each other, for the calling is not an easy one. Christian, find a partner to do you outreach with. You may think that 70 individuals going out in separate directions would be able to cover more ground than 35 pairs, but not in God's economy.

**I am Scared to Evangelize**

I want to tell you all something brutally honest, I am not here preaching today, or laying on a trip of how you should be evangelizing; I will be perfectly honest with you and that is that I am afraid to evangelize. I am well trained, well prepared, but still frightful of rejection and those times of confrontation. Everybody should have an accountably partner, a prayer partner, and an evangelism partner, because we need to stand beside each other and encourage each other to go, to encourage each other when it doesn't go as we hope it to.

**Go as a Lamb / Shepherd a great Segway into the Gospel**

And when you go, go as a Lamb, be gentle and kind and people will recognize you warmth and care for them. Go as a lamb and tell people there is a Shepherd who cares greatly for them, tell them He wants to lead them besides still waters, He wants to lead them in peace, and that He is a Shepherd that lays His life down for His lambs. Display the heart of Jesus, tell them the heart of Jesus for them. Telling them about the Good Shepherd is a great Segway into the Gospel because after telling them about the Good Shepherd, you can ask them if they are "in His Fold", are they "following Him".

*John 10:11-16 (NKJV) <sup>11</sup> "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup> But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. <sup>13</sup> The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. <sup>14</sup> I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. <sup>15</sup> As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup> And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.*

**Bible Thumping – Heart Thumping / Starts with Prayer before we Go**

When we share the heart of the Shepherd, people will see the difference between Bible Thumping, and a heart thumping, beating with love for them. It comes first with prayer before we go out into the harvest field.

**Luke 10:5 But whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house.'**

**Luke 10:6 And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you.**

**Luke 10:7 And remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give, for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not go from house to house.**

**Luke 10:8 Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you.**

**Luke 10:9 And heal the sick there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'**

**Don't Trade Up / Better doesn't mean out Of His Will**

We discussed this in our study in back in chapter 9. Jesus is telling them to trust in Him, and to freely accept what is given to them, and not look to trade up. They may first get offered to stay at a home of modest means, and then get invited over to someone else's house is well off. Jesus says stay in the same place and don't look to trade up. There is a danger when better comes up, because we can think we are out of His will if we aren't at better; but this verse dispels that error.

### **Food Poisoning / Hot Water**

I can think of some of the food that was place before me at people's homes when I have been in the mission field, and the joy upon their face to provide it is indescribable. They were proud to serve me their best, and I know it came at a cost to them. It blew me away because who am I, but because I came with the word of God to them, and their country, they treated me like royalty. I can think of the apple that was given to me, it was beaten and bruised, but it was precious to them to give to me. When I was in the Ukraine in 1995 I was invited to a house and I ate what they gave me, and it about killed me. I had horrible food poisoning, but thankfully I didn't lose my lunch until I had left the house. It was funny when I was in Russia in 1993, I stayed in different houses as I went from town to town. In Russia at that time, hot water was pumped from the hot water plant in the center of each town. But there wasn't enough water for everyone to have it every day, so on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday the left side of the street got hot water and the right cold, and then on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday the right side got the hot water while the left side didn't, and on Sunday no one got hot water. Wouldn't ya know that for two weeks straight, I always stayed on the right side of the street on M,W, F and then on left side on T,T, S – so two weeks in never got a hot shower, and the temperature was like 40 degrees high every day. In the morning everyone was kind of still waking up, and I come out all loud and fired up, alright praise the Lord, let's go do some work for the King!.

### **True Joy – Woe (10:10-16)**

#### **Woe to those who Reject**

Now there is a woe in this evangelism, and that is for those who reject.

**Luke 10:10** But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say,

**Luke 10:11** 'The very dust of your city which clings to us we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you.'

**Luke 10:12** But I say to you that it will be more tolerable in that Day for Sodom than for that city.

**Luke 10:13** "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

**Luke 10:14** But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you.

**Luke 10:15** And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades.

**Luke 10:16** He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me."

#### **Power in Evangelism – Believe it is God speaking Through You**

Here is pure power in evangelism, and that is when we believe that as we speak this gospel, it is actually God speaking through us. Believe that, and you will lose your fear in witnessing, and gain power and boldness.

#### **Not our Responsibility to be Successful**

It's not our responsibility to be successful. Our responsibility is simply to be faithful.

*Luke 19:17 (NKJV)<sup>17</sup> And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.'*

#### **John 6:44**

And let me also draw on this, God calls them, God works on their heart, and we just go and find the ones He has already drawn.

*John 6:44 (NKJV)<sup>44</sup> No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.*

#### **Capernaum / Hell is Hell**

Notice who Jesus is bringing an indictment upon, it is Capernaum. Capernaum was Jesus' headquarters, it was in Capernaum when dead were raised, sick were healed, bread was multiplied, and yet they could still reject all that they had saw. Jesus said if the other cities saw all the glory you saw they would have repented, but no you. I

believe Jesus is talking in a comparison language to make illustration. He is not talking about actuality, but making spiritual application; He is saying even as wicked as Sodom was, if they had seen and heard what you have seen and heard, they would have repented and turned to Me, but not you. Also, I don't think Jesus is saying there will be lighter judgment for one as compared to another, for quite simply, hell is hell, and hell will be hell in all its entirety.

### **America**

I can't help but think of America, and all that this Nation has seen and prospered because of God, and now telling Him to leave the schools, the government, and hearing the Head of the Nation say we are no longer a Christian Nation.

### **God still Glorified in the Rejection**

Listen Christian, even when they reject, God is still glorified. No one on the day of judgment will stand before Him and say you never told me. Jesus will say, oh yes, on September 1<sup>st</sup> 2012, I sent my servant Ray to you and he shared my gospel to you, as if it was me Myself speaking to you, and you rejected. No one can deny He didn't love them, that He didn't try to reach them. Their rejection will be their own witness against themselves. Whenever we share Christ, God is glorified regardless of the results.

*Luke 10:16 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me."*

*1 Corinthians 10:31 (NKJV) <sup>31</sup> Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

### **The Guy on the Island Story**

I know one of the most challenged points that people will make when we try to share the gospel with them, is that they ask about the guy on the island. I don't know who this guy is on the island but everybody sure does seem to be interested in him. They seem to be interested in him but they don't care to go find him and see if he would like to return to civilization. Nor do they try to seek them out to see if he would like a care package was some homemade cookies. They only seem to care about the guy on the island when you are trying to share Christ with them personally.

### **Man in Hospital**

I'm reminded of the story of a man who was in the hospital in his last days. His son came and tried to share Christ with him several times, but the dad would have nothing of it. The hospital chaplain came to visit him several times himself and tried to share Christ with him, but each time the man said it's all just a fairytale. Then one morning a wife came to visit him, and the man said that you go call on the chaplain for me and ask him to come see me. The wife was taken back, and said really, why so? The man replied the last night while he was sleeping Jesus came to his room and told him that he is no fairytale. The man said I am ready to receive Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. Don't worry about the guy on the island, Jesus will go. Him if need be. You only need to worry about yourself, and right now God is speaking to you all that you need to know and hear in order to receive him as your Lord and Savior.

### **Muslim Dreams**

An article in Christianity today (24 August 2012) a missionary in the Middle East retells the story about a Muslim kidnapping a Christian in Cairo, takes him as gunpoint to an abandoned warehouse. Inside he meets a group of 10 imams, who tell him they have been having dreams about Jesus and ask him to teach them the Bible.

### **Daniel Massieh**

Recently I heard speaking a former Muslim who lived in Egypt, and he said in Algeria (heavy Muslim country) that it has been reported that over 176,000 people in that country have had the same dream of Jesus standing at the foot of their bed saying, "I am the Way – follow Me".

### **God will Reach the Unreachable**

God will reach the unreachable – the article said, more Muslims are coming to faith in Jesus today than ever before," Doyle writes. "In fact, we believe more Muslims have become followers of Jesus in the last ten years than in the last 14 centuries of Islam."

## Today

If God is speaking to you, then today is the day to respond to Him, not tomorrow, for you may miss Him if you wait. Don't worry about the guy on the island, you come today!

*2 Corinthians 6:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

## Return of the Seventy

### True Joy – Know (10:17-24)

**Luke 10:17** Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name."

#### **You will Always Return in Joy**

Whether you're witnessing where you work, ministering at the convalescent hospital down the street, faithfully discipline your children, going across the ocean—whatever it might mean in your context, when you are doing what the Lord is calling you to do, although initially you went out with fear and worry, you'll always return with joy.

#### **Street Ministry for Us**

I want you to know we will be putting a mission team together to go to the bus stop to evangelize, to go to the homes around the neighborhood of our new location. We will first gather to pray, then we will go out and share the heart of the Great Shepherd, and then return to the church for prayer, and then food. You will rejoice each time I guarantee it!

**Luke 10:18** And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

**Luke 10:19** Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

#### **Satan can't Stand It**

Lots of debate on exactly what this verse means. Is Jesus talking about the past when Satan was cast out of heaven, is he talking about the future when Satan will fall to the earth as referenced in Revelation? Maybe. But I think it means this, and that is that we know Satan goes back and forth from earth and heaven to accuse the brethren. But when the Gospel is being preached, people are getting saved, Satan can't stand it. He can't stand the sight of the rejoicing in heaven. Luke 15 is so misquoted as people say the angels are rejoicing, but that is not correct, for it says in the presence of angels there is rejoicing, and who is in the presence of the angels, but Jesus. So picture the seen as Satan is there accusing the brethren, then Jesus jumps up and starts to dance and give high-fives, saying oh wow Jim just got saved; then he sits down and Satan starts to accuse then Jesus jumps up, oh wow Linda just got saved. Satan can't stand it, like a little child he storms out of the throne like lightening, for he cant stand to see the sight. Keep preaching saints, for Jesus rejoices and Satan falls.

*Revelation 12:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.

*Job 2:1-2 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. <sup>2</sup> And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it."

*Luke 15:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

#### **John Harper**

We, in all our weaknesses and failings, can make Him rejoice. How amazing. Can I share a story of pure power with you.

Editor's note: Sunday (April 15) is the 100th anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic.

TAYLORS, S.C. (BP) -- It has been 100 years since Titanic, the greatest ship of its time, sank on its maiden voyage, killing more than 1,500 passengers. The "unsinkable ship" had done just that, and on the tragedy's centennial we stand captivated by the story. Many movies,

documentaries and books have familiarized us with some of the passengers, such as entrepreneur John Jacob Astor IV or the "Unsinkable" Molly Brown. Yet one of the supreme stories of the Titanic involves a heroic pastor and his passion to save lives and souls.

When pastor and preacher John Harper and six year old daughter boarded the Titanic it was for the privilege of preaching at one of the greatest churches in America, Moody Church in Chicago, named for its famous founder Dwight L. Moody. The church was anxiously awaiting his arrival not only because of the pending services, but to meet their next pastor, as Harper planned to accept their invitation. Harper was known as an engaging preacher and had pastored two churches in Glasgow and London. His preaching style was suited for an evangelist as testified by the words of another local pastor. "He was a great open-air preacher and could always command large and appreciative audiences. ... He could deal with all kinds of interrupters, his great and intelligent grasp of Bible truths enabling him to successfully combat all assailants."

When the Titanic hit the iceberg, Harper successfully led his daughter to a lifeboat. Being a widower he may have been allowed to join her but instead forsook his own rescue, choosing to provide the masses with one more chance to know Christ. Harper ran person to person, passionately telling others about Christ. As the water began to submerge the "unsinkable" ship, Harper was heard shouting, "women, children, and the unsaved into the lifeboats." Rebuffed by a certain man at the offer of salvation Harper gave him his own life vest, saying, "you need this more than I do." Up until the last moment on the ship Harper pleaded with people to give their lives to Jesus.

The ship disappeared beneath the deep frigid waters leaving hundreds floundering in its wake with no realistic chance for rescue. Harper struggled through hyperthermia to swim to as many people as he could, still sharing the Gospel. Harper evidentially would lose his battle with hypothermia but not before giving many people one last glorious Gospel witness.

Four years after the tragedy at a Titanic survivor's meeting in Ontario, Canada, one survivor recounted his interaction with Harper in the middle of the icy waters of the Atlantic. He testified he was clinging to ship debris when Harper swam up to him, twice challenging him with a biblical invitation to "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." He rejected the offer once. Yet given the second chance and with miles of water beneath his feet, the man gave his life to Christ. Then as Harper succumbed to his watery grave, this new believer was rescued by a returning lifeboat. As he concluded his remarks at the Ontario meeting of survivors he simply stated, "I am the last convert of John Harper."

When the Titanic set sail there were delineations of three classes of passengers. Yet immediately after the tragedy, the White Star Line in Liverpool, England placed a board outside its office with only two classes of passengers reading, KNOWN TO BE SAVED and KNOWN TO BE LOST. The owners of the Titanic had simply reaffirmed what John Harper already knew. There are people who know Christ and will spend eternity with God in heaven and many others who will not.

For us, 100 years after the Titanic, may we be as zealous as Harper was with every opportunity to share Christ with the perishing.

### **Let's make Satan Fall**

What a story of power, and it can be ours today. Pray for the Lord of harvest to send laborers into His field.

**Luke 10:20 Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."**

### **Rejoice not at what Doing – But He has Done**

"Don't rejoice about what you're doing," Jesus said to His disciples—and to us. "Rather, rejoice in what I've done on your behalf: that you're saved, that I died for you, that I chose you as My bride." It's exciting to hear what miracles the Lord does in people's lives, but the fact that Jesus chose to write our names in the book of life should in itself make us an ecstatic people.

**Luke 10:21 In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.**

### **Our Obedience**

Our simple obedience and understanding brings joy into the heart of Jesus.

### **Parents Be careful / 88%**

Parents be careful, I know you want the best for your kids, but don't do it at the expense of making them wise and prudent. Don't let them get puffed up with this higher education or their wealth, so that they forget Him. I remind you of last week's study, 88% of the children raised in evangelical homes are walking away from the Lord never to return.

**Luke 10:22 All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."**

**Luke 10:23** Then He turned to His disciples and said privately, “Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see;

**Luke 10:24** for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen it, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard it.”

### **Wished to OT Prophet / They could only Guess – We have Full Picture**

Have you ever wished you lived in the days of Moses—when you could see the Red Sea parting, the Egyptians drowning, the shekinah glory glowing? Have you ever wished you could live in the days of Elijah when fire came down from the sky and he rode a chariot into heaven? Jesus says, in effect, they wish they were us because we understand what they could only wonder about. They could only guess at the meaning of what they wrote, but we see the full picture because we see Jesus, and in Him everything comes together, everything makes sense.

### **Jesus on the March to Jerusalem**

Jesus sends these 70 before him, as He is now making His march towards Jerusalem, and nothing will stop Jesus from His march to Jerusalem, because it is there that He redeems you and me, so that He can seal our names in the Lamb’s Book of Life, which is etched with His blood.

*Luke 9:51 (NKJV) <sup>51</sup> Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem,*

### **Rejoice – God choose Us / We will see Him / We will be Like Him / Become Co-Heirs**

Jesus said, “But rejoice that your names are written in heaven” (v. 20). Praise God—this is the joy in which we can indulge to the fullest, because it is the one in which every believer may lavish his or her soul.

- We can rejoice that our name is “written in heaven” because God chose to write it there. It was not the choice of a man or an angel. It was and is God’s sovereign choice. We are citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, those “whose names are written in heaven” (Hebrews 12:23). We are children of Heaven by God’s choice!
- We rejoice that our names are written in Heaven because at the end we will see Jesus. As the Apostle Paul said, “absent from the body, and ... present with the Lord” (2 Corinthians 5:8, KJV; cf. Philippians 1:21–23).
- We rejoice that our names are inscribed above because we will one day be transformed, as John explained: “Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is” (1 John 3:2; cf. Philippians 3:20, 21).
- We rejoice that our names are written in Heaven because there “an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison” (2 Corinthians 4:17, NASB) awaits us.
- We rejoice that our names are penned in Heaven because we are thus “co-heirs with Christ” (Romans 8:17)! How did our names ever get listed in the will along with his? The same divine hand that wrote our names in the Book of Life above put us in the will! What grace this is!

# ***True Balance (Balancing Service and Devotion)***

## **(10:25-42)**

### **1-8 Heart of Jesus / Heart of Shepherd – Mission Statement**

In chapters 1-8 we have seen the tremendous heart of the Lord, and the passion and compassion He has for man. We see him ministering to the hurting, healing the sick, raising the dead, allowing the sinful to touch Him, and touching the shameful Himself. He shows the heart of a shepherd, caring for the sheep of His fold, all who would come to Him and allow Him to be their Shepherd.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)*<sup>18</sup> *“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed;<sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”*

### **Chp 9 – Great Shift / Our Responsibility – True Discipleship**

Then in chapter 9 a great shift happens in this book as Jesus starts to call out and call to what is our responsibility as sheep in His pasture. He gives us the description of what a “True Disciple” is and does. Then what “True Greatness” is and does here on earth, then he talks what brings “True Joy” (to both Him and us) as He talks about going out in His name, and knowing that we bring Him joy as we do so.

- True Shepherd (Chapters 1-8)
- True Discipleship (9:23-26)
- True Greatness (9:46-62)
- True Joy (10:1-24)
- True Balance (10:25-42)

### **4 Requirements to be a True Disciple:**

- *Desire to Come*
- *Deny Self*
- *Take up the Cross Daily*
- *Follow Him*

### **5 Things of True Greatness / How Great do you want to Be?**

- Goes to Battle for Others
- Stoops down to the Least
- Is Non-Denominational
- Is Gentle
- Is Willing to Sacrifice

### **True Joy / Our Joy – His Joy**

- True Joy – Go (10:1-9)
- True Joy – Woe (10:10-16)
- True Joy – Know (10:17-24)

### **Now – Loving our Neighbor & Balance of Serving and Sitting / Kids Cutting the Grass / Why Serve**

Now here in chapter 10:25-42, Jesus teaches on loving our neighbor (story of Good Samaritan) Jesus teaches on the balance of serving and sitting (story of Mary & Martha). I don't know about you, but this can be a tremendous struggle for me, as I can find myself so wrapped up in doing, that I forget to just sit and enjoy Him. You know, I didn't have kids to cut the grass, I am more than capable of doing it myself; I had kids to have a family with. We cut the grass and maintain the home as something we do as we enjoy having our home together. But for others, maybe your struggle is that you find yourself sitting, and rarely serving, and you feel something is missing – which it is, because I can tell you when you strike a true balance of service and devotion, your spiritual life will grow and burn, and you will experience God in deep and intimate ways. Why does God call us into service, because we come with the service, and it gives unique fellowship opportunities that are different from when we just sit.

### **Vital Chapter (1<sup>st</sup> sending the 70) / Staying in Balance / Museum Pieces – Missing Pieces**

This chapter is vital to us as we look back at chapter 10, and see the sending of the 70, Jesus makes sure that we keep ourselves in balance, that we don't sit around doing nothing that we become museum pieces of salvation, nor that we get so busy serving that we become "missing pieces" because we never sit and simply enjoy being in His presence.

### **Most Importantly – We Rejoice our Names in Book of Life**

And most importantly, Jesus sums one thing up beyond all things for the disciples and still us today, rejoice that your name is written in His book of life.

*Luke 10:20 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> *Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."*

### **Keep Everything in Light – We are Saved!**

Keep everything in the light that we are saved and going to heaven to be with Him! No service or extra service can take that away..... ever!

### **How to Inherit Eternal Life**

**Luke 10:25** And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

**Luke 10:26** He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?"

**Luke 10:27** So he answered and said, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'"

**Luke 10:28** And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live."

### **Lawyer – Expert in Law / Good question – Every Person Should Ask / Many – Just Present Life**

*V25 a certain lawyer* - Identifying him as a lawyer meant that he was an expert in the Law of God. His question is a good one, it is one that every person should ask, what must I do to inherit eternal life. If you are asking that question today, if you are searching out these things, you do well. Many people go through their whole life just seeking what must they do to have present life, and become so involved in satisfying their present life, fulfilling present wants, that they never slow down enough to ask, what about eternity.. I will tell you a lie that Satan will always say to you,...."tomorrow", you have time! Whereas the Lord says today! Why today and not tomorrow, because every day you put off this decision for Christ, is another day that your heart becomes callous and ears become dull, to a point that you no longer even consider..... Eternal Life. Beloved, if you are seeking these things today, make a decision for Him today, while your heart is still open to these things.

*2 Corinthians 6:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> *For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*

### **This Lawyer – Wrong Motive / Tested – Things he will Trip Jesus / Fame**

So this lawyer has a great question, but an absolutely wrong motive. He sounds noble, but we see that little word in there "tested" as he thinks he is going to test Jesus and trip Him up or trap Him. He calls Jesus teacher, but now this student wants to give the teacher a test. This lawyer thinks he is going to be the one who trips Him, and then this lawyer's fame will spread through all the land as he was the one who finally had the question that caught Jesus, revealed that Jesus was a fake and phony. He has been practicing his "look" in the mirror that he will use for the photo shoot for Jerusalem Week magazine. He has picked out the special robe he will wear for the NBC news (Never Believe in Christ Network) interview. He has vision of glory, as his intellect will be unmatched, and all will marvel in his intelligence. So many people like that still today, they pick up bits of knowledge, and then think themselves ready to dispel God, Jesus Christ, by their study and their intellect.

### **Jesus still Reaches Out to Him / Ever so Patient**

But look at Jesus, rather than slam him, He answers Him. Jesus sees though a person's pride and arrogance, and still reaches out to them. What an amazing God, so patient, so loving, and so desiring that none should perish but have eternal life.

*2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> *The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*

### **Jesus back to the Word – Every Life Answer in this Book**

*V26 - What is written in the law* - Jesus takes him back to the Word of God, the Law of God. Every answer of life, can be found in this Book. From how to have eternal life, to how to have a healthy marriage, on how to raise your children, on how to manage your finances, how to overcome depression, addictions, hatred, resentment, you name it, the answer can be found in this Book. Precious person don't spend all your time running from this person to that person, from this seminar to that seminar, to this latest book to that latest book, start here in this book, study it (don't just read it) every day, and let this book study you, so that it can reveal to yourself who you are, and where God wants to do some adjusting and changing in your life.

### **Deut 6 – Lev 19 / 2 Tables of 10 Commandments**

*V27-28 You have answered rightly* - great answer Jesus said, as this lawyer gets the answer right as he quotes Deuteronomy 6, which is known as the Shemah. The Shemah was to be taught to each person of Israel from the time of their childhood. This lawyer is such an expert he even adds in their Leviticus 19, and thus so skilled in his understanding that he saw God's law was both vertical (man to God), but horizontal also (man to man). The 10 commandments are laid out in two tables, in that the first four commandments are loving God with all our heart, mind, and soul; and the next six are how we are to love and treat our neighbor.

*Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!" <sup>5</sup> You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

*Leviticus 19:18 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

### **Now Go do It (means he wasn't) / Keep ALL basis of Law – Perfection / Problem is we Can't / Trapped**

*V28 - do this and you will live* - Jesus said, "This do, and thou shalt live". Jesus is saying now go do it, which infers that the man is not doing it, yes right answer, but the answer did not contain actual living it out. Keeping all the commands of the Holy God is the basis of the law. What has just been described here is **perfection**, in that a person will love God perfectly (and that would entail keeping the 10 commandments perfectly) for every action of our every day, and loving our neighbor (and that would entail keeping the 10 commandments perfectly) for every action of our every day. The problem is, we can't, and we haven't (Romans 3:23), so we're dead, because we don't qualify for the do this and you shall live. Jesus said if you have hatred in your heart you are guilty of murder (Matt 5:21-22), have you had hatred for anyone this week, this month, this year? Jesus said if you have lust in your heart you are guilty of adultery (Matt 5:27-28), have you had lust in your heart this week, this month, this year? You see Jesus elevates the Law to not only be outward action but our inward thought life which He sees (and this point is vital and clear as Jesus shows this man his heart in the story of the Good Samaritan). This lawyer answers correctly and self-condemns himself, and the trap he tried to set has now entrapped him. That is the whole purpose of the Law, and that is to show every person they are guilty before the perfect and Holy God (Romans 3:20).

*Romans 3:23 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

*Matthew 5:21-22 (NKJV)* <sup>21</sup> "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' <sup>22</sup> But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire.

*Matthew 5:27-28 (NKJV)* <sup>27</sup> "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' <sup>28</sup> But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

*Romans 3:19-20 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. <sup>20</sup> Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

### **Perfect God – Provides a Way Out / GRACE / Residence – Strength / Born-Again**

But this perfect and holy God, Jesus Christ, does provide a way out of this death, and that is by His own death of trading places with the guilty. It is called Grace ( God's Riches At Christ Expense). Once a person freely receives this free gift (Romans 6:23), God takes up residence within them (1 Cor 3;16) and gives them the power to have victory in this present life (Phil 4:13 / Eph 1:18-20), and then have it come into fullness when we enter eternal life in

heaven. That is what it means to be born again (John 3:3), as we die with Jesus for our sins (as He took our sins with Him to hell - **for that is where all sin must go** - and every person must decide if they want to go where there sin goes) but because we are in Him, we raise from the dead as He did unto new life. We are born again?

*Romans 6:23 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*1 Corinthians 3:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

*Philippians 4:13 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

*Ephesians 1:18–20 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, <sup>19</sup> and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power <sup>20</sup> which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

### **Born-Again?**

Have you been born-again?

*John 3:3 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

### **Name Written in Book of Life**

For who have, rejoice that your name is written in the Lamb's book of life.

*Luke 10:20 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

*Revelation 21:27 (NKJV)* <sup>27</sup> But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

## **Parable of the Good Samaritan**

**Luke 10:29** But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

### **Want's To Justify**

So this lawyer is convicted in heart, and like any good lawyer tries to find a loop-hole to get out of his clear and direct guilt. He will be busted again, and let that be a note every man, there are no loopholes in God's Holy Law.

**Luke 10:30** Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

**Luke 10:31** Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

**Luke 10:32** Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side.

**Luke 10:33** But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion.

**Luke 10:34** So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

**Luke 10:35** On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.'

**Luke 10:36** So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?"

**Luke 10:37** And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

### **Called Parable – I think real Story**

This is called the parable of the Good Samaritan, but I am not convinced that this is a made up story to make a point. I think it may have actually happened, and possible this lawyer who had asked the question, was actually the priest in the story. Not sure literally, but I am sure that this lawyer knew which heart he had.

### **Certain Man**

*V30 – a certain man* – The man is not identified for his nationality. Since this man is beaten to a bloody pulp, there is no way to determine his nationality by his face and skin, because they are covered in blood and severely bruised.

The man is stripped naked, so there is not way that his clothing can help identify his nationality. There is no way to tell if this man was a Jew, a Samaritan, or Gentile. Jesus is making the point that everyone is our neighbor.

### **Dangerous Road / I Remember Nicaragua – The Dump**

*V30 - went down* - The dangerous road between Jerusalem and Jericho, it was 20 miles long, and dropped roughly 3,500 feet in elevation, so dangerous was it because of the thieves and robbers it was called "the bloody way". I'm reminded of when I was doing missions in Nicaragua and we would go out to the garbage dump and share Christ and fresh water. Two thousand people lived at the dump, they waited every day for the trash truck to come with the city waste, and they would pick through the trash for food and pieces of metal and glass to take to the recycle yard. There was not a tree for five miles, the 100 degree sun just beat down upon them relentlessly, and yet they called it home. It even had a mayor. There were scraggy dogs, disease infested cows moving about the dump. I was giving my testimony and this cow comes up right in front of me and starts eating a diaper right in front of me, I thought I was going to give a testimony right in front of them if you know what I mean. So these people would pick through the trash for little pieces of metal and glass, and on a good day they made a dollar. I would estimate that in order to make a dollar they had to fill a bag about the size of a carry-on suitcase weighing 30 pounds. Sometimes kids would have to carry the bags because the parents were too old to carry and make the trek to the recycler, but I remember seeing these thugs (all of about 18 years old) and they would jump the kids or person, and steal their bag that took them 8 hours to pick and fill. Cruel and heartless, and I see them as a picture of this story Jesus tells. Although the road was known to be dangerous, a person who wanted to do business would have to take the chance of passing through in order to put food on the table and to pay the rent.

### **This Guy – Just trying to Pay the Rent / Mostly Dead / Imagine coming across this Scene**

This innocent passer-by (who is not identified by any particular nationality so he could have been a Jew or a Gentile) is just trying to make a buck to feed the family not only gets robbed, he gets beaten, and not only robbed and beaten, he gets stripped naked. So here he lays it says, half dead (he is not dead - he is just mostly dead - thats for you Princess Bride movie fans). Imagine the sight, bloody, bruised, and naked. Not only a desperate life situation, a strange and uncomfortable situation.

### **Priest = Law / Can't be made Unclean - Reputation**

*V31 - the priest passes by.* The priest represents the Law, as he performed the sacrifices at the Temple for those who broke God's Holy Law. Now see the priest can't be seen with a naked man, got to protect his reputation, and his position, for if he touched a bloody person he would become ceremonially unclean and no be able to perform his duties for 7 days (Numbers 19).

### **Certain Priest – Could they be Same Person**

Notice verse 31 says a "certain priest", and I wonder if this lawyer was also this certain priest in the story. It very well could be because a priest was to be experts in the law (John 1:19), they were to examine people to see if they were legitimately sent from God (as we see being done when they came to examine John the Baptist). Imagine if he was, and he hears Jesus say these words, how he must have seen his heart and action in this light, and imagine Jesus looking into his eyes as He spoke it, and this man knows he is in the presence of the God who sees not only his actions, but his thoughts too.

*John 1:19 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"

### **Levite = Legalism**

*V32 - the Levite passes by.* The Levite was the worker at the Temple, they helped set it up and keep it stocked and operating from an administrative and operation standpoint. The Levite to me would represent legalism because they have to make sure everything is done exactly the right way, and there be no deviation from the rules and regulations. So we see religion do these hurting man any good.

### **Jesus blows up Religion and Rituals / They don't make up heart of God**

So Jesus here in these first two men blow up the law, rituals, and legalism as the way to having the heart of God. God's heart is Luke 4, God's heart is that of a Shepherd:

*Luke 4:18-19 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

*Matthew 9:36–38 (NKJV)* <sup>36</sup> But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. <sup>37</sup> Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. <sup>38</sup> Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

### **Jews hated Samaritans – Started back in Babylonian Captivity / Rival temple / Samaritan Hero - Face**

*V33 - then came the Samaritan.* The Jews hated the Samaritans hated the Jews. The hatred between Judea and Samaria went back over 400 years and centered around racial purity, because while the Jews had kept their purity during the Babylonian Captivity, the Samaritans had lost theirs by intermarrying with Assyrian invaders. In the Jews' eyes the Samaritans were compromising mongrels. Also, the Samaritans had built a rival temple on Mount Gerizim only to have it destroyed by the Jews in Maccabean times. Remember last chapter James and John wanted to rain fire down upon them. So Jesus making the Samaritan the hero of this story totally rubs this lawyer's face in his cold and callous heart.

### **Oil-wine**

*V34 - oil and wine* - was used in that day to promote healing and prevent infection.

### **2 Months / Severity of Beating**

*V35 - took out two denarii* - which with this amount of money would have paid for roughly two months in the inn—an incredibly generous gesture. This also shows the severity of the beaten man's condition.

### **What was Difference – Compassion / Jesus' Mission Statement has NO Bounds**

What was the difference between this man and the other two? He had compassion; he had mercy on the hurting. In this story this Samaritan demonstrates the mission statement and heart of Jesus. In this story Jesus makes it clear that compassion knows no bounds, compassion reaches across all man-made boundaries, compassion loves all and through it all.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

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### **Confucius – Mohammed – Buddha - Krishna**

This story shows the heart we are to have, and it shows the heart of Christianity. It shows the difference between religion and relationship, because a relationship takes on the heart of Christ. Let me give you an illustration of the difference between God and the false religions. One day a traveler fell in some quicksand and was going under.

- Confucius came by and said, "It is evident that man should avoid such situations" then he kept walking.
- Then Mohammed came by and shaking his fist at the man said, "It is the will of Allah" and kept walking.
- Buddha came by and said, "Let this man's dilemma be an example to many" and kept walking.
- Krishna came by and said, "Better luck next time" and kept walking.
- Then Jesus Christ came, reached His hand down and said, "Take my hand, I will pull you out". Only Jesus has the power (and love) and the love to pull you out of the quicksand of sin.

### **God gets Involved – We are to Get Involved / Go do Likewise**

God gets involved in the life of people, and we (remind you as we are still in the context of discipleship) are to get involved into other people's lives ourselves. What was the difference between this man and the other two? He had compassion, he had mercy on the hurting, and Jesus says to this lawyer and says to us today, go and do likewise.

### **Pray the Lord brings Hurting your way**

So Christian, pray the Lord brings you someone who is hurting today, who is in need of physical healing, emotional support, and spiritual revelation. Make a meal for the bed stricken, invite the lonely over for dinner or the holiday meal, ask that person how are you doing today, and stop long enough, and look into their eyes, that they know you are actually asking and not making a greeting.

### **Self-Examination / Can't will to Love them – Need Supernatural work of God**

But I also want to ask you a self-examination question, because I know personally how hard it is to minister to someone who has greatly mistreated us, so the question is, is there anyone in your life today that fits this story as the man lying on the roadside all beaten and hopeless, but you justify not getting involved in and with because maybe you just don't like them, maybe they have hurt you, maybe they have mistreated you, and you justify in your mind why you can't stop to minister to them. Could you be the priest or the Levite in this story, and you have absolutely no heart for them, you justify why you have the right not to love them ( maybe even have hatred or resentment towards them), if so then ask the Lord to give you a heart change, that you would be able to love like He does, regardless of how they have mistreated you. Listen you can't love them in your own self-will any more than you can keep the commandments of God, you must ask God to do a supernatural work within you, but it all has to start with that you sincerely want to be changed, you desire to love and think of others the way the Lord thinks of them, and you. We gladly receive His love and forgiveness, but do we believe and desire that the person who has hurt us receives the same? Good self-examination for each of us today. And when you answer honestly before God, then you can go to the next step, Lord I can't love them naturally, I can't think myself or will myself to do it, I give up, and ask You to supernaturally change my heart, or better said I need you to give me a new heart concerning them. This lawyer needed a new heart, as do we in these situations.

### ***Mary and Martha are Contrasted***

**Luke 10:38** Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house.

**Luke 10:39** And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word.

**Luke 10:40** But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me."

**Luke 10:41** And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things.

**Luke 10:42** But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."

#### **Cutaway of Home**

See inserted cut-away view of a house during the time of Jesus

#### **Martha is Hostess**

Martha invites Jesus and His disciples into her home while they were traveling through the region (Luke 10:38). In biblical times, homes were typically one-room structures without much extra space. (Imagine this ancient home, with at least 13 extra bodies crammed inside of it—and bodies of full-grown men, at that.) As the hostess of the home, Martha would have been facing a serious challenge in accommodating everyone. If a meal had been offered—which is very likely, according to common customs of that day—it would have added tremendously to her workload. Preparing food was an extremely time-consuming process. Fires had to be lit, and in many cases an animal had to be killed and dressed before it could even be cooked. On top of all this, and within that cultural context, a woman's social reputation was inseparable from her performance as a hostess. Communities were so small that word—whether good or bad—got around fast. Martha knew that her failure or success in taking care of her guests would soon be the "talk of the town," putting even more pressure on her. We can picture this woman darting about here and there, tripping over bodies that were wearily sprawled out on her floor. She would have been feverishly trying to pull everything together for her guests, making sure the fires were burning properly, testing the flavor of this and that, and calculating how much food was needed to ensure there'd be enough on the table.

#### **Mary 3 Times at Jesus Feet / Where might Jesus find Us / Precious Real Estate**

*V38-39 - who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word.* – Martha's sister Mary is seen three times in the Gospels—each time at the feet of Jesus. Where might Jesus find us? The most precious real estate in all the world, is at the feet of Jesus. More precious than Maui, Manhattan, London, or Paris, and it can be ours to recline at and enjoy with no mortgage or property tax because it has already been purchased for us through the paid price of the cross.

#### **Martha sat at Jesus' Feet Too / This day She is Forgetting**

But see here also that it says "who also sat at His feet". This references back to the last subject which is Martha. So we need to have a balanced perspective of Martha in that she too sat at Jesus' feet, but just not today because she is forgetting what it is all about, and that is simply enjoying the presence of the Lord.

### **Martha willing to be Ex-Communicated / Livelihood at Stake**

It should also be noted that Martha believed in Jesus so much so, that she was willing to be excommunicated from the synagogue because by now at this point in Jesus' ministry the religious leaders made it clear that anyone who followed Jesus was excommunicated from the synagogue. Whatever Martha's livelihood was, it was now at stake because many people would stop doing business with her once word got out that she had Jesus into her home.

### **Martha believed Jesus was the Christ**

When Mary and Martha's brother Lazarus dies, it will be Martha who says Lord you are the Christ. She knew who Jesus was more than the disciples.

*John 11:24-27 (NKJV)* <sup>24</sup> Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." <sup>25</sup> Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. <sup>26</sup> And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" <sup>27</sup> She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

### **Martha Busy – but not Blessed / Upset when looks Around / Beloved – don't Look Around / Else Bitter**

*V40 - 42 - "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things* – so here we see Martha is busy but not blessed. She's busy and she's bitter. I've been there. Maybe you have too. We can be working for the Lord and getting upset with our brethren because they are not helping, they are just receiving, but not giving. Hey, here is the simplest word I can give on that, and that is, just serve the Lord because He has called you to, and don't worry where the other people are. When you start to look around wondering where the other people are, you will become bitter. But when you are doing any type of service for the Lord, keep your heart focused on who you are doing it for (Him). Martha's error is not that she was busy working for the Lord, Martha's error was that she was bitter in the work, rather enjoying the work. Whether it is work or worship, the Lord says what is needful, is doing it as an offering of love unto Him.

### **Silverware at CCMI**

I remember when I first got asked to do something at CCMI, it was to go find silverware for 250 place settings. They sent me to a liquidator because the price was one-tenth what new would cost; the only thing is there was no way to find 250 complete sets, so the challenge was to find 250 sets that were close enough. I was excited for the opportunity, I serious about my task, and I sought the Lord to help me succeed, and I had a wonderful time doing it, in fact I enlisted a few friends and we had a wonderful day of it together.. So here I am, Mr. Bible College graduate, searching for forks and spoons, and felt it was a high calling. Now, as I look at myself today, and look back to that day, I did some self-examination and said would I be as joyful about searching for forks and spoons today, and I was honest with myself and said no, I would probably gripe and complain thinking someone else should do it because I am the Senior Pastor.

### **A Gentle Rebuke**

*V41 – Martha, Martha (Ray, Ray) -* Jesus gently rebukes her, but a rebuke nonetheless, and Martha gets what He is saying because next time we see Martha serving we see her serving with joy and not bitterness.

*John 12:1-2 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. <sup>2</sup> There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him.

### **Lost Rewards**

*Verse 41 - shall not be taken away from.* In the day of rewarding, the Bema Seat, what Martha did will be considered rubble because of the wrong motive and attitude of her heart, whereas what Mary did will be considered of value because it was done in the right attitude - love and devotion to the Lord.

### **The Key**

One of the keys in the whole service part is to make sure you make time to serve. We so overload our schedule in our everyday life that we leave no time to serve, so when the time comes to serve, we have no time, and thus we feel it is a burden rather than a blessings, and we just try to do it like it is part of our "to-do" list, and we just want to get it done so we can get back on-schedule. Make time, leave time, reduce your TV time or your internet time,

whatever it takes, so you can serve the Lord with peace and not feel a time pressure; and then enter into the service with Him together.

### **There are Times to Sit – Time to Serve / When you Serve – do it Devotionally**

There are times where we sit at Jesus' feet and enjoy His presence and rest, but then there are times where we serve Him, and what I want you to see here today is that when we serve Him, serve Him devotionally. The way the houses were in those days Martha could have heard Jesus' words and still been in the kitchen cooking, but she looked at what others were not doing and it upset her, and she thus took her ears off of Jesus and out her mind unto her sister, and totally got robbed of the joy of serving Jesus, devotionally. Devotion means a warmth of passion, glowing hot as fire. Serving by saying Lord I am doing this for You, with you, together, and I thank you for the blessing to do something for others so they may be blessed and they can come to know and enjoy you as I do. That they may be refreshed and rested, encouraged and lifted up. May we always remember that when we serve, to do it devotionally.

### **Story of Father and Daughter**

But, Christian, be careful that you don't get so busy serving, that you forget the most important part, sitting and enjoying your Love, your Savior. I remember hearing of a dear father who had lost his wife. She had left him one daughter, and he loved to have her with him; but being a busy man they could have only their evenings together. He would come home from work, and after dinner they would spend several hours together, and one or the other would read; then she would play and sing for him. He found his greatest solace in the company of his darling child. It was getting along towards the end of the year, and the daughter said to him one evening, "You will excuse me tonight, father; I have something I should do in my room." The next night it was the same thing, and the next, and the next, much to his disappointment. But he had to get used to it, and he did not like to ask her what she was doing that she had to leave him alone. Finally it was Christmas morning, and she came into his room and called, "Merry Christmas, Dad!" She handed him a pair of crocheted slippers which she had made for him. He said after he had thanked her, "I would much rather have had you with me all those lonely evenings than to have these slippers, beautiful and comfortable as they are." I think our Lord says that to us. We are trying to please Him by much serving, but I am afraid He will say to many of us, "You have spent so many hours in service when I would rather have had you at My feet. You were not there when I wanted to share many secrets with you." May we learn more and more the blessedness of communion with Him!

### **Most Importantly – We Rejoice our Names in Book of Life**

And most importantly, Jesus sums one thing up beyond all things for the disciples and still us today, rejoice that your name is written in His book of life.

*Luke 10:20 (NKJV) <sup>20</sup> Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."*

### **Conclusion:**

- True Shepherd (Chapters 1-8)
- True Discipleship (9:23-26)
- True Greatness (9:46-62)
- True Joy (10:1-24)
- True Balance (10:25-42)

# **Luke 11**

## **Teach Us to Pray**

### **11:1-13**

#### **DISCIPLES Never Asked – Preach – Prophecy – Demons / But how to Pray / They Watched**

The power of meaningful prayer; as far as we know, the disciples never asked Jesus to teach them to preach, to prophesy, or to cast out demons. There is no record of them asking how to worship or witness or how to build a ministry or lead their families. The one thing the disciples asked of Jesus directly was, “Lord, teach us to pray.” Why? I believe it is because, after watching Jesus for several years, the disciples were convinced prayer was the secret of His ministry and the foundation of all He did.

#### **Definition of Prayer**

Prayer means “to be given to”, “apply oneself to”, “to bring near”, “to touch”. One of the variants of the word I fond meant to bring a ship to land, to dock a ship. And thus the disciples are watching Jesus out and about, but every day He takes the time to dock with His Heavenly Father, and they see that it is there at that time of docking where He obtains His power.

**Luke 11:1–13 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, *that* one of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.” <sup>2</sup> So He said to them, “When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as *it is* in heaven. <sup>3</sup> Give us day by day our daily bread. <sup>4</sup> And forgive us our sins, For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one.” <sup>5</sup> And He said to them, “Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves; <sup>6</sup> for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; <sup>7</sup> and he will answer from within and say, ‘Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you’? <sup>8</sup> I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs. <sup>9</sup> “So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup> For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. <sup>11</sup> If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if *he asks* for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? <sup>12</sup> Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? <sup>13</sup> If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”

#### **The Lord’s Prayer**

**Luke 11:1** Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.”

**Luke 11:2** So He said to them, “When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.

**Luke 11:3** Give us day by day our daily bread.

**Luke 11:4** And forgive us our sins, For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one.”

### **Satan's Deceit – Religious System**

Maybe it is important for me to add this here, for you may suffer the same deceit I had. You see I was raised in a religious system, and that is all that it was, rituals and dogmas that were powerless. Part of the ritual was to recite this prayer over and over, to the point it was not only meaningless, but it was dreadful, it became work, it was actually used as punishment for sin. After I was born-again, infused with the living God residing in me, I still had a great aversion to this prayer because I wanted to distance myself from the dogma, the thing that sucked the life right out of me....., good job by the enemy. I allowed that to keep me from the power of this prayer, to keep me from the very prayer that Jesus would teach His disciples – twice. If Jesus would teach it twice, and the same way each time, how much power is available to us, in it? So don't let the same happen to you.

### **Outline for the Lord's Prayer:**

- God's Place (v.2a) – Our Father in Heaven
- God's Plan (v.2b) – Thy Kingdom Come Thy Will be Done
- God's Provision (v.3) – Give us this day our Daily Bread
- God's Peace (v.4a) – Forgive us as we Forgive Others
- God's Protection (v.4b) – Lead us not into Temptation

### **Some Attack the Model / Keeps my Mind from Wandering / Reminds me of All God is – Plans for Me**

Another thing I should add is that many bible teachers and pastors attack the principle of using this as a model, or a structure, or an outline for prayer. Whatever I say, Jesus didn't seem to have a problem telling us to pray this way. If you are like me maybe you have a hard time keeping focus when you pray because your mind wanders, for my mind sure does, somehow I can go from praying for my dear sick friend to rotating the tires on my car, not sure how I ended up there. Outlines help me stay focused. Now yes the problem with outlines are that they can become a checklist and then the whole prayer time is just check the box and get out. So if you use outlines you have to stay on guard to protect against that. One of the things I like about seeing my outline is that it reminds me of all that God is, and all that He wants to do in my life personally.

### **Come back to Develop**

What I would like to do in our study is come back to this prayer, after we look at the two stories Jesus told that went along with prayer, because what we see in them is that the Lord wants to convince them, convince us, that there is power and purpose in prayer. Let's be honest, one of the main reasons we do not pray is because we think it really doesn't change things. For if we did believe that it is pure power, nothing would keep us from it.

### ***Parable of the Persistent Friend***

**Luke 11:5** And He said to them, “Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves;

**Luke 11:6** for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him’;

**Luke 11:7** and he will answer from within and say, ‘Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you’?

**Luke 11:8** I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs.

**Luke 11:9** “So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

**Luke 11:10** For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

### **Design of the Home – see why Reluctant / But God is Contrasting – not Comparing**

In Jesus' day, the middle- and lower-class houses consisted of a single room in which one-third of the floor was elevated above the rest and contained a small fire ring around which the family would sleep. The remaining two-thirds of the room housed the animals. Thus, it is easy to see why this man was reluctant to crawl over the kids and stumble over the animals to answer his door. Yet he did so nonetheless. Jesus uses this analogy to say that because our Father never sleeps (Psalm 121:3), because our Father never says, “Don't bother Me,” how much more would He be willing to respond to the one who keeps asking, keeps seeking, keeps knocking.

*Psalm 121:3 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> He will not allow your foot to be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber.

*Matthew 11:28–30 (NKJV)* <sup>28</sup> Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

### **He wants to Convince us to Seek Him in Prayer / Ask – Seek - Knock**

The Lord here wants to convince them, convince us, that there is power and purpose in prayer, and thus to seek Him in prayer. So He says, ask, seek, and knock:

*Luke 11:9–10 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup> For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

### **Ask (What Type) – Simple or Begging / Principle 1<sup>st</sup> Mention / Matthew 5**

Ask – So what type of asking is implied here? Is it a simple "ask", or is it an emphatic "begging". Well, we have all been here at both have we not, there are times where we simply ask the Lord to engage and help, but then there are times where our hearts are ripped open, and the situation so dire, we are begging the Lord to please, please help! Whatever our heart situation is, it doesn't change God's requirement for asking. You see some people think you have to ask with such fervency that God we say ok now you are sweating and straining, you have earned my ear, and now I will respond. When I come to places in the Scriptures that I want more clarity on, I like to go back to the first place that word is used in the Bible (this is called the principle of First Mention in bible doctrine) and see how was that word used the first time we see it in the Scriptures. Well for this word "ask" it is back in Matthew 5 and we can see it is a real simple "ask". The context is helping others, even an enemy, the context is going the extra mile, the application is clearly, do not turn away anyone who is in need. So I believe that unlocks for us exactly how God wants to respond to us when we ask, simply ask, and I will not turn away, I will meet your need.

*Matthew 5:38–42 (NKJV)* <sup>38</sup> "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' <sup>39</sup> But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. <sup>40</sup> If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. <sup>41</sup> And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. <sup>42</sup> Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.

### **The Depth Missed when Taught / Context is – the Connection between Prayer and Father**

But I want to tell you this, and that is that I think when this passage is taught, over and over again, we miss the depth of where God wanted to take us. We become so focused on give us this day our daily bread (and a better job, nicer this, and a more comfortable that), that we totally miss the depth that God wants to take us in this prayer. The context of this whole prayer is that the disciples ask Jesus to teach them to pray (not preach, do mighty works, or have great prosperity) but to pray, because they saw the connection between Jesus' prayer life, and His intimacy with the Father, and how that translated into the great "SPIRITUAL" life that Jesus had. Teach us to pray, so that we might have this same intimacy with the Father as you do, that we might have the same "SPIRITUAL" life that you have. So that is what we are to be asking for, seeking, and knocking. How many of us truly do that when we pray? That we ask for more of God in our lives, more intimacy with Him; or is our prayer more of getting things accomplished (even good things like providing for our families and ministry activities). Teach us to pray, teach us how to have more of You in our lives, to have more intimacy, to be deeper in the things of God and lesser in the things of the world. That is where I want to take our study today.

### **Ask for First & Continually – Wisdom / Solomon**

Let's start with "Ask". Here is what I believe we are to ask for first, and daily, and shape all of our other asking on, and that is wisdom. When Solomon (before he became full of himself, while still a humble man) was asked by the Lord to ask for whatever he wanted, anything, and it was his, oh the depths of his answer, and the unleashing of power in our lives if we do the same; Solomon asked for "wisdom and understanding" (Read 1 Kings 3:5-14). We have a real life Biblical example of what we are to ask for, and will guaranteed, and will be blessed with, here with Solomon.

*1 Kings 3:5–14 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask! What shall I give you?" <sup>6</sup> And Solomon said: "You have shown great mercy to Your servant David my father, because he walked before You in truth, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with You; You have continued this great kindness for him, and You have given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. <sup>7</sup> Now, O LORD my God, You have made Your servant king instead of my father David, but I am a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. <sup>8</sup> And Your servant is in the midst of Your people whom You have chosen, a great people, too numerous to be numbered or counted. <sup>9</sup> Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?" <sup>10</sup> The speech pleased the LORD, that Solomon had asked this thing. <sup>11</sup> Then God said to him: "Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, <sup>12</sup> behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you. <sup>13</sup> And I have also given you

what you have not asked: both riches and honor, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days. <sup>14</sup> So if you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days.”

### Definition of Wisdom

The definition of wisdom is:

- a : accumulated philosophic or scientific learning : **KNOWLEDGE**
- b : ability to discern inner qualities and relationships : **INSIGHT**
- c : good sense : **JUDGMENT**

*\*Merriam-Webster, I. (2003). Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary. (Eleventh ed.). Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc.*

### His Ways – Discernment - Decisions

Lord give us **knowledge** of You and Your ways.

Lord give us the ability **to discern** spiritual things

Lord give us the ability to **make good decisions**

### Proverbs – Wisdom

Solomon, the wisest man on the earth, wrote the majority of Proverbs, and he wrote often wisdom (almost 25% of the uses of the word wisdom in the OT can be found in the Book of Proverbs), because he is transferring to the reader, seek wisdom and find wisdom and you will be blessed beyond measure, for you will then have knowledge, discernment, and thus make great decisions every day of your life. For you see, it are the bad decisions of our life (that we not in line with God's knowledge (Word), and had no discernment, that so often lead a person down the wrong path, that leads to hardship and even absence from the Lord as people get so far away from Him they no longer even hear Him or seek Him.

*Proverbs 1:2 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup> To know wisdom and instruction, To perceive the words of understanding,*

*Proverbs 1:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, But fools despise wisdom and instruction.*

*Proverbs 1:20 (NKJV) <sup>20</sup> Wisdom calls aloud outside; She raises her voice in the open squares.*

*Proverbs 2:2 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup> So that you incline your ear to wisdom, And apply your heart to understanding;*

*Proverbs 2:6 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding;*

*Proverbs 3:13 (NKJV) <sup>13</sup> Happy is the man who finds wisdom, And the man who gains understanding;*

*Proverbs 4:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding.*

*Proverbs 8:11 (NKJV) <sup>11</sup> For wisdom is better than rubies, And all the things one may desire cannot be compared with her.*

*Proverbs 9:1 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Wisdom has built her house, She has hewn out her seven pillars;*

*Proverbs 16:16 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> How much better to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding is to be chosen rather than silver.*

### Lord give me Wisdom / Like Solomon – All other added Unto

When we ask the Lord, ask for wisdom, beg if need be, for then we will be making wise decisions that will lead us closer to Him, and wise decisions that will lead our families closer to the Lord. And like Solomon, all the other things will be added unto us.

*1 Kings 3:13 (NKJV) <sup>13</sup> And I have also given you what you have not asked: both riches and honor, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days.*

### Seek / 1<sup>st</sup> Mention in Matthew 2 - Herod

Ask, then we read “seek”. And the first mention of this word seek in the NT is found in Matthew 2 when Herod is seeking out the Babe Jesus so that he might destroy Him. And I seek the Lord unfolding before me and to you, saying seek out Jesus with the same fervency that Herod did. People (saved and unsaved) are seeking this and seeking that in this world, and Jesus in this teaching on prayer I believe is telling us to seek Him, and like the asking part, we will have all that we need.

*Matthew 2:13 (NKJV) <sup>13</sup> Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, “Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him.”*

## **Matthew 6:33**

*Matthew 6:33 (NKJV)* <sup>33</sup> But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

## **Jeremiah 29**

We all know and claim Jeremiah 29:11, but listen to the passage in its full context and you will see a direct application to Jesus' teaching here in Luke 11.

*Jeremiah 29:11–14 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. <sup>12</sup> Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. <sup>13</sup> And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. <sup>14</sup> I will be found by you, says the LORD, and I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, says the LORD, and I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive.

## **Knock / Revelation 3 / Come Dine and Fellowship Together**

When I think of this word knock, Revelation 3 comes racing to my mind immediately. So here Jesus is saying to them (and to us today), Ask for Wisdom for wisdom leads to Me, Seek Me with all your heart, and you will find Me, and knock and I will come in and dine with you, and we will have intimacy and fellowship together.

*Revelation 3:20–21 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. <sup>21</sup> To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

## **Parable of the Good Father**

**Luke 11:11 If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish?**

**Luke 11:12 Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?**

**Luke 11:13 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"**

## **Even Imperfect Parents / Camden and Golfing / Love giving him things Bring us Together**

Jesus relates that even imperfect parents, want to and do meet the request of their children. Yesterday Camden came in my office while I was studying and asked, Dad is there no work for you today? I said no work, just finishing up my Bible Study for Sunday, and he says Dad can we go golfing..... I said absolutely. I didn't say golf, how about you go clean some toilets, and then cut that grass, and just maybe we will talk about some golfing. I love golfing with him, not that I love golfing, I just love him (more than anything in this world next to my Lord), and I love golfing because I love being with him.

## **Lord loves to Supply / We say no to bad Things**

The Lord loves to give and take care of His kids; and he loves to give things to us also that we draw us together in sweet fellowship and intimacy. But notice a subtle message here being spoken, and that is that the Lord won't give us anything that will harm us (stones, serpents, scorpions), and thus should we ask for anything that could harm us, He will say no it, even if we don't agree or understand.

## **But NOTICE This – Give the Holy Spirit**

But now notice this, for this to me is the whole depth of this teaching that Jesus gives – and that is He says, “how much more will your heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him”. Aint no one said anything about asking for the Holy Spirit. No one said Lord how do I get the Holy Spirit in my life, the kid in the story asked for bread, a fish, and an egg. The next-door neighbor just asked for some bread, he didn't ask for the Holy Spirit, and the disciples did not say teach us how to get the Spirit, but they said teach us to pray. But Jesus summarize His whole teaching on prayer by saying, how much more will your heavenly Father give you the Holy Spirit. Do you see Christian, Jesus ties prayer, persistent prayer, to the receiving of the Holy Spirit. Prayer is the avenue that unleashes the Holy Spirit in our lives. If you are born-again, the Holy Spirit dwells in you, lives in you, and is ready to overflow from you, and that avenue (that spigot if you will), is through prayer. Jesus is saying to them and to us, all the power you see being exercised in My life, My wise decisions, My powerful teaching, the mighty works that you see happening in My ministry, is because of the Holy Spirit that is upon Me, and the Holy Spirit moves in My life because of My prayer life..... and He will move in your life, in accordance with your prayer life.

*1 Corinthians 3:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> Do you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?

**Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)** <sup>18</sup> *“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”*

## **Ask – Seek - Knock**

### **Let’s Look at Lord’s Prayer Again**

So based on that, let’s just take a look at this prayer again, and look at it in the context of the releasing of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

**Luke 11:2** So He said to them, “When you pray, say: **Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.**

**Luke 11:3** Give us day by day our daily bread.

**Luke 11:4** And forgive us our sins, For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one.”

### **Outline for the Lord’s Prayer:**

- God’s Place (v.2a) – Our Father in Heaven
- God’s Plan (v.2b) – Thy Kingdom Come Thy Will be Done
- God’s Provision (v.3) – Give us this day our Daily Bread
- God’s Peace (v.4a) – Forgive us as we Forgive Others
- God’s Protection (v.4b) – Lead us not into Temptation

### **Conciseness – 63 Words / Concise – Not Wordy / Freeing – Liberating / Strength in Length**

I am impressed with its conciseness – only 65 words. Jesus encourages us to be short and concise in our prayers, not to be wordy and keep repeating ourselves. To me, this is fantastically liberating because I fall prey to thinking, the longer I pray, the more impressed God will be. We have been deceived into thinking that the strength of prayer is in direct correlation to the length of prayer. It’s not the length of the surgery that makes the operation successful, it is the precise of the surgeon’s scalpel that does. We say oh I only have 15 minutes to pray, what is the use, so we don’t pray. The Lord’s Prayer is only sixty-three words, now that is precision! The prayer is a place of freedom and refreshment, yet how we have (or can) turned prayer into a place of bondage and discouragement, as we think what the use is, I only have 10 minutes, and He isn’t going to bless (reward) this short time.

### **God’s Place (v.2a) – Our Father in Heaven**

#### **Jesus is a Person / Father – makes us Children / Call Him Daddy**

We see through the scriptures Jesus weeping, Jesus rejoicing (celebrating). Jesus thinks, He feels. . . . . for Jesus is a person. When we pray we are talking to a person, not a spiritual force. If He is the Father, then that makes us the son and the daughter. Jesus in His prayer called the Father “daddy”. So too can we. When Camden calls me dad, my heart moves every time.

**Mark 14:36 (NKJV)** <sup>36</sup> *And He said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will.”*

**Romans 8:15 (NKJV)** <sup>15</sup> *For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.”*

### **God’s Plan (v.2b) – Thy Kingdom Come thy Will be Done**

#### **Prayer process Taking hold of His Will**

Prayer is the process that we take hold of His will, the will that He has for us, which will always be greater than anything we could ever imagine or think. Part of our prayer process as we ask for things from the Lord is to help us sort through what we are actually asking, so we can get down to what actually matters. Too often people quit their prayer life a day too short (or a week or a month) as they ask they continually ask for something that is not God’s will for them, and rather than sorting through why God is not responding in the way they want Him to, they

quit praying, and they end up doing something outside of His will, and thus ultimately rob themselves of the unleashing of the Spirit of God moving through their lives as we seen in the life of Jesus.

### **God's Provision (v.3) – Give us this day our Daily Bread**

#### **Wants to Provide Daily Need / More so – to Ask for Wisdom**

God wants to provide for our daily needs, just like any parent wants to do. But more so, he wants us to ask and have wisdom, every day, so we can make wise decisions concerning our life, so don't enter into things that can separate us from Him, that will close the spigot of His Holy Spirit flowing through us. Every day, ask the Lord to grant you wisdom in all the decisions you are to make, and don't make decisions without asking Him.

### **God's Peace (v.4a) – Forgive us as we Forgive Others**

#### **Wants sin Before us Daily / Sin quenches Intimacy – Stifles Flow of Spirit**

Jesus says to seek forgiveness every day that we pray. Thus He is saying that He wants us to continually have our sin before our minds. Why? Well unrepentant sin will break that fellowship and intimacy with the Father, and thus will close the spigot of the Holy Spirit flowing through us, and thus our sin makes us stagnant.

*1 John 1:9 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

#### **Un-forgiveness quenches Spirit**

Secondly, if we do not see our sin as an offense, if we forget that we are simply sinners saved by grace, we will never be a people who freely forgives us. And, when we don't forgive, we become bitter, and that root of bitterness will close the spigot of the flow of the Holy Spirit in our lives, and God will never be unleashed in our lives to do the great things He desires to do. I know there are those of you here today and you are living a less than victorious life, because you have bitterness and resentment in your heart towards someone in your life. Maybe it is something that happened in the past, maybe something that is presently happening, maybe a compounding combination of both, but you find yourself continually churning and burning, agonizing in your heart, maybe even boiling over with hatred in your heart; would you be bold enough, confident enough, to seek the Lord out change me, change my heart, supernaturally, for I cannot self-will to love and forgive this person for what they have done. It won't happen in a drive-by prayer, you must stop at the house-of-the-Lord and seek Him with all your heart asking Him to change your heart.

*Hebrews 12:14–17 (NKJV) <sup>14</sup> Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: <sup>15</sup> looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; <sup>16</sup> lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. <sup>17</sup> For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.*

### **God's Protection (v.4b) – Lead us not into Temptation – Deliver us from Evil One**

#### **James 1**

James 1 says that God will not lead us into temptation:

*James 1:13–15 (NKJV) <sup>13</sup> Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. <sup>14</sup> But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. <sup>15</sup> Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.*

#### **What Saying – Don't Give more than Handle / How we put Ourselves in Bad Situations**

What this is saying is that we are to ask God to help us not to enter into more than we can handle. Lord, I think this sounds good, I really want to do it, but Lord if this is not of you, is this is not going to be good for me, speak to me, or close the door to keep me from entering into a place that may take me place that are not good for me. How we can enter into something, and then find it is taking us away from the Lord, has brought us into a place that distracts us from the Lord, or brings temptations upon us that we are not spiritually mature enough to handle. I must date that person, and then after pushing into the relationship without asking God, the person doesn't have

the maturity to control themselves when the temptations comes, and Satan is waiting. I must have that job, that extra 10% would be a great financial blessing, while not seeking the Lord and entering into a job that now takes me away from the family, or so much stress I am constantly in a bad mood and constantly missing church and fellowship – and Satan is waiting. Jesus says, pray to the Lord to ask for guidance in such areas so as to not take on more than you can handle, and pray that we not allow ourselves to be in a place where Satan can have his way.

### **Conclusion**

#### **Condition – Not a Title**

The Spirit-filled Christian is not a title, it is a condition.

#### **Teach us to Pray**

Lord teach us to pray they said, and Jesus in essence said, “so you want the Holy Spirit”, you want the power of the Living God flowing through you, you want to be under the control of the Holy Spirit so you may walk wisely and work powerfully, alright.....”

May the Lord teach us to pray!

# **One Sign Only**

## **Luke 11:14-32**

### **Recap**

Well as a recap chapters 1-8 Jesus displayed His heart and his power to the people. Then in chapter 9 we saw a great shift in His teaching as He started to be very direct and specific on what He expects from us, all those who would call Him Lord. And, now in this shift we will see Jesus being very direct with the religious leaders and the religious hypocrites, and here in this chapter Jesus is not mixing words, He is not watering it down, He is simply laying it out to them.

### **Shift in way we Study**

We will take a shift sort of from how we have been doing our studies, as we have been going verse-by-verse, but I have been sections of scriptures and teaching just on the main theme (as for example last week we just covered the first 13 verses and focused on the topic and theme that it covered, prayer. We now we will start for the next several chapters just reading through the passages, verse-by-verse, and making comments on points as we go. And although we will have many passages of scriptures where Jesus is laying out the religious people, I will also pull out application for all of us as followers of Christ, for every word of God is pure and is a shield to us. So something in every verse, for every person.

*Proverbs 30:5 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup> Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.*

### **Christ Heals the Demonic**

**Luke 11:14 And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute. So it was, when the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marveled.**

### **Imagine being Mute**

To be twenty-five or thirty-five or forty-five or sixty-five and not have uttered a word for years—what must that have been like? Especially in a culture where only a few could read or write. The ability to verbally communicate with others is part of normal everyday life. Not having that, if the poor man in Luke 11 could not write (and very likely he could not), his needs and his feelings could only be conveyed by a frustrating combination of facial expressions, body language, gestures, and sounds that probably he alone could understand. There were times when he might have felt like a prisoner within his own body. And that feeling was not unfounded because his tongue was chained by a demonic spirit that satisfied its perverse pleasure by keeping him inarticulate. To be tongueless was one thing, but to have one's tongue chained by palpable evil was much worse.

### **What did he Say / When the last Time you said Thanks**

I wonder what he said once he was freed. I think maybe “thank you”. Not sure when the last time you said thank you to the Lord, but say it, and say it often, not just because He deserves to hear it, but because you need to hear with your own voice ringing through your own ears – we have been made alive, we have been set free, who knows how messed up our lives would be had He not come to set us free. I thank you Lord, we thank you Lord, and with our lips we give you praise of what is on our heart.

### **Seized by Great Affection**

This past week, I heard about an article describing a great revival which took place in Florida in the 1890s. As thousands of people were brought into the kingdom, reporters covering the story repeated an expression they heard the new believers use. They didn't say people were “born again.” Nor did they say many people were saved. Nor did they say many people received Christ. Now, all of those things were true. People were indeed born again and were saved because they received Christ. But the phrase appearing most often in the written record was that people were “seized by a great affection.” In other words, people were simply overwhelmed by the goodness and grace of God, swept up in His loving embrace. I like that! In his epistle to the Romans, Paul tells us it is the goodness of God that leads men to repentance, which ushers people into the kingdom of God (2:4). After all, how could we not be “seized by a great affection” when we begin to understand what God has done for us?

*Romans 2:4 (NKJV) <sup>4</sup> Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?*

## **Christ's Power Not from Satan**

**Luke 11:15** But some of them said, “He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.”

**Luke 11:16** Others, testing Him, sought from Him a sign from heaven.

### **Give us Another Sign / 2 Peter 1:19**

So they seek a sign from him even though he just performed the mighty miracle, that miracle wasn't enough, they said give us another one. Maybe they wanted Him to make the earth shake, rain fire down from heaven, who knows. Many people tell me they are waiting for a sign from heaven, they want to see something that will convince them God is real. I tell them God has given us something greater than physical signs, He has given us His Word, and the prophecies spoken in this book are undeniable, and have stood the test of time, in fact time reveals more how amazing this book is. We need nothing more than this book.

**2 Peter 1:19–21 (NKJV)** <sup>19</sup> And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; <sup>20</sup> knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, <sup>21</sup> for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

### **8 Prophecies / Texas – 3 Foot Deep**

Jesus must be born in Bethlehem, why?, so that all would be sure, so that all could rest their hope in Him, Jesus Christ the Promised Messiah, the One promised all the way back in the garden that would crush Satan's head and the curse. The One promised, must come into the world exactly as the Old Testament prophets said He would. I would like to talk about the odds of Jesus just fulfilling 8 prophecies such as where He would be born, how He would die, His lineage, and the likes. The odds of any man fulfilling just 8 prophecies is equivalent of filling the State of Texas 3 foot deep in quarters, and painting 1 quarter yellow, and giving a person blindfolded one chance, and one chance only to walk as long as he wants, and then bend down and pick that yellow quarter up, one try and one try only. Jesus fulfilled 300 prophecies, not just 8, I don't think it humanly possible for me to give you an example of what those odds are.

#### *His Birth & Lineage*

1.) *The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Micah 5:2a / Matthew 2:1-2*

2.) *The Messiah would be a descendant of David. Isaiah 9:7 / Matthew 1:1*

#### *His Environment & the World Setting*

3.) *The Messiah would be announced to his people 483 years, to the exact day, after the decree to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. Daniel 9:25 / John 12:12-13*

4.) *The Messiah would be killed before the destruction of the temple. Daniel 9:26c / Matthew 27:50-51*

5.) *The Jew's authority to administer capital punishment would be gone when the Messiah arrived. Genesis 49:10c / John 18:31*

#### *His Death*

6.) *The Messiah would be sacrificed on the same mountain where God tested Abraham. Genesis 22:14 / Luke 23:33*

7.) *The Messiah's back would be whipped. Isaiah 53:5c Matthew 27:26*

8.) *The Messiah's hands and feet would be pierced. Psalm 22:16c Matthew 27:38*

**Luke 11:17** But He, knowing their thoughts, said to them: “Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and a house divided against a house falls.

**Luke 11:18** If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? Because you say I cast out demons by Beelzebub.

### **A Divided Kingdom will Fall**

Here in this verse Jesus is going to be making a specific point of the kingdom divided for, He's making direct point that if his kingdom was divided it would fall, and if Satan's kingdom was divided it would fall. But let that be an application for us today

- Husbands and wives if you are divided against each other your marriage will fall.
- Mothers and fathers if you are divided over your child rearing, your children will fall.
- Parents and children, listen to me children, if you are divided against one another your family will fall.
- Family and country, and this country is divided it will fall.
- And let me say this, church, church family if we are divided will fall. We are a family we must stand united, we cannot be divided.

### **Satan is not Divided / We cannot be Divided**

Here also what Jesus is saying, and that is that Satan is not divided, Satan is united. There is no civil war going on in hell. Satan is the field general and he is giving orders to his minions, and they are in complete agreement and direction on what they are to be doing, and that is attacking and destroying. Satan is united, and we can see how well he is doing. Marriages, families, country, and churches – we must unite, we can't divide, for Satan's strategy is to divide and then to conquer. We must unite, else we are no match for his ways.

### **Husbands – any Reconciliation needed Today**

Husbands and wives, do you have some reconciliation that is needed? Then today, before the sun goes down, reconcile and make it right.

**Luke 11:19 And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges.**

**Luke 11:20 But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.**

**Luke 11:21 When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace.**

**Luke 11:22 But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoils.**

### **Notice only 1 Finger**

Jesus only needs a finger to defeat Satan. He does not need a whole hand, nor a whole arm, nor a whole body, simply a finger and Satan is defeated. The mighty finger of God, created heaven and earth with His finger, overcame all the magicians in Egypt with just a finger, and He will overcome the evil one with just one finger, and this awesome God lives in you, and greater is He who is in you than he who is in this world (1 John 4:4). So with just a flick of His finger, whatever that thing is that tries to bind us, God has the power to flick it away just like a bug on a table. And the finger that wrote the Law that condemns us, is the same finger that wrote in the sand to give us grace.

*Psalm 8:3 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup> When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained,*

*Exodus 8:19 (NKJV) <sup>19</sup> Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, just as the LORD had said.*

*1 John 4:4 (NKJV) <sup>4</sup> You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.*

*Exodus 31:18 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.*

*John 8:6 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear.*

### **Only Greater can Overcome – Jesus has stormed Satans House**

Now, Jesus is saying here that only the greater can overthrow the lesser, and Jesus is making point here that He has just walked into Satan's house and took one of his possessions (this mute man), and has made him His possession. Satan set up a fortress, Satan set up his guard around this man, but a stronger One (Jesus) came in and took it, with just a finger.

### **Parents – Does Satan have your Child**

You parents here today, maybe Satan has one of your children, maybe your child is in his fortress and Satan has set up a guard all around your child, and to you the fortress right now seems impenetrable, the walls too high to scale, and too thick to bust through; well you be strengthened today that Jesus is the stronger one, and that He has the power to go in and take your possession back, and to make your child His own. We need to seek the Lord with all our heart, draw near to Him and fellowship with Him (last week's study), and ask Him to go storm the fortress and reclaim your child back to His own. Send Jesus to go get your child back for you; He is the ultimate commando, and He loves war, He loves to fight against the evil, He loves to show Himself strong, and so ask Him to go and He will willingly and passionately go fight for your child. That is His mission statement, that is why He came, to set the captives free.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

*Deuteronomy 1:30 (NKJV)* <sup>30</sup> The LORD your God, who goes before you, He will fight for you, according to all He did for you in Egypt before your eyes,

*Deuteronomy 3:22 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> You must not fear them, for the LORD your God Himself fights for you.'

*Deuteronomy 20:4 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> for the LORD your God is He who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.'

*Joshua 23:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> One man of you shall chase a thousand, for the LORD your God is He who fights for you, as He promised you.

*Nehemiah 4:20 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us."

**Luke 11:23 He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters.**

### **Etched on Every pastor's Heart**

I think this passage should be etched in every pastor's heart and mind and soul, and that is if you are not gathering for Jesus that you are scattering. How sad and troubling it is to me to see pastors who are fighting for their territory, and rather than seeking to just usher people in the kingdom not caring where they end up in church, some pastors fight for their territory saying this area's mine staying away, and because of that they don't unite with other pastors and churches to help grow the kingdom, rather they fight against other churches which diminishes the Kingdom.

### **There is no Neutrality**

But for us here today, understand this, there is no neutrality with Jesus, you are either for Him or against Him. And know this also, and that is that Satan does not recognize neutrality. If you are not for Jesus, than Satan considers you his, and he will be using you as he chooses and pleases. The only way to protect yourself from the wiles of the devil, from his ways, and his battery, and that is to be for Jesus. A person who is not for Jesus wholly is a sitting duck and they set themselves up for Satan's attack and influence. And my how many tactics (wiles) the Devil has today as he can influence through

- the world and the so-called wisdom of the world,
- or he can influence through our flesh and the wants of the flesh that are not in line with the ways of God,
- and he can even bring a spiritual influence that sways people to his influence.

The only way to protect yourself is to be for Jesus, and in Jesus, and to do that you must first give your life to Jesus. *Ephesians 6:11 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

**Luke 11:24 "When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.'**

**Luke 11:25 And when he comes, he finds it swept and put in order.**

**Luke 11:26 Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first."**

### **We might not Cast Demons Out – But we Have much Wisdom / Give great marriage Advice**

Now Jesus is making the application that when a demon is cast out of a person, that person needs to come to Christ and have God take up residence within them, else the demon will come back and the second state will be far worse than the first. And we may not be involved in that type of activity of casting out demons, but there is much application for us today in that how often we help people through hard times, we help them cleanup their lives, but not lead them to Christ, and believe it or not we could have actually made their second state worse than the first. See we have been given wisdom from above, we have great wisdom in many matters concerning living life. So someone can come to us with marital problems and we can give them great marriage advice based on the scriptures and their marriage gets healed. We can tell them the biblical principles of husband love you wife, we can tell them about giving to the other one, we tell them about watching their tongue, about using their words to build up and not tear down, all biblical principles, and they go home and start to apply them in their marriage and their marriage is healed, reconciled, and brought back together. But we did not tell them about Christ and their need for him, and when we say hey come to church they say oh we can't we have football tickets (it's our special day together), or oh Wednesday is date night, or we bike ride together. How we can patch them up, comfort them, help them great

through the hard times, we did everything for them except give them Christ, and when the good times return they have no time for the Lord.

### **People with Addictions / Give them Programs**

We can help people with addictions, drug abuse, alcohol abuse, lives in our bound to these things and we can enter in and help set them free by being there for them, by helping get them into some program (and I am not knocking programs), we can take them to meetings and take up the support groups, and as we walked with them and talk to them and they overcome their bondage and addiction. But we never gave them the Person (Christ), we never gave them true life, and now they go on and they lived their life in their own strength, they feel that done it in their own power, they feel they are self-made people, and they never see a need to draw near Christ. They may even feel they have a relationship with a higher power, but they don't identify that that power is Jesus Christ.

### **Substitute / Don't try to Clean them up First – Give them Christ**

God is a substitute for everything, but nothing is a substitute for God. The programs can be great, but the person doesn't need a program, they need the Person, the Person of Jesus Christ. After they have the Person, then give them the program. Don't try to clean them up first and then bring them to Christ; give them Jesus first and let Him clean them up, else we could make the second state worse than the first.

### **This Week I met a Man**

This week I met two young men, both were looking at some serious legal issues. These were young men living in the worse areas of our County, high crime, high drugs, high shootings, high murder. One young man had been stabbed 12 times in a recent fight. They live in an area where life can be over in a blink. They were at MacDonald's and it turned into a shooting. Maybe a life most of us cannot truly relate to. They say they feel trapped, there is no way out, for they have no money and can't make more than 8 dollars an hour. They live in the midst of it, and there is nowhere else to go. Now really what kind of program can I give them? I could offer them the best of the best, but at the end of the day they still have to go home back into the neighborhood, a neighborhood where just going to MacDonald's can get you shot. They need the Person, they need Jesus, they need Jesus to go back home with them, to guard them, to give them wisdom in decisions, and to provide for them. The programs may be great for them, but only after the meet the Person of Jesus Christ.

*1 John 4:4 (NKJV) "You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."*

### **Blessed is the Womb that Bore You**

**Luke 11:27 And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!"**

**Luke 11:28 But He said, "More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"**

### **Mary Elevation**

Here literally we see the first mention of Mary elevation. Jesus is preaching and preaching in power and this woman in the crowd says oh what a marvelous mother you must've had raised you up and made you into who you are today. Now notice that in verse 28 Jesus said "more than that", and then he goes on and says "blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it", notice that Jesus did not diminish his mother he is in agreement how blessed Mary is. I think one of the struggles that can happen for people who were raised in Catholicism and then give their life to Christ and are born again, and that is they can become anti-Mary, they want to get so far away from the worship of Mary that they come and actually diminish the greatness of Mary. Mary is marvelous, she is a woman unlike any that can be found in all the Scriptures. She dedicated her life to God as a young teen, when all the girls were running here and there Mary set herself up heart for God, she was a virgin, a pure virgin. When the Angel came to her she received the message and by faith she lived it out, she basically said let your will be done in my life God I submit it fully to you, I give all of myself to you. She is an amazing and wonderful example of a godly woman and you young girls here today you older women here today you can glean a lot as you study her life. I would go on to give this challenge every man in this place to take the challenge of living a life of faith just as Mary. Mary was a tremendous woman of faith. We should not diminish her because of our past dogma for that is exactly what the evil one would want us to do, but we must also be wise to see that she is not to be elevated over Christ she's not greater than Christ she's not even equal with Christ she was a vessel that was chosen by God for a specific time for a specific purpose. She was and is highly blessed among women, she is not to be worshiped.

## **Immaculate Conception**

And by the way I think it's important that I make this point about Mary's conception of Christ was supernatural. It is the Immaculate Conception, the Holy Spirit came upon her and she became conceived with Jesus Christ. I say that in that God the father did not leave heaven come to the earth and have actual, physical, sexual, relationship with Mary. That is heresy that is from the pit of hell, which is pure vileness. That is what the Mormon doctrine teaches, and millions of people following it, and anyone who believes that is totally deceived by Satan.

*Luke 1:34–37 (NKJV)* <sup>34</sup> Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" <sup>35</sup> And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. <sup>36</sup> Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. <sup>37</sup> For with God nothing will be impossible."

## **Christ's Only Sign is Jonah**

**Luke 11:29** And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, "This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet.

### **Verse 15 – we started with Asking for Sign**

Well here we are back to the request that came back in verse 15, of the people asking for a sign. Jesus responds, and He doesn't mix words.

### **Jesus not Impressed with Big Crowds**

It says the there were so many people the crowd was thick. It was a packed house. Because He knew what was in their hearts, Jesus was not impressed by the big crowds, but the disciples were. In order to keep the Twelve from being swayed by "success," Jesus gave them some insights into what was really happening – and Jesus actually says it was an evil generation. The same is true for today, many churches are looking for signs (and I don't mean raising the dead and casting out demons), but they say we are experiencing a miracle, look at all these peoples, but there is little or no spiritual thing happening, people are coming to church, and the church is like Disney World or a rock concert, and people are all caught up in the emotions of the crowd, but hearts are not changing.

**Luke 11:30** For as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation.

**Luke 11:31** The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here.

**Luke 11:32** The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.

### **Jonah – Queen Sheba - Nineveh**

Jesus lays out three stories for them, all with mighty meaning behind them.

- **Jonah** – would spend three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, but would not die but rise out of the depth of the sea and walk again. Jesus is telling them something that may have left them scratching their heads, until He word would come that on the third day He rose again from the grave.
- **Queen of South (also known as Queen of Sheba)** – She say all the wisdom of Solomon and knew there was none like him in all the land; and Jesus is saying there is a greater than Solomon standing before you and you don't even realize it.
- **Nineveh** – Jonah came to preach to this pagan gentile city, who had no idea of God's Law and way. Jonah did not even preach a message of repentance; it was a total message of destruction. Jonah offered the city no grace, yet the people said lets repent and fast, and cry out to this God and just maybe this God will turn His judgment from us. Jesus is saying to these hearers on this day, Jonah preached a graceless message, and Nineveh repented, and here I am before you offering grace and mercy and you reject Me.

*Matthew 12:39–40 (NKJV)* <sup>39</sup> But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. <sup>40</sup> For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

*2 Chronicles 9:1–4 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to Jerusalem to test Solomon with hard questions, having a very great retinue, camels that bore spices, gold in abundance, and precious stones; and when she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart. <sup>2</sup> So Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing so difficult for Solomon that he could

not explain it to her. <sup>3</sup> And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, <sup>4</sup> the food on his table, the seating of his servants, the service of his waiters and their apparel, his cupbearers and their apparel, and his entryway by which he went up to the house of the LORD, there was no more spirit in her.

**Jonah 3:4 (NKJV)** <sup>4</sup> And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day's walk. Then he cried out and said, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"

**Jonah 3:7–10 (NKJV)** - <sup>7</sup> And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. <sup>8</sup> But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. <sup>9</sup> Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish? <sup>10</sup> Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.

### **How I can see this Being Me**

Amazing for them, but it can be equally amazing for us. We have a God who:

- Has the resurrection power in His finger tip, and yet how often we try to do and overcome in our own strengths.
- Has the all the wisdom of the universe, who is ready to give it to us if we only seek Him and ask, yet how often we try to figure things out in our own wisdom and understanding, which is limited at best.
- Has given us GRACE, total forgiveness, yet we continue to live in the shadow of guilt and shame, for the failing past and the failings present, and we think He is constantly disappointed in us or ready to come down upon us, all the while He is saying come to Me, because of My grace, My Wisdom and Strength never cease to flow to you, and you can live in freedom and power, but I can't give these things to you if you don't come.

### **Grow in these Three**

Christian, grow in these three (Resurrection Power – Wisdom from Above – Grace), believe they are all promises to you, and you will find yourself living life, and that more abundant, just as He promised us.

**John 10:10 (NKJV)** <sup>10</sup> The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

And they were "seized with affection"

So like the mute man, we have been released, now let's go live like it!

# ***Walking in the Light***

**11:33-54**

## **The Shift**

We have seen the beautiful heart of love and compassion in Jesus Christ in chapters 1-8 (He sums His mission statement up in Luke 4), then begins the shift in chapter 9 as Jesus lays out the requirements of being His disciple (death to self).

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)*<sup>18</sup> *“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed;<sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”*

*Luke 9:23–24 (NKJV)*<sup>23</sup> *Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.<sup>24</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.*

## **Quite the Contrast**

It is quite a contrast when you compare these two verses. They almost seem to contradict themselves, but as you follow the teaching of Jesus you see they are in perfect harmony.

Salvation is free – but discipleship will cost you your life.

Let’s open in prayer, let’s ask the Lord to do discipleship training here today.

## ***Parable of the Lighted Lamp***

**Luke 11:29** And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, “This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet.

**Luke 11:30** For as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation.

**Luke 11:31** The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here.

**Luke 11:32** The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.

**Luke 11:33** “No one, when he has lit a lamp, puts it in a secret place or under a basket, but on a lampstand, that those who come in may see the light.

**Luke 11:34** The lamp of the body is the eye. Therefore, when your eye is good, your whole body also is full of light. But when your eye is bad, your body also is full of darkness.

**Luke 11:35** Therefore take heed that the light which is in you is not darkness.

**Luke 11:36** If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, the whole body will be full of light, as when the bright shining of a lamp gives you light.”

## **Purpose of Candle**

The purpose of a candle is to give light. That’s the one purpose. So when you light the candle, you don’t put it under a bushel basket.

## **Jesus saying He is the Light / Some clearly See and become Disciples / Others Acting Spiritual – But Blind**

Jesus is telling them He is the Light, they need no other sign, they can clearly see all they need to see by looking at Him. And for many they believe that, and they begin to follow Him knowing the cost of discipleship; but others (these ones asking for a sign), they are outwardly acting as if they are spiritual by asking for more evidence that Jesus is who He says He is (the Savior sent from God), but Jesus is bluntly saying, you don’t see because you don’t want to see, and He is warning them to open their eyes, else they bring judgment upon themselves. Even the brightest sun can’t make a blind man see. This explains why even though Jesus is the Light of the world, people don’t see properly because their eyes are darkened according to their own choice.

*Luke 11:35* *Therefore take heed that the light which is in you is not darkness.*

### **John 3 – Reason people don't Come to Light**

In John 3, that great salvation verse (16), the verse everyone can quote, has another clear message with it (why people don't get saved, why they won't come to the Lord). Jesus makes it real clear, the reason people do not come to Jesus is not because they are waiting for a sign, or they are critical thinkers, or because they hate religion, or have seen the hypocrisy of Christians and churches, or because they have their own form of connecting with God.....Jesus says it is for one reason only, they don't want the light to turn on, else their sin will be revealed, and they do not want to turn from their sin. Whether that sin is fornication and partying, or the sin of pride, that they refuse to admit and agree that they are not perfect, that they are in need of a Savior, that they need help. So many people will say they are a sinner "generally", but they won't admit that they are offensive to the Holy God, else that would make them as lowly as the person next to them, as lowly as you and I who have called upon the name of the Lord Jesus to save us from our sin.

*John 3:16–21 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. <sup>18</sup> "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. <sup>19</sup> And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. <sup>20</sup> For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. <sup>21</sup> But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."*

### **Satan god of this World – has blinded Them**

Satan has blinded them, but the blind willfully do not seek the light because they don't want it to reveal what is really going on in their lives, else they have to turn from it.

*2 Corinthians 4:3–6 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup> But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, <sup>4</sup> whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. <sup>5</sup> For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. <sup>6</sup> For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

### **Are you 100% Sure / Insurance Policy 2am**

If you are here today, and you are not 100% sure that if you would die tonight that you would go to heaven, then please step out of your fear of what people would think, and ask one of us what must you do to be saved, so you can be sure that you are sure, and that your eyes clearly see. This week on Tuesday we had a water line break in the kitchen, in the middle of the night of course, and hundreds of gallons flooded the kitchen and through the floor into the basement. Guess what I was doing at 2am, I wasn't soaking up water, I wasn't moving furniture, I was reading my insurance policy, I was reading to see if I was covered, because to be honest the amount of damage exceeds what is in my bank account. Death will be too late to read your insurance policy to see if you are covered, you need to be sure that you covered today, because you do not know when the middle of the night will come.

### **But those Saved – May our Lives be filled with God's Light**

But for those here today, those who have given their life to Christ, may our lives just be filled with God's light. May God keep us from darkness and from allowing the things of darkness to penetrate into our life. How I desire to be pure as He is pure, Holy as He is holy. Righteous as He is righteous. To live a godly, pure and righteous life. And not to allow my mind to be polluted with the things of darkness. There might be the glorious shining of His light.

*Ephesians 5:8–14 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light <sup>9</sup> (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), <sup>10</sup> finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. <sup>11</sup> And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. <sup>12</sup> For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. <sup>13</sup> But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. <sup>14</sup> Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light."*

### **Jesus turns to Religious Leaders**

In the rest of this chapter Jesus is going to start laying it on the religious leaders, who were truly the blind leading the blind, and the hypocrisy of their religious system, and all the trappings of spirituality, but inside where no one can see but God, it was all wicked and evil. We enter very clearly in our gospel study the line being drawn between Jesus and the religious leaders, between a personal relationship with God and Religion, and so sharp will be the line the religious leaders will intensify their plot to kill Jesus. The stage is being set for the cross, and so we enter a great shift in the chapters to come, as compared to the chapters we studied in chapters 1-8.

### **Still application for Us**

But, I do not want to spend all our time reading of their wickedness and foolishness, because even words of rebuke to another, can be apples of gold for us who will search them out, dig them out, and refine them for ourselves. So we shall do just that, and be the richer and the wiser for it.

### ***“Woes” on the Pharisees***

**Luke 11:37** And as He spoke, a certain Pharisee asked Him to dine with him. So He went in and sat down to eat.

**Luke 11:38** When the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that He had not first washed before dinner.

### **Ceremonially for Priests Only**

Washing speaks not of hygiene but of ritual. The Book of Leviticus makes it clear that ceremonial cleansing was intended only for the priests. But over the years, the priests required it of the people, and thus they elevated/added to it above God’s Word. They had a ritual washing and it’s all prescribed. How that you had to pour so much water over your hands as you are rubbing your hands in an upward fashion like this and you had to hold them out so that the water wouldn’t drip down your wrist. So hold them out like this and they pour water over and you rub and then they’d pour more water and you hold them down and rub them. It was a ritualistic kind of thing and Jesus didn’t go through that whole ritual. And so this fellow marvelled because after all, this is ritual.

Jesus will kill people’s sacred cows in order to open their eyes to their self-made deception if who He is.

### **We have same Tendency / Don’t make your List their List**

So this ritual ceremony, I can see this same tendency in my own life. Perhaps you can in yours as well. Sometimes the Lord might speak to us individually about specific things we are or are not to do. But the temptation and tendency is for us to make what the Lord tells us personally a rule for everyone around us corporately. And such is the basis of legalism. Maybe the Lord has laid it on your heart to do something very specifically, whether that is to abstain from something (that isn’t called out directly as sin in the Bible) or maybe He has laid it on your heart to do something very specific (a service, a certain time to meet with Him, a specific outreach), and that is wonderful, but let it be wonderful between you and the Lord and not feel that everyone should be doing the same thing as you. Simply, don’t make your list, their list. Let God make their own list. But, I do say this, if you notice something powerful in a certain person’s spiritual life, you might want to check out their list.

Some Lists:

- Alcohol or Not (Budweiser vs O’Doul’s)
- Smoking or Nonsmoking (Holy Spirit can’t breathe down there)
- Tattoo’s (spray painting the church)
- Clothing (how high and how low)
- Movies – Ratings (let’s let Hollywood set the bar)
- Homeschooling vs Public Schooling vs Christian Schooling
- I know a woman who got turned away from church for wearing pants
- I know a woman who got turned away for wearing a dress (that was above her knees)
- Interestingly to me the man who passed that rule down got busted at my work place for having pornography in his desk.

Here are some clips from a book:

Here’s an awesome one. Kara says, “We were not allowed to wear black polos at our private school. Any other colors were okay, but not black because, if you wear black, you love the devil.”

Rachel says, “I remember a church that didn’t let boys and girls swim together because the girls could get pregnant.” That’s not how it happens.

Jeff says, “A lady came to a pastor friend of mine and requested prayer for another lady. Upon hearing she needed prayer, my surprised friend replied, ‘Wow, I just spoke with her and she seemed just fine. What’s going on?’ ‘Well,’ the lady said, ‘I don’t think she is saved.’ My friend is now really confused and asked, ‘What makes you think that? She seems to show good fruit, serving here at the church.’ The lady responded, quote, ‘Well, I just found out that she’s a registered Democrat and I don’t see how you can be both a Christian and a Democrat.’”

Oh, here’s a good one. This one’s awesome. Cassie says, “I have a friend whose parents would not let her trick-or-treat because it was Satan’s birthday.” I am not finished. “And then they had a baby born on Halloween.” You can see God in heaven going, “No, seriously, you got to come watch this. This is going to be fantastic.” You can see that woman like, “Argh!” Trying not to have that baby.

Here’s one. Ashley says—this one’s actually sad. “My best friend’s mother-in-law wouldn’t let my friend, the bride, dance at her own wedding reception because they did not believe in dancing, not even slow dancing. And it made the bride cry.” This is the religious mom coming up, “You cannot dance with my son. It could lead to—” “Duh. We just got married. That’s what we were hoping.”

Here’s a kid, Josh. I think he’s a high school kid, like in a public school. He says, “There’s this Seventh Day Adventist kid at my school who says he’ll go to hell if he eats shrimp. So when we have it for hot lunch, he gives it away.” Now, just think about that. Just think about that. “Apparently, he doesn’t care if other people go to hell.”

**Luke 11:39 Then the Lord said to him, “Now you Pharisees make the outside of the cup and dish clean, but your inward part is full of greed and wickedness.**

**Luke 11:40 Foolish ones! Did not He who made the outside make the inside also?**

### **Jesus sees the Heart / Youth**

Jesus sees what is inside the heart, Jesus sees through the outward actions. That isn’t good for those who think they can fool God by portraying this outside life, but deep inside they are anything but that. Kids, youth, listen you may be fooling your parents, or think you at least, but God sees.

### **Good News**

Verse 40 - But here is the greatest news for us today, and that is that God does see our inside, He knows our thoughts, and He says to us today you don’t have to put on a show for Me, just come as you are, and I can work a work from the inside out, I can make the inside as beautiful as the outside you are trying to portray. And, He wants to, He wants to make you as beautiful as you desire.

### **All Because of His Grace**

Christian, He wants to do that, He can and will do that, because of His grace. These people in the story can’t receive His grace because they won’t receive Him, but for us, because we have received Him, then we receive all His grace. It is not our performance or failings; it is our receiving of His grace that opens the way for Him to do that. We need not beat ourselves up for our failings, nor run and hide from Him, and it surely can’t be because we think we are something such as these Pharisees, but it is coming with open heart, saying Lord by Your grace You can change me from the inside out, and Lord I want to be changed, I want Your Light to reveal everything that is darkness, everything that is not pleasing to You, for Lord I want to be made into Your beautiful and perfect image. When I speak about Christ, I say it is all about Him; but amazingly when Christ speaks about you, we see from His perspective it is all about you. Everything he has done, He has done it for you, all that He thinks about, is you (Psalm 139). Jesus is putting it out there that everything He has done has been for you, that He is so deeply in love with you, so passionate about you.

*Ephesians 2:8 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,*

*Psalm 139:17–18 (NKJV) <sup>17</sup> How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! <sup>18</sup> If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; When I awake, I am still with You.*

### **My Desire for this Church**

My desire for this church and you is that you would fall passionately and deeply in love with Him, more so today than yesterday, like no other time in your life. I want your best life in Him, to be today, not yesterday, and your tomorrow even greater than your today. And that can be so for all of us..... Because of His grace, God’s Riches

At Christ's Expense, and we need not put on some outward appearance for Him or man, we need only come to Him and say based on Your grace, I am asking you to make my as inwardly beautiful as I desire my outward beauty to be. And He will.

**Luke 11:41 But rather give alms of such things as you have; then indeed all things are clean to you.**

**Luke 11:42 "But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass by justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.**

#### **They tithes wrong Reason / But Power when do for Right Reasons**

These religious leaders gave for the wrong reason; they gave so people would think they were spiritual. They didn't give because they were seeking the spiritual power behind tithing. Jesus confirms the principal of tithing, many people will challenge and say tithing is not in the NT therefore tithing is void, on the contrary Jesus says in verse 42, this you should have done. But tithing out of obligation is powerless, but tithing for spiritual power, is pure power, because tithing releases us from our greed, and our self-reliance trust in our own works, and empowers to see how God works for us and provides for us when trust Him to release 10% back unto Him. People say they can't afford to tithe, and my answer always is, you can't afford not to.

**Luke 11:43 Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces.**

**Luke 11:44 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like graves which are not seen, and the men who walk over them are not aware of them."**

#### **Jesus Exposes their Inward Heart**

So Jesus exposes their heart in that all their spirituality was just an outward show, for inside they really did so people would admire and comment of how spiritual they were, but they only did these things so people would exalt and elevate them, not the Lord.

#### **Ceremonially Unclean – Blind Leading Blind Away**

Verse 44 – if a person stepped on a grave they would become ceremonially unclean and would not be permitted to enter into the Temple to worship, and Jesus is saying that these religious leaders were not leading people unto the Lord, but actually leading them away from the Lord.

#### **Hey Dads / Karl Max**

Hey dads (moms too), as we have spoken to the youth, the Lord wants to speak to us dads too about putting on a front of spirituality, but inside there is nothing. I am reminded of a story as I studied this passage.....many years ago a small Jewish boy asked his father, "Why must we surrender our Jewish faith and start to attend Lutheran services here in Germany? The father replied, "Son, we must abandon our faith so that people will accept us and support our business adventures!" The young lad never got over his disappointment and bitterness. His faith in his father and in his religion were crushed. When the lad left Germany he went to England to study at the British Museum where he formed his philosophies for life. From those intensive investigations he wrote a book that changed the world called, "The Communist Manifesto. From that book one-third of the world fell under the spell of Marxist-Leninist ideology. The name of that little boy was Karl Marx. He influenced billions into a stream that for 70 years ruined, imprisoned and confused many lives. Today, that system of thinking is crumbling, but only after people got a good look at its tragic consequences. The influence of this father's hypocrisy multiplied in infamy. Hey dads, live out your faith, fully and whole-heartedly, for your kids are watching your every move.

#### ***"Woes" on the Lawyers***

**Luke 11:45 Then one of the lawyers answered and said to Him, "Teacher, by saying these things You reproach us also."**

**Luke 11:46 And He said, "Woe to you also, lawyers! For you load men with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers.**

#### **Jesus says His Burden is Light / Christian don't put Burden on People**

These men loaded people down with burdens, but burdens they themselves did not carry. "Come unto Me all ye that are weary and heavy-laden," Jesus said, "and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). Jesus is the burden-Bearer. The

more I get to know people, the more I find myself praying, “Lord, don’t allow me to burden anyone this day more heavily than they’re already burdened.” You see, although our tendency is to think we’re the only ones going through hard times, everyone we meet, everyone we talk to is fighting a tough battle in some area of their lives. No wonder we are to be kind.

*Matthew 11:28–30 (NKJV)* <sup>28</sup> Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

### **In My Marriage**

In my marriage, I put no burdens or expectations on my wife Renee. She knows that, she knows that I am not expecting her to be super-mom or super-wife. She knows that I do not look to her to be my completer, she knows that Jesus is my completer. We both have a mutual understanding that we obey God’s word and His standard, but she knows that I put no expectations upon her. What that does is releases her to live freely, she doesn’t have to live under the pressure of pleasing me, or under my critical eye and evaluation. Because of that freedom she isn’t all bound up and tensed up, walking on eggshells, or living in the sorrow of she has disappointed me..... and thus she responds in sweet release, in joy of marriage, the depth of love, and we have a wonderful marriage. We have a unity of love, we are each other’s best friend, and we can’t wait to be together each day, we miss each other throughout the day, and we don’t therefore take each other for granted. Husbands that is some the best marriage advice you will ever receive. It won’t happen overnight, it didn’t start that way for us, I honestly can be a real jerk, but husbands release you wife of any expectations, and they will then be free, and in that freedom there will be a natural response, a supernatural response, and you will find your marriage in a sweetness you have never experienced before, and it will get sweeter as each year passes too.

### **Apply Matthew 11 to Your Marriage / Come for Rest – Lead to Jesus – No Burdens / Release to Freedom**

Jesus said My yoke is easy and My burden is light. We need to apply that same heart into our marriages, we need to be like Jesus in our marriages by not applying heavy burdens upon our spouses, and thus give them the freedom to simply live and enjoy the relationship. Be their burden bearers, let them come unto you for rest and not a burden, lead them to Jesus, and don’t put her under a yoke of bondage but of freedom.

*Matthew 11:28–30 (NKJV)* <sup>28</sup> Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

**Luke 11:47 Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them.**

**Luke 11:48 In fact, you bear witness that you approve the deeds of your fathers; for they indeed killed them, and you build their tombs.**

**Luke 11:49 Therefore the wisdom of God also said, ‘I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and persecute,’**

**Luke 11:50 that the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation,**

**Luke 11:51 from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who perished between the altar and the temple. Yes, I say to you, it shall be required of this generation.**

### **Impressive Monument – But Greatest Prophet Before Them**

The religious leaders built impressive monuments for the prophets their own number had killed. Here, the greatest Prophet of all stood before them, and they would kill Him as well.

*Luke 11:32 (NKJV)* <sup>32</sup> The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.

### **From A to Z**

From A to Z—the blood of Abel to Zacharias (complete condemnation) would be required at the hand of the religious establishment.

**Luke 11:52 “Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered.”**

**Luke 11:53 And as He said these things to them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to assail Him vehemently, and to cross-examine Him about many things,**

**Luke 11:54 lying in wait for Him, and seeking to catch Him in something He might say, that they might accuse Him.**

**When Jesus to Talk – not to Understand but to Trap / Approach Him as a Friend**

The scribes and Pharisees tried to get Jesus to talk—not to gain understanding from Him, but in an effort to verbally trap Him. May I just close with this comment and that is that anyone here who has doubts Jesus and who He is, and what He is like, may I recommend to you that you approach Him as a friend, for He is not your enemy, He does not want to be at war with you, in fact He loves you greatly and wants a personal relationship with you. So for the next month would you approach Him as such, as a friend who wants to talk to you. So listen to Him, hear what He has to say, listen with an open heart and an open mind, rather than attacking every word and challenging every word, listen openly to His word, consider what He is saying. Then you will be able to honestly evaluate if all this is real, is it just a made-up story, and if He is real then what does He require of me? You see the critical spirit will dispel all the things He wants to speak to you, and thus remove that opportunity to meeting Him, so just listen to His words, treat Him like a human being, a friend who has come to speak to you, and then let's see what happens from there.

# **Luke 12**

## **Believer Beware**

### ***Beware of the Fear of Man***

#### **12:1-12**

#### **Recap Chapters 1-11**

In chapters 1-8 we have seen Jesus displaying His heart and compassion, identifying His mission statement of why He came, and that was and is still today to reach a lost and dying world. Chapters 9-11 we see a shift as Jesus presents that there is a responsibility and calling that comes with claiming His name, becoming one of His followers. We also see a shift in those chapters of an increase tension between Jesus and the religious leaders of that day, and it is escalating in each chapter as we read, and this chapter is more intense between Jesus and them than the last, and in the last chapter we read of Him really laying them out.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> *“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”*

*Luke 9:23–24 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> *Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.*

*Luke 11:53 (NKJV)* <sup>53</sup> *And as He said these things to them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to assail Him vehemently, and to cross-examine Him about many things,*

#### **Jesus uses the Setting to Prepare His Disciples / 4 Spiritual Warnings to Beware of / Meander or Victory**

Chapter 12 is a wonderful and fruitful passage in that Jesus (while under the attacks of the religious leaders), uses the environment to teach, prepare, grow and mature His disciples by giving 4 spiritual warnings that every believer is to beware of, and the difference of conquering these 4 areas are the difference of living a victorious Christian life, or simply meandering through, just getting by, never fully obtaining that which we have been obtained for.

*Philippians 3:12–14 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> *Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. <sup>13</sup> Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, <sup>14</sup> I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

#### **Believer Beware (12:1-59)**

- Beware of the Fear of Man (12:1-12)
- Beware of Covetousness (12:13-21)
- Beware of Worrying (12:22-34)
- Beware of Spiritual Dullness (12:35-59)

#### **Our Study Today**

In our study today we will just look at this first one, the Fear of Man, for how much what we think on, of what others think of us, how that keeps us from attaining what we have been obtained for, to live a powerful and impacting Christian life.

#### ***Christ Warns About Hypocrisy***

**Luke 12:1** **In the meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled one another, He began to say to His disciples first of all, “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.**

**Crowds Pressing – Love to see that in USA**

An innumerable multitude of people were pressing in upon Jesus. How awesome would that be to see that happen here in our nation? Imagine a revival in this Country? I would love to see it first start with all who profess Jesus as Lord to get excited about Him.

### **Leaven Puffs up / Pharisees all Puffed-up / Loved being Exalted and Above Others**

So Jesus says beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. Leaven puffs-up. Leaven is used in bread to cause it to rise. These Pharisees were all puffed-up, they loved the praises of men, they loved being recognized and exalted among the people, they loved to hear how wonderful they were because they were so spiritual (so they and the people thought – but Jesus tore that down in the last chapter).

### **Are You Successful at Work? / Don't let it go to Head / Be Gentle and Kind / God Raises us Up**

Are you successful at work, are you considered one of the best if not the best, does your boss love you because how valuable you are? That is great, give God the glory, but be on guard that you don't get puffed up over it. It is easy to let that go to our head, to feel that it is because of our hard work (and no doubt you have worked hard and applied yourself), but let's remember that without Him we can do nothing, He raises us up (or sits us down) for His glory sake. But the word for you, the word for all, is to remain humble. Stay humble before the Lord, but stay humble before man too. When you are in the meeting, when you are on that job sight, be gentle and kind to those who are not at your level or caliber; don't put them down nor put them in their place, simply be kind and gentle with them, and you will become endeared to them, even the ones who feel threatened by you, or who feel you are their competition. Humble thyself in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up.

*John 15:5 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup> "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.*

*Psalms 75:6-7 (KJV 1900) <sup>6</sup> For promotion cometh neither from the east, Nor from the west, nor from the south. <sup>7</sup> But God is the judge: He putteth down one, and setteth up another.*

*James 4:10 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.*

### **Also – Don't put Coworkers Down / God with us at Home, Church, & Work / Work is still all God**

May I also add, don't put any of your co-workers down. One reason that is done is that as they get put down, the thought is that the other raises up. You don't need to worry about promoting yourself, humble they self in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up. That takes trust, that takes faith in the Lord, that He is with you, in church, in your home, and in your workplace. Do you believe that He is in all three of those fronts in your life? The tendency in a Christian's life can be God is with me at church, God is with me in my home, and there I will meet Him when I get home from work, and on the weekends, as a Christian can feel work is all on them, and they have to make it happen on their own. God wants to be with you in every front of your life, and He wants to co-labor with you on every front, and we know it is true in every aspect of our lives because He is the Vine and we are the branches.

*John 15:5 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup> "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.*

### **Pharisees the Original Fundamentalist**

The Pharisees were the original fundamentalist. The Pharisees were originally born out of the return from the 70 years of captivity in Babylon. When they returned to the homeland of Israel they wanted to ensure that the word was preserved, the word was honored, the ways of the Lord were followed, and they wanted to direct the Nation back to the God and His Word. They were the original fundamentalist. But unfortunately they went from seeking to draw near to God, to turning their relationship into a ritual. They began to focus so much on the form and the fashion, that they no longer were seeing and seeking faith and the Father. So easy to do when a person losing the relationship part, and works on the form part.

### **Last thing – be Called a Pharisee / But how about the Ritual Part**

The last thing any Christian ever wants to be accused of is being a Pharisee, or being legalistic; and you probably are not legalistic, but how about the ritual part? Have you stopped to consider that lately, have you done a self-assessment lately? Could your Christianity be now form and fashion, and far from the faith and the Father part? Are you drawing nearer to the Father every day, or do you feel like you are just going through the motions? Ok, let's see each morning I read a chapter, say these same words, and then it is off to my day and I'll pick those things back up tomorrow. Ok its Sunday, so that means Church, because I got to go to church because that is what a Christian is supposed to do, right? And got to keep up appearances. You know the worse part about a ritual is when you no longer want to do it, but feel you have to because you are trapped, and have to do it. Oh I'd rather be doing something else, but I got to keep up appearance.

### **Is that You – Your walk Merely a Ritual? / Watch the Progression**

If that is you, if you feel your relationship is merely a ritual that you are doing to keep up appearances, whether that is before others, the Lord, or even yourself, if a ritual is where you find yourself, you got to get out of it before you really do turn into a Pharisee, and that will be the natural progression. The Pharisees went from seeking to keep for sake of drawing near, to it becoming a ritual, to then becoming critical and self-righteous, and unloving, and simply blind to the real world around them and all its needs and the beautiful God that was right in front of them yet they couldn't see him.

### **What to Do – Go have Coffee**

What to do? Go have coffee with the Lord. No agenda, no time constraint, no rush to get in no rush to get out, just pour a cup of coffee and sit in your favorite place and just talk. Me and Renee so often (too often) are in overload, all these things we have to manage and process with work, home, ministry, and children..... And we become strangers in the home, no tension, nobody is upset, but then it becomes like ok the couple days have turned into a couple weeks now, and we need to put a stop to this, recalibrate, readjust, and refocus..... And that usually starts with a cup of coffee, and we just put everything aside and drink a cup of coffee and chat, and enjoy each other, being friends and having each other. And that is what you may need to do, just stop, sit, meet with Him and enjoy Him, and it will lead to all things beautiful. He wants that so desperately, he is calling out to you, come away from your ritual and routine and just come to Me and lets walk together and talk as two lovers. Can't help but think of Song of Solomon when I think of God calling His Bride away for a time together:

*Song of Solomon 4:8-9 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, With me from Lebanon. Look from the top of Amana, From the top of Senir and Hermon, From the lions' dens, From the mountains of the leopards. <sup>9</sup> You have ravished my heart, My sister, my spouse; You have ravished my heart With one look of your eyes, With one link of your necklace.

**Luke 12:2 For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known.**

**Luke 12:3 Therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops.**

### **Hypocrisy is Irrational – Because all will be Seen**

After identifying the danger of hypocrisy, Jesus goes on to speak of the irrationality of hypocrisy. Hypocrisy is foolish because the truth eventually comes out. "Be sure your sin will find you out," the Word declares (Numbers 32:23)—not because God will track us down, but because our sin itself will.

*Numbers 32:23 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the LORD; and be sure your sin will find you out.

### **Jesus says you Can Act – but I See**

So Jesus is telling these people, you can act all you want on the outside but I see the inside, and I know every detail of your life, and I even know what is going on inside your home when the door is shut, when the lights are out, when you think no one can see or hear.

### **Word – Actors on a Stage / Masks – a Double Life / Jesus says I see through It**

The word that is used here for hypocrite was the word that was used in that day for an actor on a stage. Now in that time when they wanted to dramatize an emotion, when they wanted to amplify what was going on inside the mind, the actor would hold up a mask and place it over his face. They would have a face with a big smile to display happiness, or a mask with a large frown for sadness, and an angry face, a scared face, etc. Jesus is saying I see through it. Other people may believe you are who you portray to be, but you and I know you are living a double life. That person you are acting like is not the real you. When you watch a movie about a true story, the actors study their characters life, they study their actions, their mannerism, their little subtle, and every detail so that when you watch that movie you feel like you are seeing the real thing. But they are just actors. Jesus is saying hey you are not the real thing, watching you is like watching a bad movie.

### **How about Us?**

But how about us, can I be an actor:

- Act like I care – when I really don't
- Act like I honor and respect – when I don't even like them

How about a little deeper:

- Preach a great sermon on sexual purity – but have a mind filled with lust.
- How about just going through the motions of Christianity

### **Hypocrite – Double Life – Frightening / For Us wanting More – Freeing / He still Accepts / Crickets**

For the hypocrite that is acting, hiding behind the mask, living the double life, then Jesus' word saying that everything shall be brought into the light is frightening. But for those who want to be all they can in Christ, who want to go higher, further, and deeper – then these words are pure power. He says everything is uncovered and brought into the light, and if you are His child, that means that although I see and hear everything, all those ugly things, I still love you and accept you, and so you can bring those things to Me and I will help you rid them from your life. Ever have a cricket in your house, they are annoying, I want them out! I will gladly take any help I can to track them down and rid them out. Oh the crickets of sin that dog me, that keeping chirping, they annoy me..... yes Lord uncover them and clear them out. After our flood in our basement last week we had great concern about mold growing in the walls; I was glad to rip open the walls and ceiling so we could get to the areas to clear them out and make them clean.

### **Hypocrisy is a Miserable Life to Live / The Freedom saying Lord Shine your Light**

Hypocrisy is a miserable life to live, a double life, of having to act one way so no one truly knows what is going on in my life for real. Oh the freedom of saying here it is Lord, shine Your light, You know it is here, now change me from the inside out.

**Luke 12:4 “And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.**

**Luke 12:5 But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him!**

### **Powerful V5 – Need V4 First**

Powerful verse 5, but rest on verse 4 for a while..... My friends.

### **He calls you Friend / Mighty God calls you Friend**

He calls you friend. The God of the universe calls you His friend. The One who holds the world in His hand, the One who sits upon the throne, the One who is King of all, calls you ..... friend.

### **But Holy God – Worthy & Entitled / USA has lost Fear of God**

But He is also a Holy God, and not just worthy of respect, but entitled to respect. There is a great problem today as we live in a Nation that does not fear God. No reverence, no respect, no regard, no regrets..... no fear.

### **One Day Man will Fear**

One day they will tremble, when they see their sin, and see they His Holiness, but it will be too late.

*Joel 2:1–2 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Blow the trumpet in Zion, And sound an alarm in My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; For the day of the LORD is coming, For it is at hand: <sup>2</sup> A day of darkness and gloominess, A day of clouds and thick darkness, Like the morning clouds spread over the mountains. A people come, great and strong, The like of whom has never been; Nor will there ever be any such after them, Even for many successive generations.*

*Philippians 2:10–11 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

### **Large Man In Charge**

This week I was sharing Christ with a rather large man, 6'2" 350 pounds. He was confident, he carried an air of being in-charge, he was somewhat intimidating as he towered over me and spoke in such a deep voice. But it was interesting to me as I shared Christ with him, that I noticed he began to shake. Maybe for the first time in his life he was faced with the fact that he wasn't in charge, he wasn't his future maker, that there was one greater than he. Man has no idea what it will be like to stand in the presence of the Holy and Awesome God, just His mere presence will make the unrepentant tremble, let alone when He opens His mouth to speak.

### **Woe Woe What are you Saying**

Last week as I shared Christ with a young man, when I came to the part of the Gospel about hell, and how man is judged to hell for breaking God's Holy commandments, he said "Woe, woe, woe..... what are you saying, that is not the God I know, the God I know is all loving and caring, and He would never condemn a person to hell". I told him, hell is real, and people really go there.

### **I'm not Turn or Burn Preacher – But there is Power in Speaking of Hell / Temporal**

I am not a turn and burn preacher, but I will tell you this, and that is there is power in speaking about hell, for speaking on hell releases you from the fear of man; it puts light on the temporal world, the fading world, and brings the spotlight on to the eternal world that is to come.

### **Imagine Being Disciple and Crowd Pushing In / Jesus calms Fear / Teaches them Something New in Fear**

Imagine being one of the disciples with Jesus right now, the crowds are pushing in, things are getting heated, they can clearly see the hatred rising from the religious leaders, maybe they even see rocks being picked, and they now begin to think, we will be stoned with Him. Maybe some disciples are thinking it is time to become an undercover disciple because the pressure is too much. But Jesus calms their fears by letting them know they are with Him, and He has the ultimate power over the earth, and even if they were to die, He would give them eternal life. God is so good to us in how He will take situations of fear and teach us something about Him that we had never known before, and will use a place of fear and turn it into a place of fortification and strength. This is the first mention of hell in Luke's account, I think in Jesus' public ministry only the second, and it is here where He reveals it in a unique way. Yes a message to the hypocrites, but a message to His disciples who were fearful (as 5 times in these 12 verses today Jesus speaks of fear to them), and in their fear He teaches them something new, He makes a point to them that they had never heard, and that is He has the power of death and hell. He will do that in your fear, if you will allow Him to, if you will not let you anxiety consume you, but just draw near to Him, and He will teach you, show you, fortify something new and powerful in your life in the midst of your fear. Are you in fear of your health, your income, your child, a relationship – listen through the fear and God will show you something new, fortify you with a word of strength that is greater than that fear that is upon you, pressing in.

### **Counter-Balance / He calls us Friend**

See the counter-balance to verses 3-4; there is nothing to fear for those whom He calls friend (12:4).

### **Fear of God – Will release you from Fear of Man**

The fear of God, will release you from the fear of man, and remember the fear of man is a snare and will entrap you. *Proverbs 29:25 (NKJV)* <sup>25</sup> *The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe.*

### **Jesus goes on to Build How precious we Are to Him**

Jesus will now go on to build on of how precious we are in His sight, how He is constantly and intimately involved in our daily lives, and thus we need not fear man and this world, for we are continually before His eyes and heart.

**Luke 12:6 “Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God. Luke 12:7 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.**

### **Buy 4 get 1 Free / Sparrows of Little Value – Yet Jesus attends the Funeral of Every Sparrow**

You could buy two sparrows for 1 coin, or buy 5 for 2 coins. So buy 4 get one free. I remember being at a fair back in the Bayou of Louisiana, and they were selling ribs; 13 bucks for a slab, or 6 bucks for a half slab, I was like really – ok I'll have two half slabs, so the guy took a slab of ribs and cut it in half and said that will be 12 bucks.

Anyways, buy 4 sparrows and get one free, all for 2 copper coins, which was about a penny. Sparrows were of very little value. But Jesus says I know every one of those sparrows personally, even the get one free one. It has been said, God attends the funeral of every sparrow.

*Matthew 10:29 (NKJV)* <sup>29</sup> *Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will.*

### **Verse 7 – Hairs are Numbered not Counted**

By the way, notice that verse 7 says that you hairs are numbered, not the word counted. They say that blondes have 125,000 hair on their heads, and that brunettes have 95,000, and that red heads have 85,000. I don't know who counted them but that's what they say, whoever they are. God doesn't just know the amount of hair you have on

your head right now, but He knows them by number. There goes number 8334 if just fell out. Ought ohh, little Johnny just pulled out numbers 9,000 through 9,100 out of little Suzy's head. It isn't just intimate knowledge of you, but it is also current knowledge of you; God is intimately and instantly involved and looking at every little detail of your life.

### **God will not Forget Sparrow nor You / So Stop It – You have a Work to Do**

If God will not forget the sparrow, he will not forget you. You are more important to Him than the sparrow, you are precious to Him..... so stop it:

- Stop putting those drugs in your body
- Stop consuming those massive amounts of alcohol
- Stop the sexing
- Stop the giving of yourself away
- Stop being used
- Stop feeling you are worthless

Stop It..... You have a work to do, you have a life greater than that, now go on and live it.

**Luke 12:8 “Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God.**

**Luke 12:9 But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God.**

### **The Negative / Fear of Man – Keeps from Fear of God / Fear of Man a Snare**

The negative is that if you deny Christ He will deny you. You can join in the separation of church and state all you want, you can say religion is personal, you can two things I don't talk about is religion and politics, but Jesus says real clearly here, deny Me before men and I will deny you. See the fear of man, is what keeps you from professing Him. The fear of man is a snare!

### **Now Positive – He Confesses Us Publically**

That is the negative, but here is the positive..... follow what is being said here, when you profess Jesus publically, He professes you before angels in heaven. When I make my public profess before man, He turns to the host of heaven and says, Ray is mine, we are one. I personally believe it is on-going to, it isn't just that time I asked Him into my heart, but it is every time that I stand up publically and profess Him, He then does the same.

### **Another Key to Unlocking Power – Public Profession / Do-it and Live in Power**

Jesus is telling us another key to unlocking the power of God in our life, and that is to go on public record that you follow Jesus Christ; and that profession is continual, not a one-time event. Those who continual let people know they follow Jesus, have and live tremendous spirit-filled powerful lives. Why, because they immediately free themselves from the fear of man, and what men think of them.

### **Go on Record Quickly – Longer Wait the Harder it Is**

Go on record quickly, look for the opportunity to go on record, the longer you wait the harder it is to go on record.

### **Example 1 – Why I Moved / Different Priorities**

Get personal even in a professional context. Example, so where did you transfer from? I came from so-and-so, they transferred me (or I prayed about taking this job) and here I am. It was tough, I really liked that job, but I am excited about this job, and we are adjusting in here greatly, we found a new church and are making new friends there and in the neighborhood, and it's been really good. Probably not best to say anything like we really miss our old church and this one we are at right now is really lame (hahaha), that probably will defeat the purpose you are aiming for. See, but getting the church part out, getting the involved part out, right up front you are sending message that you have different priorities than most people do, you identify what is important to you, and it may open conversation right then and there about the Lord, or it may lay foundation for future conversation, it may connect you right there with another believer, and/or it may send the message – don't bother inviting me to happy Hour, don't tell me those crude jokes, and don't expect me to join in on talking trash about the company, etc, etc.

### **Example 2 – You haven't Before**

Well, how about if you have been saved for a long time, you have been working at the same job, with the same people, and you have never made that distinction, you have never gave any indicator about you being a follower of Jesus Christ, what do you do at this point? I'll tell you one thing, get involved in something that you can glean off of in your conversation. People always ask, so how was your weekend, how was your vacation – and you can say great, I had the most wonderful time going to the Feeding Ministry with the church over the weekend, or do a clothing drive for the needy, and use that to springboard into conversation, and..... A short-term mission trip goes a long, long, way..... way beyond the week you spent in that mission field. Hey were you going on vacation (or were you on vacation), and you say oh it was amazing.....and then you share about your trip.

### **Go On Record for there is Power In It**

Go on public record, for there is power in your personal spiritual life, because it frees you from the fear of man.

### **Recap on Power**

- Power in speaking the word Hell
- Power in going on Public Record

### **Recap in Remembrance**

- Have Coffee with the Lord – Break the Ritual
- Freedom in knowing He sees All – Don't have to Act
- He calls us Friend
- He attends the funeral of the sparrow – He died for Us
- He numbered our hairs – not counted

### **All Release us from Hypocrisy and Fear of Man**

All these things will release us from hypocrisy and the fear of man, so that we might live the life that He has called us to live in power and love.

**Luke 12:10 “And anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven.**

### **Context verse 8-9**

Mind you we are still in the context of verses 8-9, Jesus denying and professing, as we deny and profess:

*Luke 12:8-9 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> “Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God. <sup>9</sup> But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God.*

### **The Work of the Holy Spirit**

The work of the Holy Spirit, is to convict the world of sin and righteousness, and that there is a judgment to come.

*John 16:7-15 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. <sup>8</sup> And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: <sup>9</sup> of sin, because they do not believe in Me; <sup>10</sup> of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; <sup>11</sup> of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. <sup>12</sup> “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. <sup>13</sup> However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. <sup>14</sup> He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. <sup>15</sup> All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.*

### **Only 1 Means to Forgiveness – Jesus / Holy Spirit Bears Witness**

You see, God has provided only one means by which your sins can be forgiven. And that's through the death of His Son. And the Holy Spirit bears witness to your heart that you need to surrender your life to Jesus. And if you disregard that warning, if you do despite to His Spirit of grace that is reaching out and offering you the salvation, there is no other means whereby your sins can be forgiven and your sins will either be forgiven and pardoned because of the work of Jesus Christ, or they will be punished in Gehenna. So beware of that turning your back upon the witness of the Holy Spirit to your heart inviting you to receive Jesus Christ as Lord.

### **But I must make Point**

The work of the Holy Spirit is to convict each person of sin (their offense and need for a Savior), and righteousness (right standing before God – correctness of thinking – thinking of God's standard). The Holy Spirit does not stop

convicting on the day a person makes a profession of faith in Christ, the Holy Spirit then moves on to convict (continually) that a person is not living in the standard of God's holiness. The Holy Spirit continues to convict a person of their sin. Listen, if you can willfully sin without any conviction upon you, you are in a dangerous place. It is not a one and done, public profession and live and sin as I choose. The Holy Spirit will continually convict you of your sin, if not, then you may want to self-evaluate, why you can freely continue to sin, and the Holy Spirit is not convicting you of that. Have you committed the unpardonable sin, I would say no if you are still listen to my voice and actually care what I am saying.

**Luke 12:11 “Now when they bring you to the synagogues and magistrates and authorities, do not worry about how or what you should answer, or what you should say.**

**Luke 12:12 For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.”**

### **If Called before Man**

If called before man, the Holy Spirit will fill your mouth with the right words, so don't be afraid to put yourself in places, or be in a place where you can get challenged, for the Holy Spirit will be with you and leading you.

### **Notice the Trinity Committed to You**

Notice, the Father, the Son and the Spirit, all committed to you. Father watching over you. You don't have to fear. Jesus confessing you before the holy angels. And now the Spirit there to assist you when you stand before the tribunal.

Come Away with Him this Week

*Song of Solomon 4:8-9 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, With me from Lebanon. Look from the top of Amana, From the top of Senir and Hermon, From the lions' dens, From the mountains of the leopards. <sup>9</sup> You have ravished my heart, My sister, my spouse; You have ravished my heart With one look of your eyes, With one link of your necklace.*

# **Beware of Covetousness**

12:13-21

## **Unique chapter / Under the Skin / 4 Things that can Block Spiritual Flow**

Chapters 1-8 Jesus displayed His great heart and compassion for all people, gave His mission statement of why He came (Luke 4:18-19), and then in chapters 9-11 He lays out the calling for all people to become His disciples. Now we are here in Luke 12, and it is a unique chapter in that Jesus is addressing things in a person's life that are under the skin, that is not readily seen by those on the outside, things that dwell deep within a person that others can't see from the outside. Jesus will address four things that are deep, and four things that we need to beware of, four things that if we allow can block the spiritual flow of God in our lives, and rob us of living the Christian life, that spirit-filled life that He desires for each and every one of us here today.

He says to:

- Beware of Hypocrisy
- Beware of Covetousness
- Beware of Worry
- Beware of Spiritual Dullness

## **Last Week – Hypocrisy / Actor on Stage / Fear of Man – God Sees – We can be Honest**

So last week we took an in-depth look at hypocrisy, that trying to appear one thing on the outside, but really living a whole another life on the inside, or when no one is looking. The word hypocrisy was the word for an actor on the stage, the wearing of a mask in the theatre. We talked about the fear of man, and how the fear of man can make a person live that double life, because they want to be accepted and respected by man, even if they means doing things that are contrary to God's word and ways. The most beautiful part of that study was that we saw the Lord saying I see everything in you, yet I am not turned off or put off by it, but just come to Me and together we can change you from the inside out, you can become that man/woman of God that deep inside you, you desire to be. It is a beautiful place to be Christian, we can be honest with God, we can be honest with ourselves, and we can be honest with each other..... we can say "hey I am not all that I should be, I know I have some weaknesses and failings right now, but Lord will you help me change, friend God accepts me as I am and is working to changing whom I am from the inside out, will you accept me as I am, will you come and stand beside me too and help". Listen, you don't have to fear man or try to impress man, because the fact is that every man/woman has their issues too, they are just like you, and thus who cares if you impress them, they are messed up too. Seek to impress God, and He will press upon you and form you from the inside out.

## **Need not Fear Man – Impress Man / Just Keep Reaching**

We need not fear man, nor fear impressing man, what we need, is we need to keep pressing on for the high calling of God, we need to keep reaching for the prize, we need to obtain that which we were attained for:

*Philippians 3:12-14 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. <sup>13</sup> Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, <sup>14</sup> I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

## **See Space Jump**

Speaking of fear, did you see the guy jump from the little space capsule last week? He jumped from 24 miles (128 thousand feet) up on the fringe of outer space. He had to wear a specially designed spacesuit that was pressurized, he had to have breathing oxygen, it was totally crazy. Speaking of fear, you would say there was a guy with no fear (but he actually says he has learned how to make fear his friend – interesting thought to think about). When he jumped he reached speeds close to 700 mph (first human to ever break the speed of sound), and then somehow was able to pull the parachute chord and land safely. You would say there was a guy who had no fear, but guess what the mission almost got aborted, if you can believe it that he actually had fear, he wasn't afraid of jumping from 24 miles above the earth, nor going 700 mph, nor trusting in his parachute, but he almost quit and the mission was almost aborted, because he couldn't overcome his claustrophobia when they began training for the mission several months ago. Imagine that, jumping from 24 miles no problem, getting in a little capsule - problem, he couldn't control his fear of being in that little capsule. So they brought in a sports doctor who specializes in extreme sports,

who after determining that it was anything physically wrong with him, they went to work on his mind, and when they asked the doctor how did you help him overcome his claustrophobia and want to jump out of that capsule 24 miles high and go 700mph, and the doctor said it was a simple point, I worked with him to fix his mind on one thing, not the capsule, ..... but the prize. The prize of being the first ever to break the speed of sound, and become the world record holder.

*(Note from Ray: this article has been copied in its entirety as originally printed. However good the mental professions advice may have been, they still fall short because they did not include God in the factoring or aid in the problem).  
Space Jump - Sun October 14, 2012 |*

*(Wired) -- Of all the things Felix Baumgartner had to worry about while pursuing his dream of skydiving from 120,000 feet, the one that almost stopped him cold was ... Claustrophobia.*

*"Fearless Felix" got a bit freaked out by the pressurized suit he'll wear during his ascent and, more importantly, his supersonic descent from 23 miles up -- now tentatively scheduled for Sunday or Monday. Getting over his discomfort was a key hurdle to clear as the Austrian adventurer set out to make the highest skydive ever.*

*To that end, Red Bull, his sponsor, called in Dr. Michael Gervais. He's a sports psychologist who specializes in high-performance and "extreme" sports like, say, falling out of the sky at the speed of sound. Red Bull wanted him to psychologically evaluate Baumgartner and help him conquer his fear.*

*It must be said that Baumgartner is no stranger to fear or death-defying situations. The 43-year-old former military parachutist has made more than 2,500 jumps, including dives from the Petronas Towers and the Taipei 101 skyscraper. Clearly he has learned how to put aside fear, even use it to his advantage.*

*"Fear has become a friend of mine," he said in a statement. "It's what prevents me from stepping too far over the line. On a mission like this, you need to be mentally fit and have total control over what you do, and I'm preparing very thoroughly."*

*But his plan to break the unofficial record retired Col. Joe Kittinger set with a leap from 102,800 feet in 1960 revealed a fear Baumgartner hadn't felt before. And it had nothing to do with coming down from such a height, but suiting up to reach it.*

*To prevent a potentially fatal condition called ebullism, Baumgartner must wear a custom-made space suit and helmet. Although the suit, based on those worn by high-altitude reconnaissance pilots, is designed to maximize maneuverability and visibility, it constricts his movement and vision. He'd never worn a pressurized space suit before, and he felt the claustrophobia — which, according to a New York Times account, was so severe it brought on panic attacks — threatened to bring the mission to a screeching halt.*

*That's when Gervais stepped in. After determining that Baumgartner was entirely committed to making the jump and not using claustrophobia as an excuse to back out, he set to work. (Baumgartner, who is in Roswell, New Mexico preparing for Sunday's launch, could not be reached for comment, but Red Bull confirmed Gervais' account for Wired.)*

*Over the course of three days, Gervais determined Baumgartner didn't have quite the right tools to manage his mind and emotions in the face of so great a risk. That's where the suit became an issue: It was a symbol of his not having complete control of the situation. To combat this, Gervais said, Baumgartner had to reconnect with his vision. He'd become too focused on the suit, not the goal he hoped to reach wearing it.*

*Simply put, he needed to get his eyes back on the prize.*

*"When we are in a high stakes or intense situation, it's not uncommon for our minds to jump forward, going to the next moment and worrying about what happens when this moment doesn't go well," Gervais said. "What happens is we give 50 percent to something that doesn't exist yet and 50 to this moment."*

*To reconnect with his vision, Baumgartner needed to reconnect to what Gervais called his hidden journey — what the jump meant to him, beyond being the first person to skydive from so great a height, or being the first person to exceed the speed of sound (about 700 mph at that altitude) in free fall. The hidden journey, he said, is much more basic: Baumgartner wants to go somewhere no one has ever been.*

*Gervais taught Baumgartner how to better manage his mind and body under pressure. Baumgartner mastered something Gervais called "combat breathing," or deep breathing, to calm himself. And he developed positive self-talk, using great care in choosing the words he used when talking to himself and others about the jump.*

*"Self-talk is considered one of the most powerful mental skills," Gervais said. "Self talk is the foundation for self-confidence and self-esteem."*

*To sharpen these skills, Gervais put Baumgartner in increasingly uncomfortable situations — which he would not specify — and made him try to gain control of his body and mind.*

*"We cultivated a situation to move a person to the edge of panic," said Gervais. "Imagine doing that repeatedly over 30 hours of training and at the end of it, you've got full control of how your mind works, and you breathe freely in those moments."*

*To further help Baumgartner, Kittinger — a trusted adviser who has worked closely with Baumgartner over the years — will be the only voice the Austrian will hear on the radio.*

"Felix trusts me because I know what he's going through — and I'm the only one who knows what he's going through," the retired colonel told the Times. His flight team also devised a detailed pre-launch procedure to help occupy Baumgartner's mind before lift-off.

Once Baumgartner's mind was at ease, Gervais had to convince the Stratos team the problem had been solved. Because his ascent, in a space capsule dangling beneath a 55-story helium balloon, would take about 3.5 hours, and the descent about 20 minutes, he had to demonstrate 4.5 to five hours of proficiency in the suit.

"Then they would feel comfortable that Felix as a man and an athlete could manage himself in a space where no one else has been," Gervais said.

We already know Baumgartner passed the test, because he made successful test jumps from 13 miles up in March and 18 miles up in July. That said, the repeated weather delays — the jump has been twice delayed by high wind — can't be helping the mental strain, but Gervais is confident that Baumgartner has what it takes to stay focused on the task at hand.

"He's somebody that is willing to commit everything to his vision," added Gervais. "Everything is on the line. It's a great emblem for all of us to find value and fully commit to a vision."

### **We all Have Fears / Caught up in Praise of Man – Fear of Man / Today – Covetousness / Eye on Prize**

We can all have our fears, we can all get caught-up in wanting to be respected or thought highly by others, or we can get caught up in today's topic of covetousness (the wanting and need of more stuff), or next week's study on worrying, we can worry about this and we can worry about that, but the key to overcoming all these things, all four of these things that Jesus says to beware of is, is to fix our eyes on the prize, the upward calling of God, that this world is not all that, we are just passing through, pilgrims on a journey, and I am going to see Him. I, we, have a God who loves us, is passionate about us, calls us friend, calls us His, who died for us to have us, I am His and He is mine, and that is what the prize is, and that is what we must keep our eyes fixed upon, else we can easily get sucked into these four things that Jesus says to beware of, because they carry so much weight in the world we live in, but not until they are put in their proper perspective, do we see how vain and empty they really are, and thus why investing in them is such a waste.

### **Let's Look at Vanity of Worldly Possessions**

So today we will look at this vanity, emptiness, and futility of gaining worldly possessions.

### **Read 13-21**

So let's read verses 13-21, then we will start our verse-by-verse study.

*Luke 12:13–21 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> Then one from the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." <sup>14</sup> But He said to him, "Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?" <sup>15</sup> And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses." <sup>16</sup> Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. <sup>17</sup> And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' <sup>18</sup> So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods.' <sup>19</sup> And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.'" <sup>20</sup> But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' <sup>21</sup> "So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

### **Summarize & be Clear – Nothing wrong with Possessions**

Now, first let me summarize something to be clear. There is nothing wrong with being rich, having wealth, having possessions. The issue at hand today is covetousness, and the definition of coveting is "wanting more, to not be satisfied with what you have", the literal meaning as it was used in this day was "to thirst for more".

### **2 Points**

So two points concerning coveting:

1. Do I possess my possessions, or do they possess me?
2. Am I grateful for what I do have, or more about complaining what I don't have?

### **Parable of the Rich Fool**

**Luke 12:13** Then one from the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

**Luke 12:14** But He said to him, "Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?"

**One in every Crowd / Do you know Joe from NY**

There is one in every crowd, this guy hadn't or wasn't listening to a thing Jesus was saying. I remember I was doing open air preaching in the Ukraine in 1996, and I thought things were going well, had a crowd gathered around me to listen, and this one guy seemed all excited about what I was saying, couldn't contain himself, and interrupted me in the middle of the gospel, and so I turn to my interpreter and say what is he saying, I'm thinking wow I'm going to have to give an altar call right here on the street, and I say what is he saying, and she said "he wants to know if you Joe from New York".

### **1 Every Crowd / Hadn't Heard Word Jesus Said verses 1-12 / Sparrow Funeral – Hell – Light - Blaspheme**

There is one in every crowd, this guy hadn't heard a thing Jesus had talked about in verses 1-12, he didn't hear about a God who knew the number of hairs on his head, who attended the funerals of every sparrow, and how much He think of you, he didn't hear a word about there is a hell, nor the blaspheme of the Holy Spirit, all he was doing was waiting for Jesus to take a breath so he could interject and try to get his issue resolved that he was having with not getting all the stuff that was coming to him, due to him, after the death of his parents.

### **Jewish Culture dividing Inheritance**

In the Jewish culture they had a unique way of dividing the inheritance. The oldest brother would divide up the inheritance, but the youngest brother got first pick, and the oldest got last. You could be sure that the brother divided things up equally. We'll usually it worked well, but obviously there seems to be some contention over the dividing up part between these brothers.

### **I like Jesus' Answer / Police Officer vs Paramedic**

You know I like Jesus' answer, and we all here serve in the ministry in some form or fashion, and I see great applets to glean from here. Notice that Jesus doesn't get involved in the refereeing part here, He says what is that to Me, even more emphatic He says "man" what is that to Me. You know I often felt like I had to be the policeman in many arguments among Christians, and it was my role to help determine who was right and who was wrong, and I would get all involved in hearing out both sides and trying to determine cause and who needed to change, but now as I understand the ministry of Jesus Christ more, as I watch Him interact throughout the Gospels, I have come to understand that my role is not the role of a police officer coming upon an accident scene, but the paramedic who comes on the scene, and his only desire is to look for the hurting and try to patch them up, try to make them whole, try to bring healing so they can go on and live healthy and fruitful spiritual lives. Good example given here by Jesus, and good example for us today.

### **Back to our Story – Man had no Interest in Spiritual Things / Only Physical & Material**

But back to our story, and what we see here is that this man had no interest in the spiritual things of God, all he was concerned about was the physical, the here and now, and his desires for possessions possessed him, and separated him from the God that was standing right before him.

### **Could that be You Today – God standing right in Front of You – Focused on the Worldly**

Could that be you today, could God be standing right before you, and yet your focus on gaining the things of the world (whether that is possessions or people) is keeping you from seeing the God who is standing right before you?

**Luke 12:15 And He said to them, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.”**

### **Francis of Assisi – Every Confession / Feel bad about Others**

I believe it was the early church father Francis of Assisi who said “I have heard the confession of every conceivable sin among men,” “except the sin of covetousness.” People feel bad about immorality, lying, swearing—but when was the last time we cried over the sin of covetousness?

### **So Subtle / Evaluate today – You Possess or They Possess You**

It is so subtle isn't it, thus why Jesus says beware of it (His verb tense is to continually beware of it). Let us think about it today, and evaluate ourself today, and determine do you possess your possessions or do they possess you?

### **Why Jesus say Beware – Because we Lose Freedom / Maintain and Polish and Worry**

Why does Jesus say beware, because once things start to possess us we lose our freedom, we have to maintain this thing, we have to polish this thing, we have to work overtime to keep this thing, the we even have to worry about this thing if we are going to lose it, break it, or have it stolen. Now instead of being free to enjoy Christ, we are enslaved to gaining or maintaining things.

### **Stuff a Better Word / Magic Garage – Strong Fellowship**

Stuff may be a better word because we stuff it here we stuff it there, we stuff it in the closet, we stuff it under the bed, we have so much stuff we have to stuff it where ever we can find an unclaimed hole. My wife is funny; she thinks the garage is a magical stuffing place. She thinks all she has to do is somehow get that stuff out into the garage and somehow it magically places itself somewhere out of the way and out of sight, but when she wants it five years from now it will be there, as she calls to me the warehouse manager, hey where is my thing. Oh how many times we have had, strong fellowship (that's the Christian term for fighting amongst husband and wife), over where is the stuff. I have told her, but she doesn't seem to hear me, and that is I have said if it is sitting on the floor in the garage then I assume it is junk and I take it to the roadside for pickup. I am not going through the box or the bag to evaluate its worth, I just take it to the trash. How many times it is, honey do you know where that bag is I put in the garage three years ago is, it had my expensive curtains, or one-of-a-kind décor set, or Camden's winter clothes in it, and I am like, ahhhhhh..... looks like a day of strong fellowship is a coming.

### **Anyhoo – Jesus says Beware (continually) / Remember time when Completely Satisfied in Him?**

But back to the possessions posing us, Jesus says to beware, because once there was a time where we were completely satisfied in Him, but now He is not enough. That place will always lead us into discontentment, unrest, even depression, and thus we must beware of it, and the verb tense it to continually beware of it.

### **Notice v15 – Man's Life doesn't Exist in Abundance**

Notice Jesus said there at the end of verse 15 that a man's life does not exist in the abundance of the things he possess.

*Luke 12:15 (NKJV) <sup>15</sup> And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."*

### **Johnny Green Story**

I am reminded of the story of the young man madly in love with his girlfriend, and he says honey I want you to marry me, I know I don't have a yacht like Johnny Green does, or a Rolls Royce like Johnny Green does , or a mansion like Johnny Green does, but I do love you with all my heart, and want to spend the rest of my life with you. And she responds, oh I love you too honey, very much, but could you tell me a little more about this Johnny Green?

### **Oh Yes Lord I love You – BUT>>>> / Be on Guard Continually**

Lord You are the treasure that I seek, but there is a lot of cool stuff out there. Oh yes Lord I love you, but that thing would be so nice to have, it would make my life so much more comfortable and enjoyable, and thus we have to constantly be on guard that the things we possess do not possess us.

### **Rich Man – Not One has Most, but Needs the Least / Want to be Rich – Cut Back**

The rich man is not the one that has the most, but the one that needs the least. If you want to be rich, cut back on what you need, and you will be free.

### **We live in Society that Screams Opposite – Beware / 131 Billion in America**

We live in a society that screams out the opposite message constantly. Jesus says to beware of that, we are bombarded on billboards, commercials, web ads, newspaper ads, junk mail, it is continually upon us. In 2010 there was 131 billion dollars spent on advertising in America.

### **Jesus gives Parable to bring more Understanding**

Now Jesus is going to give a parable, this is not an actual story, but it is an illustration that Jesus uses to cast a story alongside of a spiritual truth to bring it into a clearer understanding.

**Luke 12:16 Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully.  
Luke 12:17 And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?'**

**Luke 12:18 So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods.**

**Luke 12:19 And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry." '**

### **I Problem – Self-Problem**

Notice this guy has a self-problem. Did ya notice he said "I" six times, and four "my" and one "your".

### **Today's Wealth built on Debit**

Part of today's wealth is built on debt, and man becomes enslaved to that debt. Americans are buried in credit card debt (average household – \$16,000), (total USA consumer debt – \$2.5 trillion), over their heads in their mortgage (many upside now), college graduates are buried in massive student loans or else their parents are (\$27,000 average per student – 1 Trillion total – the next financial crisis is my prediction). And, look at our national debt (16 Trillion – and the clock keeps ticking), it is unsustainable for any Country to carry that much debt. Our financial stability is backed up to a fiscal cliff, and we are only a step away from crashing down.

### **Concerned About our Youth**

I am greatly concerned with our young generation today, so many of them seem to be focused on one thing above all things, and that is self and I. This has to be the most materialist generation of all times. But parents, what role did we play in that? You who have young ones today, spoil them with love, not with things, don't build them up to be materialistic, that ask and ye shall receive approach will leave them appreciating nothing.

### **Have to Keep up with Friends / Sports Car Story**

Then of course so many of them have to keep up the image, got to get that one up, and possessions are the big player in that. I'm reminded of the young man in his sports car pulling up to this guy in his Rolls Royce, windows down, they look at each other smugly, hmm he thinks he is something doesn't he. So the guy in the sports car says so do you have a satellite TV in there, the other says I do, he goes how about a fax machine, the man replies of course, surround sound, of course, and then the guy in the sports car says how about a queen size bed, and the guy in the Rolls Royce says what, no I don't, the kid says loser, and speeds off. So the guy in the Rolls Royce goes right down to a custom shop and says I don't care what it cost, put a bed in my car. Once done he takes off and goes looking for the sports car, and when he finds him parked on the street, so he pulls up, starts honking, no response from inside, and the windows are up, so he starts knocking on the window, and finally the window comes rolling down and the guy in the sports car looks out, his hair is soaking wet, and says what is it, what is the big deal with all that pounding going on. And the guy in the Rolls Royce says well I just want to tell you that I got a bed in my car, and not only that it is not a queen bed but a king size bed, what do you think of that. And the guy in the sports cars says, are you kidding me, you got me out of the shower to tell me that.

### **Vainly keeping up with Jones / Community College**

Oh the vanity of keeping up with the Jones. Youth can I tell you this, the Community College is more than fine, save yourself 40 to 50 grand in debt, or make your parents have to work another ten years of their life because you felt the Community College was below you.

### **Here is Point of Coveting / Ungrateful to God – Not satisfied with what He is Doing in our Lives**

And here is a point of coveting that we must all beware of, first was that we were not satisfied with what we currently have, and secondly we are ungrateful for what God has given us. If we find ourselves unsatisfied, what we are saying is God I am not satisfied with what you have and are currently doing in my life.

### **2 Points**

So two points concerning coveting:

1. Do I possess my possessions, or do they possess me?
2. Am I grateful for what I do have, or more about complaining what I don't have?

**Luke 12:20 But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?'**

**Luke 12:21 “So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”**

**Notice his Presumptions – View of Self / Greatly Different from Gods**

Notice this man had the presumption that he was going to have a future of ease, and many years to come, yet Jesus says he had presumed wrong for life comes at you fast. And notice that this man’s view of himself was greatly different than that of God, as this man thought he was rich, successful, powerful (as wealth can bring/buy that), and so this man has a great view of himself, but Jesus view of him was that he was a fool.

**Plans Today – Retirement – but not Eternity**

This man had plans for today, he had plans for his retirement, but he had no plans for his eternity.

**We think Money will Satisfy / Howard Hughes**

We think money will satisfy and bring a complete life, but I am reminded of the multimillionaire Howard Hughes whose money drove him mad literally, he became so obsessed with his money that it drove him and to the point that he had a bacteria phobia, and no one could touch him, he let his fingernails grow to inches long where he could use his hands, he wouldn't cut his hair or shave, and in the end even with all his millions, and his pure genius that made him his millions, he died in isolation and a madman.

**Haddi Green**

How about Haddi Green, she was called the witch of Wall Street. She died in 1916. Hattie's life is a sad demonstration of what it is like to be among the living dead. When Hattie died, her estate was valued at over \$100 million; yet Hattie lived in poverty. She ate cold oatmeal because it cost money to heat it. She boarded up her house, a huge home in New York City, and only heated one room. After she read the Wall Street Journal she would neatly fold it back up and send her son out on the street to sell it, after all why waste 5 cents. She became obsessed with keeping her possessions, worrying about her wealth, that she became consumed by them. When her son's leg became infected, Hattie wouldn't get it treated until she could find a clinic that wouldn't charge her. By then, her son's leg had to be amputated because gangrene set in. When she died no one attended her funeral, including her son, and all that money, a billion dollars in today's standard, her son blew it all in 20 years, and became a homeless street bum in New York City. He resented her, and had no value for her money.

**Harrison Ford - Peace**

I think of Harrison Ford at the time when he was the richest man in Hollywood making 50 million a year, and in a television interview they said you are the richest man in Hollywood, the most successful and popular actor of our day, you have wealth, respect, love, and fame, is there anything you lack in your life -and to that he replied, yes, Peace.

**Peace only Jesus can Bring / Beware (continually) – especially the Land we Live In**

There is a peace that only Jesus can bring, and we need to beware, be on guard, that the pursuit of wealth, especially in the land that we live in, does not separate us from that love and passion we once had, when we had Jesus, and Jesus was enough. Lord you are the treasure of my heart, but there is a lot of cool stuff out there.

**How do I do That - ACTS**

Well how do I apply this, how do I guard against this covetousness you may ask, we'll here is something I've learned over the years, and that ACTS, the prayer, as the Book of Acts of the acts of the Holy Spirit moving through His people.

**ACTS**

**Acknowledge** - remember whose you are. Address is everything. And exalt Him in your prayers so you are reminded of His love and power, and That He is intimately and passionately concerned in every detail of your life.

**Confession** - clear the air; don't let sin block the flow of sweet fellowship with Him. You can be real and honest with Him, and as we studied last week He accepts you as you are, and knows everything about you, and says come, let's deal with this together. He is such a good God.

**Thanksgiving** - give God thanks for all that He has done and has given you presently, and you will find yourself more appreciative of what you currently have, and you may find yourself realizing how much more you have than the rest of the world around you.

**Supplication** - a good indicator of your spiritual covetous state can be seen right now by taking a review of the things you have prayed for lately. If you find yourself not asking God for any assistance it may be an indicator that you are self-reliant, and not God-reliant, its ok Lord I got it you may think. Maybe your prayers are praying for others, praying for ministry and ministries, and desire to be Christ-like, and conformed into His image. If so, totally awesome. But maybe your prayer requests are leaning heavily on material requests, well that may be a sign that you are seeking more earthly riches rather than heavenly. It is ok to ask, God wants us to ask, but if you find that you are continually just asking for things, and for self, you may have a covetousness problem.

### **1 Cor 6:12 / Lawful – Beneficial - Helpful**

Applications, pray about your purchases, and consider these three things when you do. 1 Corinthians 6:12, is it lawful, is it helpful, could it bring you into bondage (binding, slavery). Just a quick note, the context of verse 12 is in light of verses 9-11 where God gives us a specific list of what is not lawful. Some folks like to quote verse 12 and say once you are saved everything is lawful, but that is out of context. What is lawful that is being spoken is in the context of eating meats, and food sacrificed to idols (1 Cor 10:23-26). So back to our application today, and that when you look to purchase something ask yourself, pray about, is it lawful. Yea that should be pretty easy, is it something forbidden in the Scriptures (against the law of the Land – Romans 13:1). What also may be unlawful is the means by which you are obtaining it, bootleg, and black-market. Or, the way you can finance it, such as cheating on your taxes, lying about a prequalifying status. If you have to quit tithing to afford it, then I would tell you it is not for you (for tithing is God's way of releasing us from the grips of greed and covetousness). But let's say you pass the lawful part, then the question next is it helpful? Will the purchase of this thing be beneficial, will it draw you closer to the Lord, is it a daily necessity, or could it be something that draws you away from the Lord? If it draws you away from the Lord, your family, ministry, then it is not beneficial, and thus don't buy it. Lastly, could this purchase put you in bondage, could it make you a slave to working to pay for it, could it draw you away because you have to invest so much time maintaining it, polishing it, or worrying about. But if it is lawful, it is beneficial, it is not bringing you into slavery.....then enjoy it.

*1 Corinthians 6:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.*

*1 Corinthians 6:9–11 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, <sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>11</sup> And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.*

*1 Corinthians 6:13–14 (NKJV) <sup>13</sup> Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. <sup>14</sup> And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power.*

*1 Corinthians 10:23–26 (NKJV) <sup>23</sup> All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify. <sup>24</sup> Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being. <sup>25</sup> Eat whatever is sold in the meat market, asking no questions for conscience' sake; <sup>26</sup> for "the earth is the LORD's, and all its fullness."*

*Romans 13:1–2 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. <sup>2</sup> Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.*

### **Application – Pray about Your Purchases / Prayer takes out of Worldly into Eternal**

Prayer, takes you out of this earthly realm and places you into the eternal realm and eternal mindset, and it is there you will begin to see the power of storing your treasures in heaven. Christian, keep your eye on the prize!

*Matthew 6:19–21 (NKJV) <sup>19</sup> "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup> but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

### **Man on Micronesia**

There is a story from early years about a sailor getting shipwrecked off a small island of Micronesia, and he was rescued by the primitive islanders. They grabbed him and hoisted him on their shoulders and they paraded him

through the village, and then immediately they set him up as their king and showered him with praise and service, and obeyed his every wish. All seemed well to him, what a great misfortune for me he chuckled to himself. But after some time as he had heard stories of other shipwrecked sailors, gods who washed ashore, he found out that none of them were still around, and he found out that on that island that a man was made king for one year and then was banished to a small remote deserted island for the rest of his days, which would be short lived because of the lack of food and conditions on the other island. So the man, because he was king, made the people begin a massive building project on that island. He built a strong home that would withstand the tropical storms, a large storehouse which was then filled with enough food to last 100 years, he had them build a fresh water system, and thus when the day came that he was banished to the island, and he would live in ease and comfort. He was smart, he used the position that he was currently in, to prepare for his future day that was coming.

**True – we can't take it With us – but can Send it Ahead / Store Treasures**

It is true that we cannot take it with us, but we can send it ahead, Jesus said to store your treasures up in heaven for where your treasures are, your heart will be.

**Wise is the Man/Woman who invests in eternity – Not Caught up in Worlds Wealth**

Wise is the man, woman, who invests in the things of God and eternity. The wise person is he who is seeking to be rich in God, with eternity's value in view, as they are not caught up in this world's wealth, but seeking to be rich in God.

**Worship Team**

Let's have the worship team come back.

**Steve Sabol**

Not sure if you know who Steve Sabol is, but he is the genius behind the NFL films, he started the company that filmed all the NFL games, and then made all those great shows out of them like Top 10 greatest QB's, or the football bloopers, or Super Bowl highlights. Well, he died last month, and here I find one of the saddest quotes of life:

*So they talk about heaven, and I don't know what is waiting for me up there.*

*But I can tell you this: Nothing will happen up there that can duplicate my life down here.*

*Nothing.*

*That life cannot be better than the one I've lived down here, the football life.*

*It's been perfect.*

*Steve Sabol*

**Charles Finney / And then What**

And I will close with this today, there was a young man who had just graduate from law school and his professor called him into his office. He said young man what are you going to do next, and the man said go get a job, and the professor said and then what, and the young man said then eventually start a law firm, and the professor said and then what, and the young man said get married, and then what, have a family, and then what, retire, and then the professor said, and then what, and the young man said relax, and then the professor asked, and then what? And it was at that moment the young man stopped, ran from the office, and then ran and ran, and finally stopped, realizing that one day he would face eternity, and had not done anything to prepare for it, and at that moment the words of the gospel that were preached to him came ringing back, and he gave his life to Christ right there. The young man was Charles Finney, he went on to be one the greatest evangelist used of God in the 1800's. If you are reading these words today, the question for you is..... and then what?

# Beware of Worrying

## Luke 12:22-34

### Unique chapter / Under the Skin / 4 Things that can Block Spiritual Flow

Chapters 1-8 Jesus displayed His great heart and compassion for all people, gave His mission statement of why He came (Luke 4:18-19), and then in chapters 9-11 He lays out the calling for all people to become His disciples. Now we are here in Luke 12, and it is a unique chapter in that Jesus is addressing things in a person's life that are under the skin, that is not readily seen by those on the outside, things that dwell deep within a person that others can't see from the outside. Jesus will address four things that are deep, and four things that we need to beware of, four things that if we allow can block the spiritual flow of God in our lives, and rob us of living the Christian life, that spirit-filled life that He desires for each and every one of us here today.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

*Luke 9:23–24 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.

He says to:

- Beware of Hypocrisy
- Beware of Covetousness
- Beware of Worrying
- Beware of Spiritual Dullness

### Beware of Worry

So today we will dedicate a whole study on worry. So, this past week, have you found yourself worrying about anything? What was it? Why was it? What did it cost you, did you lose sleep, were you depressed, were you anxious, were you agitated, did you find your mind consumed with something that you couldn't shake, even though there was absolutely nothing you could do about that thing that you continually were thinking about.

### Definition of Worry

The definition of worry:

*Worry: to be anxious, to be troubled with, to be burdened with, to continually look out for, to be full of thought on, to draw in different directions (means to have thoughts all over the place), to be distracted, to brood, to speculate.*

### Last 6 Months of Ministry

Jesus is in the last 6 months of His public ministry, He is on the march towards Jerusalem, to the cross. If you knew you only had 6 months left to live, what would you tell your loved ones, what would you make sure they understood, what would you leave them as your final words of wisdom? Jesus leaves these words, they must be important.

### Spiritual Dams / Seattle Fog

Worry, is a spiritual dam, as it blocks the flow of God through our lives; it does it first and foremost in the most crucial place, our minds. Block the mind, and everything else gets shutdown. You it happens often, and that is that the whole city of Seattle gets shutdown because of fog. Sometimes it is so bad that the airport gets shutdown and planes can't land nor takeoff. City traffic comes to a stop, even the trains and subways. A fog so thick that it covers the whole city, a fog so thick that you can't even see, hundreds of thousands, stopped in their tracks. Interestingly, fog is merely water droplets suspended in the air, it is really just a cloud on ground level. But guess what, take that whole cloud that ensnares Seattle, condense it down into just pure water, and it only makes a half glass of water. So too it is with worry is it not, we can take a half glass of worry and shut down our whole mind, that half glass of worry can consume all our thoughts, to the point we can be in a gridlock, no takeoffs or landing, we just are frozen in our location until the fog clears.

## **Worry is a Spiritual Dam**

Worry is a spiritual dam, it can shut us down from obtaining, that which we were attained for, and thus why the passage before us is so vital to our understanding today.

*Philippians 3:12–14 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> *Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.* <sup>13</sup> *Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,* <sup>14</sup> *I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

## **Woman's Retreat / Disclaimer**

Before I begin, let me make a disclaimer, as I always feel necessary after a men's or woman's retreat, and that is that this message has no subtle hints or covert messages in it that is trying to tie back to the past retreat or conference. First, that just isn't what I do – ever, I seek the Lord and ask Him to give the application for the passage we are in. Secondly, if thought the Lord wanted something said specifically to someone, I would tell the directly myself in person so we can have further and more intimate discussion, for their sake. And, third, just so all woman know, me and Renee have a mutual agreement that I don't discuss what happens (personal details) at Men's Retreats, and she doesn't discussion (personal details) about the woman's retreats. I know the thought of thought would freak anyone out, but no worries. Really, I don't want to know. I don't want to know who gives what, and I don't. I don't want to know who is doing what, and I don't (that is the reason I am not on facebook, twitter, blogs, etc); for I don't want to know so I can study with no bias (good or bad), and teach as led by the Spirit.

## **Seek the Kingdom of God**

**Luke 12:22** Then He said to His disciples, “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on.

### **Speaking to Disciples**

*V22 - Then He said to His disciples* - First notice that Jesus is speaking to His disciples. The application and conquering of worry that we will study today, is only applicable for followers of Christ. All others, are left to the world's wisdom, and the world's remedy, and maybe that explains why the number one medical prescription written today is for anxiety and/or depression. Antidepressants are a multi-billion dollar business in the United States, not to mention those who are self-medicating with illegal drugs, and over the counter alcohol to relieve their stress and worry. So Jesus is giving His followers, remedy for overcoming worry.

### **Warning – Don't stop your Medication**

Listen, it is very important that you hear on this before I continue. If you are taking any anti-depressants, do not apply this study that you are in sin, you are unworthy to be His disciples. I just ask that you listen to this whole study, and start applying these principles that Jesus gives for all of us today. And please, do not go home and take yourself off all your medication that is dangerous, you could through off your whole chemical balance, and you could find yourself in a terrible state. I tell everyone who wants to get off any kind of medication, to don't do it alone, see your doctor, and discuss how you can do that without throwing your body into upheaval.

### **Man is a Trinity**

The word here for life in this verse is (psyche), and it is where we get our word psyche, and it is often used interchangeable between life, and soul. Our soul (psyche), it is our desires, our wants, our inner man. Why I point this out is that man is a trinity, man is body, spirit, and soul.

*1 Thessalonians 5:23 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> *Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

### **We Must Live Balanced Life**

To live a well-balanced life, we must attend to each area; we cannot neglect one area over another. Jesus will amplify that we are to seek first the kingdom of God. Quite simply, the reason that worry wins, is because we seek first our wants (soul), and things for our body, and we don't attend to the spiritual things at the same degree. Our wheel of life is out-of-balance. The spiritual things need to be the hub of the wheel, and all the other things (body and soul) will roll along just fine.

*Luke 12:31* But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.

## **Let me Add – Take care of Your Body**

Let me add, take care of your body my friends, yea you don't need to become some gym rat, but get you rest, get your vitamins, eat well – for the body that is weak and tired will have a hard time focusing on the spiritual things.

### **Outline on Worry**

1. Worry is Destructive (12:22)
2. Worry is Deceptive (12:23-29)
3. Worry is Deforming (12:30-34)

### *Worry is Destructive (12:22)*

**Luke 12:22 Then He said to His disciples, “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on.**

### **Worry – to be Torn Apart / to be Held in Suspense / To Strangle**

The word translated “worry” in Luke 12:22 means “to be torn apart,” and the phrase “anxious mind” (Luke 12:29) means “to be held in suspense.” It is the picture of a ship being tossed in a storm, riding the waves high and low, but not moving ahead, seeming like this storm will never end. Our English word worry comes from an old Anglo-Saxon word that means “to strangle.”

*Luke 12:29 (NKJV) <sup>29</sup> “And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind.*

### *Worry is Deceptive (12:23-29)*

**Luke 12:23 Life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing.**

**Luke 12:24 Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds?**

**Luke 12:25 And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?**

**Luke 12:26 If you then are not able to do the least, why are you anxious for the rest?**

**Luke 12:27 Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.**

**Luke 12:28 If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will He clothe you, O you of little faith?**

**Luke 12:29 “And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind.**

### **Worry is Deceptive**

Worry is deceptive, worry blinds us, and worry deceives us.

### **3 Deceptions**

Notice three deceptions that Jesus makes point of:

1. Worry deceives us on what is most important in life (12:23)
2. Worry deceives us on exactly how God thinks of us (12:24-28)
3. Worry deceives us to actually thinking we are accomplishing something by worrying (12:29)

#### **1.... What's most Important**

Worry deceives us into thinking about the immediate here and now (bodily needs), and Jesus before we will finish will say seek first the Kingdom of God. He is saying worry takes our eyes off the spiritual and eternal, fixes them on the physical and temporal, and that is destructive and deforming.

#### **2....What God thinks of Us**

Worry can deceive us, clouds our thinking from exactly how much God thinks of us. We get our eyes on the problem, and we totally can't see through the problem to remember how precious we are to God, how we have a God who considers us precious to Him, a God who is passionately in love with us, can't stop thinking about us. Worry blinds us from that, even makes us doubt that, in some cases it even makes people lay challenge against Him, and even to a point that some shake their fist at Him in anger..... where are You and why aren't You doing something.

### **3....That we Accomplish through Worry**

Worry can deceive us into thinking that worrying can actually accomplish something (like adding a cubit to his stature). Probably a more literal translation of that verse is “to add one moment to one’s life”, but the fact is that worry is the ultimate waste of time, for it accomplishes nothing, and robs of everything.

#### *Worry is Deforming (12:30-34)*

**Luke 12:30 For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things.**

#### **Deforming – Makes us like the World**

Worry is deformative. It keeps us from growing and it makes us like the unsaved in the world (Luke 12:30). Jesus says when you worry you are just like the world, who seek and strive to gain and maintain, and then once they get it they worry about how to keep it.

#### **Father knows your Need**

He says your Father in Heaven knows what you need, and He has His eyes upon you just as He does the sparrow, and you are much greater, and if He provides for them, how much more so will He provide all things for you.

#### **Now the Escape from Worry**

And now after Jesus tells us how and why worry is destructive, deceiving, and deforming - He now tells us how to escape our life of worry. I only have 6 months to live, and this is vitally important that I tell you and you know these things, because I want you to be free from your worry, and live the abundant life that I have come to give you. The lies of the enemy to rob, kill, and destroy you – but I have life, and an abundant life at that. Not just getting through, but going big, living life in power. Worry is a thief, beware of the thief that comes, and guard your home from him, and this is how to do that.

*John 10:10 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

**Luke 12:31 But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.**

**Luke 12:32 “Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.**

**Luke 12:33 Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys.**

**Luke 12:34 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**

#### **WAIT**

When you find worry entering your home, remember this word, and apply it – WAIT.

*Psalm 27:14 (NKJV) <sup>14</sup> Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!*

*Psalm 33:20 (NKJV) <sup>20</sup> Our soul waits for the LORD; He is our help and our shield.*

*Psalm 37:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.*

#### **W-A-I-T**

W - Walk

A - Apply

I - Invest

T - Trust

#### **W-A-I-T**

W – Walk with the Lord

A – Apply yourself to Today

I – Invest in the Spiritual Things

T – Trust in the Lord

### **W – Walk with the Lord**

When worry comes a knocking on your door, go for a walk, literally! Jesus is literally saying to us to go for a walk, and as we do look at the lilies in the field and see how they receive rain and nutrients to grow, and they blossom simply by being rooted and grounded. Look and watch the birds of the air, the squirrels, the deer's of the field, and watch how I provide for them says the Lord, and remember you are more important to Me than them. Just sit and watch, mediate and reflect, and you will return with the proper perspective.

*John 15:5 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup> "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.*

### **A – Apply yourself to Today**

In His parallel teaching, Jesus says don't worry about tomorrow, for you have enough to manage already for today. See, Jesus does expect us to be engaged in today. Not to worry about today, but to be engaged in today. The birds of the air don't plant or plow, but they were to go out and partake what was provided; same for the lilies in the field. So too for us, we are to engage in today, apply ourselves to what God puts before us.

### **Don't squander Today**

One reason people worry today, is because they squandered the day before, and now yesterday has caught up to them. Should I worry about this coming storm that we see forming in the Atlantic and has a direct path towards us in 2 days. Worry? No, I need to trust the Lord, but prepare today, absolutely. I am going to check my sump pump, batteries, canned goods, water, etc.....so should it hit, I am prepared. The key to not being overwhelmed with today, is to walk with the Lord, spend that quiet time with Him, and then ask Him, what are the things I am to apply myself for today, and then help me prepare for them. See, on any given day we will have more put upon us and before us than we can handle, thus we need to seek the Lord to help us prioritize, and at the same time ask Him to help accomplish.

*Matthew 6:34 (NKJV) <sup>34</sup> Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.*

### **What not to Apply**

And let me say this, don't apply today your past failings. Don't be tortured over your past. Your Father in Heaven loves you, forgives you, and is walking with you today. Don't let the past paralyze your today. Apply and live all that God puts before you today. And on another note, I am reminded of the story of the guy who constantly worried, he worried about every little thing, and everyone knew that he did, as his face was constantly reflected his worry. One day he came into town and he had a whole new countenance, everyone could see it, they asked him what was up. He said no more worry for me, I am free he said with a smile. They said how did you overcome that they asked; he responded by saying that he hired someone to worry for him. Yep he said, he worries for me about my health, my old car, my old roof, my wife, my kids, he worries about it all for me. They said how does that cost, and the man says I pay him 500,000 dollars a year to do all my worrying for me; and they say but you only make like 50,000 a year down at the plant. The man says.....that's for him to worry about. Christian, let me say, lots of people love to make their worry, your worry, as they lay this and that upon you, expect you to take care of it, and now somehow you are carrying your cares and their cares all upon you. You have to be able to say, no. Or, you say let's pray together about this, but don't make everyone else's problems your problems, seek the Lord and ask Him, what is it that You want me to apply today.

### **I – Invest in the Spiritual Things**

Thirdly, invest in the spiritual things, daily! Jesus is talking about daily here, the birds eat daily, the grass and lilies grow daily, He provides for them and us daily, and thus we should be investing in the spiritual things daily. Seek first the Kingdom of God, daily.

### **Seek – Go After / Present –to Eternal**

Seek (means to go after). Go after the things of God. Kingdom (means rule). Go after the things of God, and let them rule over, lead you, not the things of this world. When we do so we will get taken out of the deception of the immediate here and now, and the physical and we will have heart and mind set on the things above, the eternal things, the weighty things.

### **If King – then I am Subject**

If He is my King, then I am His subject, and thus I am His responsibility totally. He is responsible for providing and protecting me. He gives His subjects actions and activities to be involved in on behalf of His Kingdom, and He also gives His people all they need to live.

### **What have you Invested in the Kingdom this Week?**

Christian, what have you invested in the kingdom of God this week? Ask yourself an honest question. If you don't have time because you are busy, then I will flat out tell you, you are defying the words of Jesus, because right here He says to seek ..... Thus with every command comes His enabling to do so.

### **Amazing Antidote for Worry - to Give / We think everyone has it Together**

V33 – amazing antidote for worry, and that is to give. Why, because it releases us from the grip of this earth and lifts us into the heavenly, the eternal, and not the temporal. Have you invested in the poor and needy, have you invested in the hurting and broken? Get involved in the strong peoples life too. It is funny, everyone thinks everyone else got it together. We put these masks on. Christians have to hide the facts of their weaknesses, because we are Christians and we are to be strong and perfect. Give yourself away to others, get involved in other people's lives. Guess what happens when you do, you find out you aren't the only one with problems, and secondly you will find you aren't spending so much time thinking about yourself, because now you will be thinking about others. Want to make yourself miserable, think about yourself.

### **God wants to Rule over Your Life**

Seek the Kingdom of God – Kingdom means rule, so seek the rule of God over your life. Obey His words, every one of them, inwardly and outwardly. Invest in this word every day, and don't just read it and walk away, but read it and do it, every last word.

### **T – Trust in the Lord**

Trust Him, let it go and simply trusts that your Father will see you through when that thing comes upon you.

### **4 Things He Is**

Did you notice the four things He made point that He is to us.

- 1.) Creator – He created the lilies and the birds, and us too, and is involved in every detail of theirs and our life.
- 2.) Father – He is a Heavenly Father, and He will go to the ends of the earth for His kids, just like every one of you parents in here would for your kids.
- 3.) Shepherd (over the flock) – and He tends to His flock.
- 4.) King – and the King is responsible for all the people in His Kingdom.

### **Top 5 News Articles**

Please read these headline news articles from this week and tell me what you think they mean? Is it interesting that as you read them, you read them simply for meaning what they meant. Yet for some reason, we can read the Bible, and read it differently. The Bible is stating facts, news, clear and precise information, yet man can read it to mean something other than what is clearly being said. No one doubted these news articles for the week, no one questioned whether they were true, but somehow we can question these headlines of news that the bible declares as truths when worry sets in upon us:

News:

- 1.) Lance Armstrong Stripped of his 7 Tour DE France Titles
- 2.) SF Giants win Game 7 of the NL Championship 9-0.
- 3.) Tropical Storm Sandy is in the Atlantic right now
- 4.) National Election on November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012
- 5.) Apple unveils Mini-Pad

Bible:

*Philippians 4:19 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> *And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

*Hebrews 13:5 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> *Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."*

*Romans 8:28 (NKJV)* <sup>28</sup> *And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.*

*Matthew 6:33 (NKJV)* <sup>33</sup> *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

*Jeremiah 29:11 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.*

### **Let Tomorrow be Tomorrow**

Beloved, let tomorrow be tomorrow, and trust the Lord today to meet today's needs.

### **Corrie Ten Boom**

"Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow," said Corrie Ten Boom; "it empties today of its strength."

### **Abe Lincoln**

In his circuit-riding days Lincoln and his companions, riding to the next session of court, had crossed many swollen rivers on one particular journey, but the formidable Fox River was still ahead of them. They said one to another, "If these streams give us so much trouble, how shall we get over the Fox River?" When darkness fell, they stopped for the night at a log tavern, where they fell in with the Methodist presiding elder of the district who rode through the country in all kinds of weather and knew all about the Fox River. They gathered about him and asked him about the present state of the river. "Oh, yes," replied the circuit rider, "I know all about the Fox River. I have crossed it often and understand it well. But I have one fixed rule with regard to the Fox River—I never cross it till I reach it."

### **Worry Projects the Worst / Tomorrows Burden added to Today – Sinks Us**

Worry projects the worst: the Fox becomes the mighty Mississippi at flood stage. The worrier is perpetually going unfed and unclothed. Worry loads the present with the weight of the future. And when you load the troubles you are anticipating upon the troubles you are presently experiencing, you give yourself an impossible burden. As George MacDonald wisely put it: "No man ever sank under the burden of the day. It is when tomorrow's burden is added to the burden of today, that the weight is more than a man can bear." Jesus said just that in his summary statement of the parallel passage in Matthew: "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own" (Matthew 6:34).

*Matthew 6:34 (NKJV)* <sup>34</sup> *Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.*

### **Today's Problems**

When today's problems come, look at them as ordained by God, and as opportunity to see Him work, to give you insight and knowledge into something you would not have otherwise seen or known, and look for it as an opportunity to invest in the Kingdom of God, to share Christ with someone, or to be a witness just by your peace of not worrying, but that people see you putting your trust in the Lord. And say, Lord I trust You will see me through it all, whatever You allow to come before me today.

### **Fear Not**

Jesus says to you today in your worry, fear not. He says that with compassion and comfort. He sees us as sheep, not lions, He sees that we need His protection, His guiding, and like a the Great Shepherd He wants to protect and provide for His flock.

*Luke 12:32 (NKJV)* <sup>32</sup> *"Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."*

### **W-A-I-T**

W – Walk with the Lord

A – Apply yourself to Today

I – Invest in the Spiritual Things

T – Trust in the Lord



# ***Beware of Spiritual Dullness***

(Luke 12:35-59)

**Luke 12:35** “Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning;

**Luke 12:36** and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately.

**Luke 12:37** Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them.

**Luke 12:38** And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

**Luke 12:39** But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.

**Luke 12:40** Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

## **Unique chapter / Under the Skin / 4 Things that can Block Spiritual Flow**

Chapters 1-8 Jesus displayed His great heart and compassion for all people, gave His mission statement of why He came (Luke 4:18-19), and then in chapters 9-11 He lays out the calling for all people to become His disciples. Now we are here in Luke 12, and it is a unique chapter in that Jesus is addressing things in a person’s life that are under the skin, that is not readily seen by those on the outside, things that dwell deep within a person that others can't see from the outside. Jesus will address four things that are deep, and four things that we need to beware of, four things that if we allow can block the spiritual flow of God in our lives, and rob us of living the Christian life, that spirit-filled life that He desires for each and every one of us here today.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)*<sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”

*Luke 9:23–24 (NKJV)*<sup>23</sup> Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.

## **He Says To:**

- Beware of Hypocrisy
- Beware of Covetousness
- Beware of Worrying
- Beware of Spiritual Dullness

## **Continually be on Guard / Remain Watchful / Jesus is Coming Back**

The verb usage for this word beware in this chapter is to “continually beware”, continually be on guard, because we are all prone and suspect to these things, and thus must daily be on guard of them. In our passage today Jesus addresses spiritual dullness. Jesus will speak a theme of remaining watchful throughout this text today, and that is remaining watchful on His soon return. Christian, Jesus is coming back, and it is going to be soon, do you believe that today, are living like He may.

## **Stay Alert – Sharp / Definition of Dull**

As we read through we will see calling to remain watchful, and to not become spiritually dull, to stay alert, stay sharp, to stay on-fire. If you are not on-fire, then get on-fire. Just so we can see what we are not to be, here is the definition of dull, and as we read it, think of it in spiritual application:

- Intellectually weak or obtuse
- Lacking responsiveness or alertness; insensitive.
- Dispirited; depressed.
- Not brisk or rapid; sluggish
- Not having a sharp edge or point; blunt: a dull knife.
- Not intensely or keenly felt: a dull ache.
- Arousing no interest or curiosity; boring
- Not bright or vivid.

- Cloudy or overcast

### **Synonyms for Dull**

Synonyms: dull, colorless, drab, humdrum, lackluster, stodgy, uninspired. These adjectives mean lacking in liveliness, charm, or surprise: a dull, uninteresting performance; a colorless and unimaginative person; a drab and boring job; a humdrum conversation; a lackluster life; a pedestrian movie plot; a stodgy dinner party; an uninspired lecture.

### **Definition of Watch**

Now, the definition of watchful:

- look at attentively.
- keep under careful or protective observation.
- (watch for) look out for.
- exercise care, caution, or restraint about.
- maintain an interest in.
- remain awake for the purpose of religious observance.

### **Watch in Action**

Here are some watching in action:

- a small timepiece worn typically on a strap on one's wrist.
- an act or instance of watching.
- a period of vigil, typically during the night.
- a fixed period of duty on a ship, usually lasting four hours (also starboard or port watch) the officers and crew on duty during one such period.
- a shift worked by firefighters or police officers.(also night watch) historical a watchman or group of watchmen who patrolled and guarded the streets of a town at night.

### **Watch Phrases**

- be on the watch be on the alert for danger or trouble.
- keep watch stay on the lookout for danger or trouble.
- watch one's (or someone's) back protect oneself (or someone else) against danger from an unexpected.

### **Jesus is Coming Back / Courtroom Jury Story**

Jesus Christ is coming back, in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, do you believe that? I am reminded of a murder trial years ago, but the body was never found, and the defense's case was that she choose run away to a new life. During his closing arguments the defense lawyer whipped everyone up into a fury with his fire and zeal, and then he said and he could not have killed her for her she is right now as he turns and points towards the door. All the jury turns and looks towards the door, but no one came through the doors. The lawyer said, you must find my client innocent, because there is enough reasonable doubt that she is still alive, and my case in point is that you all turned to look. When the verdict was handed down – guilty. Later upon interviewing the jury they were asked, you all looked, was that not enough reasonable doubt that she could still be alive, and the jury answered, yes we all looked, everybody looked, everybody turned to look at the door..... except the defendant. We knew he didn't turn because he knew she wouldn't be walking through those doors because she was dead and he had killed her.

### **If Someone Said Look – Would You / It is about Time / Newspaper & World Around Us**

If someone jumped up and said look it is Jesus, would we all turn? Or would we say to ourselves, can't be. Are our "minds watches" set that Jesus is coming back at any moment, are our minds set that He is long-long overdue, are we saying what in the world are you waiting for. Do we look at the newspaper, watch the world around us, and say to ourselves continually, he has got to be coming back today, if not today than tomorrow at the latest.

### **Those who Live in His Imminent Return – Live on-Fire / How I want that for You – and for Me**

In our passage today we will see that those who live as such, that His return is imminent, if not today than tomorrow, they live differently, they will have a fire and a zeal about the things of the Lord, they will be anything but dull, they will have life, and that more abundant. Oh how I want that for you, I want that for me, I want that for my wife and

my kids, I don't just want to get through this life, meander through it, I want to live in His power, I want be completely separated and sold-out for Him, and our passage gives us that calling today.

*John 10:10 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

### **Who is the Faithful Servant/Disciple**

Jesus says, "who is the faithful servant", and in our outline today we see that the faithful servant (disciple) is watchful, working, warring, and wise.

*Luke 12:42 (NKJV) <sup>42</sup> And the Lord said, "Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season?"*

The Faithful Disciple:

- Is Watchful (12:35-40)
- Is Working (12:41-48)
- Is Warring (12:49-53)
- Is Wise (12:54-59)

### **The Faithful Disciple - Is Watchful (12:35-40)**

#### *Parable of the Expectant Steward*

**Luke 12:35** "Let your waists be girded and your lamps burning;

**Luke 12:36** and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately.

**Luke 12:37** Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them.

#### **Jewish Wedding / Ready to Serve**

The Jewish weddings were held at night, and a bridegroom's servants would have to wait for their master to come home with his bride. The new husband would certainly not want to be kept waiting at the door with his bride! So the servants had to be sure they were ready to go to work, with their robes tucked under their girdles so they were free to move.

#### **Remarkable – Master Serves Us**

But the remarkable thing in this story is that the master serves the servants! In Jewish weddings, the bride was treated like a queen and the groom like a king; so you would not expect the "king" to minister to his staff. In John 13 we saw Jesus doing this for His disciples, as he girded His robe, got a wash basin and towel, and washed their feet. The King of the Universe stooping to wash feet, but it is true. Peter foot in mouth disease, Thomas I won't believe it until I see, James and John shall we rain fire down upon them, and Jesus washed every foot, or every one of them, not calling out their faults and failings, but loving them like cherished and precious friends. Oh how the Lord loves you, He is passionately and deeply in love with you, and desires to be intimate and personal with you.

*John 13:4-5 (NKJV) <sup>4</sup> rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. <sup>5</sup> After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.*

#### **Peter – No not my Dirty, Stinky Wretched, Unfaithful, Sinful – Feet / I know Everything about You**

I think of Peter saying no no Lord far be it from you to wash my stinky, dirty, sinful, wretched, unfaithful feet. Most sermons point out his foolish statement, but I relate to you Peter, I relate to how often I say and feel, oh Lord don't get personal and intimate with me, my stinky, dirty, sinful, wretched, and unfaithful life. But the Lord says, it's ok, I know everything about you Ray, and I still am deeply in love with, I still want to touch you, I love to look into your eyes, behold your face, and hold you in My arms. It is true Christian; it is absolutely true about each and every one of you.

*John 13:8 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."*

#### **Why the Warning? / All 3 things We Crave**

Why this warning on remaining watchful? Why the warning on beware of hypocrisy, covetousness, and worrying? Because if you see, those three things are all things we are longing for and craving. Hypocrisy (the fear of man, what man thinks of us), is our desire to be accepted, unconditionally as we are, but we fear that if people really knew

all about us, they wouldn't want anything to do with us. Covetousness, we want more, because we can think there is security in abundance. And worrying, we worry that it is all up to us, that it is something we have to make happen. It is all what we desire and crave, and all three can be found right in Jesus. Someone who accepts us unconditionally, flaws and all. Someone who will meet and provide for our every need. And, Someone who says "Fear Not" I have your back, I have your future, and I have your today, rest in Me, wait upon Me and I will take care of all for you.

*Luke 12:32 (NKJV)<sup>32</sup> "Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."*

**Luke 12:38 And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.**

**Luke 12:39 But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.**

**Luke 12:40 Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."**

### **Tomb Unknown Soldier**

I am reminded of the faithful watchman at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, even though hurricanes and blizzards. That is a picture of the heart I want as I wait for the Lord's return, a heart, mind, and soul that is on-guard, unmovable, undistracted, fixed on one point, Him! May God give us that heart today, may He revive us as we have drifted off into a slumber, as we have been distracted by the cares of this world. May today He return us to that place of eyes fixed and focused upon Him

### **The Faithful Disciple - Is Working (12:41-48)**

#### *Parable of the Faithful Steward*

**Luke 12:41 Then Peter said to Him, "Lord, do You speak this parable only to us, or to all people?"**

#### **Jesus Doesn't directly Answer / Live in Continually Seeking – to not become Dull**

What we will notice is that Jesus doesn't directly answer Peter. You will see that throughout the scriptures, as the Lord doesn't give direct answers on certain issues, because He wants us to live in a place of continually seeking after Him, to not come to a place of dullness, to have us continually be in a place of evaluating of where we are in Him, how are we doing in this call to discipleship. If being a Christian was a crime, would there be enough evidence to convict you?

**Luke 12:42 And the Lord said, "Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season?"**

**Luke 12:43 Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.**

**Luke 12:44 Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has.**

#### **Faithful Disciple is not Just Sitting Around – but be Engaged in Kingdom Biz**

Jesus is saying that the faithful disciple will not just be sitting around waiting and watching, but will be engaged in serving the King and His Kingdom.

#### **Millennial Kingdom / 30 Second End Times**

Here, Jesus hints at the fact that those who are watching for His coming presently will, in the ages to come, hold positions of authority. In other words, what we do now affects what we'll do in the Millennial Kingdom. Here is a 30 Second overview of the Last Days.

- Rapture (Jesus takes His Church to heaven) – 1 Thessalonians 4
- 7 Year Tribulation Period on earth (we enjoy the Marriage Supper of the Lamb) – Revelation 6
- Jesus' 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming (we come with Him) – Revelation 19
- 1,000 (Millennial) Reign of Jesus on Earth (we co-reign with Him) – Revelation 20
- Final Judgment – New Heaven and New Earth – Revelation 21

*1 Thessalonians 4:16 (NKJV)<sup>16</sup> For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.*

*Revelation 6:16–17 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! <sup>17</sup> For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”

*Revelation 19:9 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> Then he said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’ ” And he said to me, “These are the true sayings of God.”

*Revelation 19:11 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

*Revelation 20:4 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

*Revelation 21:1 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.

### **1,000 Years where we Co-Reign / Interests Today – Fulfilled Tomorrow**

So there is a thousand year period where Jesus will be here on the earth, and we will be His ambassadors, and representatives on the earth. So maybe there are interests or desires God has placed on your heart that have yet to be worked out or realized. It is very likely that when you enter into the Millennial Kingdom, those will be the very areas that will come into fullness and fruition in your life.

**Luke 12:45 But if that servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk,**

### **Two-Fold / Brutality & Carnality**

The result of saying the Lord can’t come today will be a two-fold tendency: brutality and carnality. How would we treat one another if we truly believed Jesus would return in the next twenty-four hours? I only lash out at people or beat up on people if I forget Jesus could very well come today. An awareness of the Rapture is not escapism. Quite the opposite. Jesus said a realization of return leads one to treating others with love and respect.

### **Purifying Affect**

Not only does looking for His soon return keep us in the proper perspective on how we treat others, but it has a purifying effect on our lives too. We don’t get drunk with the sins of this world, all the things the world says to enjoy and indulge in, but we say no way because we do not want to be doing those things when He returns.

*1 John 3:1–3 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. <sup>2</sup> Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. <sup>3</sup> And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

### **Was there Anything this Week – If Jesus walked in On You?**

Christian, think back over this week, was there anything that you were doing that if Jesus walked in at that very moment you would be shameful of? I pray the Lord is speaking to you through this study right now, and you will make course adjustment.

**Luke 12:46 the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.**

**Luke 12:47 And that servant who knew his master’s will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.**

**Luke 12:48 But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.**

### **Strong Words / Didn’t Answer Peter Directly / Talking the Person not Ready / Gnashing Teeth = Hell**

These are strong words from the Lord. Remember He hasn’t answered Peter, on who specifically He is talking to. He is saying that he who was not prepared, did not enter into heaven. Some Bible teachers try to make this say something else because of their theological positions, but Matthew 24 which is the parallel passage to this passage,

says the this person will be punished, and endure weeping and gnashing of teeth (which is always a reference to hell).

**Matthew 24:45–51 (NKJV)** <sup>45</sup> *“Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? <sup>46</sup> Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. <sup>47</sup> Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. <sup>48</sup> But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ <sup>49</sup> and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, <sup>50</sup> the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, <sup>51</sup> and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

### **Hell? / Jesus doesn't Answer Purposely / Jesus answers so Every Person Self-Evaluate**

Do I think that a believer who is unwatchful goes to hell, no. What I see here is Jesus doesn't answer Peter purposely and specifically when Peter asks so is this teaching for us Your disciples or for the world (those who were not believers at that point but were listening to Jesus teach). Peter asks a “or” question, and Jesus doesn't differentiate, He doesn't draw a line of separation. Jesus answers in such a way, that every person listening would have to self-evaluate, examine their lives personally, not the guy to their left, or the gal to their right, but themselves right in the middle. Right in the middle of how were they doing, were they living for the Lord, were they focused and fixed on Him, or had they started to drift, were they mistreating others around them, and were they being drunk with the things of the world.

### **Jesus' Teaching is Masterful / Never Leave you in State you are In**

Jesus' teaching is masterful; He will never leave you in the state you are in. You lukewarm, He wants to fire you up. You on fire, He wants to fuel your passion. Jesus will comfort the afflicted, but afflict the comfortable.

### **The Faithful Disciple - Is Warring (12:49-53)**

#### ***Christ Warns of the Costs of Discipleship***

**Luke 12:49** **“I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!**

**Luke 12:50** **But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!**

#### **He wants to Catch us on Fire / Holy Spirit to Rule US / I Pray this Study Lights a Passion in You**

He wants to catch us on fire, He wants His Holy Spirit to rule within us, and overflow from us. I pray this study today lights a passion in our hearts that we want more of Him, and all of Him, as we see this world just isn't it, and we look forward to His Kingdom Come.

**Luke 3:16–17 (NKJV)** <sup>16</sup> *John answered, saying to all, “I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>17</sup> His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.”*

#### **Have Fire – Many won't Like It**

But have that fire, and many are not going to like it.

**Luke 12:51** **Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division.**

**Luke 12:52** **For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three.**

**Luke 12:53** **Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.”**

#### **Christ Divides / Not because you are Wrong / Don't waiver on Truth / John 3:19**

Christ divides, it is just a fact. The church is off if they think they can unite the world. Jesus says that He will divide, He will divide nations, He will divide families. When we offend people because of our faith, and because of His words, we immediately think it is because we did it wrong, we should have said this or we shouldn't have said that, but don't beat yourself up. Jesus said He would divide, and that He does. Don't waiver on the truth, nor water it down, speak it in love, and be ready for whatever comes out of it. Remember, here is why people turn on you and turn on Jesus, because they love their sin and do not want to repent of it:

**John 3:16–21 (NKJV)** <sup>16</sup> *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. <sup>18</sup> “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. <sup>19</sup> And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. <sup>20</sup> For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. <sup>21</sup> But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.”*

### **Why Atheist – Muslim not Offensive?**

And why is it that an atheist can spout off and no gets offended, a Muslim demands their rights, and no one gets offended, but let a Christian stand for their beliefs and the world jumps on them and calls them intolerant and judgmental Bible thumpers, it is because those others do not come with the Spirit of God, the baptism of fire, so they don't burn anyone, thus they don't bother anyone. But your words come with fire, for God does not and cannot separate His fire from His Word, for they are one in the same:

*Hebrews 4:12–13 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. <sup>13</sup> And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

### **The Faithful Disciple - Is Wise (12:54-59)**

#### ***Christ Warns of Not Discerning the Times***

**Luke 12:54** Then He also said to the multitudes, “Whenever you see a cloud rising out of the west, immediately you say, ‘A shower is coming’; and so it is.

**Luke 12:55** And when you see the south wind blow, you say, ‘There will be hot weather’; and there is.

**Luke 12:56** Hypocrites! You can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how is it you do not discern this time?

#### **Discern Times – Read Newspaper**

Jesus says discern the times, read the newspapers watch and look for the signs, and you will see that My return is near.

#### **Luke 21**

When we get to chapter 21 I plan on doing a full prophecy update. But for now let me just make a few points. Look at all the cults in the world today professing Christ, look at all the wars, how about earthquakes and natural disasters, famines and diseases, and the increased resentment towards Christianity. Jesus said you will my return is near by the increase in these things, so based on what we just read, if Jesus doesn't come back today, then He is coming back tomorrow.

*Luke 21:8–13 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> And He said: “Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am He,’ and, ‘The time has drawn near.’ Therefore do not go after them. <sup>9</sup> But when you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end will not come immediately.” <sup>10</sup> Then He said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. <sup>11</sup> And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven. <sup>12</sup> But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name’s sake. <sup>13</sup> But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony.

**Luke 12:57** “Yes, and why, even of yourselves, do you not judge what is right?”

**Luke 12:58** When you go with your adversary to the magistrate, make every effort along the way to settle with him, lest he drag you to the judge, the judge deliver you to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison.

**Luke 12:59** I tell you, you shall not depart from there till you have paid the very last mite.”

#### **Judge or Savior**

Jesus will either be your judge, or your Savior, but He is not and will not be both. He says if you knew you were going to court and you were guilty, do whatever it took with your accuser to settle it before you went before the judge, because once before the judge, the law would play itself out in the full affects.

### **Conclusion**

#### **Who is the Faithful Servant/Disciple**

Jesus says, “who is the faithful servant”, and in our outline today we see that the faithful servant (disciple) is watchful, working, warring, and wise.

*Luke 12:42 (NKJV)* <sup>42</sup> And the Lord said, “Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season?”

The Faithful Disciple:

- Is Watchful (12:35-40)
- Is Working (12:41-48)
- Is Warring (12:49-53)
- Is Wise (12:54-59)

# Luke 13

## The Questions of Life

### Luke 13:1-9

#### **Christ Teaches on Repentance**

**Luke 13:1** There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

**Luke 13:2** And Jesus answered and said to them, “Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things?”

**Luke 13:3** I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.

**Luke 13:4** Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men who dwelt in Jerusalem?

**Luke 13:5** I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.”

**Luke 13:6** He also spoke this parable: “A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none.

**Luke 13:7** Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, ‘Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?’

**Luke 13:8** But he answered and said to him, ‘Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it.

**Luke 13:9** And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down.’ ”

#### Pray

#### **Sleeping in the Barn**

*I am reminded of the story of three travelers. A lawyer and two friends, a rabbi and a Hindu priest, had car trouble in the countryside and asked to spend the night with a farmer. The farmer said, "There might be a problem; you see, I only have room for two to sleep, so one of you must sleep in the barn." "No problem," chimed the rabbi. "My people wandered in the desert for forty years. I am humble enough to sleep in the barn for an evening." With that, he departed to the barn and the others bedded down for the night. Moments later, a knock was heard at the door, and the farmer opened it. There stood the rabbi from the barn. "What's wrong?" asked the farmer. He replied, "I'm grateful to you, but I can't sleep in the barn. There is a pig in the barn, and my faith believes that is an unclean animal."*

*His Hindu friend agreed to swap places with him. But a few minutes later, the same scene recurred. There was a knock on the door. "What's wrong now?" the farmer asked. The Hindu priest replied, "I too am grateful for your helping us out, but there is a cow in the barn, and in my country cows are considered sacred. I can't sleep on holy ground!"*

*Well, that left only the lawyer to make the change. He grumbled and complained, but he went out to the barn.*

*Moments later, there was another knock on the farmer's door. Frustrated and tired, the farmer opened the door, and there stood ... the pig and the cow.*

#### **Funny how we View Others – Ourselves / Lifestyle – Activities – Spirituality / Patience**

It is funny how we view others and how we view ourselves. It is funny what we think of our lifestyle, activities, and spirituality... and how we view others lifestyles, activities, and spirituality. It is funny how we have and ask for patience for ourselves, but how we can have limited or little patience for others.

#### **Passage Today – Abundance of Wealth / Facts of Life / Key Principles to Apply**

In our passage today, just nine verses, but what an abundance and wealth of "questions of life", as Jesus addresses some key questions we all have, and key principles we all need to apply.

#### **Passage: When – Where – Why - How**

In our passage today we see and have answers to such questions of When, Where, Why, and How.

### **Questions of Life:**

- God Where - were You when we needed You?
- God Why - did You allow this to happen?
- God How - do I respond to these things?
- God When - will You judge them?

### **Half way through this Book / Warn You Advance – If taking Class for Credit**

Twenty-four chapters in the Book of Luke, we are at the midway point, and I will warn you in advance, if you are taking this class for credit, this is your midterm exam examine, and it is worth fifty percent of your grade. If you are auditing the class for no credit, then it is worth 100 percent of your grade.

### **God Where - were You when we needed You?**

**Luke 13:1** There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

**Luke 13:2** And Jesus answered and said to them, “Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things?

**Luke 13:3** I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.

### **Breaking News**

So Jesus is teaching, and then someone interrupts this broadcast for a special message, late breaking news, some Galileans (who were Jewish countryman) were just killed by Pilate. What we can gather from is story is that these fellow countrymen were in Jerusalem at the Temple offering sacrifices, and Pilate for whatever reason killed them.

### **Two thoughts on People Mind / Where were You – They must have been Bad People**

Two questions are on the people's minds, one was "where were You, why did you allow your fellow countryman to be killed by this evil Roman Empire". The other thing on people's mind obviously was that these countryman were killed because there was something wrong with them, they had a sin in their life that made them deserving of this judgment.

### **It just Seems to be Natural Response / Why didn't You Save the Day / March / Popularity Poll**

It just seems to be a natural response for us that when bad things happen to a child of God, especially ourselves, we question God where were You? Why didn't You come in and save the day. Jesus is not far from Jerusalem at this time, a forced march easily could have had Him there in time to save the day, show Himself strong on behalf of the Nation, and very much would have boosted His popularity in the polls by 10 points, probably enough to win the election, for sure it would have secured all the electoral votes in Galilee region. Popular opinion would have swung greatly in His favor no doubt, and Jesus could use some good public relations right now because the polls are split 50/50 at this point, and they are going south on Him fast. More and more, as led by the religious leaders, people are turning on Him. It will culminate in a few months when almost the whole crowd will scream, crucify Him, crucify Him.

### **Religious Leaders Loving It – Use this as Rallying Point against Jesus**

The religious leaders are loving this, as they no doubt use this to bolster their rally against Him, as they make point, what type of Savior would ignore the pleas of His people, who would leave them to suffer at the hands of evil, even when they were doing something religious, as they were making sacrifice at the Temple and He ignored them and allowed them to suffer.

### **Not Answer you would Expect / He knows their Thoughts / Not Happiness – But Holiness / Issue is Salvation**

Notice Jesus' answer (not the answer we would have expected); Jesus knows their thoughts, and He says unless you repent, you too will perish. Listen, Jesus is saying I did not come to make man happy, I came to make man holy. My life, My work, is about holiness, not happiness. Many people think Christianity is about arriving at death comfortably, and Jesus makes it clear in this story, the whole issue of life, is salvation. People ask the question of why do bad things happen to good people, and Jesus is making the point, there is none good (on God's Standard), and all are in need of a Savior.

*Romans 3:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one."*

### **This story Addresses the Challenge – Where were You in the Trial / Not a Promise / Salvation a Guarantee**

So, we have a story that clearly addresses the times when we are faced with suffering, trials and tribulations in our life, and we can wonder where He is and why He didn't step in to save the day, we see that isn't a promise, and if it happens it is more the exception. But the guarantee is, salvation for all who will repent and receive.

### **Other Common Thought – Did I do Something Wrong / ARE THEY BIGGER SINNERS**

As for the other common thought when a child of God suffers, when they come upon harm or problems, and that is oh they did something wrong, oh God is mad at them (or me), and Jesus answers, are they bigger sinners than everyone else, no, for all are sinners. Hence, if all are sinners, and God seeks to punish for sin, then everyone should find themselves on hard times.

### **Sin has Consequences / Self-Inflicted**

Yes, sin has consequences (drunk driving accidents, sexually transmitted disease, imprisonment) but those are self-inflicted, not God afflicted.

*Galatians 6:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.*

### **Why Some Healed – Others Not / Just know it is not God's Revenge / All Punishment at the Cross**

Why do some get illness and others don't, that I do not know. Why do some get healed and others do not, that I know not either. But should you find yourself in troubled times, just know it is not God's revenge upon you, His punishment upon you, for all revenge and punishment for sin was done at the cross. And when you look to the cross, you will see anything but a God that deeply and passionately loves you.

*Hebrews 10:17–18 (NKJV) <sup>17</sup> then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." <sup>18</sup> Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.*

### **God Why - did You allow this to happen?**

**Luke 13:4 Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men who dwelt in Jerusalem?**

**Luke 13:5 I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish."**

### **Why? / Freak Accident**

God why did you allow this to happen we ask. This story Jesus tells is about 18 souls that were killed in a freak accident as some tower fell upon them. Jesus makes the same point again that if accidents happened because a person's personal sin, then everyone should have bricks fallen on their heads.

### **I do not Prescribe to Hurricanes God Judgment / Why New York & New Jersey – Over Maryland**

I personally do not prescribe to the position that hurricanes, earthquakes, or even terrorism, are God's judgment. Even in the Old Testament when God used another Nation to discipline Israel, He sent prophets to tell them this is why it was happening. But natural disaster as they are called, I don't prescribe to them being judgment of God, because why should New Jersey and New York be punished beyond Maryland. Why should New Orleans be punished beyond Maryland, are they more a sinner than us? What have they done that is worse than us?

### **Insurance Policies**

I like how insurance policies attribute disasters like earthquakes and hurricanes to "acts of God", but nobody attributes sunrises and blue skies to acts of God.

### **His Hand Could be Lifted**

I do believe that we can lose the hand of God upon us, protecting us. I believe God can say, if you want to go it alone, then I will respect your decision and your desire. Natural disaster are part of the fallen world, but I believe God can steer away disasters. But, tell Him we got, we get it.

*2 Chronicles 7:14 (NKJV) <sup>14</sup> if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.*

### **More Sinners than We?**

Is New Jersey and New York more a sinner than we?

### **Bricks**

If this doctrine was true about judgment for sin, then we should all be wearing hardhats to church. At the least, not sitting right next to the person on your right, because you know how they are.

### **God How - do I respond to these things?**

Luke 13:3 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup> I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.

Luke 13:5 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup> I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.”

### **Jesus uses Story – Life is Frail / Galileans going to Celebrate – Siloam going about Life**

Jesus is using these two events to convey to man how frail life is. For these Galileans they were going to a celebration, they look forward to it for weeks and months, never expecting it would end in death. The 18 at the tower of Siloam, we just going about their day, having no idea that day would be their last. Jesus uses these two events on the fragility and brevity of life

### **While Working on this – Fire Alarm in my Hotel / Ground Zero**

It was interesting that as I was working on this study I was in a hotel in New York City and it was in the wee hours of the morning, and the fire alarm went off in the building and I was on the 12th floor. I immediately considered any one of the eleven floors burning would trap me, no way out. Just hours before I stood on Ground Zero, going back over in my mind that tragic day. It turned out to be a false alarm in my hotel, but a good reminder of how quickly life can change.

### **Jesus takes Physical – conveys it in Spiritual / Jesus came for Spiritual Things – Not Physical**

Jesus takes the physical, and conveys it into the spiritual, for it is the purpose of why He came, the spiritual things, not these temporal and earthly things.

### **Sums all Life into Two Categories (Repentance or Perishing) / Our Lives (Play – Graduate – Work – Wed)**

And Jesus sums all of a man's life up into two categories, repentance or perish. Not our summation of life, for our summation of life goes something like, have fun as a kid, get out of high school, go to school, get a job, get married, have kids, enjoy life, retire, and then go off into our golden years. Jesus makes it much simpler than that, He sums life up into two categories only - repentance or perish.

### **Told you it was Mid-Term**

I told you today was the mid-term exam.

### **Every Human has 2 Options / Repentance rarely Talked About / Self-Love is Popular / Perish = Hell**

Every human being has two options: repent or perish. Repent or perish. People don't even talk about repentance anymore. Preachers don't even preach repentance anymore. Christians don't even discuss repentance anymore. There are a few exceptions, but repentance is not popular. You know what is popular? Self-love, self-esteem, self-help, self-actualization, not repentance. "Repentance," Jesus says, "is the only alternative to perishing." What does he mean by perishing? Dying and going to hell to suffer eternally forever as a just consequence of sin against a holy and righteous God.

### **No In-Between / We all Born going Wrong Way – World & Flesh turn us Wrong Way / Path away God**

Repentance or perishing - there is no in between. Every one of us is born into this world going the wrong way, as the world turns us in the wrong way, our flesh turns us in the wrong world, and Satan tries to turns us in the wrong the way. That path takes us further and further away from God, from the reason we were created, the purpose of our existence and that is fellowship with God.

### **Jesus says to Them – Change Direction / Change Mind / Not a Feeling of Sorry – but is Decision & Action**

Jesus said that direction must stop, that direction must change. Repentance means to change directions, to go the other way. For man it means to have a change of mind (the Greek word (metanoia) is a compound, meta (means

change) and noia (means mind). A change of mind that produces a change of actions. Repentance is not feeling sorry for doing and being wrong, but repentance is to be translated into an action. Repentance is a decision.

### **Perishing is a Decision Also – not an Accident / Man knowingly Decides his Path**

Perishing is a decision also. Perishing is not an accident, it is not something that unexpected, it is a decision as a man or a woman knowingly makes a decision to go their own way, rather than God's way.

*Proverbs 14:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.*

*Proverbs 21:2 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup> Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, But the LORD weighs the hearts.*

### **Jesus saying Glad for Concern of Others – But take care Your Eternity First**

Jesus says to these people, I am glad you have a concern for the people you are hearing about, reading about in the paper, but make sure that you take care of your eternity first, that you are ready for eternity which can happen at any moment, you take care of your issue of eternity first.

### **Some may Quote Other Pastors & Churches – THEY may be Persihing**

Some of you say, “But there are pastors who affirm my lifestyle. There are churches who would tell me that all religions are the same and that all gods are the same and that all paths lead to the same place.” And I would tell you, “Those pastors may be perishing.” You can be a preacher and go to hell. You can be a pastor and go to hell. You can be a theologian and go to hell. You can be a writer, an author, a thinker, a scholar, and go to hell, if you don't what? Repent.

### **Not Just to Get Saved – It is a Life**

Repentance is not just something that you do to become a Christian. It's what you also do to grow as a Christian.

### **Repentance is a Gift – Most Freeing thing I can Encourage / Freedom from Bondage – into Intimacy**

Repentance is a gift, it is the most freeing things I can encourage you on and to do, because when you repent, you are free from the things that puts you in bondage (sin always over promises and under delivers) and leads to perishing, but rather leads you to freedom, and the freedom to have a personal and intimate relationship with God, a God who loves you, who is passionate and desperate for you, a God who loves you enough to provide a way to have your sins not just covered, by wiped away, cleared from the record book, a God who takes your soiled life, and makes it white as snow.

### **Not Just to Get Saved – It is a Life**

Repentance is not just something that you do to become a Christian. It's what you also do to grow as a Christian.

### **Protestant Reformation**

The Protestant Reformation was an effort to correct or to bring to repentance some errors within the Catholic Church. And it culminated around a man named Martin Luther. He had previously been a Catholic monk and scholar and theologian. And then in studying the Bible he realized that the church had some false teaching and some bad doctrine and some error. And so he wrote something called the 95 Theses. It was basically 95 points of error that the church needed to repent of in order to be consistent with the teaching of the Bible. And he posted this on something called the Wittenberg Door. It was like a bulletin board in that day. It was where issues of culture and theology were posted for discussion. And that is seen by some as the opening salvo of the public issue of the Protestant Reformation. And the opening line of the 95 Theses of Martin Luther was incredibly important. And he said this, quote, “All of a Christian's life is one of repentance.” The Christians are not the nicest people, the most consistent people, the most generous people, the most winsome people, but by God's grace we should be. The true mark of a Christian is repentance.

### **Don't Miss 6-9**

And don't miss what He says here in verses 6-9.

### **God When - will You judge them?**

**When? Look at His Gentleness and Patience**

God When - will You judge them? God when will you judge me. Listen to His gentleness and His patience with you, with that person that sits beside you today

**Luke 13:6 He also spoke this parable: “A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none.**

**Luke 13:7 Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, ‘Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?’**

**Luke 13:8 But he answered and said to him, ‘Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it.**

**Luke 13:9 And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down.’ ”**

**Jesus with them 3 years / No Fruit – More turning on Him / Worthy of Judgment – Lord shows His Heart**

Jesus had been with them three years, but the fruit was not seen, and as the days approach, more and more they will turn away than turn to Him. The Nation and people of Israel were worthy of judgment, of perishing, but The Lord shows How He is long suffering wishing that none should perish but all should seek repentance.

*2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*

**Catch the Beauty / Worthy to Be Judged – Don’t want to Give Up on you / Get Dirty for You / Never**

Catch the beauty of the Lord's heart being displayed here. Yes you are worthy of judgment, yes I have been patient and long suffering, and yes you should reap what you have sown, but I don't want to give up on you. Jesus is saying He is going to cultivate you, He is not coming with the axe, but His gardening tools and His work clothes. He is willing to and going to, get his hands dirty, and let sweat drip from His brow for you, for me, for us. If you know Christ, He never gave up on you, even when you were going the other way, when you had no thought or care for Him, when you were doing your thing your way, all the way. Yet The Lord didn't come with an axe He came ready to get dirty and sweaty.

**Picture is Beautiful – as He relates self to Gardener / Weeds, Digs, Prunes, Lift, Wash, Pouring**

The picture is beautiful, as He relates it to gardening. The worker comes and digs deep around the root system, the gardener pulls the weeds up, He prunes away the dead portions so they stop sucking away the life of the good parts. Then as fruit would begin to form on these fig trees the Gardner would lift the fruit from the ground, so it wouldn't be smothered in the dirt, but lift the fruit up and wash it, delicately and carefully, much in a caressing way. Pouring water over the fruit, cleansing it. The soil was dug up so the water would seep down to the roots, for a hardened soil would only allow the water to hit it and roll away, never reaching down to the root system. Continually pulling weeds, tilling the ground, washing the fruit, and watering the roots. That is called cultivation.

**The Lord Cultivates Us / Luther Quote**

The Lord cultivated us, even when we should have had the axe laid against us for being fruitless, and that is before salvation, during salvation, and after salvation. For "All of a Christian's life is one of repentance"

**How Good He Is – So Gentle**

Oh how good The Lord is, how gentle and kind He is to us. He doesn't want to give up on us, but wants to cultivate us so that we might produce fruit that He can enjoy and partake in.

**Don't know when year is Up – But Harvest will Come – What will He Find**

I don't know when your year is up, nor when my year is up, but there comes a time when God says it is harvest time. What will He find when He comes. Not just salvation, but daily fruit.

**We Enjoy His Gentleness and Long-Suffering / BUT how about with Others**

We all enjoy His gentleness, His caresses, He long suffering don't we? But can I ask you another question today, is that how you respond to the sinners around you? Do you want to see God cultivate them, do you want to see His loving caress come upon them, or are you at your three year mark with them, are you at the place that it is now time for the axe in their lives, the thought of one more year is too much for you. You enjoyed His patience and long suffering with you, but it is time for the axe with them.

## **Just Go**

Too many Christians have the attitude of sinners, just go, I don't care where you go, just as long as you go, I don't care where you go, even if it is to hell, just as long as you as you leave me alone. God When - will You judge them?

## **Want to be Like Jesus – Get your Gardening Clothes On / THEY ARE PERISHING**

Want to be like Jesus today, I challenge you to go get your gardening clothes on, get your work gloves and tools, and start cultivating in someone's life who is ready to perish. Did you hear me, PERISH! I don't care where you go, just go, I don't care if you go to hell, just go from me.

## **Tony Evans Story**

A man and his wife were returning from dinner one evening. As they were driving along a dark road they hit a patch of ice and plowed into a tree. The man was ok, but his beautiful wife was unconscious and bleeding profusely. There was no one in sight to help. But, as he got out of the car he noticed a sign by a mailbox. It said, "John Doe, MD". A doctor lived there. He scooped his wife up and ran to the door. An older gentleman answered the door. "Oh thank God! I've been in an accident. My wife is injured badly and she needs your help!" The man replied, "I'm sorry. I can't help you. I haven't practiced medicine for 17 years." The husband shouted, "Mister, either save my wife or take down that sign!"

## **Church – Christian**

If we are not going to cultivate and reach the lost, then take the sign down! Christian simply means "Little Christs", that was how they used it in the times after Jesus' resurrection, it was meant to be a slur, "oh look a little Christ". It means to be like Christ, Christ-like, and Jesus had one mission statement, and He has passed it down to us, and we are to carry it forth.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."*

## **It is Part of Your Mid-Term**

It is part of your mid-term exam, 50 percent of your grade depends on it.

## **Finally in Closing – We all have Repentance to Do / Luther Quote**

And finally in closing, we all have some repenting to do, for the "All of a Christian's life is one of repentance", how about today.

## **Deal with Today – Not Tomorrow / Life comes at you Fast**

Deal with it today, not tomorrow, for life comes at you fast as we studied today.

## **How Repent?**

How do I repent practically? Go to the garden, meet with the Gardening, He has been waiting for you.

## **Man is Body, Soul, and Spirit**

Man is body, soul, and spirit.

*1 Thessalonians 5:23 (NKJV) <sup>23</sup> Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

## **Body – Pull the Weed**

Body - you need to pull the weeds, whatever they may be, they need to go, today

*John 8:10–11 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?" <sup>11</sup> She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."*

## **Soul – Change your Mind (Agree) / God's Word & His Standard / Non-Negotiable**

Soul - the soul is how we think, what we think on, and you need to change your mind on what is right, and what is wrong, apart from the worlds standards, but one standard and one standard only, the word of God. The word confess means to agree with, and you come to an agreement with God, that His word is nonnegotiable, and you will heed to it, regardless the cost or the consequence.

*1 John 1:9 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

### **Spirit – Must have the Water**

Spirit- all the weeding and digging must have the water, and thus we must cultivate the spiritual things in our lives by letting this word of God water us, and nourish us, and we had to dig the soil up so the water can penetrate, so please turn from a hard heart, agree with Him, and then let His word penetrate deep into your heart, let The rich fertilizer of His Sprit become one with you, and you will find yourself producing much fruit.

*Ephesians 5:26–27 (NKJV)* <sup>26</sup> that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, <sup>27</sup> that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

### **Pray**

Lets pray.

# You Are Loosed

## (Luke 13:10-17)

### ***Christ Heals the Crippled Woman***

**Luke 13:10** Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath.

**Luke 13:11** And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up.

**Luke 13:12** But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her, “Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity.”

**Luke 13:13** And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

**Luke 13:14** But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, “There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day.”

**Luke 13:15** The Lord then answered him and said, “Hypocrite! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead it away to water it?”

**Luke 13:16** So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think of it—for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?”

**Luke 13:17** And when He said these things, all His adversaries were put to shame; and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him.

### **Beautiful & Glorious / You who feel Bound / Comfort & Power**

Oh what a beautiful and glorious passage before us today. If you are here today and you feel bound, doubled-over, from “that thing” in your life, that you will never be straighten out or set free, God gives us a beautiful and powerful word today, beautiful enough to give you comfort in your trial, and powerful enough to set you free from that which has been binding you.

**Luke 13:10** Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath.

### **Love this about Jesus – He Teaches / Parents Teach**

I love this about Jesus, and I want to be like Jesus, and so one thing I can do to be like Jesus, is to teach. We see Him continually throughout the Scriptures (several times here in Luke) teaching:

**Luke 4:15 (NKJV)** <sup>15</sup> And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

**Luke 5:3 (NKJV)** <sup>3</sup> Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon’s, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat.

**Luke 5:17 (NKJV)** <sup>17</sup> Now it happened on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was present to heal them.

**Luke 11:1 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.”

**Luke 20:1 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> Now it happened on one of those days, as He taught the people in the temple and preached the gospel, that the chief priests and the scribes, together with the elders, confronted Him

**Luke 20:21 (NKJV)** <sup>21</sup> Then they asked Him, saying, “Teacher, we know that You say and teach rightly, and You do not show personal favoritism, but teach the way of God in truth:

**Luke 23:5 (NKJV)** <sup>5</sup> But they were the more fierce, saying, “He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place.”

### **Definition of Teach / Parents be Teachers over Preachers**

To teach – “to instruct, to instill doctrine into one, to enjoin, to explain or expound a thing”. Parents, let us be teachers to our kids above and foremost, rather than preachers to them. Explain to them, instill into them, rather than just say to them (don’t do this, and do that – why because I said so). Let’s teach them, let’s instruct them, and when we tell them to do certain things, explain to them the reasons and the why of the benefit of doing them.

**Luke 13:11 And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up.**

### **Something supernatural Going on Here / Imparted by Satan**

*Spirit of Infirmity* – The word spirit here would relate to “something supernatural”, and the word infirmity would mean “illness”. So this woman had a supernatural illness, and verse 16 we see it was something imparted by Satan.

*Luke 13:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> *So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think of it—for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?”*

### **Daughter of Abraham – she was Woman of Faith / Satan afflicted People in Bible**

The expression “a daughter of Abraham (v16)” indicates not only that she was Jewish but also a true believer, a woman of faith. The curvature of the spine was caused by Satan. We know from other parts of the Bible that some sicknesses are the result of Satanic activity. Job’s boils were inflicted by Satan. Paul’s thorn in the flesh was a messenger of Satan to buffet him. The devil is not allowed to do this on a believer, however, without the Lord’s permission. And God overrules any such sickness or suffering for His own glory.

*Job 2:7 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> *So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.*

*2 Corinthians 12:7–10 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> *And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. <sup>8</sup> Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. <sup>9</sup> And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. <sup>10</sup> Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

### **I don’t need to Diagnose – Just bring them Face-to-Face with Jesus**

I don’t need to diagnose or determine the difference between the ills of a fallen world, or something that may be supernatural, because in either case the answer is the same, and that is to bring that person face-to-face with Jesus, and let Jesus determine what He will do in the situation.

### **Adult Woman – 18 Years / THINK ABOUT IT**

Because the word “woman” is used, we know that she is an adult woman, and 18 years of her adult life was spent with this woman. Think about that, 18 years! Even Jesus says to us, think about that, 18 years!

*Luke 13:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> *So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think of it—for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?”*

### **Imagine a Life of this for 18 Years**

18 years, 18 years of walking bent over. Imagine trying to carry your groceries bent over; imagine trying to pick your children up, bent over; imagine trying to clean your house bent over. Imagine the constant pain in her neck as she would have to extend and strain her neck upward to try to see. Imagine her husband, walking with her, imagine what it would be like when they ran into his friends from work at the market. If she was still married, imagine the torment of wondering if her husband would leave her for another, someone more attractive to him, someone he could live a “normal” life with. It is not hard to imagine how the local children would mock her, imitate her, laugh at her, and make their comments about her as she walked down the streets; hey there goes the hunchback of Jerusalem, haha. Her back was bowed, but not her ears; her back was hard, but not her heart, as she would endure 18 years of pain and humiliation.

### **Imagine that Person You Know / Jesus says THINK ABOUT IT**

Imagine..... that person you know who has some ailment, some disability, some limitation. Jesus is saying, think about it, and when you do you will start to understand their life, you will start to be able to relate to them, and it is there that you will be able to start to minister to them

### **18 Years – But when Jesus saw Her**

This woman, 18 years of living.....”But when Jesus saw her”

**Luke 13:12 But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her, “Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity.”**

**Luke 13:13 And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.**

**Jesus saw Her – And He Sees You / Jesus finds the Hurting Person in the Room / Be Like Jesus**

Jesus saw her, and He sees you, in whatever your weakness is (be that physical, emotional, spiritual). Put a hurting person in a room full of people, and you can be sure that Jesus will find them. You can be sure that their eyes will meet. Another good application for us who want to be like Jesus, go find the person who is hurting. How, just ask Jesus, and He will show you, He will say to you, take Me over there to that person, I have found the person that is hurting, and today you will be My hands and feet, My arms to hug, My eyes of compassion, My words of hope, My heart of understanding.

**Interesting where Jesus found Her – in Church / Doesn't meet me – has Forgotten me – get Anything**

It is ever so interesting to me in that where Jesus did find her, in the synagogue. After 18 years you might think that would be the last place this woman would be. I'm not going to church today, I never get anything out of it, God doesn't meet me there, He has forgotten me. We can tend to think that in our hard times, when things seem anything but close to being blessed of God.

**I will Tell – Best time to be at Church / Ears are Sensitive – Tuned in to Hear of Hope**

I will tell you, it is even more so the time to be in church. When you are hurting, broken, defeated or downcast, that is absolutely the best time to be at church because you want to hear some word of hope, of comfort, of expectation..... your ears are tuned in to hear and listen for hope. Many times when all is well, the ears are out of tune, the ear isn't listening for hope because all is well, there is no need, there is no hurting, in fact things are going so well they are a distraction because a person is spending all their time thinking of getting back to them so they can maintain them. When times are hard, get here precious saint, for your ears are in perfect tune to hear a word of hope, to receive a touch from the Lord.

**Luke 13:14 But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, "There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day."**

**Luke 13:15 The Lord then answered him and said, "Hypocrite! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead it away to water it?"**

**God's Command / Religious turned it into Burden**

God had given the command that man was to work six days and rest on the seventh. But these religious leaders totally twisted the intent that God purposed. He meant the Sabbath as a day of rest from work, and recovery for the body, and to spiritually recharge by meeting with Him. But the religious leaders turned it from rest and refreshment, to a burden and a bore. Here in our story is a classic sad example, rather than rejoicing over her healing, they were indignant and insensitive.

*Exodus 23:12 (NKJV)<sup>12</sup> Six days you shall do your work, and on the seventh day you shall rest, that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your female servant and the stranger may be refreshed.*

**Jesus never Violated Mosaic Law**

And just for the record, let it be clearly understood, Jesus never once broke any of the Mosaic laws as prescribed by God. Accused of breaking the laws as they had twisted them, but never violated a one of them in their truest intent.

**The Words of the Religious – Powerless / She had been there – but they Looked Past Her**

Six days in a week, come and be healed on them - Oh the words of religion, they are nothing but words, powerless words at that. She could have come back on the other six days but nothing would have happened because Jesus wasn't there. Nothing would have happened because only the ruler of the synagogue would have been there, and he was powerless. In fact, I will tell you, I bet that woman had come there plenty of times on those other six days for various other reasons, or just a reason to come in hopes of something to happen, anything, and never a day on those six would these religious leaders look upon her. It was easy to walk by her all hunched over, it was easy to not make eye contact, it was easy to act if they didn't see her; but you can be sure they saw her every time, and each time wished she would leave, and hurried themselves along as if they had urgent "God business" to attend to, because we can see they had no heart for her, nor anyone else that was not whole. They cared about watering their oxen, but could care less about her 18 years of bondage. They walked right by her, "But Jesus!"

### **But Jesus Found Her / Didn't look Past her – but Stooped down to Her / He will stop & stoop for You**

But Jesus found her, He didn't look past her, He didn't look over her, He stooped down to her..... And He will stoop down to us.

### **Stoops but Lifts / Jesus doesn't want to Leave you in Current State / Come as Are – But don't Leave Same**

But notice, He did stoop down, but then He lifted her up. Jesus never wants to leave you in the state and place that you are in, He always wants to lift you up to where He is. We say it all the time, and it is worth saying again, regarding this church CCAAC, come just as you, but don't leave here the same as you came. We want people to come with all their issues and problems, and we want to comfort and console, but we surely don't want you (nor does the Lord) to remain in the state you are in. We want you to be free from sin, to have victory over addiction, to be loosed from that thing that binds you, to raise you up to where Jesus is. Lots of people think the Christian life is Jesus coming down, and it is, but that is only the beginning, for after He comes down, He then works to lift you up.

### **But Jesus**

But Jesus - For anyone that has experienced those two words personally in your life, you know the power and comfort with in them.

**Luke 13:16 So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think of it—for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?"**

**Luke 13:17 And when He said these things, all His adversaries were put to shame; and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him.**

### **Loosed – Medical Term / Unwind bandages / Imagine picture Jesus unwinding her Bandages**

The word used here for “loosed” as it was used at this time was used as a medical term, and of course this is Dr. Luke telling us what happened here, and he uses this word loose in the medical application, and it meant “to unwind a bandage from a wound”. So here Jesus comes and here He unwinds the bandages of this woman who was wounded, wounded for 18 years. You can more than read it, you can feel it, it lifts off the passages to us of Jesus with His compassion and gentleness unwinding the wound of this woman, gently, looking in her eyes, talking softly and lovingly to her. He wants to do the same for you today also.

### **Calls her Woman – How long since heard That / People become known for their Disability**

Jesus called her “woman”, do you know how long it had been since someone called her woman. A person with severe disability becomes known only for that disability. People seem to separate them from being an actual person, and they are merely known for their disability. Hey I passed that lady today, which one they asked, you know the one that is hunched over. They don't refer to her by her name, but here disability. For this woman after 18 years she was no longer viewed as human (we can see that clearly by religious leaders actions – rather than rejoicing that she was whole again they are enraged), this woman was no longer viewed as human, but probably some monstrosity.

### **He calls – She sees Feet / Beautiful Feet**

Imagine, she hears Jesus call out to her, she starts walking towards Him, and He to her, she can't see His face, only the ground, her whole life was dirt and feet, and she sees these feet, not just any feet, but the feet of Jesus. She now stands on holy ground, and oh how beautiful the feet of those who preach the good news. And these feet are the feet that have come to set the captives free (just as He declared He would – for that is His Mission Statement).

*Romans 10:15 (NKJV) <sup>15</sup> And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!”*

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”*

### **Loose – to Unshackle Chains / Jesus sets the Captive Free**

This word for “loose” not only means to “unwind a bandage”, but also “to discharge from prison, to unshackle chains”. Jesus has set the captive free, just as He said

### **All things Glorious**

*Verse 17 - All the glorious things that were done by Him* – This glorious thing was that He made this woman's life straight again. Jesus makes every life straight.

### **Bound 18 Years – Bones Fuse / Impossible Situation / You are in Impossible Situation**

This woman was bound for 18 years, at this point the bones would be fused together, the muscles bound (or atrophy), nerve endings dead, cartilage deteriorated because of the constant rubbing together, yet in one word, one touch, she is made complete whole. In a word and a touch, the impossible is done. And maybe you here today are saying your situation is impossible, you are bound, you are doubled over, you feel it is impossible to ever love your spouse again, love your parents again, to ever control your anger, your tongue, your bitterness, your lust, and you feel you are bound to this addiction forever, doubled over with depression..... But Jesus would say to you today.....Son, Daughter, you are free.

*John 8:36 (NKJV)<sup>36</sup> Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.*

### **Reminded of a Man**

I am reminded of a man; he had come to faith in his late 20's. And although he was saved by the grace of God, he was still bound by some things of the world, things that kept him from fully enjoying all the Lord had for him. In his heart he knew they were wrong, but in his mind he couldn't walk away from them, and was continually bound to them. But he will tell you of an amazing night, as he laid in his bed, and he cried out to the Lord, I give up, I agree your way is the best way, and I fully submit to your way. And the best he can describe, at that very moment, it was as if waves of liquid love began to wash over him, a peace which passed all understanding, a real touch of God. He was by no means perfect from that point on, but he knew he had been touched by God, and he knew that what he thought was impossible to walk away from, impossible to overcome, a chain that would bind him for life, was all broken by God. He knew he could walk, straight. He knew that God had ministered to Him. He knew that God's power was real. He knew God's love was personal. And, he knew that his life would never be the same.

God did the impossible in his life.

He would never be the same.

I am that man!

### **Communion**

Today let us celebrate communion, let's have a time of remembrance of being set free, and an asking to once again be set free from the things that are currently binding us.

# The Narrow Door

13:18-35

## Summation 12 Chapters

For 12 chapters we have been blessed beyond measure studying the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, God in the flesh. Jesus has been showing us His heart, and we have two verses that summarize His whole mission and ministry, His whole reason for coming, and also showing His whole heart, a heart of love and compassion:

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)<sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”*

## Chapters 9-12

In chapters 9-12 Jesus declares to us, and all mankind, what is to be our response to His calling, His sacrifice, and it is a life laid down, a life fully committed to Him:

*Luke 9:23–24 (NKJV)<sup>23</sup> Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.*

## Strong Statement / Make Sure you are Sure

And now here in chapter 13, Jesus makes some of His strongest statements concerning salvation. He is making the statement all through this chapter, make sure that you are saved, know that you know that you, be sure that you are sure that you are sure. Be sure, because the door into heaven is narrow, so narrow there is only one way in, so narrow that many think they have the right door, have actually passed through it, but have actually totally missed it. Listen to these words in our passage today:

*Luke 13:22–28 (NKJV)<sup>22</sup> And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. <sup>23</sup> Then one said to Him, “Lord, are there few who are saved?” And He said to them, <sup>24</sup> “Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. <sup>25</sup> When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open for us,’ and He will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know you, where you are from,’ <sup>26</sup> then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.’ <sup>27</sup> But He will say, ‘I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.’ <sup>28</sup> There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out.*

## It is a Narrow Door

It is a narrow door/gate into heaven. I want you to imagine with me for a moment a story that is passed down from generation to generation within a family. The story is of a great-great forefather who had lived in a place of perfect light and love. He was invited to live there forever, but was warned to be careful that he never left that place of perfect light and love, because there was a door that was an exit from that area of perfect light and love, and through that door led to darkness, a door that led from life to death. Although warned, that great-great grandfather became filled with pride, thought he could master his own way, and one day he decided to walk through that door.

Immediately upon walking through that door, the door slammed shut, and he was now separated from that beautiful and glorious kingdom of light and love. So from generation to generation the story would be told that there was a door, there was a way back into the perfect kingdom of light and love, but that door was at the end of a very straight path, but to beware because there were many paths that branched off from that straight path, all promising to lead to that door, all appearing to be shortcuts to that door, all appearing to be optional ways to that door, and that a person did not have to stay on that one specific and straight path to that one and only door, the door that led out of the kingdom of darkness and death, and into the kingdom of light, life, and love.

## Not Hard to Imagine – Adam our Grandfather

It really isn't hard to imagine, for it is the history of mankind, as written from Genesis to Revelation. That great-grandfather is Adam, and he isn't as far removed as you may think, for the world is 6,000 years old, and if each father birthed a son that carried on this lineage, just every 30 years (as an average), Adam is only 200 people removed from you. Adam is your great-great time 200 grandfather, and he told us of the story when he left the perfect and beautiful kingdom of light and love, and then the door slammed shut behind him, but then the promise and the direction that there is a door that leads man back into that perfect kingdom. There is a door, only one door, but one door is all that is needed, and all that is provided, for all Adam's grandchildren to return back home.

## **Jesus speaks of that Door here in Chapter 13**

So Jesus speaks of that door here in chapter 13, and by Divine Design the whole chapter builds up to, builds upon, to bring this message, His message, about this door, very clearly.

### **Outline Chapter 13:**

- Jesus calls for Self-Evaluation (Repent or Perish) – 13:1-5
- Jesus desperately wants to cultivate a personal relationship with each person (He desires all to come unto Him) – parable of the vineyard – 13:6-9
- Jesus displays His tenderness with the hurting and forgotten (story of the woman afflicted for 18 years) – 13:10-13
- Jesus Resists/Rejects the Religious self-righteous (His rebukes of the leader of the synagogue) – 13:14-17
- Jesus warns about the deception of religion:
  - Parable of the Mustard Seed – 13:18-19
  - Parable of Leaven – 13:20-21
  - The Narrow Door – 13:22-30
- Jesus declares His course to the Cross (Jerusalem) – 13:31-33
- Jesus shows His compassion for the Lost (wishing to gather all unto Himself) – 13:34-35

### Jesus calls for Self-Evaluation (Repent or Perish) – 13:1-5

Jesus gave the mid-term examine as we reached the halfway point of this point, and He made it clear that man is either repenting, or perishing, that there is no easy-believism, As Martin Luther said in his first point of 95, and that is that all the Christian life is a life of repentance.

### Jesus desperately wants to cultivate a personal relationship with each person (He desires all to come unto Him) – parable of the vineyard – 13:6-9

Jesus speaks and shows how patient He is, wishing that none should perish, but all would seek repentance, and how He is diligently and passionately trying to cultivate a personal and intimate relationship with every person.

However, we will see in our study today, the passages we read earlier, there comes a day we know not when, and I place we know not where, that God can and will say to some, depart from me I never knew you.

**2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV)** *The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*

### Jesus displays His tenderness with the hurting and forgotten (story of the woman afflicted for 18 years) – 13:10-13

And men today will say He is cold and heartless, but He shows His heart and compassion throughout this chapter, that while He speaks of the narrow door, and that He will say to some depart from Me I never knew you, He shows He wishes that none should perish, and He shows how He will stop for all who are hurting, He will stoop down to them, meet them where they are at, and as we studied last time that He unwraps the bandages of the wounded and broken, and makes them whole, can make their life straight.

### Jesus Resists/Rejects the Religious self-righteous (His rebukes of the leader of the synagogue) – 13:14-17

Jesus then shows the heart of the Shepherd, and He vehemently rises up against the religious self-righteous, those who lead others astray, and He says to beware of them. It is the context of where we begin our study today. Jesus tears down religion. Religion means to “Re-Link”, and Jesus tears down all of man’s self-made ways, systems, and attempts to relink to God by any other way except through this narrow door. We often say that Jesus isn’t a religion but a relationship, but even that is incorrect, for today we see that it is not even a relationship, but regeneration, a person must be made completely new, the old person done away with, and a completely new person made from the inside-out, and that can only happen by going through the “narrow door”, the only door, so lets pick our study up here in verse 18.

### Jesus warns about the deception of religion:

#### **Parable of the Mustard Seed**

**Luke 13:18** Then He said, “What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it?”

**Luke 13:19 It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and put in his garden; and it grew and became a large tree, and the birds of the air nested in its branches.”**

#### **This is Abnormal / Evil Birds in the Tree**

At first blush this sounds like a great thing, wow the kingdom of God is going to start out small, and then grow and grow until it is large, so large that all the birds (people of the world) will come and rest under the support and shade of its branches. Sounds good, except first of the context is that Jesus is correcting the religious self-righteous leader of this synagogue who just rebuked Jesus for healing the woman on the Sabbath. Secondly, and it would be obvious to the hearers, and that is that mustard seeds don't produce trees, they produce bushes. So a mustard seed producing a tree rather than a bush is not normal. Secondly the birds resting in the branches is not good either, for in what we call “expositional constancy”, when Jesus is teaching on the parables (or scriptures), what something represented in one place is what it is to generally mean in all the other places, and back in Matthew 13 Jesus depicted birds as something evil. So the picture we have here is Jesus saying the church is going to look like it is growing and is healthy, but beware for in it will house evil people. I think it is not hard to see that today with all the cults, all the people who say follow me, we can show you the door. Cults such as Jehovah Witnesses, Mormonism, as they lead down a path different than the narrow path. They seem so nice, but Jesus clearly calls evil. Beware of religious leaders today who are so close, but so far away. I look at such movements as this emergent church and they seem so nice and so right, but they say things such as there is no hell, and all people go to heaven, basically all paths lead to God. Then, on an ever increase, churches who profess Christ is the only way, that the door is narrow, but teach that while you are on the path, no worries about a life of repentance..... and Jesus addresses that I the next parable.

*Matthew 13:3-4 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup> Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: “Behold, a sower went out to sow. <sup>4</sup> And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them.*

*Matthew 13:19 (NKJV) <sup>19</sup> When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.*

#### **We teach the Word**

We know here at CCAAC that many false teachers will rise up. I have been charged at times by other people because I don't spend time pointing out all the false teachers. I could do that, but then that would mean I would have to spend my time studying their lives and ministry, rather than the life and ministry of Jesus. What I know for sure, and it is real simple, teach and study the life of Jesus and all the works of these false teachers will clearly be seen. And as for you personally, whether it is me, or the guy you hear on the radio, or the person on the television, everything they say, go and search it out for yourself to make sure what they are saying is true. Just as the Berean church did.

*Acts 17:11 (NKJV) <sup>11</sup> These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.*

#### **Parable of the Leaven**

**Luke 13:20 And again He said, “To what shall I liken the kingdom of God?**

**Luke 13:21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.”**

#### **Life of Repentance**

Leaven is used to make bread rise. Again, it would sound great that the bread keeps rising, and all can come and eat it. But what is abnormal here is that you wouldn't put three measures of leaven in a loaf of bread to make it rise. The bread would be huge, and it would be hollow because the abnormal proportion of flour to leaven. And, again the context is in light of this religious self-righteous leader who was not leading people correctly. And, for 38 other places in the scriptures leaven has a negative connotation associated with it, and you can be sure in this 39<sup>th</sup> place it is the same. So Jesus is saying that sin will creep into the church, in fact notice He says that the woman “hid” three measures, sin will be amongst the people, it will appear that the church is well and healthy growing and thriving, but secretly there will be sin in the hearts of the people, but they will think all is well. But by Divine Design, the Holy Spirit ties all this together so that none will be deceived into thinking all is well.

*1 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.*

#### **The Way into the Kingdom**

**Luke 13:22 And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem.**

**Luke 13:23 Then one said to Him, “Lord, are there few who are saved?” And He said to them,**

**Luke 13:24** “Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

**Luke 13:25** When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open for us,’ and He will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know you, where you are from,’

**Luke 13:26** then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.’

**Luke 13:27** But He will say, ‘I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.’

**Luke 13:28** There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out.

**Luke 13:29** They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God.

**Luke 13:30** And indeed there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last.”

### **Prophetically**

Prophetically Jesus is speaking about the Nation of Israel rejecting Him, and He will extend the offer of salvation to the Gentiles. This passage also has an individual application as well, which is so often the case in His teachings.

### **Few Saved – Jesus makes it Personal**

*Verse 23 – Lord are there few that are saved* - So this person asks Jesus, wow so everything I hear You say seems to make it sound that only a few people are really saved. And notice that Jesus doesn’t answer His question directly, but instead turns it directly back to him, and Jesus basically says, you don’t worry about the other people, you make sure that you are saved personally.

### **Strive – Verb Tense makes it Person’s Responsibility to Enter**

*Verse 24 – “Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. –*

This word for “strive” is “agonizomai” it is where we get our English word “agonize”. He is not talking about works, for there is no work in walking through the narrow door, man doesn’t have to create the door, nor the path, he need only walk the path provided, and walk through door that has been offered. This word is a verb, and in its tense and mood, it is meaning that the person is has the responsibility to enter through the door, it is their decision if they are to enter through the door. Here is the door, now you decide if you want to walk through it.

*Ephesians 2:8–9 (NKJV)<sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

### **Depart from Me – Stunning Words / Not Relationship – but Regeneration**

*Verse 27 – Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity* – stunning words! The people are like what, what do you mean, we ate together and we listened to Your teaching. Yes they did, but do you notice what they didn’t say?

They didn’t say, “we followed you”, they didn’t say, “we changed our lives because of Your teaching”. As I had said, it is not a religion, it is not even a relationship (of knowing about Him and hanging out with Him), it is “REGENERATION”, it is a life changed.

### **How do I know I am Saved**

How do I know I am saved?

*The Scripture before Us – 1 John 5:13.* The Greek word translated “believe” is pisteuo. Used in reference to the way one places his weight on a crutch, pisteuo doesn’t mean to merely agree with intellectually, but to lean on, or trust in. Yet even though we believe the Word, the fact remains that people can challenge us concerning it. So there is a second place wherein we find assurance of our salvation....

*1 John 5:13 (NKJV)<sup>13</sup> These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.*

*Regeneration versus Relationship – 1 John 2:3-6:* Regeneration will look like something, and it will lead to something, it will lead to a changed life. You will know if you have entered through the narrow door, when you determine and purpose, you strive and decide, that you will live according to His commands.

**1 John 2:3–6 (NKJV)**<sup>3</sup> Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. <sup>4</sup> He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. <sup>5</sup> But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. <sup>6</sup> He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

*The Love of the Brethren – 1 John 2:9-11:* You know you’re born again when you start loving Christians—people you couldn’t stand before you got saved. You know you’re saved when you find yourself feeling comfortable with the Christian community.

**1 John 2:9–11 (NKJV)**<sup>9</sup> He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. <sup>10</sup> He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. <sup>11</sup> But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

*The “Not” Love of the World – 1 John 2:15-17:* The word gives us a good indicator of whether we know Him personally or not, and that is that if a person is more interested in the things of the world rather than God, the Scriptures say the love of the Father is not in them.

**1 John 2:15–17 (NKJV)**<sup>15</sup> Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. <sup>16</sup> For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. <sup>17</sup> And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

### **How do I get Saved?**

You may be here today and have come to the realization that you are not saved, and how can you get saved? You get saved by going through the Door. We have read about a God who is personal, who is loving and compassionate, who is willing to stoop down to us, who desires to make us whole. But there is a problem and that is that our sin separates us from Him (sin is to break His Holy Commands – the words of this Bible). As we have read today there is a penalty for breaking His commands, and that is hell (and as we see in verse 28 – hell is real and a person has total consciousness in hell). But God has provided a door for the forgiveness of sin, and that is through Jesus trading places with us, as He took our penalty (death and hell), so we can walk through the door back into the kingdom of God, the kingdom of light and love. Man must then strive (profess), agree with God that they need a door, that their works are not good (workers of inquiry), and that Jesus is the only way. How will I know I have truly done that, back to the those three things we just reviewed (regeneration, love of the brethren, and not the love of the world).

**Romans 3:23 (NKJV)**<sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

**Romans 6:23 (NKJV)**<sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Romans 5:8 (NKJV)**<sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

**Romans 10:9 (NKJV)**<sup>9</sup> that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

**John 14:6 (NKJV)**<sup>6</sup> Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

### **Don’t miss the Rest**

I know we have said a lot, but catch these last two points He makes in this chapter as they tie so perfectly well with what we have just covered.

### *Jesus declares His course to the Cross (Jerusalem) – 13:31-33*

**Luke 13:31** On that very day some Pharisees came, saying to Him, “Get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill You.”

**Luke 13:32** And He said to them, “Go, tell that fox, ‘Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.’”

**Luke 13:33** Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.

### **Doubt Sincere**

It is doubtful that these Pharisees were sincere, that they actually cared about Jesus’ wellbeing, it is much more likely that they just wanted Him out of their region because He was bad for business, people were following Him now rather than the religious system.

## **Cross not Mistake**

Jesus is making the point here, that no one will take His life, but that He will lay it down for the sake of being the door by which man can enter into eternal life. When Jesus dies in Jerusalem, it was no mistake, or by the design of man, it was all God's plan, on His terms, on His timetable.

*John 10:18 (NKJV)<sup>18</sup> No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."*

## **Jesus has a Course**

Jesus is also clearly saying that He has a course set, and that course is Jerusalem and the cross, and no man can disrupt that course. Jesus had a very specific course that He was on, He knew what it was, and He was set like steel to stay on it and accomplish it.

## **Christian what Course you On**

Christian, can I ask you today, what course are you on? I ask that question because so many Christians have no course, therefore they are easily swayed and blown around. It is said that if you aim at nothing you will probably hit it. I think it is important that we as Christians have a very specific course set. A long term course and a short term course. Long term, the same for all of us, to live a life that is pleasing and honoring to God, that when we die, we can say like Paul, I have fought the good fight, I finished my course. And I think we need a near term course, what is it we are called to be doing right here and right now. So many Christians are always dreaming of the future, and thus never do anything in the present. Set a course for today, ask the Lord what it is that He would have for you today, and then set out to do it, and do it well. Notice that I didn't say anything about the middle, just near and far, and that is because if you focus on those two, the middle will by default, just naturally work itself out, as God will give you revelation after revelation of the near term, and they will be your middle terms.

*2 Timothy 4:6-8 (NKJV)<sup>6</sup> For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. <sup>7</sup> I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. <sup>8</sup> Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*

*Colossians 3:17 (NKJV)<sup>17</sup> And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.*

## **It will keep you on Narrow Path**

By the way, this will keep you on the narrow path.

*Jesus shows His compassion for the Lost (wishing to gather all unto Himself) – 13:34-35*

## **Christ Mourns Over Jerusalem**

**Luke 13:34 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing!**

**Luke 13:35 See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'"**

## **Specifically Israel – but Individually Too**

Jesus is speaking specifically about the nation Israel, but it is also a display of His heart for all, as He wishing and desiring that all will come to Him.

## **Stunning Words – Compelling Words**

Here Jesus after speaking such stunning words, such direct words, speaks such compelling words. Words of His great love, His great desire to draw and gather all men/woman to Himself, how He longs to protect them and to provide for them.

## **Under the Covering of His Wings**

The picture is deeper than we may realize; as we probably all have seen the pictures of a hen gathering her chicks under the rain, or the snow, or the cold. .... But I am reminded of my friend who was a farmer, and he told me the story of going over to a fellow farmers barnyard after the barn had caught fire. As they walked through the ashes they came upon a hen that was totally scorched, though still recognizable. He said he thought to himself, you stupid

hen, why didn't you just run out of the barn and escape the fire. And then he took his foot to roll her over and look at her underneath, and when he did, eight little chicks came running out from under her wings. The mother hen gathered her chicks in the fire, and became their fireproof in the midst of the fiery trial, and it was her wings that saved them from the fire. So Jesus makes the same statement to us today, that He gathers His chicks to Himself, protects us from the fire as He becomes our covering and our door, drawing us and all who will come, unto Himself.

# Luke 14

## *Dinner with Jesus*

14:1-35

### **Long Week – Sabbath Rest / Dinner with Jesus / End with Communion**

Well it has been a long week of ministry for Jesus; it is the Sabbath day, a day of rest. The highlight of the Sabbath day was the meal, dinner, fellowship and food. Well Jesus is invited over to a home for a Sabbath meal. Dinner with Jesus. Today when we end our service, we will have dinner with Jesus; we will take communion together as a family. There is something special that happens around the dinner table, it is one of the most special places in all the world, because we all like to eat, and then add on the joy of family and friends, resting and relaxing, disengaging from the world and enjoying conversation and fellowship. How I long for us to have our own building again, leave our season of being a mobile church, so we can go back to our family meals here at the church. Where there is not a rush to get out of the building, we fire up the grill and cook some burgers and dogs, and we get to fellowship and ask each other how are you doing, what's going on, I'm glad to see and be with you.

### **Whole Chapter – Ties Together**

So we will study this chapter in a whole as it really ties all together. Jesus is invited to dinner, and He will use dinner as an illustration to do three things.

#### Outline Luke 14 (Dinner with Jesus):

- Jesus Reaches – to the Hurting (14:1-6)
- Jesus Teaches – about Humility and Pride (14:7-14)
- Jesus Preaches – about Discipleship (14:15-35)

#### *Jesus Reaches – to the Hurting (14:1-6)*

### ***Instruction on the Sabbath***

**Luke 14:1** Now it happened, as He went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath, that they watched Him closely.

**Luke 14:2** And behold, there was a certain man before Him who had dropsy.

### **Dropsy – to Hold Water**

Dropsy is an old term, it is not used anymore. It means to “hold water”, as a person would have severe swelling in their body due to water retention. Today with our modern understanding of the body, we diagnosis the disease down to its cause, such as cancer, heart disease, liver or kidney failure, all possibilities that cause the human body to retain water.

### **Nice Jester – Not / Set-up**

Verse 1 – that they watched Him closely – it sounds like a nice jester by these Pharisees, they invite Jesus over for dinner, but it wasn't a genuine invitation, it was all a set-up, as they are looking for ways to trap Him and accuse Him of breaking God's laws (in this case healing on the Sabbath), and thus could convict Him of being a heretic and thus have reason to stone Him to death.

### **Jesus knows – Still Comes / House with Pile of Rocks in Front**

Jesus knows their motives, yet He still comes. Imagine that invitation, Jesus knowing their heart and motives, hey Jesus would You like to come over for dinner, oh sure Jesus says, that sounds wonderful, what's for dinner (You are as we are going to eat You alive). Do you know where I live the Pharisee asks, oh yes Jesus says it is the third house on the left, the one with the big pile of rocks in front of it right? I'll be there.

### **God's Command / Religious turned it into Burden**

God had given the command that man was to work six days and rest on the seventh. But these religious leaders totally twisted the intent that God purposed. He meant the Sabbath as a day of rest from work, and recovery for the body, and to spiritually recharge by meeting with Him. But the religious leaders turned it from rest and refreshment, to a burden and a bore.

*Exodus 23:12 (NKJV)<sup>12</sup> Six days you shall do your work, and on the seventh day you shall rest, that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your female servant and the stranger may be refreshed.*

### **Jesus never Violated Mosaic Law**

And just for the record, let it be clearly understood, Jesus never once broke any of the Mosaic laws as prescribed by God. Accused of breaking the laws as they had twisted them, but never violated a one of them in their truest intent.

### **Set-up – Invited man with Dropsy / Know Jesus will find the Hurting**

This is a total set-up, we know it is because these guys invited a man with dropsy, and they know if you put Jesus and someone who is hurting into a room, Jesus will always find them. Are you hurting today? Jesus will find you.

**Luke 14:3 And Jesus, answering, spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?”**

**Luke 14:4 But they kept silent. And He took him and healed him, and let him go.**

**Luke 14:5 Then He answered them, saying, “Which of you, having a donkey or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?”**

**Luke 14:6 And they could not answer Him regarding these things.**

### **Trapped in their own Trap**

They had set their trap for Jesus, but instead found themselves being the ones who are trapped.

### **You can rescue Donkey but not Human / Eagle Egg / Doesn't look like Choice to Me / PP**

Jesus says you have found a way in your interpretation of morality to find a way to rescue your donkey, that possession that is so important to you, but not a fellow man/woman who is in need. Things haven't changed much. If you destroy the egg in the nest of a bald eagle here in the USA you could be sentenced to 5 years in jail and 250,000. However, this year in the USA there has been over 1 million eggs killed in the womb of woman (55 million since 1973). They call it a choice, but if you ever see a picture of a baby in the womb, it doesn't look like a choice to me. Maybe you saw the news article this week, as Planned Parenthood in Indiana touted and celebrated how they have paved the way for 12 adoptions in the last 7 years. So about 2 per year. Compare that to their statistic that they performed 5,250 abortions in 2011 (they performed 18,298 pregnancy tests – but did not report how many tested positive).

### **The Line**

I have and often get challenges from people outside the church who talk about “strict” Christians. They apply the word legalist, and of course that makes any Christian cringe because that is the last thing we want people to think we are, legalistic, because that comes with the connotation of unloving and uncaring. But as I talk I have a place I always try to get them, and that is that they themselves have some type of moral standard. Whatever the subject, you will see everyone has some ‘line’ that they draw. You Christians are too strict, really? So is it ok to lie for every situation (even say in court as a witness, or your kids to you), well no they say. Anyone should be allowed to just walk in your home and take whatever they want, no, no that would be stealing. So we are in agreement on thou shall not lie, nor steal. Ok those are easy ones, but they clearly prove they too have a line. But the “biggies’ is always the hot topic it is not?

- **Sex:** You Christians your rules about sex. Ok, so we say (in accordance with the Word) sexual purity (and we draw a line at the 10 mark). Are you saying anything goes, is your line at 0? So rape is ok, well no, ok so your line is at least at the 1 mark. How about pedophilia, absolutely not, ok we up to a 2 at least. So it is ok for your spouse to cheat on you as much and as often as they like, nooooo, ok so you are at a 3. Ask people if they wish they virgins before marriage, most will say yes, but almost all will say yes regarding the person they married (wishing they were virgins), funny how that works. Now you are at a 4. Well you parents are too strict on your teenagers telling them to abstain; oh so boys can stay overnight, at what age? How about your kids or your spouse watching and viewing pornography, will that enhance their life and your marriage? How about prostitution (well that is consensual they may say – do you know how many

runaways are prostitutes, just trying to survive now, or having to feed their addiction, do you know how foreign girls (many of them teens) are sold or forced into prostitution via sex trafficking? You will see they have a “line” that they have drawn of when, where, and what age. At the end, you have shown them that they have a line themselves, theirs is just at a different mark, but it is a mark nonetheless.

- **Abortion** It is a choice? Really, so if the government said it is now their choice, they determine how many, and what gender, you are ok with that? You are in agreement with Adolf Hitler’s beliefs for a nation? Well no they will say, and hence they have a line.
- **Drugs:** Marijuana should be legal. Alright, so as much as you want anytime you want? No, you have to stay sober enough to drive, else you might kill someone. So like alcohol you want to set a legal limit? Sounds like you are drawing a line.
- Everyone has their line, everyone has their moral mark, for a morals less society will be chaos. Everyone, like these Pharisees on what can and can’t be done on the Sabbath, all had their own mark, but their mark was based on their standard, and not God’s.

### **God’s Standard is Perfect**

God’s standard is perfect, yes it is His law and man is called to keep it perfectly, if not He has offended God and is guilty before Him; but it is perfect in that it perfectly protects us and provides for us, when we do it His way. Life just works better because the Creator knows what is best for His creation.

*Isaiah 55:8–9 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD. <sup>9</sup> “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

### **They Watched Jesus – Didn’t Learn of Jesus**

These men had watched Jesus, but they didn’t learn of Jesus. They didn’t say You are all wise and know, tell us how to live, teach us what is best for us, for You know better than we do, but instead they wanted to tell Jesus what the standard was. Everyone here has a line, has a standard you have set for various areas of your life. The question for you today is, who has drawn the line? Did you draw it, or did God draw it. Wise is the man, wise is the woman, who says Lord teach me Your Holy ways, so that I might walk in them, for Your ways are perfect.

*Psalms 86:11 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> Teach me Your way, O LORD; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name.

*Matthew 11:28–30 (NKJV)* <sup>28</sup> Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

### **Mistake They Made – It isn’t Work for Jesus**

They watched Jesus, but they didn’t learn of Jesus, for one of their mistakes is that these religious leaders accuse Jesus of working on the Sabbath, and according to their twisted interpretation of God’s Word they think that means doing absolutely nothing, it means no work whatsoever, but where they miss the mark most is that they can’t see that for Jesus, to touch and to heal, is anything but work, it is an absolute joy. It is a joy for Him to come to you, to touch you, to meet with you, to love on you, because you move His heart every time He sees you, you move Him into reaching every time you call out to Him, and you move Him into action every time you are hurting. Work? No, He calls it a joy.

### **Jesus wants to Dine with You**

Jesus wants to come and have dinner with you personally today, so He can reach out to you and touch you, comfort you, and maybe even point out to you the difference between your line and His line, for that difference will cause you pain, because it is less than perfect.

### **Let him Go – Jesus’ Line set him Free/Religious Line kept him Bound**

*Verse 4 – healed him and let him go* - Notice a key phrase there, after Jesus healed him, He then let him go. It means to set free, to release a prisoner. The line these religious leaders had set could not set this man free, but the line that Jesus drew could, and did, and will do for you.

*Jesus Teaches – about Humility and Pride (14:7-14)*

### **Parable of the Ambitious Guest**

**Luke 14:7** So He told a parable to those who were invited, when He noted how they chose the best places, saying to them:

**Luke 14:8** “When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him;

**Luke 14:9** and he who invited you and him come and say to you, ‘Give place to this man,’ and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place.

**Luke 14:10** But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, ‘Friend, go up higher.’ Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you.

**Luke 14:11** For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

### **Projection of what Just happened – Dinner bell Rings**

Here is what I project has just happened. This dinner party Jesus had been invited to were probably all hanging out in the living room (courtyard in that day), then the planted man is ushered in, and Jesus heals him. Now that is over, they are all still standing around, and the host announces dinner is ready come and get it, and everyone starts heading towards the table, jockeying for position, trying to get a seat next to the movers and shakers of that day who had been invited to the dinner. They wanted to sit next to the important person, so they would feel and be viewed by others as important, they wanted to be recognized. Jesus was watching it (verse 7 – He noted), and so He uses it as an opportunity to teach them something about their heart (as He will teach on pride and humility).

### **Jesus uses our Everyday to Teach us About Ourselves/Him / My Dry rotted Floor**

You know I love this about the Lord, in that He does use the everyday opportunities to teach us things about Himself and ourselves. So, have ears to hear, eyes to see, and a mind that is willing to consider what have I learned about myself or Jesus in this situation that has just unfolded today in my eyes. This week we were doing a simple home repair, and then when the carpet got pulled back, underneath of it was years of water damage that had now rotted the floor, and upon further investigation the wall, and then following it to the source was the large picture window. Thousands of dollars of damage. But as the Contractor was explain all the damage, I was looking at him considering that at that very moment he had just endured several months of his wife with stage 4 cancer, they have two young children, their finances must be on vapors, the next day his wife was going for chemotherapy, and has lost all her hair at this point; I thought to myself, he would love it if this was the biggest problem in his life. I said Lord you are so God, you have blessed me so much, thank you for my wife, my children, this home, and your promise of eternal life. Christian, keep an eye and ear out in the everyday situations of life, as God will use them to show you something about Himself, and yourself.

### **People love to be Recognized**

In the case of our story before us, Jesus tells this parable so He can reveal to them their hearts about pride and humility. There is just something that is in us that loves to be recognized and viewed as important. People love to name drop (yea I was talking to Billy (Graham that is) the other day – wow you were), they love to place drop (well I was at such and such place yesterday – wow you were), and people love to thing drop (yesterday while I was serving at the soup kitchen, etc). There is just something in us that makes us want the recognition of others. That thing, it is called “PRIDE”.

*Proverbs 11:2 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup> When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble is wisdom.*

*Proverbs 29:23 (NKJV) <sup>23</sup> A man’s pride will bring him low, But the humble in spirit will retain honor.*

*1 John 2:16 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.*

### **God hates Pride**

Be careful about pride, for God hates it, and nothing will send you to God’s bench faster than pride, because pride takes God’s glory away, as people draw attention to themselves, and off of God. And they now are getting the glory and recognition rather than God.

### **Humble thyself / Never go Wrong being Humble / Don’t take someone’s Intended Place**

Humble thyself in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up. You will never go wrong by seeking the lowest position and place. For if you seek the high place that God has intended for someone else (whether that be in the

ministry, the church, the work place, the school ground), the only way God can get the person He desires to that position is to move you, and it could be humbling.

*James 4:10 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.*

### **Muhammad Ali**

There are just some people who think they are the greatest – just ask them, they will tell you so. I am reminded of Muhammad Ali, who was the greatest heavyweight boxer when I was growing up, still considered by many to be the greatest ever, and ask Ali he will tell you that he was. Humility was not his strong suit. He would constantly taunt into the camera or his opponents face, I am the greatest. Well right after defeating Sonny Liston for the World Heavyweight belt, he was on the airplane home (first class of course) and the stewardess said Mr. Ali we are taking off now and you will need to fasten your seatbelt. Ali replies superman don't need no seatbelt, and the stewardess without missing a beat says, and superman don't need no airplane either.

### **Best Approach – Start Low / God will never Overlook Humble**

The best approach is to always take the lowest place, and let God move you up. God will never overlook the humble, He will always get you where He wants you.

### **More Concerned being Right place – then Right Person / Nobody sitting next to Dropsy Man**

For these men, they were more concerned about being in the right spot than being the right person. Be the right person, and you will always be in the right spot. You can be sure nobody in this dinner party was looking to sit next to the man with dropsy, and nobody was inviting him to the head of the table.

### **Christian be the Right Person / You Youth – go sit next to Lowly**

Christian, be the right person, in every situation of your life (work, home, marriage, church, school) – seek to be the person who is looking out for the hurting, who is looking to recognize the overlooked, to be like Jesus. You youth here today, you want to blow the doors off your school, explode your youth ministry, go find the overlooked and the uncool kids at school, go say hi to the underclassman, and they will follow you anywhere, and you can lead them right to youth group, right to Jesus.

**Luke 14:12 Then He also said to him who invited Him, “When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid.**

**Luke 14:13 But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind.**

**Luke 14:14 And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.”**

### **Not saying can't have Friends for Dinner / Hostess wanted to be Recognized**

Jesus isn't saying you can't have friends over for dinner and you should always be entertaining strangers; we know that fellowship strengthens us and the other. He is making the point, the man who hosted this party did because he wanted people to recognize him, to leave saying you rock man, what till I go to work tomorrow and tell everyone how awesome you are. It is just pride, the desire to be recognized.

*Proverbs 27:17 (NKJV) <sup>17</sup> As iron sharpens iron, So a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.*

### **You will know how much Servant You Are / Do you have Servant's Heart**

Jesus is saying, you want to be recognized as such a great servant, and having a heart for others, but you are really doing it for the praises of men. It has rightly been said, you will know how much of a servant you are, when someone treats you like. When you get no return, no thanks, not gratitude, and no recognition – and you are fine with that, you will know you are a servant. But if you complain and grumble because you were not recognized, then you know you did not have a servant's heart.

### **Jesus Preaches – about Discipleship (14:15-35)**

#### ***Parable of the Great Supper***

**Luke 14:15 Now when one of those who sat at the table with Him heard these things, he said to Him, “Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!”**

### **Let's Change Subject**

The dinner conversation is getting a little tense, so someone thinks they will change the subject and lighten the mood; but Jesus is going full-court press here, and He wants to reveal to each man the condition of their heart, and He wants to reveal to each man/woman, listen, there is more to salvation than raising your hand and saying I believe. I remember watching a television special and this pastor gave an altar call and said I have received Jesus as my Lord and Savior, and if you want that, just raise your hand and say "me too". Jesus is far-far from "just say me too".

### **Parable Great Supper**

Jesus will use another parable to amplify and illustrate the condition of so many people's heart concerning salvation, and why so many people will miss heaven, even though they think they are set and secure.

**Luke 14:16 Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many,**

**Luke 14:17 and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.'**

**Luke 14:18 But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.'**

**Luke 14:19 And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.'**

**Luke 14:20 Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.'**

**Luke 14:21 So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.'**

**Luke 14:22 And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.'**

**Luke 14:23 Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.'**

**Luke 14:24 For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.' "**

### **Prophetically**

Prophetically Jesus is speaking about the Nation of Israel rejecting Him, and He will extend the offer of salvation to the Gentiles. But like so many of His teachings, there is also an individual application as well.

### **Excuses**

Verse 18 – began to make excuses – the key word here is "excuses"; they are giving reasons why they can't come to this banquet at this time. Now to us as Americans maybe this doesn't resonate as strongly, but for these hearers, Jesus is telling an extremely offensive story. The hearers in the room would be going, that is so wrong that people were invited to a person's house, accepted the invitation, and then on the day of the feast totally disrespect the host. See that is our culture, people are always like hey that sounds great yea I'll be there, but then come the day, oh I feel a little tied I think I just rest, it is almost expected that many of the invited just blow it off at the last moment. But middle-eastern culture, this is an absolute offense, it is considered a personal offense to accept, and then not show up. It is absolutely disrespectful to the host.

### **Imagine all the Work**

Imagine all the work that goes into preparing the meal, cooking over open fire, preparing the animal, hand working the bread. Still same is true today. So this man goes through all this work, gets a head count of all who is coming, and makes the food so that everyone will have enough to eat, and then moments before the meal all the excuse start coming.

### **Lame Excuses**

One man says has to go look at his property just bought, another go test the oxen he just bought, and another just got married. You know what these excuses are called? LAME! These are totally lame excuses. Really, you bought a piece of property and you bought it sight unseen, would anyone do that here? The other guy bought 5 yoked oxen (that equals 10) and he has go see if it was a good buy. Who would do that? Would you buy a car and not first test drive it? And for both, you couldn't go do that yesterday, or tomorrow, it has to be today? How about the guy who

just got married. What you didn't know you would be married at the time you accepted the invitation? Just bring her!

### **Didn't want Master's Company**

The reason they didn't come, is because they didn't want to be in the company of the master, there were other things that were more appealing to them. And so it is today, Jesus invites all to come to salvation and have a personal and intimate relationship with Him, to have supper with Him. He makes Himself vulnerable by extending the invitation, and putting Himself in the position to be disrespected as people say, no thanks (God of the Universe – the One who created me), I have other things I would rather do than hang out with You.

*Revelation 3:20 (NKJV) <sup>20</sup> Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.*

### **3 Excuses**

Notice the three excuses, as there is nothing new under the sun:

- Possessions – the first guy had to take care of his possessions, they were his top priority.
- Vocation – the second guy had to go to work, that was his top priority.
- Relationships – the third guy was more interested in hanging out with his girlfriend, and that was his top priority.

These are the same three reasons that people put above their relationship with God; got to take care of my stuff and get more stuff, I got to invest all my energy into my job and career, and/or I really am more interested in him/her rather than You God. I really am not interested in Your company God, other things are more appealing to me.

### **Jesus says OK**

Jesus says ok, I won't force you, it is your choice. I will go invite others, people who you think would be the last person that God would hang out with, but it is just the opposite. God doesn't care about who got it together, and how great they may be in the sight of the world; He just wants to be with the people who want to be with Him, and He doesn't care if they are broken, maimed, rejected, poor, smelly, and unpopular – the only things He desires is that they want to come, and they want to be with Him.

### **Quite the Dinner Party / No leftovers for Jesus**

Quite the dinner party, doubt they gave Jesus any left-overs to take home.

### **Cost of Discipleship**

Now just so there is absolutely no confusion, the Lord finishes this chapter, tying all this together, that there is a cost to follow Him, and if you want to follow Him, ---- Count, The, Cost!

### **Christ Teaches on Discipleship**

**Luke 14:25 Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them,**

**Luke 14:26 “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.**

### **Lot's Following Him**

So lots of people are following Him. No doubt people who were tired of the old religious system. People probably who were enjoying the show, wow you should have seen Jesus lay out those Pharisees, it was great. But Jesus is making it clear to them, you may be enjoying all of this now, but there will come a day that it won't be easy to follow Me, and you need to determine if you are willing to pay the price to follow Me even when the times get hard.

### **Forget the Lame Excuses**

Hate mother and brother - Jesus is using comparison language, for we know we are called to love one another.

Notice Jesus even said “his own life”. Jesus is saying, forget the lame excuses. If you would rather be wrapped up with your possessions, your vocation, or your relationships – don't consider yourself one of My disciples (followers).

### **Why**

When Jesus is first and preeminent in our lives, then all those other things will be in their proper perspective, but when those things supersede my relationship with God, everything is out of balance. A person will follow their ways, rather than God's ways – and a “disciple” is one who follows after God.

**Luke 14:27 And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.**

### **Bearing Cross**

Bearing the cross means dying to my wants and desires, and following after God's words and ways. He sets “the line”, not me. His line is perfect, and it leads me into the ways of perfection. These are no small and passing words, these words are the depths of Christianity. These words totally fly in the face of today's modern gospel of “me too”. These words are words of a life of daily repentance. Jesus is asking are you willing to live a life of repentance – daily? Count the Cost!

*Isaiah 55:8-9 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD. <sup>9</sup> “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

**Luke 14:28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it—**

**Luke 14:29 lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him,**

**Luke 14:30 saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’**

### **Can you Finish It**

Jesus says, can you finish it! For those who start then stop, people mock and ridicule; so the world does each time someone professes Christ then falls away, or lives the “me too” Christianity (I raised my hand, I said the prayer, that should settle the matter). Christian, listen, let's all finish and finish strong! Maybe you have cooled off, maybe you have drifted off, maybe even you have dropped off, then let purpose today you are going pick up the trowel and mortar and start building again, build the strong tower, finish it and finish well.

*2 Timothy 4:6-8 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. <sup>7</sup> I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. <sup>8</sup> Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

**Luke 14:31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand?**

**Luke 14:32 Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace.**

**Luke 14:33 So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.**

### **Building & Battling**

There is building, and there is battling. The battle is inevitable, don't think it strange when they come, when your possessions, vocation, and relationships start to press in upon you and you have to decide where you will place your allegiance, and have to make the decision which is the top priority. And the battle of “the line”, God's line, or the world's line.

**Luke 14:34 “Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned?**

**Luke 14:35 It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”**

### **Salt -**

There is a whole another sermon in the word salt. Now salt is in everything we eat today, it is plentiful and easy to get for us. But in their day, it was a commodity, in fact one historical account I read said the Romans soldiers were paid with salt, because they could easily barter with it for everything else they wanted (eggs, wheat, fabric, etc).

- *Preservative* – they didn't have refrigerators then so they preserved their meats by rubbing salt on them. Without preservative, things begin to decay; so it will be for a nation and a family.

- *Flavor* – all food tastes better with salt on it, as the salt brings out the flavor. Get around an on-fire Christen, and you just get excited about Jesus all over again.
- *Healing* – salt because of its sodium and chloride content was used in healing of wounds. The world is hurting, we can bring them healing.
- *Thirst* – salt produces a thirst. I always want a big cold coke when I eat my French fries, how about you? How thirsty is someone for Jesus after they spend 20 minutes with you?

### **Salt – Mark of Christian’s Life**

Jesus says these are the mark of a Christian’s life. Don’t lose those attributes. Beloved, let’s finish and finish well, let’s finish strong – are you ready to leave here and live for the King!

### *Communion*

Let’s finish our study today with communion, for it is a perfect application for all we covered today. Dinner with Jesus, and so we get to also. And I find it is at the dinner table (communion) with Jesus that I am reminded of how He reaches out to the hurting, the broken, and He wants to touch me, and wants to love on me. I am also reminded of humility and pride, as I am reminded of who paid the price, and how much I really had to do with it (none – except that I provide the sin, and He provided the Lamb), and I see there is nothing to be puffed up about, nor any reason for me to esteem or put down another. And, at the dinner table with Jesus I am brought back to what really matters, not my possessions, nor vocation, nor even my relationship (in comparison to Him), but one thing – my personal relationship with Him.

### Outline Luke 14 (Dinner with Jesus):

- Jesus Reaches – to the Hurting (14:1-6)
- Jesus Teaches – about Humility and Pride (14:7-14)
- Jesus Preaches – about Discipleship (14:15-35)

# Luke 15

## *Lost and Found*

(15:1-32)

### **March to Jerusalem – the Cross / Hostility Rising – People Drawing**

Jesus is on His way to Jerusalem, journeying to the cross, His death (our life). The religious leaders are raising their resistance towards, their hostility is growing to feverish levels, and multitudes are following Him. People are drawing near to Jesus; what kind of people, verse 1.....

### ***Parable of the Lost Sheep***

**Luke 15:1 Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him.**

**Luke 15:2 And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, “This Man receives sinners and eats with them.”**

### **Pharisees not Associate – Exodus 18 Commentary / Not even to Teach them the Law – Let them Burn**

The Pharisees and scribes would not allow themselves to associate with people they viewed as the ones who were being drawn to Jesus, and Jesus to them. In fact in the rabbinic commentary on Exodus 18:1 cites an old rule that “a person should not associate with the godless” and points out that the rabbis would not associate with such a person, even to teach him the Law, they would rather they just burn in hell (Midrash Mek. Amalek 3 on Exodus 18:1, 65a). They were enraged that someone who would identify themselves as a prophet from God would associate themselves with such people, let alone that someone who would claim to be the Messiah would.

### **Eat – Become One**

In those days of eating pretty much they would have the main dish in a bowl (like hummus), and everyone would have a piece of bread and they would dip it into the bowl and eat from it, and double, triple, and quadruple dipping was allowed. Thus, the thought was as you double-dipped some of your salvia was left behind, and so was someone elses, so as you ate some of you entered another and another entered you, and you were becoming one together. So you can see how big of a deal it was to these religious people, because they viewed Jesus as becoming one with whom they considered the lowest of low (tax collectors and sinners, prostitutes and thieves).

### **14 Chapters – Religious Repulsed by Jesus because He touches Sinners / But those People Attractive**

In 14 chapters we saw people (these religious leaders) who find Jesus repulsive because He touches sinners (leopards, prostitutes, lame and broken), and Jesus is repulsive to many. But to as many He is repulsive, He is equally attractive. The sinner and the broken, the outcast and the forgotten, are drawn to Jesus because they know they can find love and forgiveness in and through Him.

### **I am Drawn to Him / Balance Strength and Love / Troops – 1 Word Loved /World in 1 Hand Tears in Other**

For myself personally, when I study His life, I find myself more and more drawn to Him, attracted to the incredible balance of strength, and love. A God who in one word can make a whole dispatch of soldiers fall over, yet in one word make me feel love, accepted, and secure in Him. A God who holds the world in His hand, and yet takes that same hand and wipes away the tears when my heart has been broken over something. Some were repulsed by Him, but others were drawn and attracted to His beauty..... I am attracted to Him (because opposites attract they say), as a perfect and sinless God would go searching for a complete sinner such as myself, I am absolutely attracted to the One who would go off the path, into the mud and the thorns of the world, to find me and carry me out of that pit I was once in.

### **Jesus says Yes I do – AND here is the Length I will Go for Them**

Jesus in our chapter today says not only do I want to become “one” with them, but let me tell you the great lengths I will go for them (for you here today).

## **Our Passage Today – Jesus/God is Relentless in Seeking the Lost / See the Trinity at Work**

Our passage today we will see God seeking out, relentlessly at that, that which was lost. We will see the trinity at work in our chapter today as:

- We see Jesus (the Heart of the Shepherd) leaving the 99 to seek us out to draw us to Himself.
- We will see the Holy Spirit illuminating and revealing as Lamp so that we may be found.
- And, then the story of the prodigal son, we see a picture of God the Father waiting and watching at the door, for us to come home to Him.

Simply a beautiful and wonderful passage and one that needs to be studied in its entirety in one sitting.

### **Outline – Lost & Found**

The Heart of the Son (the Lost Sheep) – He is seeking and searching for you (15:3-7)

The Heart of the Spirit (the Lost Coin) – He is illuminating and revealing for you (15:8-10)

The Heart of the Father (the Lost Son) – He is watching and waiting at the door for you (15:11-32)

**Luke 15:3 So He spoke this parable to them, saying:**

**Luke 15:4 “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?**

**Luke 15:5 And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.**

**Luke 15:6 And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!’**

**Luke 15:7 I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.**

### **Failed Shepherds – Ezekiel Prophecy**

As leaders of Israel, these teachers of the law were considered undershepherds of the Shepherd, God. But they were failing in their task, just as their fathers of old had done when Ezekiel prophesied against them. One wonders if some of them did not recall Ezekiel’s prophecy, at least after hearing what Jesus was about to say. Listen to Ezekiel: ***Ezekiel 34:1–2 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, <sup>2</sup> “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD to the shepherds: “Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks?’*

***Ezekiel 34:4 (NKJV)** <sup>4</sup> The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them.*

***Ezekiel 34:10–12 (NKJV)** <sup>10</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD: “Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require My flock at their hand; I will cause them to cease feeding the sheep, and the shepherds shall feed themselves no more; for I will deliver My flock from their mouths, that they may no longer be food for them.” <sup>11</sup> “For thus says the Lord GOD: “Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. <sup>12</sup> As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day.*

The thrust of Ezekiel’s prophecy is clear: since the undershepherds of Israel had failed, God himself would shepherd and rescue the people.

### **Look at the Resources God spends Searching / Hi and Low until Brings them Home**

The Shepherd is looking for you/us, and do you notice the resources that God is willing to expend to find that one? He will seek high, and He will seek low, and He will not rest until He brings that one home

### **Camden Lost at the Park / How Jesus searches for You**

Boy I remember last year we were at the park and they were having a fair, there had to be about 5,000 people there. They have this playground that is two levels, as you slide or climb from one level to another. Renee was on the top level, and I was on the bottom level. And somewhere in between Camden didn’t go back up or down, he went off to the side and disappeared into the sea of people. Fear gripped our hearts, we frantically began our search, after just a few minutes I start making my calculations of how far he could be from me, and that I could be hundreds of yards away from him. I think predator, I think distracted driver, my son is lost. I did no causal search, I moved quickly, I scanned the crowd, I could snapshot in my mind hundreds of people and continue to move on in my search. This is

the search that Jesus has on for you, has on for your wayward child, for each person, for He has come to seek and save the lost.

*Luke 19:10 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."*

### **I Found Camden – Much Rejoicing / Much Relief / Jesus Relieved the Wolf can't get You**

When I found Camden, there was much rejoicing, and much relief. So too it is when one person repents and receives Jesus. There is much rejoicing, and there is much relief. The rejoicing is fueled by the relief and Jesus has found His lost sheep, His sheep is not sitting out in the field all alone ready to be pounced on and devoured by the wolf.

### **Jesus tells us – He called all Heaven Together when you Got Saved / You not a Face in the Crowd**

*Verse 7 - I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents -* Jesus is telling us what happened in heaven when you gave your life to Him; He called "ALL" of heaven together, and there was a party in heaven, and all of heaven celebrated that you came into the fold of God, and that you were His. So, do you think you are just some number, a face in the crowd before God..... Jesus says absolutely not, I know you by name, I celebrate you, and I present you to all of heaven.

### **Christians Suffer Depression / Don't remember God Desperate for Them / Value what Willing to Pay**

Even many Christians suffer from depression and the blues, and I find myself there often myself, but we need to come back to this point, that God is desperately in love with us. As I said last week as we search for a piece of property, the owners will always say, the property is worth this much, and thus that is how much I want; and my answer is, the value of something is only worth what someone is willing to pay for it. You can say it is worth 500,000, but if someone is only willing to pay 250,000, then it is only worth 250,000. So, the value is only worth what someone is willing to pay, and God the Father was willing to purchase you with His only begotten Son, and that Son gladly was willing to pay the purchase price for you with His own blood.

### **Parable of the Lost Coin**

**Luke 15:8** "Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it?

**Luke 15:9** And when she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbors together, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I lost!'

**Luke 15:10** Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

### **Holy Spirit Intimately Involved**

Here I see the picture and heart of God the Holy Spirit who is intimately involved in searching the lost out. In this story we see the great length that are taken to find that which is lost. Hey I still got 9, I'm still doing good. But in our story, there is a desperate search on for that one lost coin.

### **Spirit Illuminates and Reveals / Spirit will not Let Up / Are you Sensing His Presence**

The Spirit is involved by illuminating and revealing. The Spirit sends out the search light to illuminate, and reveal (sweep away the things blocking a person from being found). The Spirit reveals to the person the need for a Savior. The Spirit will not let up on anyone, as the Spirit desperately wants to draw you unto the Lord. Is the Holy Spirit prompting you right now at this moment, have you felt His presence over the last weeks and months calling you to come unto Him.

*John 16:8-11 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: <sup>9</sup> of sin, because they do not believe in Me; <sup>10</sup> of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; <sup>11</sup> of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.*

### **Presence of Angels**

*Verse 10 - Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."* - And when that day comes, there is joy in heaven. Who is rejoicing? The One who is in the presence of angels. The angels are rejoicing, for all of heaven is rejoicing, but very specifically the one who is in the presence of angels is rejoicing, and that is God Himself..... because His loved one is found.

### **The Gospel**

Maybe the Holy Spirit is prompting you right now, you feel a tug on your heart, you know you are not His. And you are asking, what must I do to be saved. The gospel is profoundly simple, and simply profound. Profoundly simply in that Christ has paid the price, but simply profound in that God was willing to pay the price with His own life. God loves you and is desperately calling out to you, but there is a problem and that is that your sin separates you from Him, because one sin is all it takes to be separated from Him. The penalty for sin is death, and death is eternal separation from Him in hell (Romans 3:23 / Romans 6:23). But God in His great love for you does not want you to be separated from Him, and thus sent His only Son Jesus to trade places with you, as He will take your sin and death, so you can become a son and have everlasting life (John 3:16). It is a choice, a decision that every person must personally make. To receive this free gift of salvation, a person must be willing to admit they are a sinner and have offended God, they must be willing to turn from their sins (repentance – as Jesus says there is much rejoicing in heaven when one sinner repents), and they must personally ask Jesus to come into their life (Romans 10:9-10). It is a decision, it is a personal decision, and if you have not made that decision, you must if you are to have eternal life.

### **As great as Salvation Is**

As amazing as it is of that we have read today, a God who loves us and searched for us desperately, who rejoices over us, who says you are more than a number or a face in the crowd, but you are personal to me. Even after all that goodness, we can still find ourselves walking away from Him, and in our final story today, we read the story of the prodigal son.

### ***Parable of the Lost Son***

**Luke 15:11 Then He said: “A certain man had two sons.**

#### **The Youngest Son**

**Luke 15:12 And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.’ So he divided to them his livelihood.**

#### **Inheritance Divided / No Easy Task for Dad / Ungratefulness – Owed / Dad does it – or will Never have Him**

The way the inheritance was divided was that the oldest son got a double portion compared to the other siblings, because the oldest son was expected to assume the leadership role in the family, he was expected to be the spiritual leader to the rest of the siblings, and he was expected to care for his parents when they could no longer care for themselves. Hence why he got double portion. So in our story today the youngest son got 33% of the family wealth. This would be no small task as the father would have to go through much labor and efforts to sell off livestock and goods to give this youngest son his 33%. Imagine the father being asked hey why are you selling this? Imagine the son continually asking, well do you got? I think probably the hardest sin for a parent to deal with is “ungratefulness” as a child feels they are owed something. The father goes through the pain (and humiliation) of giving, because he knows that he will never have his son, until his son goes and finds out for themselves what the world has to offer. So it is that God will allow His children to go out into to the world and find out for themselves if there is something better.

#### **Give Me**

**Verse 12 – Give Me** - The son says “give me”. So many people today live in the “give me” attitude, and more is never enough. I think many faithful sons become prodigal (wasteful) sons because they don’t realize that all that the Father has is theirs.

#### **Son had to Leave – because World not in his Home**

The son had to leave the home, for the things he desired could not be found in his father’s home. The son wanted the things of the world we will see, and those things could not be found in the home, if they could have, the son never would have left. Christian parent, is your home different from the world? Or can your child find the things of the world in your home?

**Luke 15:13 And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living.**

## **Prodigal - Wasteful**

Prodigal means ‘wasteful’. So he is the wasteful son.

## **Far Country – I don’t want to be like You Dad / Provisions not Presence / Wealth but not Ways**

A far country means far away from his Jewish roots, heritage, and up bring. He went to a heathen country, a place where God and His ways were not recognized. The son wanted the father’s provisions, but not his presence, and wanted to get as far away as he could. I want your wealth and blessings, but not your ways and your rules. The son is saying, I don’t want to be like you dad.

## **The Ring**

We will see later that the father puts a ring on the son’s finger, which meant that the ring the son originally had he had either left it when he left or sold when he hit the bottom. The ring represented that the son was part of the family. Imagine maybe this son threw the ring on the ground when he left, making the statement that I don’t want to be part of this family, your ways, nor do I want be called your son any longer. Maybe he sold it when he reached the party scene, hey I will sell this it means absolutely nothing to me.

## **I wish you were Dead / Dad never gave Up – Go Taste – that which son thought Dad was Withholding**

The inheritance came at death, thus the son is saying I wish you were dead. Oh what a heart break for the father, but the father never gave up on the son, and he let him go tasted what the world had to offer, that which the son thought the father was withholding.

## **Lessons for the Prodigal Parent**

Maybe you are the Father/Mother of a Prodigal. Here are some lessons and examples to apply in this very hard season of your life. We always study this passage in the light of the prodigal son, and we skip the parent of the prodigal. God knows how hard this is for you with prodigals, He knows your heart is hurting. So here are just a few words for comfort, or more so just the fact that someone else understands how hard this is for you.

- God knows that many of you have to stand alone on this matter. Notice there is no mention of the wife in this story. But God is standing with you.
- The son had to leave because he couldn’t live that lifestyle in his father’s home. I am not saying kick them out (you seek the Lord on that direction), but I am saying do not allow it in your home. Be the Joshua example
- Parent God knows that your character is being assassinated, as you can imagine all the evil this son spoke against his father. God is speaking words of praise about you for your faithfulness.
- God knows how people are gossiping about you, as the prodigal will have no problem finding people to join them in your slandering; just as in this story the son had plenty to party with, until the party was over.
- Others will judge you too, that is just what people do. Let the Lord be your judge.
- **Joshua 24:14–15 (NKJV)** <sup>14</sup> “Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD! <sup>15</sup> And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

## **Parents remember who you are Battling**

But parents know who you are truly battling, for the Principalities and powers desire to destroy your family and you personally. The child is a pawn in the hand of Satan (Ephesians 2 – the Prince of the Air)

**Ephesians 2:1–3 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> *And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup> in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, <sup>3</sup> among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.*

**Luke 15:14** But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want.

## **Parents – Pray for a Famine**

Parents pray for a famine in the land. Pray their friends are revealed. Parents don't enable their prodigal living. The father didn't send him a check every month so he could sustain his wasteful living. Because, why would they need Jesus when they have you to bail them out every time.

**Luke 15:15 Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.**

**Luke 15:16 And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything.**

#### **Don McClure / Hang in there Parents**

Pastor Don McClure has a mega church, one of the most respected teachers in the Calvary Chapel movement, but he had a son who thought there was better, got all into the drug scene. Don said you have to go, you can't stay here in my house if you are going to live this way. And he son said then I shall go. And Don said listen son you owe me this, for I raised you, I changed your diaper, I paid your doctors bill, I bought you your clothes, I fed you and all those things for these 18 years, and thus you owe me this one thing – and that is if you find anything better than Jesus out there, you owe it to me to let me know what it is. Many months later Don's wife called him at work and said Marcus is home, and he said mom please call dad and tell him – there is nothing better than Jesus out there. Hang in there parents.

**Luke 15:17 “But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!’**

#### **Friends Gone / World loves to Have the Prodigal**

All his friends are gone, nobody there for him. Let me tell you, and the heathen loved having him. The heathen love it when a Christian walks away, backslides, because it brings them comfort and joy, they feel inside, see they are just like me. For many, they feel a victory. Parents pray for the famine.

#### **Praying Mother**

You know the saying, hell knows no fury like a woman scorned..... I say hell knows no fury like a mother whose child has been taken captive by Satan. As long as there is a mother praying, Satan's victory is only temporal.

#### **Came to Himself / Give and More have shown Themselves**

*Verse 17 – when he came to himself (maybe your translation says came to his senses).* It means to come from one place to another. It means to 'show itself'. So, the deceitfulness of "give me and more" have shown themselves, have revealed how they bring a person into bondage, not the freedom they seem to offer at first.

**Luke 15:18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you,**

**Luke 15:19 and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.” ’**

#### **I Have Sinned / Not Dysfunctional**

Notice he says "I have sinned". He doesn't say dad I did what I did because of you, or because this house is dysfunctional, or because you and mom got divorced, or because mom died..... But he simply says I have sinned. Coming home, starts with repentance.

*Psalm 51:4 (NKJV) <sup>4</sup> Against You, You only, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight— That You may be found just when You speak, And blameless when You judge.*

#### **Give to now Make Me / I want You – Your Presence – Covering – to be with you**

The son back in verse 12 says "give me", and now here he says "make me". He is no longer seeking the gifts, but the gift giver. He says father I want you, I want your presence, I want your covering, I want your care, father I want to be with you.

#### **The Father**

**Luke 15:20 “And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.**

**Luke 15:21 And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.'**

### **Son Far Off – Father Knew It**

The son was a far ways off, but dad knew it was him because he knew his walk, he knew his mannerism, and even after being eaten, beaten, and chewed up by the world, the father knew the walk of those whose were his.

### **Dad Saw – because Dad Watching Everyday / So too is God the Father waiting at the Door**

Dad saw him afar off, because every day dad was standing by the door looking for him to return. So too it is with God the Father and His children today, as He stands at the door waiting for them to return.

### **Son had whole Speech / Practiced It / Father Cuts him Off**

The son had a whole speech prepared, probably rehearsed it over and over on the journey back home. Probably thought how he would say it with which tone in his voice, where his eyes would be, whether he would stand with head down, or fall at his father's feet, he had it all rehearsed, but notice he didn't get to finish his speech, he didn't get to the part about make you your servant, for the father cuts him off and just began to love on him.

### **Father displays Agape Love / No Record of Wrong**

The father displays agape love, an unconditional love, a love that doesn't keep records of wrongs, but a love that fully accepts and receives the person for who they are and where they are at, for it is that love and only that love that can lift them from where they are to where they need to be.

### **The Father runs to him**

The father ran to his son. To run the father would have had to lift his robe and show his legs, and in that time it was considered humility to do so. But this father does it.

### **\*\*\*\*\* 3<sup>rd</sup> Son is Jesus / Firsthand account of Father's Heart \*\*\*\*\***

There is a third son in this story and it is Jesus, and He and only He can tell us what the heart of the Father truly is; and He is telling us that the Father's heart is unconditional love, and He is pleading for us to come home. Jesus the Son is telling this story from personal conversation with God the Father who has told Jesus, go and beg them for Me, go and plead with them on My behalf to come home. Tell them how desperately I want them to come home, tell them I stand at the door every day looking for them.

### **For those with Prodigals – Shepherd is Looking, Spirit is Illuminating / God will not Rest!**

For those with prodigals, it would be obvious that 99% of them are not here to hear this message; but know this..... Jesus the Great Shepherd is out there searching for them, and the Holy Spirit is illuminating and revealing to them, the word to come home. And your God is not resting, and will not quit on them.

**Luke 15:22 "But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet.**

**Luke 15:23 And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry;**

**Luke 15:24 for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry.**

### **Let the Celebration Begin / Jesus telling Heart of the Father**

Just like the lost sheep and the lost coin, there is rejoicing and celebration when they are found. Jesus is telling the story, firsthand account of someone who knows the heart of the Father.

### **When they do Return**

Here are some key points that we can glean from this study, of what to do when your child returns, and thus it is best you start praying them through right now, for God very well may not bring them home until you are ready to receive them as He desires them to be received:

- Notice the father freely received them, - don't make them earn their way back
- Repentance is the only requirement (before God and you)
- Notice the father didn't demand restitution for the money that was blown - don't require restitution

- Be willing to run to them. To lift the robe was shameful, be willing to take the shame, be willing to absorb their shame, it will speak volumes to them.

### **Wait – there is More to the Story – More applicable than you may Think**

But wait, there is more to the story than most people think, and in actuality the next story about the oldest son may be more applicable to everyone in this room. We see a son who doesn't agree or think it is fair and right the wasteful son gets received back, with no begging, no requirement for earning the way back, and not having to pay restitution.

### **Different Feeling when Closer to Home / Someone who has hurt you Personally**

Maybe for many hearing this story about a distant person returning warms the heart, the heart changes when it is someone closer to home, someone who has hurt you personally with their wasteful living

### **Older Son**

**Luke 15:25** “Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing.

**Luke 15:26** So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant.

### **I think he Knew / Doesn't happen Overnight**

I think he knew, he is just setting the stage for his platform to finally speak his heart after all these months or years the brother was living the wasteful life. You know, these things just don't happen overnight either, they build over time, so no doubt there was months and years of tension in the home as the youngest son continually spewed his carnal desires out upon his father, in an ungrateful and unloving manner no doubt.

**Luke 15:27** And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.’

**Luke 15:28** “But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him.

**Luke 15:29** So he answered and said to his father, ‘Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends.

**Luke 15:30** But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.’

**Luke 15:31** “And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours.

**Luke 15:32** It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.’ ”

### **Good Thing Brother didn't meet him First**

Notice that in verse 30 he says to the father, your son, and he doesn't say my brother. It is a good thing that the father was looking for him, and met him first, for how different this story would have been if the brother had met him first. How about us, what about that person that has gone wayward, how will it be if they meet us first, especially if their sin and rebellion has hurt us personally. We can never be a proper son without being a proper brother:

**1 John 4:20–21 (NKJV)** <sup>20</sup> If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? <sup>21</sup> And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.

### **Not about the Party – Never Is / Behind all Anger is Fear**

It is not about the party, he says that it is, but it is not, it never is..... the party is an excuse to vent and a reason to release a verbal wrath. The very fact that he says he has been perfect in obedience tells us he is not telling the true story. This anger is more so about the brother, than it is the father, although it is against the father absolutely. Behind all anger, is fear. Anytime you experience someone's anger, realize there is a fear behind it. The person fears something, and the anger is one of their ways to protect themselves from that thing they fear.

- Jealousy comes out in the form of anger – because they fear losing that person

- Control comes out in the form of anger – because they fear that once control is lost, that thing will be lost (finances, respect, to be needed and wanted).
- Respect comes out in the form of anger – as when someone disagrees, the person takes it personally, as they feel you think I am stupid, or simple because I believe what I believe.
- Insecurity comes out in the form of anger – because if I allow you to do what you are doing to me, you could hurt me financially, or lose my possessions, my job, etc.
- Behind all anger is fear

### **Oldest Brother had Resentment / Look like Jerk to say the Truth**

This older brother has resentment towards the younger brother, but with everyone celebrating and all, he would look like a complete jerk if he really said why he is upset. His anger is not about not ever having a party himself, it was just an excuse to be able to express his deep feelings in a way that seems justified. It isn't about the party (or that thing) – it never is.

### **What was Oldest Son Fear? / Father knows the Heart**

What was this oldest sons fear? The father tells us, because the father knows the heart of the son (as does God the father knows your heart thus you need not try to mask your reason – just be honest with Him so he can minister to your fears). The father addresses the true fears (verse 31):

- son you are always with me,
- and all that I have is yours.

Son the father is saying, just because your brother is home again doesn't mean that our relationship will diminish, I will not be giving all my attention to your brother and be forgetting you. And son, all that I have is yours..... You need not fear that I will take away your inheritance and give to your brother. I know you are fearing that your brother will do this again, and again, until the point that he will keep taking the family inheritance until there is nothing left for you. All that I have is yours, and I will always take care of you, and you and I will always have our relationship together, son..... I love you as much as I love your brother.

*Luke 15:31 "And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours."*

### **Many Don't have Problem with being Youngest son / But deep Down the Resentful**

Many people today don't have a problem with this parable when they view it as themselves, being received by God even after they have blown it. But when the story flips to the other side, and they are the oldest brother, they won't say they have a problem with the story, for that wouldn't be very loving and Christ like, but deep down in their heart they have resentment towards that person, and that resentment can come out as "righteous indignation", which is a Christians loophole to have anger and resentment towards someone. But behind all anger is fear, as they fear something about that person returning back to God. Maybe it is close to home and they fear they let this person back in, and they will take advantage of them, or cause them financial damage, or come back only to do it again and again (which they very well may). Maybe they fear slipping into the back of the room, no longer be favored one, and the recognized one.

### **Resentment not Fair / Not that easy / Youngest Son – Always look at Father he Hurt / Thank your Parents**

Some have resentment, that it can't be that easy. Hey that isn't fair that they got to go blow it and just waltz back in here like nothing happened, and here I have been faithful and obedient, and no one is celebrating me. Let me just say, yes grace literally is a waltz, it sweeps people so graciously and beautifully from being lost to being found, from the pigpen to the throne room, from addiction to freedom. It is that easy, and it is that fair, for all of us desire God's judgment for all of us have offended the perfect and holy God, for one sin is offensive enough to a perfect God. The youngest son will always remember the sin that he had sowed, and he will take that into his marriage. But how about his father, yes the Father will forgive and forget, but the youngest son will always remember what he had done to his father. He will look at his dad across the table at breakfast the next morning, and it will begin to sink in, wow dad you look like you have aged 10 years in just the past year since I last saw you. You lost a lot of hair, your face seems to have sunken some, and the lines around your eyes are ever so clear even from where I sit. The youngest son will have to carry that burden for the rest of his life, for truly you will reap what you have sown. If you were a prodigal, you can't reverse that, but maybe today is a good day to make that call, write that letter, have that dinner, and just say "thanks for never quitting on me". As for your heavenly Father, He doesn't remember, and don't let Satan try to remind you that God does

*Psalms 103:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.*

### **The Story is Left Open – Did he Go in or Not / Will you go In or Stay Out**

This story is left open, as it ends with the oldest son standing outside, and we do not know if he went in, or stayed outside. He had to make a decision if he was going to join his father in the celebration of the lost son/brother returning, or not. And so too does each person today, as they decide if they will enter into the celebration of the lost son/brother who has returned, or hold a continual resentment towards them for doing what they did. So what will you do? Will you come in, or stay outside.

### **Brother didn't Recognize Father's Pain – Didn't have the Heart of Father**

See the brother didn't recognize the father's pain, because he was too absorbed looking inwardly at himself. The oldest brother didn't recognize his brother's pain either, as the world will chew up and beat on the lost. The oldest brother simply did not have the heart of the father. Jesus tells this story because there is a tendency in every heart to hold resentment towards a prodigal, the sinner that has hurt us, but Jesus tells this story in light of the lost sheep and coin, so everyone is on equal ground.....the grounds of grace.

### Wrap Up

### **Our Passage Today – Jesus/God is Relentless in Seeking the Lost / See the Trinity at Work**

Our passage today we will see God seeking out, relentlessly at that, that which was lost. We will see the trinity at work in our chapter today as:

- We see Jesus (the Heart of the Shepherd) leaving the 99 to seek us out to draw us to Himself.
- We will see the Holy Spirit illuminating and revealing as Lamp so that we may be found.
- And, then the story of the prodigal son, we see a picture of God the Father waiting and watching at the door, for us to come home to Him.

Simply a beautiful and wonderful passage and one that needs to be studied in its entirety in one sitting.

### **Outline – Lost & Found**

The Heart of the Son (the Lost Sheep) – He is seeking and searching for you

The Heart of the Spirit (the Lost Coin) – He is illuminating and revealing for you

The Heart of the Father (the Lost Son) – He is watching and waiting at the door for you

# Luke 16

## Stewards of God – Part 1 (Possessions)

### (16:1-13)

#### Fitting Passage for New Year

I think a most fitting passage for us to start a new year off with; and even if it was the middle of the year, how fitting as this passage brings us back to a reevaluation of looking at what are we investing in, what we are making our priorities, where is our attention focused on. This passage today is on stewardship, the managing and use of what God has given us. I believe all of us here today want to make our life count, we want to please our Lord, we want to be found faithful, we want to end our life and hear those words, “well done thy good and faithful servant.

*Matthew 25:21 (NKJV)* <sup>21</sup> His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

#### Jesus is flowing from Prodigal Son

Jesus is flowing into this passage right out of the story of the prodigal sons (notice I said sons plural). Prodigal means wasteful, and one son wasted his father’s wealth on indulgence in the world; but the other son (oldest) was just as wasteful as he spent all the time with the father, but never gleaned and gained the heart of his father, and he wasted the opportunities to reflect the heart of the father, to the lost and broken in heart.

#### Outline: Stewards of God:

- Stewards of Possessions (16:1-13)
- Stewards of the Word (16:14-18)
- Stewards of Eternal Life (16:19-31)

#### Stewards of Possessions (16:1-13)

#### Jesus gives Instruction on Investing / Seek First the Kingdom

Many of you here today will be seeking tax advice for the new year with the new rules, some will seek financial advisers to see where you can invest for your 401K, you will be seeking to make the most of your money so it can go further and provide greater for you.....well Jesus gives instructions on investing in eternity, on how to make our possessions work for Him, rather than us working for our possessions, for us to not being all wrapped up in the things of the world, of seeking first the Kingdom of God.....

*Luke 12:29–34 (NKJV)* <sup>29</sup> “And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. <sup>30</sup> For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. <sup>31</sup> But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you. <sup>32</sup> “Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. <sup>33</sup> Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. <sup>34</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

#### Parable of the Unjust Servant

**Luke 16:1** He also said to His disciples: “There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods.

#### Talking to Disciples

Verse 1 - He also said to His disciples - Important to note that Jesus is talking to His disciples, not the religious leaders. So Jesus isn’t make a point against the people playing religion, those filled with hypocrisy, judgmental in heart, and resistant to Jesus – but to disciples, His followers, people who are committed to Him. If that is you, then Jesus is telling a story specifically to you, and the story is in regards to stewardship.

#### Stewards were Financial Managers

Verse 1 - a certain rich man who had a steward - Back then, and today, there are rich people who have so much wealth, that they enlist people to help them manage their wealth for them. Today they are called financial advisers, or wealth managers, but in its simplest definition, they are household managers. They manage the wealth of the

household, but it is not their money, it is not their goods, they simply oversee something that belongs to someone else.

### **This Steward Mismanaging / Not Maximizing the Return on Investment**

*Verse 1 - and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods* - As for this steward, there is no mention of him skimming off the top, or misusing the expense account..... but whatever it was, he was wasting the master's goods, he was not managing it in such a way to maximize the master's return on his investment.

### **Jesus sets Stage – that we all Stewards / God has an Expectation of You**

So Jesus is setting the stage of the story (as He speaks to disciples) is that we are all stewards of what He has given us..... and he expects us to manage and invest wisely on what He has entrusted to us. Maybe you have never considered that, but you are God's Steward, and He has entrusted you with His things, and He is expecting you to manage and use all of it wisely, and to bring Him great profit.

**Luke 16:2 So he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.’**

**Luke 16:3 “Then the steward said within himself, ‘What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg.**

### **Wasteful Steward – Scattering / Prodigal Son**

And in our story before us, this steward was being wasteful with what the master had entrusted him to manage for him. The word for wasteful in verse one means “to scatter”. So the master is saying rather than gather profit to me, you are scattering it loss. It is the same word that was used back in 15:13 speaking of the prodigal son who had taken the Father's riches and wealth, and scattered it throughout the land of foolish and unprofitable living.

*Luke 15:13 (NKJV) <sup>13</sup> And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living.*

### **Jesus talking to Disciples / He expects us to Increase His Kingdom**

Again, Jesus is speaking to His disciples and is making a point to them, that He expects them/us to be increasing His wealth, expanding His Kingdom, with all that He has given us to manage for Him.

### **Wake Up Call for this Man – Now how Prepare for Future**

*Verse 3 - What shall I do?* - For this man, it is a wake-up call, as he sees he has mismanaged the things that were given to him. He doesn't argue the evaluation that was made of him, he knows he has not been faithful with what has been entrusted to him, and knows his days of employment are coming to an end.

### **He Devise a Plan**

So he devises a plan for when he is fired.

**Luke 16:4 I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.’**

**Luke 16:5 “So he called every one of his master's debtors to him, and said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’**

**Luke 16:6 And he said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ So he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’**

**Luke 16:7 Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ So he said, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ And he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’**

### **Cuts Debit – hey Remember Me**

So he cuts the debit of those who owed the master, so that when he is laid off he can go to them and say hey remember me, remember how I took care of you, how I did that favor for you.....well I need you to do me a favor now, and I need you to give me a place to stay for a while.

### **Measure Equivalence / Considerable Debt Relief**

To let you know how big this debt relief was, 100 measures of oil was equivalent to 1,000 gallons of oil (1 measure = 10 gallons). You need about 150 olive trees to produce that much oil. The other guy, owed 100 measures of wheat, which was about 1,000 bushels of wheat (1 measure = 10-12 bushels). So he is giving a considerable debt relief.

**Luke 16:8 So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light.**

### **Shrewd = Wisely / Commended for Preparing for Tomorrow**

Verse 8 - he had dealt shrewdly - The word shrewdly means “wisely”. The master actually commends this servant for acting wisely. His wisdom being, that he prepared for his future. Now Jesus is not commending Him his shady accounting practices, for cooking the books, for shredding the paper trail..... but Jesus is using this story to draw out a spiritual point, and that is that His disciples need to be wise about investing in tomorrow, eternity, and that is done by investing in the opportunities He gives us.....today.

### **Jesus points out – People of World plan on Retirement**

Verse 8 – For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light - Jesus, talking to His disciples, says the ‘sons of this world’ act more wisely than the “sons of light” (which speaks of those who follow God). Jesus is making the point that wise people of the world prepare for their future, they invest in the future, so when the future comes they are not ill prepared. They have invested in their retirement fund, they have paid off their house, they have money in the bank to draw from when they no longer have a paycheck to draw from.

### **Jesus commends man for Preparing for Future**

Jesus commends this unfaithful servant for preparing for his future, investing in tomorrow with the opportunity that he had that day. That is the point He is making to us His disciples, plan for your future, invest wisely in tomorrow, and don't waste the opportunities you have today to invest in tomorrow.

**Luke 16:9 “And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home.**

### **Mammon – Material wealth & Resources**

Mammon was a commonly used word of that day, and it meant material wealth and resources. So it wasn't just money, but all the possessions a person owned (which would include their home, their cow, their horses, their servants, etc). I think it is a great mistake to teach this passage simply on money, because mammon is more than that; and for some people it is easier to write a check than it is to get involved personally in the calling from God.

### **All Wealth will Fail – Send it Ahead**

Verse 9 - that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home - Jesus says all that wealth will one day fail. It will fail because simply put, a person cannot take it with them. But Jesus is saying, although you can't take it with you, you can send it ahead, you can invest it in your eternity.

**Luke 16:10 He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much.**

**Luke 16:11 Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?**

### **Truest Riches**

Verse 11 – the truest riches – What are the truest riches Jesus is talking about, they are the spiritual things, they are the eternal things, they are the things of the Kingdom of God.

### **Jesus Dispels – I only have a Little / Way Mänge 50 is way manage 500**

Verse 10 - He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much. - Jesus is dispelling that thought that people have who think, I am just getting by, my little wealth and

resources is nothing; but if I had greater resources, I would be making such a difference in the kingdom of God. Jesus is saying if you had more, if you had double, if you had one-hundred fold, you would still manage it the same way. What you do with 500 dollars a week is the same that you would do with 5,000 dollars a week. What you would do with a small home is the same you would do with a large home, what you do with 2 hours of spare time a week is what you would do with 10 hours. Some people can waste their whole life thinking about what they would do if they had more, and never using what they currently have.

### **Peter Marshall**

D. James Kennedy tells a story of a man who came to Peter Marshall, former chaplain of the United States Senate, with a concern about tithing. He said: "I have a problem. I have been tithing for some time. It wasn't too bad when I was making \$20,000 a year. I could afford to give the \$2,000. But you see, now I am making \$500,000, and there is just no way I can afford to give away \$50,000 a year."

Dr. Marshall reflected on this wealthy man's dilemma but gave no advice. He simply said: "Yes, sir. I see that you do have a problem. I think we ought to pray about it. Is that alright?"

The man agreed, so Dr. Marshall bowed his head and prayed with boldness and authority. "Dear Lord, this man has a problem, and I pray that you will help him. Lord, reduce his salary back to the place where he can afford to tithe."

### **Jesus says if Mismanage Material – He will not entrust Spiritual**

*Verse 11 - who will commit to your trust the true riches?* Jesus is saying in verse 11 that people who are not faithful in the material things of this world, people who will not use them for God's glory but for self-glory, that God will not entrust that person with the truest riches, which refers to the spiritual things. If a person won't give personal wealth unto the Lord, it is because they don't trust Him to provide. A person who won't trust God to provide for them, lacks faith, and thus they are disqualified themselves from teaching on His faithfulness, because they personally don't believe it or trust it themselves.

**Luke 16:12 And if you have not been faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what is your own?  
Luke 16:13 "No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."**

### **Jesus asks Disciples – what are you Investing In? / What doing with God has Given You?**

So quite simply, Jesus is saying to His disciples, what are you investing in? What are you doing with the resources God has entrusted to you.

### **Christian – where are You Investing**

Christian, where are you investing right now at this very moment?

### **New Year 2013 – Take Evaluation / How will you STEWARD / AIM at Nothing**

We are upon a New Year, and it is always a great time to step back and evaluate the past year, and plan for the next year. Where will you invest, how will you steward the year 2013. Are you pleased with your 2012 investments, what have you planned for 2013. As it has been said, if you aim at nothing, you will probably hit it. How will you S-T-E-W-A-R-D this New Year that God will entrust to you?

### **Stewards of God:**

- S – Serving
- T - Time
- E - Evangelism
- W - Wealth
- A - Abilities
- R - Resources
- D – Devotions

### **S – Serving**

If you were to reflect back on the year 2012, can you see a continual pattern of where you served the Lord. Can you see a regular involvement in some service to the Lord. I like Warren Wiersbe's definition of ministry (*Ministry takes place when divine resources meet human needs through loving channels to the glory of God. – Wiersbe*).

What will you commit to this year? I pray that you will set yourself apart today, and seek Him, and ask Him, what is it that you want me to be involved in this year. Christian invest in the things of God, don't let the year slip away as you say, tomorrow I am going to get involved, make a plan for tomorrow – today!

*Colossians 3:23–24 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, <sup>24</sup> knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.

### **T – Time**

Time is the greatest commodity. Every day my bank account gets replenished, and every day at the end my bank account of time gets emptied. How are you using the 24 hours that He gives you. I pray that you review how you spend your time each day, then each week, and ask yourself, am I investing my time in the spiritual and eternal things more so than these temporal and material things.

*Ephesians 5:15–17 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup> See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, <sup>16</sup> redeeming the time, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup> Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

### **Prayer – Investing In It**

I know I am going to make a shocking statement, heretical for a Calvary Chapel, but we do not need more Bible studies as a church, more clubs or events, we need to gather together in the power of corporate prayer, and seek Him, His presence, His power in our lives, and we as individuals, and we corporately as a church, will experience Him in a new and powerful way in our New Year. It will be all the above (STEWARDS), and it will bring heavenly dividends I will promise you that.

*Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

### **E – Evangelism**

God has entrusted us with the words of life. Words that change lives, words that can deliver a person from darkness to light, from death to life, from hell unto heaven. Are we stewards with that truth?

*1 Thessalonians 2:4 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts.

*2 Corinthians 4:7 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.

### **W – Wealth**

What are you doing with the finances God gives you? Money is a cruel taskmaster if we allow it to be (the seeking to have more so we can buy more); but money is equally a wonderful servant if we allow it to (the seeking to use it to expand the kingdom of God).

*Matthew 6:19–21 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup> but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

### **A – Abilities**

God has given us special abilities and gifts, and we must use those gifts and abilities to serve others. Let me quote Warren Wiersbe again, "*The thief says, "What's yours is mine—I'll take it!" The selfish man says, "What's mine is mine—I'll keep it!" But the Christian must say, "What's mine is a gift from God—I'll share it!"*" We are stewards and we must use our abilities to win the lost, encourage the saints, and meet the needs of hurting people.

*1 Peter 4:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

### **R – Resources**

What is that in your hand, and are you using it for the glory of God? Throughout the Bible I see the Lord will use whatever is in our hands presently to do His work in the ministry. Whatever your thing is, that's what he will use.

- *As God called Moses in the wilderness, He said, Moses what's that in your hand...a rod...great I'll use that...lets go talk to pharaoh.*
- *David what's that in your hand...a rock and a sling...great I'll use that...lets go kill a giant*
- *Peter, James, John what's that in your...a net...great I'll use that...lets go catch some men*
- *Matthew what's that in your hand....a pen...great I'll use that...write this down*

*Exodus 4:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> So the LORD said to him, "What is that in your hand?" He said, "A rod."

So what is that in your hand, and how are you using it for the glory of God? Got car keys, can you pick someone up for church? Got a fishing rod, can you take a youth fishing and invest time in them? Got a Bible in your hand, can you teach a child the word of God up in the Sunday school class?

### **D – Devotions**

This is where the victory will always be won, because it is where the battle is fought, and that is in our devotional life, the time we spend with the Lord, seeking Him, communion with Him, getting our directions and instructions from Him. Romans 12:1-2, sums it all up. I pray that you steward this gift from God, the gift of the King of the Universe saying come unto Me, come into My presence, let us spend undivided attention together, so that I might reveal Myself more to you, and that you will become led by Me.

*Psalm 5:1–3 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Give ear to my words, O LORD, Consider my meditation. <sup>2</sup> Give heed to the voice of my cry, My King and my God, For to You I will pray. <sup>3</sup> My voice You shall hear in the morning, O LORD; In the morning I will direct it to You, And I will look up.*

*Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

### ***Conclusion***

**Luke 16:13 “No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”**

### **Why?**

Why does God want our possessions, because He wants us, for we come along with those possessions? He doesn't need any of the stuff, he can speak it into existence if He chooses, but what He truly desires is you. And there is a default setting in all of us that can allow us to be distracted and wrapped up in the things of the world, and Jesus clearly says, you can't serve two masters.

### **Full bank – Empty Life**

Christian, don't have a full bank account and an empty life. All the riches we need and desire can be found in Him!

### **Recluse Man**

There was a certain old recluse who lived deep in the mountains of Colorado. When he died, distant relatives came from the city to collect his valuables. Upon arriving, all they saw was an old shack with an outhouse beside it. Inside the shack, next to the rock fireplace, was an old cooking pot and his mining equipment. A cracked table with a three-legged chair stood guard by a tiny window, and a kerosene lamp served as the centerpiece for the table. In a dark corner of the little room was a dilapidated cot with a threadbare bedroll on it. They picked up some of the old relics and started to leave. As they were driving away, an old friend of the recluse, on his mule, flagged them down. “Do you mind if I help myself to what's left in my friend's cabin?” he asked. “Go right ahead,” they replied. After all, they thought, what inside that shack could be worth anything? The old friend entered the shack and walked directly over the table. He reached under it and lifted one of the floor boards. He then proceeded to take out all the gold his friend had discovered over the past 53 years – enough to have built a palace. The recluse died with only his friend knowing his true worth. As the friend looked out of the little window and watched the cloud of dust behind the relative's car disappear, he said, “They should have got to know him better.

I wonder, as we reflect on the past year, Jesus Christ, who suffered and died a criminal's death 2000 years ago that we too have missed out on the gold. Do we know our Friend's (Jesus) true worth? Do we treat Him as if he's some old relic of history that lived somewhere in strife-torn Middle East long, long time ago in a galaxy far, far way? What's that gotta do with me? Yeah, sure He died, and maybe he's some tragic hero and we drive away, walk away empty from this assembly this day or do we wanna walk out here with the gold? Have we missed the gold? Will someone one day say of us that we should have got to know Jesus better?

### **Apostle Paul**

So now God has spoken, and now we have to ask the same question that the Apostle Paul asked when the Lord met Him on that day... for the Lord wants to draw you close to Himself, He wants intimacy with you, how will you live out your year 2013?

*Acts 9:6 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."*

**Stewards of God:**

- S – Serving
- T - Time
- E - Evangelism
- W - Wealth
- A - Abilities
- R - Resources
- D – Devotions

# Stewards of God – Part 2 (The Word)

## (16:14-18)

### Pick Up in Verse 14

Here in chapter 16 we are studying the calling that Jesus is giving to be stewards, overseers, managers, of His possessions. We saw in our study last week that Jesus expects us to take what He gives us (that is our possessions and abilities), and to invest them in eternal things, and thus expand His Kingdom, and return unto Him a profit.

**Luke 16:13 (NKJV)** <sup>13</sup> *“No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”*

### Outline: Stewards of God:

- Stewards of Possessions (16:1-13)
- Stewards of the Word (16:14-18)
- Stewards of Eternal Life (16:19-31)

### Today

Today we pick up the second half of the chapter (as the theme continues on of stewardship) and we see that God gives us the calling to be stewards of His Word (to not water it down or waver on it to please man), and that we have been given the greatest gift, and that we have been given revelation into the truth of eternity and eternal life, and we are to be sharing that truth with the world, including those who are deceived by their riches, who think they are ok with God because they appear to have it all together, blessed by Him because they are comfortable in their possessions.

### Great passage to start New Year

Again, how blessed we are here today, for what a great passage to start off the New Year with, as God gives us a calling and challenge of what are we, how are we, going to invest in the year 2013.

### Spending or Investing

The question for you to look back on 2012, and prepare for 2013 – are you spending your life, or investing your life.

### Stewards of the Word (16:14-18)

**Luke 16:14–18 (NKJV)** <sup>14</sup> Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they derided Him. <sup>15</sup> And He said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God. <sup>16</sup> “The law and the prophets *were* until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it. <sup>17</sup> And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail. <sup>18</sup> “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced from *her* husband commits adultery.

### This Passage

Now this passage seems out of context (Jesus talks about Divorce) but we will see that it is actually still in the context of riches, and thus we will see why He is saying what He says regarding divorce.

### **Christ Warns the Pharisees**

**Luke 16:14** Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they derided Him.

**Luke 16:15** And He said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

### Deride – Sneer / Don’t like what Saying – Hit us Right in the Heart / We like our Comfortable Lives

Verse 14 - and they derided Him -Deride means to “turn up the nose, sneer, and scoff”. They scoff Jesus as if He had no right in speaking about money and righteousness. Really, what they are saying in their actions is “we don’t

like what you are saying, it hits us square in the eye, right in the heart, for we love our money and our comfortable lives, and your words seek to upset all that.”

### **Act Like they Loved God & People – Really Loved \$\$**

*Verse 15 – God knows your heart* – They acted like they loved the people and were in the ministry for the sake of the people and serving the Lord, but Jesus says God knows your heart, and He knows why you are doing what you are doing – because you love the money.

**Luke 16:16 “The law and the prophets were until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it.**

### **Prophets Pointed – John Pointed – Jesus stands Before Them**

All the prophets foretold of the Messiah to Come, John the Baptist actually pointed to the Messiah, the Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world, who would see right through the hearts of men, and still offer them a way out of their sins and into the everlasting kingdom of God; and now Jesus says and here I Am standing right in front of you.

*John 1:29 (NKJV) 29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*

### **All Life Pressing into Kingdom / Spending or Investing**

*Verse 16 - Pressing in* - All of humanity is on a flow to the throne of God, all of men whether they realize it or not will one day stand before God and give an account on how they responded to His Word. The question for you to look back on 2012, and prepare for 2013 – are you spending your life, or investing your life.

**Luke 16:17 And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail.**

**Luke 16:18 “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced from her husband commits adultery.**

### **The word Stands**

Jesus is telling them that the law (His Word) will stand and last forever, regardless of how man may twist it around for their own purposes and desires. It stands, just as I stand in front of you Jesus is saying.

### **Steward & Marriage Tied Together / Faithfulness / Adultery verses any Ole Reason**

This whole passage (chapter 16) is the context of money and possessions, stewardship. So what is up with this insert, blurb, on divorce? It seems out of context (especially considering the next verses are about the rich man going to hell), but I definitely see a clear tie and reason behind it. First of all, the heart of marriage is faithfulness. . . . . and the heart of stewardship is faithfulness, and Israel and the Pharisees were not being faithful in marriage, thus they would by no means be faithful in stewarding all God had given them. Divorce was a very hot topic at this time, it was very controversial in Israel. Jesus makes it clear that divorce was only to be on the grounds of adultery, unfaithfulness. But at that time, the rabbis were granting certificates of divorce on just about any grounds, things as foolish as the wife was a lousy cook (burnt the eggs, put too much salt on the food), therefore she was not contributing to the marriage wholly. One rabbinical writing said a man could divorce his wife if she had lost favor in his eyes, which meant that the husband found another woman more attractive. One of the writings I read said that some rabbis were themselves on marriage number twenty. So Jesus is calling them out on their corruption of God’s word concerning divorce.

### **Commits Adultery**

So Jesus is saying that when a person gets divorced for unbiblical (lawful) reason, and when they marry another, they are committing adultery, and the person who they married is also committing adultery. The same when the divorced partner remarries. So one unbiblical divorce, four people guilty of adultery, and four people who will be judged before God on the grounds of adultery. Serious statement being made here.

### **Watered the Word Done – For Fear of Money**

And, I believe that Jesus is tying the reference of money and divorce together with these religious leaders, in that the religious leaders were watering down the word, they were granting unbiblical divorces, because they were afraid if they spoke the truth, then people would stop giving to the temple and synagogue, and it would hurt their pocketbooks, and they didn’t want that because they loved their money. They were afraid that when people came

and asked the rabbis for a bill of divorce, and they said no because it is unbiblical (lawful) people would say fine, then I am going to the synagogue over in the next town.

### **Pastors and Churches Today – Watering the Word Down**

There is nothing new under the sun, and pastor and churches today are watering the word down because they are fearful that if they speak the truth of God's word, then people will leave and many are fearful about that because they are afraid in the drop in tithes, and their massive ego can't bear the thought of saying their church is shrinking.

### **Hot Topic was Divorce – Today it is Gay Marriages**

The hot topic of the day was divorce, and rabbis were afraid to address it biblically because they feared the consequences. Ask yourself right now – what is the hot/controversial topic today in the churches? Today the hot topic (controversial topic) in the church is Gay Marriages. God's word is clear regarding homosexuality, but it is now somehow open for debate and a "new" interpretation (did God really say that – Satan's favorite line). So let me take you on a little trip of church history here in the USA, going back to just 50 – 60 years ago, and that was that divorce was absolutely unacceptable, and the moral code of the USA was infused into people minds. Satan hates a unified family, he desires to destroy it, for when he does he not only gets the husband and the wife, he gets the kids too (ohh the devastation of divorce today – how many children are raised in fatherless homes). So how did Satan make divorce acceptable? He made divorce pale in comparison to fornication (sexual relationships outside of marriage), he made fornication acceptable, because that would make divorce look less offensive. So he started a campaign and a wonderful campaign at that, in the 60's and 70's it became the sexual freedom movement, free love they called it, the sexual revolution it was known as. The churches spoke out against it at first, they spoke loud and strong against it, but fast forward 20 years (and to today) and churches and pastors hardly even mention, and when they do, they don't do it with power and authority. Once fornication (all sex outside of marriage) was no longer a big deal, then divorce (apart from adultery) no longer seemed shocking compared to this new sexual revolution. Hey, do you notice that the world does not use the word fornication anymore? That word disappeared from our everyday language back in the 60's.

*1 Corinthians 6:9–11 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, <sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>11</sup> And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.*

### **Pastors afraid to Preach on It / Wont ask in Premarital / Marry people living in Sin**

So today, I see many pastors and churches won't preach against fornication because they know a large number of people in their congregation are engaged in it, and if they preach against it, those people will leave. So they are silent against it, they won't ask about it in premarital counseling, and churches all around the country are marrying people who are living in sexual sin together, thinking well once they are married then it is no longer a sin (which is a fools lie). Satan calling it premarital sin is masterful, because it lends itself that it will automatically be corrected when they get married, but the fact is rarely do they get married. But for those two people who do get married, and then after the physical part wears off they get divorced, because they were never right for each other to start with, but the sex masked that, and the pastor failed them by not standing up and declaring to them it would be so. And Satan laughs.....

### **Statistics**

The US Census Bureau gave the following figures:

- In 1920, 1 divorce for every 7 marriages
- In 1940, 1 divorce for every 6 marriages
- In 1960, 1 divorce for every 4 marriages
- In 1972, 1 divorce for every 3 marriages
- In 1977, 2,176,000 marriage licenses were issued in the United States—and 1,090,000 divorces were granted. A ratio now of 1 to 2!
- More frightening, we are close to the day where, divorces will outnumber marriages.

### **Satan made it Acceptable – God calls it an Abomination**

Satan and this Country may have made it acceptable, but God and His Word still calls these things an abomination.

*Luke 16:15 (NKJV) <sup>15</sup> And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.*

### **God has Called us to be Stewards of the Word / Word Produces Life**

God has called us to be stewards of the word, stewards of the truth of this Bible, at whatever the cost. Even if it costs us friendship, even if we come across as judgmental and hateful, even if it cost us that people turn their nose up at us, it may even cost you financially and relationally. God says steward what I have given you, because the things I have given you produce life, eternal life. All other things merely die and fall into the ground.

### **As for Gay Marriage / Stand for Truth for Purity**

As for the gay marriage controversy..... here is my point, the church has bought into Satan's strategy hook-line-and sinker, because if you notice, you can only hear a whimper of the church speaking out against fornication, and even a fainter whimper regarding divorce. Once homosexuality is embraced by the majority of the world, and the church, the last stance against fornication and divorce will be all but gone..... And Satan will laugh. Church don't get sucked into his strategy, stand for purity, be pure, don't wink at it with your kids, and please-please don't pipe it into your home via a Harlequin Romance novel, on your Ipad, via your computer, or with that remote in your hand. Be pure..... stand for purity.

*1 Timothy 4:12-13 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. <sup>13</sup> Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

**Luke 16:18 "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced from her husband commits adultery."**

### **New Year & Your Marriage / If Not Married**

Although Jesus is speaking about watering the word down, I do want to ask everyone here today to evaluate how you have been investing in your marriage. Will you invest all your whole being in your marriage this year. Consider how you will strengthen it and give your all to it. If you are not married, will you help strengthen those that are? The stakes are high, and Satan wants to destroy another, and another, and another.

### **Marriage in Genesis - Glued / Tie the Knot - Glued**

In Genesis, when God describes His intent on marriage, He said they shall be joined together. That word there for joined is "dabaq", and the word was used to mean "glued". People want to tie the knot, unfortunately you can untie a knot just as easy as you can tie. But glue isn't meant to be "unglued", in fact when you try to separate pieces that are glued together, you end up tearing both pieces. God's intent on marriage is to be glued together, and glued for life, and never "torn" apart.

*Genesis 2:23-25 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." <sup>24</sup> Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. <sup>25</sup> And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

### **Marriage is a Picture of Salvation / Steward your Marriage**

Marriage is meant to be a living illustration to the world of God's desired relationship with each individual. So then, if marriage is an example and illustration of our relationship with the Lord, then we can easily see that God expects us to invest in our marriages, and therefore we are expected to steward our marriages, and invest in them and grow them for His glory sake. So we can apply last week's S-T-E-W-A-R-D to this weeks marriage.

*Ephesians 5:25-27 (NKJV)* <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, <sup>26</sup> that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, <sup>27</sup> that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

### **Stewards of God:**

- S – Serving
- T - Time
- E - Evangelism
- W - Wealth
- A - Abilities
- R - Resources
- D – Devotions

## Stewards of God:

### **S – Serving**

I think it is easy for us come to a place in our marriage that forget what a gift it is to have someone to share our life with. What once was a thank you Lord for giving me this person to share my life with, to a point of expectations upon them, a taking them for granted, a forgetting of that they are a gift from God. All which leads to a marriage can quit serving the other, and expect to be served instead. Part of Stewarding our marriage, is the continual remembrance we are called to serve the other.

*Colossians 3:23–24 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, <sup>24</sup> knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.

### **T – Time**

Time is the greatest commodity. Every day my bank account gets replenished, and every day at the end my bank account of time gets emptied. How are you using the 24 hours that He gives you. How important for a marriage to spend time together. Quality time! Walking and talking, looking into each others eyes, hearing what is on the heart of the other. We can get so busy (work, household, kids, world) that the last person to get time is the spouse. Make time for each other, spend time together, make time for intimacy (that glue).

*Ephesians 5:15–17 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup> See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, <sup>16</sup> redeeming the time, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup> Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

### **Prayer – Investing In It**

Last week we spoke about prayer. Spend time praying for your spouse, lifting them before the Lord, daily. For when you do you find your heart being knitted to them. Spend time in prayer together, spend time coming to corporate prayer, and you will see God do a supernatural work in your marriage.

*Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

### **E – Evangelism**

God has entrusted us with the words of life. Words that change lives, words that can deliver a person from darkness to light, from death to life, from hell unto heaven. I can tell you from experience that some of the most exciting and exhilarating times in my marriage are when me and my wife share Christ with other people together. We do that corporately as a church every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday, you should come join us. If your spouse is not marriage, you need to invest your whole life into bringing them into the saving knowledge of Jesus.

*1 Thessalonians 2:4 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts.

*2 Corinthians 4:7 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.

### **W – Wealth**

What are you doing with the finances God gives you? Money is a cruel taskmaster if we allow it to be (the seeking to have more so we can buy more); but money is equally a wonderful servant if we allow it to (the seeking to use it to expand the kingdom of God). Money can be a marriage killer, so we must steward it well to protect our marriage. Don't bury your marriage in debt, it produces stress that strangles everything else we just talked about, especially the intimacy part. Also, even when you do have money, you may have to deny yourself, and say, no let's spend this on you. Sometimes we have to say no to ourselves for the sake of the other.

*Matthew 6:19–21 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup> but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

### **A – Abilities**

God has given us special abilities and gifts, and we must use those gifts and abilities to serve others. Let me quote Warren Wiersbe again, "The thief says, "What's yours is mine—I'll take it!" The selfish man says, "What's mine is mine—I'll keep it!" But the Christian must say, "What's mine is a gift from God—I'll share it!" Use your God given abilities to steward your marriage. If you are the better one at finances then you do the bills, if you are the better

cook, then you cook. But share the God given abilities in your home (among your kids) to make your home and marriage run smoother and more productive.

*1 Peter 4:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> *As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

### **R – Resources**

What is that in your hand, and are you using it for the glory of God? Throughout the Bible I see the Lord will use whatever is in our hands presently to do His work in the ministry. Whatever your thing is, that's what he will use.

- *As God called Moses in the wilderness, He said, Moses what's that in your hand...a rod...great I'll use that.....lets go talk to pharaoh.*
- *David what's that in your hand...a rock and a sling...great I'll use that...lets go kill a giant*
- *Peter, James, John what's that in your...a net...great I'll use that...lets go catch some men*
- *Matthew what's that in your hand....a pen...great I'll use that...write this down*

*Exodus 4:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> *So the LORD said to him, "What is that in your hand?" He said, "A rod."*

What is in your hand? Nothing? Exactly..... Go pick up a dish rag and help with the dishes, go pick up a rake and help with the yard work. Serve the other, and the marriage will prosper. Don't allow your spouse to be overburdened or overloaded.

### **D – Devotions**

Keep your personal devotions, and then share them with your spouse. This is where the victory will always be won, because it is where the battle is fought, and that is in our devotional life, the time we spend with the Lord, seeking Him, communion with Him, getting our directions and instructions from Him. Romans 12:1-2, sums it all up. I pray that you steward this gift from God, the gift of the King of the Universe saying come unto Me, come into My presence, let us spend undivided attention together, so that I might reveal Myself more to you, and that you will become led by Me.

*Psalms 5:1-3 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> *Give ear to my words, O LORD, Consider my meditation.* <sup>2</sup> *Give heed to the voice of my cry, My King and my God, For to You I will pray.* <sup>3</sup> *My voice You shall hear in the morning, O LORD; In the morning I will direct it to You, And I will look up.*

*Romans 12:1-2 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.* <sup>2</sup> *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

Some couples like to do devotions together and that is awesome. As for me and Renee we each do our own personal devotions and then we share it together throughout the day, as we "spend time" together. We say oh the Lord showed me this today, and oh how sweet this passage of scripture is, hey did you know that the word for joined there in Genesis is the word for glued. We share, and God knits our hearts together because He is His Word, so as we share His Word we are sharing Him with each other. It is beautiful.

### **Apostle Paul**

So now God has spoken, and now we have to ask the same question that the Apostle Paul asked when the Lord met Him on that day... for the Lord wants to draw you close to Himself, He wants intimacy with you, how will you live out your year 2013?

*Acts 9:6 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> *So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."*

### **Steward Your Marriages**

Oh beloved, steward your marriage this year 2013. Review these things and make evaluation, how have I been investing in my marriage. Ask the question, have I been spending my marriage (just going along with it daily), or have I been investing in my marriage.

### **King Henry**

In the eleventh century, King Henry III of Bavaria grew tired of court life and the pressures of being a monarch. He made application to Prior Richard at a local monastery, asking to be accepted as a contemplative and spend the rest of his life in the monastery. "Your Majesty," said Prior Richard, "do you understand that the pledge here is one of obedience? That will be hard because you have been a king." "I understand," said Henry. "The rest of my life I will

be obedient to you, as Christ leads you.” “Then I will tell you what to do,” said Prior Richard. “Go back to your throne and serve faithfully in the place where God has put you.” When King Henry died, a statement was written: “The King learned to rule by being obedient.”

When we tire of our roles and responsibilities, it helps to remember God has planted us in a certain place and told us to be a good accountant or teacher or mother or father. Christ expects us to be faithful where he puts us, and when he returns, we’ll rule together with him.

**Living Sacrifice**

Will you offer yourself up to your spouse, at all cost? Will you be a steward of His word at all cost? Regarding your marriage, it says husbands love your wife as Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for her. Will you steward that word at all cost?

**Steward the Word**

And in a world that wants to change the word and water the word down, may we be a people that Steward the Word of God at all costs.....even when we have to stand alone.

# Stewards of God (part 3 – Eternal Life)

## Luke 16:19-31

### Studying being Stewards of God

For the last two weeks we have been studying being stewards of God. A steward is one who manages another's affairs, and are expected to manage them well, to the point of bring them gain and profit. We looked into how we are to steward our possessions, all that God has given us. And last week we studied how we are to be stewards of God's word, that we are not to compromise it, how we are not to shortchange it for the sake of not upsetting people. And today we will be studying how we are to be stewards of eternal life. That eternal life is both having eternal life, and sharing with others how they too can have eternal life, because God has given us His word (stewards of the Word), and He has given us the calling to steward the possessions to bring gain and profit to our Master, thus we are to be seeking and serving His Kingdom, using our time wisely, evangelizing, using our wealth (finances) for the furtherance of the Kingdom, using the abilities that He given us, using the resources He puts in our hands, and where and how to do all those things is thorough the devotional time he calls us to in the midst of this busy and chaotic world.

### Outline: Stewards of God:

- Stewards of Possessions (16:1-13)
- Stewards of the Word (16:14-18)
- Stewards of Eternal Life (16:19-31)

### Parable vs Story

Many say this is a parable; problem is that Jesus doesn't call it a parable like He does when He tells seven parables prior to this passage:

*Luke 5:36 (NKJV)* <sup>36</sup> Then He spoke a parable to them: "No one puts a piece from a new garment on an old one; otherwise the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was taken out of the new does not match the old.

*Luke 6:39 (NKJV)* <sup>39</sup> And He spoke a parable to them: "Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch?"

*Luke 8:4-5 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> And when a great multitude had gathered, and they had come to Him from every city, He spoke by a parable: <sup>5</sup> "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it.

*Luke 12:16-17 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. <sup>17</sup> And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?'"

*Luke 13:6 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> He also spoke this parable: "A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none.

*Luke 14:7 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> So He told a parable to those who were invited, when He noted how they chose the best places, saying to them:

*Luke 15:3-4 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> So He spoke this parable to them, saying: <sup>4</sup> "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?"

### Spiritual Truth

In any case, the story is meant to draw out a spiritual truth. The truth is, there is a hell and it is real, and people really go there.

### Stewards of Eternal Life (16:19-31)

**Luke 16:19** "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day.

**Luke 16:20** But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate,

**Luke 16:21** desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

**Luke 16:22** So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.

**Luke 16:23** And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

**Luke 16:24** "Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.'

**Luke 16:25** But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented.'

**Luke 16:26** And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.'

**Luke 16:27** "Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house,

**Luke 16:28** for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.'

**Luke 16:29** Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.'

**Luke 16:30** And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.'

**Luke 16:31** But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.' "

### **I Tell You the Truth**

Today it is my intent to teach you the Bible and really my job is to tell the truth. Jesus says repeatedly in the Bible, "I tell you the truth." Jesus tells the truth. My role and goal today is to tell you what Jesus said and to tell you the truth. Your job is to make a decision. What are you going to believe? That's your decision to make.

*John 8:45-47 (NKJV) <sup>45</sup> But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me. <sup>46</sup> Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? <sup>47</sup> He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God."*

### **Today tell you About Hell / Some will have to Make Decision / Others – Passion for 1&2**

Today I am going to tell you, teach you, about hell; and for some here today you will have to make a decision on what you are going to do about hell, what you are going to do about eternity, and what that means to how you will live the rest of your life on earth. For others, you have made your decision, your future is secure, but I pray that the third piece of this study on stewardship, that hell is real, will fuel and drive your passion on being a great steward of your possessions and the Word.

### **7 Things About Hell**

Today we will see 7 things about hell, seven things that are sure and true, and that is because the Word of God is sure and true, and since Jesus said, it is true, because Jesus said – I tell you the Truth.

#### **7 Things to Know about Hell**

- 1 - Our Position on Earth does not determine our Position in Eternity (16:19-21)
- 2 - You are going to Die (16:22)
- 3 - Hell is a Real Place (16:23)
- 4 - Hell is a Place of Torment (16:24-25)
- 5 - Hell is Permanent (16:26)
- 6 - There is Remembrance in Hell (16:27-28)
- 7 - Eternity is Decided on Earth (16:29-31)

#### **1 - Our Position on Earth does not Determine our Position in Eternity (16:19-21)**

##### ***Parable (story) of the Rich Man and Lazarus***

**Luke 16:19** "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day.

**Luke 16:20** But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate,

**Luke 16:21** desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

**Extremes Opposites / People equate Riches with Favor**

So here are extreme opposites, one man rich beyond rich, and another man who was poor beyond poor. In the minds of the people of that day, the rich man was blessed of God and was heaven bound, and the poor man was cursed of God, and was hell bound. But Jesus says, hold on, things are always how you perceive them to be.

### **So Poor – Crumbs a Meal**

A man so poor that crumbs were a big meal for him.

### **Purple big Bucks / Money equals favor with God**

To be clothed in purple meant the person was incredibly wealthy, because purple was a rare commodity in that day. The purple dye was extremely rare and expensive. This man was extremely wealthy and the teaching and mindset of that day was that if you were wealthy it was because of your favor with God, but if you were poor, stricken, in peril it was because God was not pleased with you.

### **Next Passage – Riches do not Equal Righteousness**

Jesus in this story dispels that riches equate to righteousness, or God's favor, and that poverty or illness equate to unrighteousness. The scriptures declare that God makes His sun rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust, and thus riches and ease of life can happen to anyone, just as quick as disaster and distress can.

*Matthew 5:44–45 (NKJV)* <sup>44</sup> But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, <sup>45</sup> that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

### **When I was in College**

I can relate to this story, and that mentality that being a good religious person meant God owed you a favor. I can remember when I was in college in Daytona Beach Florida that I would go to the 5 o'clock "mass". Wow wasn't I such a good catholic boy, I even went to church when I was away from my parents, I even went to church when I was in college, man I even went to church on a Saturday night.....that meant I had to leave the beach early so I could get cleaned up and to church on time, I was such a good catholic boy. Fact one, because I didn't want to go on Sunday, the reason was fact two. Fact two, "mass was out at 530, 545 at the latest.....and then.....get this, there were like twelve bars between the church and my house, and I would hit each one, and eventually get home at 3am. What a good religious boy I was. And here is the kicker..... I thought the party life was a reward for being such a good religious boy. I thought God really loves me, and look He made sure that I had a good time because I went to church.

### **I carried that Mentality on After / America the Blessed**

I carried that mentality on after college; I applied it to good job, overtime, motorcycle, jet ski, etc – all because I was such a good person, God was rewarding me. And so that is how many people think today, I must be in favor with God, after all look at how blessed my life is, look at my position, look at my possessions, look at my looks..... but never heeding to Him or His Word. Jesus says your position on earth has no bearing on what your position is before Him, nor will it have any bearing on what your position in heaven will be. We are blessed because we live in the USA, and thus many people think they are going to heaven because they are American, and God loves America, and therefore all Americans go to heaven. It rains on the just and the unjust – that is all that it is.

### **Parable vs Story / With that Said – Jesus knows him by Name**

The rich man, don't know his name, but we know the name of the poor man, a man named Lazarus. Maybe on the top of this section, your bible says "The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus". It very well may be, but this is the only parable that Jesus gave that actually used a specific name. It uses an actual name, and thus I believe it is not a parable, but an actual story. And from that (whether a parable or a real story) Jesus is telling a message, I know My peoples name personally, they are dear to Me, and beloved of God, He wants you to know that He knows your name and you are precious in His sight, that you are not some number, some afterthought, some face in a crowd, but you are specific to Him, you are precious to Him, and He knows every detail of your life. He loves you!!!!!!

*John 10:1–5 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. <sup>2</sup> But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup> To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup> And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. <sup>5</sup> Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers."

### **King Tibni**

I am reminded of the story of one of the kings of Israel, his name was Tibni (1 Kings 16:21). It is interesting to me that when you study through the kings, somewhere along the way it is always told whether they were a good king or an evil king, but when you read about Tibni, there is no mention one way or another. Actually it doesn't say anything about anything he did, other than he was king, it doesn't even say how long he was king (which it usually always does). That made me wonder why. Why nothing said about one who was king, and I came to this.....a life that was not known for anything, probably was a life that meant nothing. What will your life be remembered for?

## 2 - You are Going to Die (16:22)

**Luke 16:22 So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.**

### **Friend – You are Going to Die**

Friend, you are going to die. Whether by age, accident, or circumstances, you are going to die.

## 3 - Hell is a Real Place (16:23)

**Luke 16:23 And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.**

### **Hades – Hell / Jesus spoke on Hell about 13% of His Public Words**

This man went to Hades (maybe your translation says hell). Jesus said there is a place called hell, and thus we know there is, because Jesus continually says, "I tell you the truth". And so I tell you the truth today, there is a real place called hell, and people go there for real. More than anyone else in the whole Bible, Jesus spoke and referred to a literal place called hell, and about 13% of the words we read Him saying, refers to the literal place – HELL.

### **People say there is no Hell / Some of Today's Positions on Hell**

There are people today, people who pastor large churches even, who say there is no hell; to them I say, Jesus tells us the truth that there is a hell, and people go there. Man has made up several alternatives to hell, because a real hell and people really going there is not a comfortable thought, especially if that means making changes to your life and your lifestyle, but here are a few of the lies (some by people who say there is no God, and some even by people who they believe Jesus is God:

- Number one, the naturalists will tell you that you do not have a soul, you are just a body, and when you die, you cease to exist. There is no existence of any sort or kind following your death. That's not true, but many believe that. Jesus says "I tell you the truth".
- Number two, the universalists teach that, in the end, everyone or almost everyone goes to heaven, that hell will be empty or sparsely populated. Some will say that all religions lead to God and all paths end in salvation. That's not true. Jesus died because he said differently. Some of you will be inclined to believe that, but that's not true. Jesus says "I tell you the truth".
- Number three, the reincarnationists will tell you that we have multiple, successive lives, that you will die and return, and die and return, and die and return, and that you have to pay off your karmic debt to the god or gods or universe. That's not true. That's not true. Jesus says "I tell you the truth".
- The fourth would be annihilationism, which is that when people don't know Jesus and they die, they simply cease to exist, or they suffer for a while in hell, and then eventually they cease to exist. That's not true, but some teach that. Jesus says "I tell you the truth".
- Number five, the Catholics will also teach something called purgatory, which is nowhere to be found in the Bible because it's not true, but they will teach that people can die and then suffer for a while as part of the finishing of their work of salvation so that, ultimately, they might be in heaven. That's not true, though some hold it. Jesus says "I tell you the truth".
- The question is, which is the sixth point, what does the Bible say? What does the Bible say? Not what do all the scholars and the critics and the interpretations and the perspectives say. Jesus says "I tell you the truth".

## **Hell is a Real Place**

Hell is a real place, and people really do go there.

### Two Compartments (Paradise and Hell)

The rich man ended up in hell and we read that the poor man Lazarus ends up in a place called Abraham's bosom. What does all this mean? What are these two places you may ask? First we have to recognize that this story is BC (before the cross), Jesus has not died for the sins of the world. So here is what happened when a person (all the way from time of Adam until the moment before Jesus died on the cross):

- Paradise (also called Abraham's Bosom) – was the place that believers in the Messiah would go until the Messiah would come to die for the sins of man. All the way back in the garden of Eden God had declared that He would send a Savior who would take away the sins of the world. That promise was even more defined in Genesis 22 as the picture of Abraham sacrificing his only son Isaac. The promise of a Savior/Messiah was spoken of all through the OT. Remember on the cross Jesus told the one thief who acknowledged Him, that he would be with Jesus in Paradise.
- Hades / Hell - Between Paradise (Abraham's bosom) there was a great gulf, that separated Paradise from Hades (hell). The rich man is hell, and we see it is a place of torment, and it is the place that people would go would never believe they needed a Savior, never acknowledged that their sin was and is offensive before a Holy, a place where people believed they were a good person and thus would go to heaven for being a good person.

**Genesis 3:15 (NKJV)** <sup>15</sup> And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."

**Genesis 22:14 (NKJV)** <sup>14</sup> And Abraham called the name of the place, The-LORD-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, "In the Mount of the LORD it shall be provided."

**Luke 23:42–43 (NKJV)** <sup>42</sup> Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." <sup>43</sup> And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

### Ephesians 4

In Ephesians 4, we read that Jesus after His death, during those three days, descended into Paradise (Abraham's Bosom) and declared to all those there that the price has been paid, that the One they waited for, has come, and that He will lead them out of there into heaven when He resurrected.

**Ephesians 4:7–10 (NKJV)** <sup>7</sup> But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. <sup>8</sup> Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men." <sup>9</sup> (Now this, "He ascended"—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? <sup>10</sup> He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

### Paradise is Empty / Absent Body – Present with Lord

That compartment is now empty, for the One (Jesus the Messiah) has come, the price has been paid once and for all, and thus now to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. In Matthew 27 we read how the saints of paradise were raised and released after Jesus' resurrection.

**2 Corinthians 5:6–8 (NKJV)** <sup>6</sup> So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. <sup>7</sup> For we walk by faith, not by sight. <sup>8</sup> We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

**Matthew 27:51–53 (NKJV)** <sup>51</sup> Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, <sup>52</sup> and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; <sup>53</sup> and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

### People Could not go to heaven without Jesus' Sacrifice

Although the people in Abraham's bosom believed in the need for a Savior, that God would send a Messiah, that alone was not enough for them to go to heaven, for the final sacrifice had to be coupled with that faith (Hebrews 10); and in Hebrews 11 it says (speaking of the heroes of faith) that they all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them. . . . .

**Hebrews 10:1–10 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. <sup>2</sup> For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. <sup>3</sup> But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. <sup>4</sup> For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins. <sup>5</sup> Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me. <sup>6</sup> In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. <sup>7</sup> Then I said, 'Behold, I have come— In the volume of the book it is written of Me— To do Your will, O God.' " <sup>8</sup> Previously saying, "Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them" (which are offered according to the law), <sup>9</sup> then He

said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second. <sup>10</sup> By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

**Hebrews 11:13–16 (NKJV)** <sup>13</sup> These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. <sup>14</sup> For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. <sup>15</sup> And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. <sup>16</sup> But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

### **Hades waiting Place – for all who have Rejected**

Hades is still receiving people even today as we speak, it is still the waiting place for all men/woman who have not believed in the Messiah, who have rejected the need for a Savior from their sin. Hades is a waiting place, until the final place, the Lake of Fire, where all men/woman will be sentenced and judged to for rejecting Jesus Christ as God, King of their Lives, and the one needed because sin is that offensive to the Holy God.

**Revelation 20:11–15 (NKJV)** <sup>11</sup> Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. <sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. <sup>13</sup> The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. <sup>14</sup> Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. <sup>15</sup> And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

### **4 - Hell is a Place of Torment (16:24-25)**

**Luke 16:24** "Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.'

**Luke 16:25** But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented.'

### **There is Consciousness in Hell / It is not Nothingness**

Give me drink the rich man requests, which proves that there is consciousness and feeling in Hell. Hell is not nothingness, but a real place, that people really experience, for all eternity. All the riches in the world cannot deliver a person from it either.

### **Place of Torment - Truth**

And it is a place of torment; Jesus says "I tell you the truth".

### **How could God allow This**

The question always, how could a God of love allow this?

### **Note – Poor not Buried / Thrown in Dump (Gahanna)**

Did you notice back in verse 22 that there is mention of the rich man being buried, but not the poor man. That is because the poor were not buried, that was an expense, they simply were carried outside the gates of the city and taken to the garbage dump, and burned with the garbage. They called that place outside the city Gahanna, and it became a picture and an illustration of hell itself. It was located in the valley between the city and the peak of the hill outside the city (Mt Zion, Golgatha).

### **Jesus Crucified overlooking the Dump**

Gahanna this wretched place that was outside of the city (and in OT times) where horrible religious practices were done by false worshipers and idolaters. Children were sacrificed to Pagan gods. Ritual sex and orgies of every kind was undertaken and it became a cursed place, a disgusting place. It became that part of town that nobody wanted to go to because it was just vile. Invariably, God's people turned it into the garbage dump. That's where all the feces and the refuse and the decomposing bodies were sent and then the worms would eat everything that was there, including the corpses and the fire continually burned in Gahanna, just consuming all of this rubbish. And they would look out of town and they would see the flame and the smoke and occasionally, the wind would change direction and they would smell the stench of Gahanna. Jesus would tell this story, all the listeners would know that the poor would be burned in this dump..... and amazingly as Jesus tells this story, he would know that in less than 6 months He would be crucified overlooking the dump.

### **Taking out the Trash**

It is an amazing picture, for these religious leaders who plotted to have Jesus killed for speaking the truth, to them it was as if they were taking out the trash, imagine they considered and treated God Himself as taking out the trash. But even more mind-blowing is the fact that God Himself would allow Himself to become trash (the sins of the world); your sin and my sin, that He would say let Me take all your filth, all your rubbish, heap it upon Me, and let Me take it to the dump (Gehhena) with Me, for you, so you will not have trash before the Father in heaven, so that you will be seen as clean, and so that the Father may say “come into My house – welcome”.

### **Jesus did that for You / Propitiation**

Jesus did that for you and for me, He said let me not only take out your trash, let me become your trash, so it may be burned completely out and away from your life. The theological term is called “propitiation”, which simply put means to take the wrath for another.

*1 John 2:1-2 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. <sup>2</sup> And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.*

### **5 - Hell is Permanent (16:26)**

**Luke 16:26 And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.’**

### **No Second Chance**

There is no second chance, there is no purgatory, the decision made on this side of eternity determines and defines the other side of eternity, and it is irreversible.

### **Touchstone**

One of the uses of this word here for torment in the original language was “a touchstone”. A touchstone was used to test metals to see if they were really precious metals or something that just closely resembled the real things (I think of pyrite – which looks like gold but is not – thus they call it fools gold). The touchstone continually touches and reveals the heart and character of this person who is in hell – and it continually reveals they belong in hell.

### **No Second Chance**

There is no second chance, there is no purgatory, the decision made on this side of eternity determines and defines the other side of eternity, and it is irreversible. Jesus says “I tell you the truth”.

### **Why Doesn’t God Judge Quickly**

How often we wonder how and why God allows such injustices to continue on in this life we live. The answer is because it is a brief life, less than 100 years for most, but after that comes eternity, and this is what waits for the person who rejects God’s offer to trade places and take their wrath.

### **6 - There is Remembrance in Hell (16:27-28)**

**Luke 16:27 “Then he said, ‘I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father’s house,  
Luke 16:28 for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.’**

### **Hell will be Hell – Realizing all the Rejected Invitations**

Part of the hell, part of the torment, will be that a person will have a memory, and they will have the memory of all the opportunities they had, and they squandered. All the opportunities to receive Jesus, yet they rejected Him; all the opportunities to invest in the spiritual and eternal things, but they were too caught up in the material and temporal things.

### **Father Abraham**

Back in verse 24 this rich man says “Father Abraham”, that was an identification of being a descendant of Israel, of being Jewish; but for this man although he made an identification and association with Abraham (Israel) it was in word only, it was not in heart, it never translated into a real following. A real following comes with all that is

included (which is faith, action, repentance, and belief there was a Savior coming and the person needed the Savior). The torment of knowing that you were that close, yet missed it for all eternity.

### **They Bought the Lie / Polygraph – Jim Vaas**

How many people buy all these lies; but I personally believe a person only buys the lie because they want to buy the lie, because they want to do their own thing, and not be under anyone's authority (God). But that is the ultimate lie because every person serves someone (Satan or God). Anyone who has ever taken a polygraph (lie detector) will tell you how unnerving they are. They will declare what the truth is, and the liar will be found out. Man can say what they want, even convince themselves it is true, but the truth will find them out in the end. I am reminded of the story of Jim Vaas, he started up YDI (Youth Crisis International). He was a wire tapper for the mafia. His wife dragged him to a Billy Graham Crusade and he got saved there. It is a great movie – called "Wiretapper". But one thing he tells in his personal life story is that he realized that God was real, and if he (Jim Vaas) had the ability to set up a wiretap and hear and record everything other people said, then how much more so God could. He realized all he ever said, done, and thought would be repaid before God, and he knew he would be found guilty. Imagine all those things man had done in their life, all the time they knew it was wrong, and having those thoughts and images replayed in their mind, all they times they rejected the opportunity to repent, the chance to receive Christ, yet they said no – and all eternity to play the tape over and over again.

*Luke 16:15 And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God."*

### **Looking at the Empty Paradise**

Part of that torment will be to be able to look over at Paradise and see that it is empty, and know they had a chance, yet rejected it for the temporal pleasures of the world, didn't want to give up their sin, refused to lay down their pride and admit their sin was and is an offense before the Holy God, to reject that they needed a Savior.

### **What do People in Hell think About – Loved Ones**

Do you know what people in hell think about? They hope that someone will witness to their family, so that their family will not end up in the same fate.

### **Don't want friends Here**

Forget all the songs and all the jokes about me and my friends will be partying in heaven, this story tells the truth and the facts, that even the person in hell will not want their friends to be with them in hell.

### **Return to Preach – not Party**

And look here, this rich man lived the rich and famous life, but if he could return it wouldn't be to eat one more great meal, and drink the finest wine; if he could return it would be to preach to his friends and family.

### **7 - Eternity is Decided on Earth (16:29-31)**

**Luke 16:29 Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.'**

**Luke 16:30 And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.'**

**Luke 16:31 But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.' "**

### **Moses & Prophets = Word of God / Word all that Needed to Convince**

Moses and the prophets refer to the spoken/written word of God. There is nothing else needed to convince a person of the need for a Savior, then the written word of God. Jesus is saying the written word of God is even greater than if someone rose from the dead to preach.

### **Another Named Lazarus Raised from Dead – they didn't Believe**

Jesus will raise a man named Lazarus from the dead, but that didn't convince the religious leaders to repent, in fact it even made them more hostile towards Jesus in that they plotted to kill Jesus Himself.

*John 11:45-48 (NKJV) <sup>45</sup> Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him. <sup>46</sup> But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did. <sup>47</sup> Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. <sup>48</sup> If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation."*

## Hebrews 4:12

The word of God is inspired and empowered, and it only has the power to convince people the need to repent (turn away from their sins), and call upon Jesus to be their Savior.

*Hebrews 4:11–13 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. <sup>13</sup> And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

## Application for 3 Groups Today

**Never made Decision** – the first is for anyone who has never made that decision to give their life completely to Christ. Today is your opportunity to do so. The Gospel is clear and straightforward. You are perishing (going to hell) and will continue to perish and eventually end up in hell (a real place – Jesus says I tell you the truth), because your sin offends the Holy God. You need to see the need for a Savior (someone to take your garbage of sin to the dump and be burned – because if you take it yourself you will be burned up with it (hell is the only place sin is consumed – and you will not be able to make the return trip). And then you need to repent of your sins (which means to turn from them), and follow Christ. Words without action will not lead a person to heaven.

*John 3:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

*Luke 13:5 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish."

*Acts 3:19 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

**Father Abraham** – words without actions leads me to the next group, and that is that some here may be deceived into thinking they have a personal relationship with Jesus because of some family heritage, born in the USA, or said a prayer one day with someone or at a church or crusade, but never went out and lived it. You need to examine yourself, least you be like the rich man in this story and say "Father Abraham", I am part of you, but in reality it was only in word, it never translated into a personal and real relationship with God.

**Believers** – and the last application is for those who have given their life to Christ. You are called to be stewards of eternal life. Hell is real, and people really go there, and God has entrusted with the gospel and we are to be His hands and feet, and His voice here on earth to declare there is eternal life. People, you need not fancy stories, or some great personal testimony to speak to people the need for a Savior, you need only share with the Word of God that is inspired and empowered. How do you let a caged lion defend itself, simple open the door to the cage, and the lion will take care of the rest from there.

*1 Thessalonians 2:4 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts.

*2 Corinthians 4:7 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.

## **7 Things to Know about Hell**

1 - Our Position on Earth does not determine our Position in Eternity (16:19-21)

2 - You are going to Die (16:22)

3 - Hell is a Real Place (16:23)

4 - Hell is a Place of Torment (16:24-25)

5 - Hell is Permanent (16:26)

6 - There is Remembrance in Hell (16:27-28)

7 - Eternity is Decided on Earth (16:29-31)

# **Luke 17**

## **Conflict Resolution – The Rules of Fighting**

### **Luke 17:1-10**

#### **Jesus on the Way to Jerusalem / To a Hill outside Palestine**

Jesus is on the way to Jerusalem, He has a mission, He has a focus, He has direction, it is to a hill in Palestine, a hill with a cross, a hill with nails, a hill with a spear, a hill where He will be mocked and rejected, humiliated and despised, a hill where He will cry out My God My God why have you forsaken Me..... Yet a hill that nothing could keep Him away from. Nothing could keep Him away from that hill because you were on His mind, you moved His heart, and Love did not drive Him on to Jerusalem, but drew Him to Jerusalem, because His Bride was there. How He loves you, How He cherishes you, and how He adores you. You are precious in His sight folks, don't forget that, rejoice and celebrate it today.

#### **Overview of this Sabbath Day / Chps 14 - to Here**

So today we are in chapter 17, and beginning probably with the fourteenth chapter of the gospel of Luke, we have what might be titled, "A Day in the Life of Jesus." The day begins with an invitation by a Pharisee for Jesus to come and dine at his house. It was a Sabbath day. It was a set up. They had a sick man there. A man who was plagued with a deadly malady. They had invited Jesus to see if He would violate their traditional keeping of the Sabbath by healing that man, which of course, to them was a violation. Jesus did heal the man and then He challenged the other guests who had been invited by the way they looked for the better seats in the house. Then He challenged the man who invited Him because of the guest list. As Jesus left the house, which was a place of hostility because they began to challenge Jesus, the multitudes waiting outside began to follow Him. But the Pharisees weren't ready to yet let Him go. He began to address the multitudes but there were constant challenges by the Pharisees that were in the crowd. And so this interchange goes on to chapter seventeen and to the tenth verse. So we are still on this same Sabbath day, following Jesus as He is being followed by the disciples, and those people who were interested in what He had to say and also by the Pharisees who were wanting to challenge everything that He said. And so we find Him addressing Himself sometimes to the Pharisees and other times to the disciples and as we catch up with them here in chapter seventeen, He is again addressing Himself to the disciples and He speaks to them about three different issues that seem to be rather unconnected and yet there is a unity in the whole message.

#### **A day in the Life of Jesus (a Sabbath Day at that)**

Luke 14

- Dinner with Jesus – 14:1-35
  - Man with Dropsy (the set-up)
  - Pharisees fight for the best seat
  - Jesus teaches on the Great Supper
  - Jesus says "Count the Cost of Discipleship"

Luke 15

- Lost and Found – 15:1-32
  - Lost Sheep
  - Lost Coin
  - Prodigal Sons

Luke 16

- Stewards of God (part 1 - Possessions) – 16:1-13
- Stewards of God (part 2 – The Word) – 16:14-18
- Stewards of God (part 3 – Eternal Life) – 16:19-31

#### **Today – Conflict Resolution (the Rules of Fighting)**

So today we pick up the end of this day, and Jesus is going to talk to His disciples (the Pharisees listen in for sure), and Jesus is going to talk about conflict resolution, how He expects His disciples to handle conflicts when they arise. I just love this bible, it covers all the topics and issues that I need to live an abundant life. From salvation, to

conflict resolution. From stewardship to serving. I am so glad the Lord told us to go verse-by-verse, else we would miss so many of these instructions for life, and not live in the wisdom He calls and desires us to live.

### ***Christ Teaches on Offenses***

**Luke 17:1** Then He said to the disciples, “It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come!

**Luke 17:2** It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

**Luke 17:3** Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.

**Luke 17:4** And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, ‘I repent,’ you shall forgive him.”

**Luke 17:5** And the apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith.”

**Luke 17:6** So the Lord said, “If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.

**Luke 17:7** And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come at once and sit down to eat’?

**Luke 17:8** But will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink’?

**Luke 17:9** Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not.

**Luke 17:10** So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, ‘We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.’ ”

Back to verse 1

**Luke 17:1** Then He said to the disciples, “It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come!

#### **You are going to Fight – Don’t kid Yourself**

*Verse 1 - It is impossible that no offense should come* - You are going to fight, don’t kid yourself that you are that spiritual, you are a sinner who has been saved by grace and he who began a good work in you will be faithful to complete it (when you are dead)! He is working in you to form and fashion you into His image, and that will happen daily if you lay yourself before Him every day..... but you are still in this fallen body, your body has yet to be glorified, and thus you will still sin, and thus you will still offend, and the other person is in the same state as you so they will still offend. As I often say, put two sinners into a room together, and at some point there will be a problem. So we will see what to do when we are the offender, and when we are offended.

#### **Conflict Resolution (The Rules of Fighting)**

- There is to be Respect
- There are Rules
- There should be Resolution

#### **Yes there are Rules**

What? There are rules in fighting? Yes absolutely. We don’t want to admit it as Christians that we will fight, but it is true that we do, and thus God made rules for when we do, and we will study that today.

#### ***There is to be Respect***

**Luke 17:2** It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

**Luke 17:3** Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.

**Key Word – Millstone**

Here a key word is millstone, and Jesus makes strong statement about offending another. A millstone weighed about 100 to 150 pounds. If you were lucky enough to get the 100 pound millstone hung around your neck rather than the 150 pound, you would get the pleasure of seeing more sea life on your raped decent to the bottom of the ocean.

### **Key Word – Little One / God’s Eyes**

The word for little one means small in size, or younger in age, or least in worldly significance. So the most common interpretation that is said regarding this verse is that it refers to little children, and that is for sure. But it is easy to apply also that we are not to offend or stumble those who are younger in the Lord, and younger in the Lord refers to maturity in the Lord, regardless of age. Jesus is making a point in this whole passage today, take heed to yourself that you don’t stumble another (regardless of age). And really, from the perspective of the Father in heaven, every person is a “little one”, and every person is precious in His sight.

### **Key Word Here is Brother / Precious in Sight of Lord**

So another key word here is brother. We would all do well in remembering in our next fight, that the person you are fighting with is precious in God’s eyes. Even if they do not know the Lord, they are precious in His sight because He created them in His image, He is marching towards Jerusalem to redeem them, and His heart desires them. We must respect God’s creation. And, probably more applicable for us here today, is the fighting that happens amongst the believers, the brothers and the sisters in the Lord. That relationship could be husbands and wife, mother and daughter, father and son, brother in the Lord with brother in the Lord (and vice-versa).

### **In Heat of Battle – Easy Forget they are Child of God**

It is very easy in the heat of the battle to forget that the person you are fighting against is God’s son or God’s daughter, which trumps even if you call that person husband/wife, son/daughter. I, you, we must always remember that we are handling, treating, speaking to God’s child and creation, and therefore just in that, there must be respect regarding that, and that respect must be carried over to them.

### *There are Rules*

**Luke 17:3 Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.**

**Luke 17:4 And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, ‘I repent,’ you shall forgive him.”**

**Luke 17:5 And the apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith.”**

### **Rabbis Taught**

The rabbis of the day taught that you only had to forgive a person three times, and then after that you were no longer bound to having to forgive them. Jesus here now elevates it to 7, and thus He is doubling and then one for good measure. Jesus by saying 7 times in a day is saying you forgive Every time they ask for forgiveness.

### **Apostles – Are you Serious**

The apostles (not disciples) go, ohh wow, are you serious? Lord you have to increase our faith if you want us to do that.

### **Only Account of Request for Faith Increase**

It is interesting to me that the apostles say “Lord increase our faith”. I read every account of the word faith in the gospels (Matthew-John), and only one time, which is right here, do the apostles say “Lord increase our faith”. How interesting that they didn’t ask for increase in faith on dealing with opposition, hardship, temptations, storms at sea, demon possessed people, paralytics, lepers.....but one time, one time only, right here – and that was dealing with forgiveness.....most specifically giving forgiveness. Why? Because forgiveness is one of the hardest things to do when someone hurts us or offends us.

**Luke 17:6 So the Lord said, “If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.**

### **Mulberry Tree 40 feet – Deep Roots / Daunting Tasks this Forgiveness**

This mulberry tree is no little tree. It can grow up to 40 feet in height and is known for its deep root system. The word picture here is quite daunting, because the mulberry tree would be considered immovable. But Jesus is making point that mustard seed faith can do it.

### **Faith and Forgiveness – Hand in Hand**

Christina – “Faith and Forgiveness” go hand in hand. Forgiveness is preprogramed already into the seed of faith, and that seed is implanted into you when you put your trust (faith) into Jesus Christ.

### **We Afraid to Forgive – they will Keep Doing It**

Now, why don't we automatically forgive? Because so often we are afraid to continually forgive someone because we say hey they will keep doing it if I don't correct them, they will never learn their lesson. Or, we say I am not going to forgive them because then they will keep taking advantage of me, or will come back to hurt me again, and I have to protect myself.

### **Forgiveness doesn't minimize the Sin**

Hey, forgiveness doesn't minimize the sin, if anything it solidifies it that is sin and it was offensive, and that it did hurt someone else.

### **Key to Faith is God will Correct and God will Protect**

The key is faith in God, is that God is going to correct them, and protect you. Hence why you can see that when the disciples got what Jesus was saying, they said wow, increase our faith. And when we get, we really get it, and we saying you want me to keep forgiving..... and allow myself to be hurt, and allow for them to keeping going on doing what they are doing..... Oh wow Lord, increase our faith, for that is one tall order You are asking of me.

### **Watch This – Can Change your Life / New Lease – Total Release**

Watch this, see what Jesus does here when they ask for an increase in faith, and it can totally change your life. Today can become a new lease on life for you, as you will be released from the fear you may be bound up in, bitterness that is choking out all you joy, and the prison you have put yourself in because you are ensuring that you are protected and no one can get into your inner circle and hurt you again.

### **When they ask for Faith / Jesus doesn't Lay hands / Seminar or Workshop / Just one Verse**

When they say Lord increase our faith, I would have expected next that Jesus would have laid hands in them and prayed for them that they might have more faith. Or invited them to a retreat where they could study Old Testament faith compared to New Testament faith. Or had a 2 hour workshop on faith..... Jesus didn't that, but what did He do? He gave one verse.....Faith of a Mustard Seed

*Luke 17:6 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> So the Lord said, "If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.*

### **Mustard Seed – Smallest Seed / Increase Faith – Jesus says you already have Enough Faith**

Since you have the faith of a mustard you can say throw it into the sea and it shall be done. The mustard seed was the smallest seed in that region, it was tinny-tiny and thus the point is made all you need is tiny faith to do this. One of the apostles said Lord increase our faith, and Jesus is saying you already have enough faith to do this, it only takes small faith to do this, it isn't as great a task as you make it out to be.

### **You have It – But Got to / But have to Want It**

You just have to do it, and you do it, by believing it and speaking it, and truly wanting to release it and forgive them.

### **Unleash Your Faith**

Jesus says all it takes it tinny-tiny faith to say mulberry tree go into the sea and it shall.

- The disciples said, “Increase our faith.”
  - Jesus said, “Unleash your faith.”
- The disciples said, “Expand our faith.”
  - Jesus said, “Express your faith.”

### **You have Enough – No More Prayer is Needed – Now just Go Do IT**

You already have enough faith Jesus is saying, you need not pray for more, you just need to use what you have, unleash what is yours. It is not expanding, it is expressing, it is not increasing, it is unleashing. Say to those about whom you feel a root of bitterness, a tree of unforgiveness, a hedge of hostility, I forgive you. I no longer hold a grudge against you.”

### **Sound Noble – Let’s Talk More / Nothing More to Talk About – Just Do It**

You see the apostle sounds so noble and pious, oh Lord tell us more how we can forgive, we want to learn more about this so we can do it, but listen gang, Jesus is saying there is nothing more to talk about, everything you need to do it, you have it, so just do it (catchy phrase - husbands and wives should each put these shirts on after their next fight - just do it).

### **Increase Faith – Delay the Forgiveness – More Prayer – More Bible – More Counsel / Jesus says Do IT Now**

Oh Lord increase our faith, meaning can we talk about this some more, can you give me a reason not forgive, can we delay not forgiving someone today until we have more faith, spend more time with you, go to more prayer meetings, need more bible studies (afterglow faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God) - but Jesus is saying you have all the faith you need to forgive, right now, no need to pray more, counsel more, or read more - so when the person comes who has offended you and asks for forgiveness, you give it, and mean it.

### **Children Israel against Red Sea**

I am reminded when the children of Israel had their backs against the wall, literally a wall of water there at the Red Sea, the Egyptian army was coming from the other side to destroy them, and then Moses prays to God and The Lord says what are you praying to Me for, get moving. Gang there comes a time when we don't need to pray about something, we just need to do it, and when a person asks for forgiveness, then it is to be done. We don't say I will pray about it, or let me have some time to myself, but we immediately forgive. And that is the key, we immediately forgive, we immediately seek reconciliation, for that brings immediate unity. God does not division, because division leads the door open for Satan to get a foothold and drive a wedge that will keep people separate.

*Exodus 14:13–16 (NKJV) <sup>13</sup> And Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. <sup>14</sup> The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.” <sup>15</sup> And the LORD said to Moses, “Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward. <sup>16</sup> But lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.*

### **Promise in this Word – He will do something Supernaturally**

There is a promise woven into this word that Jesus gives us, and that is that when we speak out from our lips forgiveness, He does something supernaturally, something from heaven, something from the Spirit within us, that we will be released ourselves from the pains that unforgiveness brings. When we don't forgive we keep churning the event over and over again in our mind and we relieve it over and over again. Anger boils, resentment settles, and the situation festers into a stench.

### **Proverbs – Death and Life**

The word of God says death and life are in the power of the tongue, and with your words (either forgiving or asking for forgiveness) will bring life back to that relationship.

*Proverbs 18:21 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.*

### **You are Framing Something**

Check this marvelous picture out, and that is that the Lord spoke the universe into existence, and then He spoke the earth as we see it into existence, and then He spoke man into existence..... when God spoke, he was building something, he was framing something.....and so we see that when we speak, to that person, we are framing something, we are building something, and we do so much of it with the words that we speak.

*Genesis 1:3 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup> Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.*

*Genesis 1:9 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> Then God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear”; and it was so.*

*Genesis 1:26 (NKJV) <sup>26</sup> Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”*

### **Proverbs – Death and Life**

The word of God says death and life are in the power of the tongue, and with your words (either forgiving or asking for forgiveness) will bring life back to that relationship.

*Proverbs 18:21 (NKJV)* <sup>21</sup> *Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.*

**Luke 17:7 And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come at once and sit down to eat’?**

**Luke 17:8 But will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink’?**

**Luke 17:9 Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not.**

**Luke 17:10 So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, ‘We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.’ ”**

### **The Servant – Serves**

Point of the story, the servant is simply doing what the servant is expected to do, and thus God is saying like that servant doing what he is expected to do, you forgiving others is what is expected of you. This servant comes in from the field and doesn't sit down and get served, no the servant keeps going, and now it is time to serve the master his meal. After the master eats then the servant can eat. Jesus says the aster doesn't go great job, you are awesome after the servant works all day in the field and then comes in a serves dinner – no Jesus is saying, that is what is expected of a servant..... there is no great hurrah for doing what you are supposed to do, and thus we are supposed to forgive, and we are supposed to ask for forgiveness.

### **No Glory I n Obedience**

There is no glory in “obedience” it is what is to be expected.

### **It is what is Expected**

We spent all of chapter 16 discussing how were are to be stewards of what the Lord has given us, and the Master expects the steward to manage his possessions well, and not to diminish his wealth, and if at all possible increase his wealth. God wants us to steward His most precious possession, and that is people. All that passes from this world into the next are people, and God desires that we steward His most precious possessions today, and forgiveness is part of how we do that. Unforgiveness often times leads to the master's wealth being diminished because it causes people to walk away from Him, or to stop fellowshiping with Him, or to be so hurt by “His people” that they say they don't want nothing to do with Him.

### **Take Heed to Self**

Again, we are to take heed to ourselves, and thus we are called to give forgiveness, and we are called to go ask for it. Asking is much harder than giving.

### **The Keyboard**

Yesterday I noticed something I had never noticed before. It was still dark in my office, I had my desk lamp turned in a way that it normally isn't, and because of that it shined on my keyboard in a way it never had. So from I was sitting I could see dust in my keyboard, and I noticed that even though I use that keyboard every day to type, that there were still certain keys that had dust all over them. Other keys were wiped clean, while others had mounds of dust on them. I could tell that I rarely type a word with the letter ‘q’ in it, and sadly I rarely use the “+” sign, that tells me my checking account is going in the wrong direction. There were some keys I have no idea what they even are for, thus they have the heaviest dust on them. It made me think, if certain actions of my life were keys on a keyboard, which keys would be wiped clean, and which would be loaded up with dust. What would the love key look like, what would the reaching out key look like, what would the caring key look like? There would surely be some spiritual keys that I probably don't even know what they are for. So Christian, what would you “forgiveness” key look like? Would it be wiped clean, would be loaded with dust, could you even find it on the keyboard?

### *There should be Resolution*

### **What if they Don't Ask for Forgiveness**

So the question always comes with, well what happens if they don't ask for forgiveness? Answer, the whole purpose God is seeking with these rules, is that there should be resolution. God wants closure, He wants relationships restored, He wants unity and community again.

### **Rebuke Them**

So if a person offends you, and they won't repent and ask for forgiveness, then the rules of the fight are – you go and rebuke them. Yes, that is part of the rules of the fight, you are to go to them and tell them what they did and how and why it hurt you.

*Luke 17:3 Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.*

### **Most People Won't – Ignore Matthew 18**

Most people won't do this, thus they are fighting dirty, and they are not following the rules of the fight. They fight dirty in that they won't say anything to that person, but they will go tell ten other people about it, and now the fight has now just spilled out of the ring and into the stands. Now ten other people are taking sides and drawing conclusions, and the division and the gossip is morphing into a new life. Matthew 18 clearly says go and address that person who offended you privately, one on one, and then if there is not resolution you ask for two or three to come meditate.

*Matthew 18:15–17 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup> "Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. <sup>16</sup> But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' <sup>17</sup> And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.

### **9 out of 10**

I tell you what will happen nine out of ten times if you go to that person and be upfront and honest with them and tell them they have offended you, nine times out of ten they will say I am so sorry, I had no idea I did that, I did not mean for it like that, would you please forgive me. But we don't, and thus tensions begin, and they grow and they grow, and what could have been a 9 out of 10 turns into the opposite 9 out of 10, in that the relationship gets so damaged, that there is only a 1 in 10 chance of it being restored and made whole again.

### **If you are the Offender**

If you are the offender, and if you think you may have hurt someone, then as a servant it is your expected duty to go to the person and say I am sorry, would you please forgive me. Seek unity, and seek it quickly before Satan can get a foothold.

*Matthew 5:23–26 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, <sup>24</sup> leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. <sup>25</sup> Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. <sup>26</sup> Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny.

### **My Personal Experience of Forgiving / Asking for Forgiveness**

I can remember when I realized the power of forgiving and asking for it. I remember a person who hurt me deeply, took advantage of my desire to want to help, and took a couple thousand dollars from me. But I remember the day I called and "rebuked them", I said you really hurt me by doing this, but I want you to know that I forgive you, and I also am wiping your debt out, I cannot and will not help you anymore, but I am forgiving you and releasing you from the debt you owe me (because that is what forgiveness is – it is wiping out a debt that is owed). I trusted the Lord to correct that person. But as for me, I was free, forgiveness unleashed the love of God in my life, and it released me from the root of bitterness that was consuming my heart. God protected me too, I made all my bills and still had money to go on mission trips. And, I also remember when I went to a person that I had hurt deeply, I remember when I said I am so sorry, I wronged you, I hurt you, and I want to make this right. Immediately, even the person I had hurt so deeply, our relationship was united again, and unity was established again. It was hard for me to do, because it was hard to say super-Christian was sinful and could actually be wrong – but I was, and still many times in a week, I am.

### **Goal is to Gain a Brother**

The goal in this all, forgiving and being forgiven, is to gain a brother, so you can be family again. The goal is to frame something and build something..... For the glory of God.

**How about Today**

Do you need to forgive someone today? Do you need to go ask for forgiveness today?

*Proverbs 18:21 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.*

# *An Encounter or a Conversion?*

## **Luke 17:11-19**

### **Outline of the Book of Luke:**

#### The Life of Christ – The God Man (Luke 1-24)

##### **The Prelude to Christ's Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- His Birth & Boyhood
- His Baptism & Temptation

##### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- His Mission Statement
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- His March to the Cross
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

##### **The Consummation of Christ's Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

### **Jesus on the Way to Jerusalem / To a Hill outside Palestine**

Jesus is on the way to Jerusalem, He has a mission, He has a focus, He has direction, it is to a hill in outside Jerusalem, a hill with a cross, a hill with nails, a hill with a spear, a hill where He will be mocked and rejected, humiliated and despised, a hill where He will cry out My God My God why have you forsaken Me..... Yet a hill that nothing could keep Him away from. Nothing could keep Him away from that hill because you were on His mind, you moved His heart, and Love did not drive Him on to Jerusalem, but drew Him to Jerusalem, because His Bride was there. How He loves you, How He cherishes you, and how He adores you. You are precious in His sight folks, don't forget that, rejoice and celebrate it today.

### **Familiar Passage / 9-1 / 1 Saved – the others Unsure / An Encounter or a Conversion**

In our short passage today we read of a great work of God. Ten men with leprosy will be cleansed/healed, and in this all familiar passage with read nine went on their way, and one returned, only one, to give God glory, to praise Him and thank Him for His work in his life. We know what happened to the one that came back, he was saved, but what happened to the other nine? We don't know, although they had a personal encounter with Jesus, a miracle at that, we don't know what ultimately became of their encounter with Jesus. Were they saved, did they give their heart to Jesus, did a touch by Jesus translate into their lives presently and eternally? We don't know, and I think therein lies one of the powers of these nine verses, and that is how does one know that their encounter, their profession, truly translated into salvation? I think it is an ever important question to ask, passage to study, for today many people are/have made professions for Christ, but are they truly saved? I think this passage will speak volumes on the question..... An Encounter or a Conversion?

### **Outline**

#### Outline - An Encounter or a Conversion?

- Steps to Salvation (17:11-14)
- Sure Salvation (17:15-16)
- Unsure Salvation (17:17-19)

## **Christ Cleanses Ten Lepers**

**Luke 17:11** Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

**Luke 17:12** Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off.

**Luke 17:13** And they lifted up their voices and said, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”

**Luke 17:14** So when He saw them, He said to them, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed.

**Luke 17:15** And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God,

**Luke 17:16** and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.

**Luke 17:17** So Jesus answered and said, “Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?”

**Luke 17:18** Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?”

**Luke 17:19** And He said to him, “Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well.”

### **What Translation / Hebrew & Greek**

I often get asked, and challenged, on what Bible translation is the best, or which one should get read. There is the King James Only folks, and they actually think if you are reading any other translation then you are a heretic. A few years ago I wrote an article for the local newspaper on what Easter means, and in it I was able to present the gospel, it was a total God thing. I received some emails from people, some stating how it impacted them and they committed or rededicated their life to the Lord. But of course there is always that one; and I got a letter from a person who said how dare you use the New King James version, and not the OKJV, they literally questioned my salvation because I used the NKJV. They didn't say boo about proclaiming Christ, giving a salvation message, what a great opportunity. Nope just an attack on the bible version I used. To him and to all, I say the bible translation we really should be using, the best, hands down.....is Hebrew and Greek (the original languages for the Old and New Testament- a little Aramaic too when reading the Book of Daniel and a few others). After that, I say - it is any version that you will read.

### **Has Saved You - Sozo**

My point of that matter is verse 19 reads, *has made you well*. The original Greek it reads, *has saved you*. It means to save from destruction (Greek word is “sozo”). First used (Matthew 1:21), last use (Revelation 21:24). All these men believed Jesus could cleanse them of leprosy, but only one did Jesus say “you are saved”. The man isn't saved from leprosy, he is saved from destruction. Fascinating, so let's break this passage down and see and hear all that it has to say to us today.

**Luke 17:19 (LEB)** <sup>19</sup> And he said to him, “Get up and go your way. Your faith has saved you.”

**Matthew 1:21 (NKJV)** <sup>21</sup> And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.”

**Revelation 21:24 (NKJV)** <sup>24</sup> And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it.

### **Steps to Salvation (17:11-14)**

#### **Let's look at Steps to Salvation**

First let's look at the steps to salvation, and see the beauty and sweetness of Jesus.

**Luke 17:11** Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

**Luke 17:12** Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off.

**Luke 17:13** And they lifted up their voices and said, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”

**Luke 17:14** So when He saw them, He said to them, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed.

### **Leprosy / 10 Million / Dreadful – Slow and Visible / Under – Spot – Sore - Diminish**

Verse 12 - who were lepers - Leprosy still exists today, it is not curable, it is estimated there are over 10 million people worldwide infected with leprosy. It is incurable. A terrible, dreadful disease is leprosy; it was a slow and visible death - it was more mentally painful than it was physically because leprosy would destroy the nerve endings,

leaving the person numb. Leprosy would begin below the surface of the skin and then work its way upward and outward. It would rot the skin leaving white spots (thus the word “leopard”), and in its later (full stage) it would cause extremities like fingers and toes to be eaten away to nothing.

### **Mentally Painful – Not Physically / The Walking Dead – No Hope - Futility**

Although it is numbing, thus not painful, the mental anguish was tremendous as a person would have to watch their body slowly be eaten away, live a slow death, and it was known as “the walking dead”. There was no hope, there was no future, a body and life with leprosy was hopeless and futile.

### **People Today – Why not take a Chance**

You know I say it to people (unbelievers) so many times, you feel the situation you are in is hopeless and futile, then why not take a chance on Jesus. Call out to Him, seek Him out, go to Him, and see what happens. Really, what is it that you have to lose.....what you may lose is because what you will find (Jesus!). So if that is you today, what do you have to lose?

### **List of 61 in Talmud**

In the Talmud (the Jewish commentary on the Law of God), the Jews had a list of 61 things that made a person unclean or contaminated and were forbidden from entering the general population until they were made clean, things such as touching a Gentile, or a dead body, etc. Well number 61 on the list was death, and number 60 was leprosy. So leprosy was the worst thing that could happen to a living being.

### **The Finger of God / 3 People in the OT**

Leprosy in the Jewish culture was known as the finger of death. The person was walking death, and it was because God put His finger on them and smote them for some sin or wrong doing they had done. They said although it may be secret and unknown sin, God sees and knows, and is bringing His judgment upon that person. People assumed this erroneous conclusion because in past history people such as Miriam, Gehazi, and Uzziah had been judged with leprosy (cf. Numbers 12:6–10; 2 Kings 5:25–27; 2 Chronicles 26:19 respectively).

### **However – It is a Picture of Sin**

However, leprosy then was used in the scriptures as a picture of sin, the destruction that sin causes, and the need to be touched and cleansed from sin, just like leprosy, and that only by a supernatural work of the Lord.

### **There is No Happen Chance**

*Verse 11 - Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem* – Let me tell you, there is no happen chance with God. They didn't happen upon Jesus, Jesus made sure that the happened, happened! Beloved, whether it is for salvation, or an intimate touch from an intimate God, God will always put Himself on your path, to meet with you and touch you.

### **There was Something About Jesus / 50 to 100 Paces Away / Knew Jesus wouldn't Walk Past**

*Verse 13 - And they lifted up their voices and said, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”* – There was something about Jesus, something these men had heard about Jesus, that they actually believed that they could call out to Him and that He would respond to them. They are lifting loud voices, by law they had to be 50 paces away from people who were up wind of them, and 100 paces if they were down wind, but they are calling out because they heard, knew, believed that there was something about Jesus that He wouldn't just walk by those who called out to Him. May you here today know and believe that today, that he will never walk past anyone who calls out to Him.

*Matthew 11:28–29 (NKJV)* <sup>28</sup> Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

**Luke 17:14 So when He saw them, He said to them, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed.**

### **Somewhere along the Way they were Healed / Amazing Moment**

So they went on their way to the priest, in faith, that somewhere along the way or when they got there they would be healed. I wonder how far they made it before they were healed? Can you imagine as they walked and talked, then all of a sudden they were cleansed? They would look at each other and go you won't believe it! They would look at their hands and they would be whole, reach up and their nose would be there again, fingers and toes would reappear. Hey Joe I never noticed it before but you not a bad looking dude. They could give each high-fives without worrying

of knocking each other fingers off. They could slap each other on the back and not knock an arm loose. The moment is amazing, and I can't wait to watch the video when we get to heaven. I wonder if that is what we will be doing during the 7 year Marriage Supper of the Lamb, watch videos of the OT and NT. But you know what, you would be in one of those videos, because God considers you, becoming His, one of His favorite highlight reels. **Psalm 139:17–18 (NKJV)** <sup>17</sup> How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! <sup>18</sup> If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; When I awake, I am still with You.

### **Step of Faith to Head to Priest / Already been there in Leviticus 13 – a Nightmare of a Day**

It was a tremendous step of faith to start walking to the show themselves to the High Priest; for they would have remembered the last time they stood before the High Priest. For in accordance to Leviticus 13 if someone suspected they may have leprosy they were required to God before the priest and the High Priest would examine them for a period and as prescribed in Leviticus make determination if they person truly had leprosy. And once pronounced they were banished from civilization, they could not go back to their home, their family, their jobs, they had to live outside the city, stay 50-100 paces from people, and when they came near anyone they were to cry out, unclean-unclean, leper-leper. These men would have remembered the day and moment the High Priest had pronounced them, for life ended at that moment, they became walking dead, it was a horrible moment, and now they are heading back to the same place where it all began.

**Leviticus 13:1–2 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: <sup>2</sup> "When a man has on the skin of his body a swelling, a scab, or a bright spot, and it becomes on the skin of his body like a leprous sore, then he shall be brought to Aaron the priest or to one of his sons the priests.

### **They Probably Expected Immediate Healing / Ever Wonder why You have to Go Long Way?**

I would imagine they were hoping for an immediately healing like they had heard Jesus had done before (Luke 5), but not this time, they had to turn and make the trek to Jerusalem if they had any hope of being healed. Does it seem like in your life that everyone else seems to get the shortest route, but you always seem to get the longest? Be encouraged, don't falter, God is working in you for good. Have you ever cried out to God, come totally broken and defeated and you cry out to the Lord, help me Jesus! Then He answers you, but not what you were expecting. You say help I'm hurting, I'm in financial hardship, I have a problem at work, I have a relationship issue, Lord help me – and then He says something that you were not expecting like.....rejoice, serve, forgive..... You say thanks but I was hoping for healing, I was wanting a miracle, I was expecting a fresh start. God said and did to these lepers what He does in our lives too, do step one that I called you to do, will you do it in faith? Do step one first.....by faith, because I want to do something greater than you are presently requesting.

**Luke 5:12–13 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup> And it happened when He was in a certain city, that behold, a man who was full of leprosy saw Jesus; and he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean." <sup>13</sup> Then He put out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." Immediately the leprosy left him.

### **Leviticus 14 – Present to Priest**

A leper that is healed was to present himself to the priest in accordance with the Law of Moses that was written 1,500 years ago.

**Mark 1:42–44 (NKJV)** <sup>42</sup> As soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy left him, and he was cleansed. <sup>43</sup> And He strictly warned him and sent him away at once, <sup>44</sup> and said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing those things which Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

### **Sit back and Consider / Jesus on the way to Jerusalem – Jesus sending an Entourage before Him**

Here is something we don't realize until we sit back and consider, but in accordance with the Law (Leviticus 14), a leper who was cleansed/healed/made whole was to go present himself to the High Priest in Jerusalem (which is the same High Priests that Jesus will stand before on the night that He was betrayed), and it was up to the High Priest to examine the leper and then pronounce them clean. Upon that pronouncement they were given the ok to enter back into society and live among the people. Ten lepers healed here, Jesus is on His way to Jerusalem to publically proclaim Himself the Messiah, the Savior they have waited for, God Himself taking on the sins of the world so that all men/woman for every sin would be cleansed/healed/made whole so they cannot enter into society, but the Kingdom of God..... and Jesus is sending an entourage before Him, a stream of lepers not just to Jerusalem but the High Priest to show there is something new happening here, there is a power upon the land, there is one that no one has ever seen before.

### **Imagine the 10 Lepers pouring into Temple / Who is this Man Jesus?**

Imagine as the lepers started pouring into the temple, telling the High Priest their story, saying we cried out to this Man named Jesus, we had heard that He can cleanse and heal, and when we cried, He heard, and said go show yourself to the priests. The priests would have had to been asking amongst themselves, who is this Man Jesus?

### **1500 Years of Unclean – Never Clean – Until Jesus**

In Leviticus chapter 13 it tells the priests how to determine if it is leprosy, and chapter 14 tells what to do when someone is healed, they were well aware of chapter 13 as they had diagnosed so many so many time before, but not chapter 14, because no one ever got healed of leprosy for some 1,500 years after it was written, but now when this Man name Jesus walks the land, lepers begin to get healed, and now in one day nine of them show up at the temple before the High Priest. They would have showed up too because they needed the high priest to pronounce them clean else they would not have been allowed back into society, they would have been stoned for coming back into the town (to return to their families, homes, and fields), even if they looked whole, they were known for not being whole, and they would not have had time to get the words out before they would have been stoned by the residents.

### **Priest would have Known Them from Chp 13**

These men would have shown up for their chapter 13 evaluation, they would have been known and documented, and now they show up.....cleansed!

### **High Priest**

The High Priest (Annas and Caiaphas), so now standing before the High Priests are 10 witnesses that something new is happening, something no one has ever seen before is before us, upon this land..... what does it all mean.

### **Then Presented to the Congregation**

The High Priest was then in accordance with Leviticus 14, after the whole evaluation process to confirm the person was cleansed/healed/made whole was to present them to the whole congregation of Israel publically. You can be sure that when that happened, people would say how did it happen? Tell me your story, and they would say.....there was a man named Jesus! These public proclamation of healing were becoming more and more frequent, and there would be a common theme woven in with the story.....cleansing and a Man named Jesus.

### **Could Only Mean – Isaiah 61**

It could only mean one thing, what was prophesied in Isaiah, and what Jesus proclaimed when He started His public ministry.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."*

*Isaiah 61:1–3 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; <sup>2</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, <sup>3</sup> To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."*

### **Jesus still sending and Entourage / Look what He has done in Our Lives**

The lepers are preparing the way.....Jesus was sending an entourage. And He is doing it again, He is on His way to Jerusalem again, He will return to establish His Kingdom on earth, and right now every day He is sending an entourage forward, you and me, as we show the world we once had the sentence of death, lepers, walking spiritual dead, but a Man named Jesus touched us, and has made us whole, and we are now presented to the whole world..... look what he has done in our lives. Christian, tell your story and tell it often, tell it anyone who will listen.

*Acts 1:9–11 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. <sup>10</sup> And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, <sup>11</sup> who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."*

### **Sure Salvation (17:15-16)**

### **We Know one Man is Saved / More than an Encounter – A Conversion**

So we know without a doubt that one man is saved (sozo), let's look at his story. The encounter with Jesus was more than a passing moment, a one-time event, it changed his whole life, it went from physical, it went from emotional, to a spiritual event that brought him salvation. He saw Jesus as more than a healer, a miracle worker, a great teacher, a good man.....but he came to saving knowledge; that the Messiah that he needed, was none other than the One who had just touched him.

*Luke 17:19 (LEB) <sup>19</sup> And he said to him, "Get up and go your way. Your faith has saved you."*

**Luke 17:15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, Luke 17:16 and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.**

**Luke 17:17 So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?"**

**Luke 17:18 Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?"**

**Luke 17:19 And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."**

### **Instead of Going to Priest – became a Priest and Offered Sacrifice**

Instead of going to the priest immediately (I am sure he did later because that would be obedience to the Law of Moses), but rather than going to the priest the Samaritan became a priest, and he built his altar at the feet of Jesus.

### **Romans 12:1-2**

The Samaritans sacrifice was himself, and it is what is acceptable and expected. Romans 12:

*Romans 12:1-2 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

### **Royal Priesthood**

He offered himself as the sacrifice, and was a priest at the same time. So too are we:

*1 Peter 2:9-10 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; <sup>10</sup> who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.*

### **His Encounter translated into a Conversion**

His encounter with Jesus, translated into a conversion. Jesus tells us it was so by telling us that this man's heart changed, and he was now saved, sozo, rescued from destruction.

### **When a Person sees Jesus – Never the Same**

When a person sees Jesus for who He really is, there lives will never be the same, they will be changed forever. It will change the direction they are going, the words that they speak, the thoughts they think, and the actions that they do.

### **Unsure Salvation (17:17-19)**

But how about the others?

**Luke 17:17 So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?"**

**Luke 17:18 Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?"**

**Luke 17:19 And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."**

### **Clear Indictment against other Nine**

Jesus makes a clear indictment against the other nine.....they did not give God glory. Although they were touched, they did not give God glory. But this man is acknowledged not just for his action, but for his heart, and it is clear that he had more than an encounter with Jesus, but that he had a true salvation experience, a conversion. He went from darkness to light, death to life!

### **The Other 9 – We do not Know**

As for the other nine, did they have an encounter or a conversion experience/moment? The answer is we do not know..... This passage is almost always developed and taught about being grateful to God, how we can be so unthankful for all He has done, how we need to be worshippers.....and that is all true and good stuff, but verse

19 (your faith has saved you) adds a whole another depth to this passage. The other nine did not get the pronouncement of being saved, even though they had a mighty encounter with God Himself, and they even exercised faith..... but did they have an encounter or a conversion experience/moment? The answer is we do not know.....

### **Jesus improved their Lives**

For these nine, Jesus had improved their lives, they were no longer walking dead but could go home and enjoy their family again, get a job, go over to the friend's house to watch the Super Bowl. They had fingers again so they could be part of the Tuesday night bowling league again. They had toes again so they could start exercising and get back in shape. They had ears again so they could listen to praise music. They were no longer barred from public assembly and thus could go to church again, Christmas and Easter at a minimum. Maybe they went every week, who knows. Jesus definitely improved their lives, but did they have a salvation moment, did conversion truly happen.

### **They followed Religion**

They went to the temple, they saw the High Priest, they did the religious duty, but were they saved? We do not know. I can tell you for sure that religious duty will not save.

### **Today People Meet Jesus all the Time – even Call Out to Him**

Today many people are meeting Jesus, they even call out to Him, they have an encounter with Him, but then..... we don't know. We don't know if they merely had an encounter, or actually had a salvation moment, a conversion into new life.

### **Maybe You Meet Them / Give them the Leper Test**

Maybe you work with them, meet them in your outreach ministry; they say they called out to Jesus, even went to church for a while, but have dropped back into mainstream life again..... But they will tell you that they and Jesus have a personal relationship, they will tell you they are saved because they called out to Him, and He "healed" them (because Jesus forgives all who asks). But to you, you wonder, because you see nothing else except words spoken, they are nice people, but they don't seem to be living it personally and seriously. They may even be living in a habitual sin, they may not have any care for the reading of the Bible or going to church, but they will tell you they are saved because they had an encounter with Jesus one day, and they believe He saved them from their sins. If you ever get the chance, give them the leper test (Leviticus 14), walk them through the chapter and ask them how are they doing in these areas.

### **Leviticus 13&14**

Leviticus 13-14 gives the method on how the priest was to diagnose leprosy, and then the sacrifice that was to be made if a person was cleansed and healed of the disease.

### **Tell No One / Chapter written for this Verse / 2 Sparrows – Sprinkle 7X / Never Done / Picture Jesus**

Jesus says go to the High Priest, meaning don't go home first, don't go back to the family, don't get sidetracked from what I am telling you to do, and that is go show yourself to the priests in accordance with the Law of Moses. In Leviticus 14 there is a whole chapter dedicated to what is to be done when a person is cleansed of leprosy. But that whole chapter was written for the time of Jesus, because no man had ever been cleansed of leprosy. The person healed was to go to the High Priest and present himself, and upon verification by the Priest that indeed the man was cleansed,

- they were to take two sparrows and kill one of them and pour its blood along with water into a jar,
- then they were to take the living sparrow and dip it in the blood and water (in the jar).
- The priest then sprinkled the blood 7 times upon the man that was cleansed,
- and then they would take the living bird that had just been dipped in the blood of the sacrificed bird, and then set it free into the open sky.

This ceremony had never been done in the land of Israel, for no Jew had ever been healed of leprosy (Miriam was healed of leprosy before the Law of Moses – Numbers 12, and Naaman who was healed was not a Jew – 2 Kings 5). It is a picture of Jesus being sacrificed, He is the first dove, and His blood covers us, cleanses us, and we are set free from the jar, that tomb, and we are free and we are made clean because of His sacrifice.

*Leviticus 14:1–7 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup> “This shall be the law of the leper for the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought to the priest. <sup>3</sup> And the priest shall go out of the camp, and the priest shall examine him; and indeed, if the leprosy is healed in the leper, <sup>4</sup> then the priest shall command to take for him who is to be cleansed two living and clean birds, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop. <sup>5</sup> And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water. <sup>6</sup> As for the living bird, he shall take it, the cedar wood and the scarlet and the hyssop, and dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water. <sup>7</sup> And he shall sprinkle it seven times on him who is to be cleansed from the leprosy, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose in the open field.

### **8 days Later – Temple Ceremony / Accepted back into the Nation / Jesus Go – A God who is Willing**

A week after that ceremony, all, and it says all, of the people were to come to the Temple and the High Priest was to make the declaration and introduction of the cleansed person, and present the person back to the nation, a decree made that they are clean and can come back into the camp, the family, the country. Jesus tells these men not to get side tracked telling other people about the cleansing, but get to the Temple and start this process, for the message will be sent, there is a God who touches, there is a God who is willing there is a God that is able. His name is Jesus!

### **Ear – Thumb – Foot / Hear – Did – Went / Interestingly Same as High Priest**

At the sacrifice at the Temple, the Priest would take the blood of the sacrifice and dip it on the cleansed man's

- right ear,
- then his thumb,
- and then his toe.

Then the priests took oil and touched

- the right ear,
- the right thumb,
- and the right toe.

Every ceremony had a spiritual principle behind it, and here God was saying I have cleansed all that you have heard in the world, all the rejection, all the words of hate, all the words against you, and I anoint you (oil in the scriptures is a picture and symbol of the Holy Spirit),

- The Spirit anoints us to hear God's word, to hear His words of love spoken unto us.
- Our hands and the things we had done were cleansed and forgiven, and the Holy Spirit will give us a new work that is for His glory;
- And the foot, the places we had gone and done, covered by the blood, forgive, and now God will take us places and use us in those places for His glory.

Catch this.....the other place you read of this anointing being made is when the priests were set apart for service unto God, and thus we who have been healed of the sin of leprosy have been set apart unto the priesthood for His glory. Do you see the amazing and beautiful picture here? Leprosy a picture of sin, we are cleansed from it; then anointing of God to be priests that make sacrifice to Him, with our very lives. A person who is cleansed and forgiven, it will be out of an attitude of gratitude, not something they feel forced and obligated to do. God You saved me, rescued me from hell, my heart breaks forth and worships you. And where You are I will be, and where you go I will be, and where You send me I go.

*Leviticus 14:10–18 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> “And on the eighth day he shall take two male lambs without blemish, one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish, three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering, and one log of oil. <sup>11</sup> Then the priest who makes him clean shall present the man who is to be made clean, and those things, before the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. <sup>12</sup> And the priest shall take one male lamb and offer it as a trespass offering, and the log of oil, and wave them as a wave offering before the LORD. <sup>13</sup> Then he shall kill the lamb in the place where he kills the sin offering and the burnt offering, in a holy place; for as the sin offering is the priest's, so is the trespass offering. It is most holy. <sup>14</sup> The priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering, and the priest shall put it on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. <sup>15</sup> And the priest shall take some of the log of oil, and pour it into the palm of his own left hand. <sup>16</sup> Then the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand, and shall sprinkle some of the oil with his finger seven times before the LORD. <sup>17</sup> And of the rest of the oil in his hand, the priest shall put some on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot, on the blood of the trespass offering. <sup>18</sup> The rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall put on the head of him who is to be cleansed. So the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD.

*Leviticus 8:22–24 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> And he brought the second ram, the ram of consecration. Then Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram, <sup>23</sup> and Moses killed it. Also he took some of its blood and put it on the tip of Aaron's right ear, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. <sup>24</sup> Then he brought Aaron's sons. And Moses put some of the blood on the tips of their right ears, on the thumbs of their right hands, and on the big toes of their right feet. And Moses sprinkled the blood all around on the altar.

**1 Peter 2:9–10 (NKJV)** <sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; <sup>10</sup> who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

### **The Leper Test**

So the “Leper Test” to that person who has called out to Jesus.....

### **The Leper Test - Your Ears**

Your Ears – are they listening to God, are they heeding His Words, His Commandments? Do you hear, and respond, differently than before you had your encounter with God.

**1 John 2:3–6 (NKJV)** <sup>3</sup> Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. <sup>4</sup> He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. <sup>5</sup> But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. <sup>6</sup> He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

### **Immutability of God**

People today absolutely believe that Jesus is a God of love, and that He will reject no one. For 2,000 years man has proclaimed that God never changes, that He will love and receive all who come to Him. That is called immutable (unchanging). But man wants to claim God’s immutability on His love, but not His holiness. People want to claim God is love, no rules, absolute acceptance.....but they don’t want to claim, He is holy, His standards never change, and what He called sin 2,000 years ago is still sin today.

**John 6:37 (NKJV)** <sup>37</sup> All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

**1 Peter 1:13–16 (NKJV)** <sup>13</sup> Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; <sup>14</sup> as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; <sup>15</sup> but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, <sup>16</sup> because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.”

**Malachi 3:6 (NKJV)** <sup>6</sup> “For I am the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.

**Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV)** <sup>8</sup> Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

### **Bruised Eye**

This week I awoke to see a blood vessel had burst in the white part of my eye. It happens to me about once or twice a year, not sure what exactly triggers it (coughing, heavy lifting, dry eyes), but it is a regular thing in my life. It isn’t pleasant because it brings the stares of people. I will be talking to someone and they will be like blablabla, and then look at me directly and then their eyes get real big when they see my eye, and they are like what happened? Because it really isn’t a common thing. It stands out so prominently because the whitest part of every person’s body, is the white part of the eye. And then to put bright red blood on top of the bright white eye, it is really prominent to the viewer. Blood gets everybody’s attention. Regarding God, His Holiness, our sin is a black spot on a white canvas, and it stands out prominently because to the purest and brightest white back drop. And even when the black sin is covered with the bright red blood, it stands out prominently. God cleanses and forgives us of our sin, but that still does not diminish that sin is black against the white black drop of God’s perfect holiness.

### **Leper Test – Right Thumb**

So the leper test goes the same for the thumb, the hand.....and the question because what is it that you are doing with your hands now. Are you using them to glorify God, or using them for yourself? Does the person use the hands to draw near to God, or to click away and type away, to things that are not of God.

**Matthew 5:30 (NKJV)** <sup>30</sup> And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

### **Leper Test – Right Toe**

And, where are your feet taking you?

**Proverbs 4:25–27 (NKJV)** <sup>25</sup> Let your eyes look straight ahead, And your eyelids look right before you. <sup>26</sup> Ponder the path of your feet, And let all your ways be established. <sup>27</sup> Do not turn to the right or the left; Remove your foot from evil.

### **Instead of Going to Priest – became a Priest and Offered Sacrifice**

As for the Samaritan, the one out of the ten, instead of going to the priest immediately the Samaritan became a priest, and he built his altar at the feet of Jesus.

*Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

### **God is so Good to Us**

God is so good to us, not only cleansing us from our leprous sins, but becoming our friend and our lover.....our best friend, our Lord and Savior. It is good to remember, it is great that we come to a passage like this so we can remember and be brought back, break through all the cares and distractions of this world and just say.....thank you Lord, receive my offering of praise as a sacrifice, and take my whole too.

### **Camden & Jerusalem**

The other night Camden was in my office and for the first time he took full notice of the panoramic pictures I have of Jerusalem on my wall.

- He said “daddy where is that?” - I said “that is Jerusalem”.
- He said “is it that far away?” - I said “about 6000 miles away”.
- He said “did you go there?” - I said “I did, I went there because that is where Jesus walked and spent much of His time”.
- He said “was Jesus there when you were there daddy?” - I said “noooo Jesus walked there a long time ago”.
- He said “were you just a kid then?” - I said “Jesus had died before I was there, they had already killed Him”.
- He said “daddy did you cry when Jesus died, did ya?” - I said “I did”. (and at that moment I reflected back to the first time I realized that Jesus died not just for my sins, but because of my sins)
- Then I said “but here is the good news son, Jesus left heaven and came to earth to die for our sins upon the cross, then He went into the grave, but guess what son, on the third day He rose from the dead, and He walked that land again, and then after 40 days He ascended into heaven..... and He is waiting for you and me to get there, and that is the good news”.
- Which he shook his head up and down and then went on his way to play.

### **Did ya Cry?**

Daddy did ya cry when Jesus died – did ya? What amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me, I once was lost, but now I am found, was blind but now I see. Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved. How precious did that Grace appear, the hour I first believed.

### **Sometimes I Forget**

Sometimes, often times, I forget, how great it is to come back to passages like this and remember.

*Luke 17:15–16 (NKJV) <sup>15</sup> And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, <sup>16</sup> and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.*

# Soon and Very Soon – We are Going to see the King

## Luke 17:20-37

### Outline of the Book of Luke:

The Life of Christ – The God Man (Luke 1-24)

#### **The Prelude to Christ's Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- His Birth & Boyhood
- His Baptism & Temptation

#### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- His Mission Statement
- His Calling of Disciples

#### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- His March to the Cross
- His Calling of Disciples

#### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

#### **The Consummation of Christ's Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

### **He is on the Way to Jerusalem**

Jesus is on His way to Jerusalem, to a hill outside of Jerusalem, to die for your sins and my sins.

### **Excitement is Swirling – Just healed 100 Toes / Masses – (Lovers, Spectators, and Religious)**

Jesus has just cleansed the ten lepers, the excitement is swirling, people are talking – hey did you just hear what happened, this Jesus just performed another miracle, He just healed ten lepers all at once. What? Ten, that was 100 toes, 100 fingers, ten noses, and twenty ears. People are thronging Him no doubt, this is better than cable tv, I wonder what He will do next. So masses are following Him, but the masses are mixed,

- some are in love with Him,
- some are spectators just watching the show,
- while others are religious leaders trying to figure this whole thing out.

### **One of them is You & He will Meet You / No Happen-Chance**

Maybe that is you today,

- you are in love with Him and you will follow Him anywhere,
- or maybe you are just a spectator and have yet to fully cast yourself to committing to Him,
- or maybe you a person who have been religious all your life but something has been swirling and stirring in your life as you are seeing the works and words of Jesus more than your religious upbringing and you are wondering if there is more.

I am sure Jesus will meet you today, for that is what He does, that is why He makes the journey, that is why He goes the long way, no happen-chance that you are here today, no happen-chance that He has a word for you today.

### **Let's Pray**

Let's pray and ask the Lord that we have ears to hear, and a heart to receive.

## ***Christ Teaches on the Second Coming***

**Luke 17:20** Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, “The kingdom of God does not come with observation;

**Luke 17:21** nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.”

### **The Kingdom of God – What is It? / Used 50% here in Luke**

The Kingdom of God - We have heard that phrase many times in our study of this Book of Luke, this is the 22nd time and we will read 10 more times before we finish the Book of Luke. It is used 70 times in the New Testament, so quite interesting that it is found almost 50% of the time in the Book of Luke. So what is it? Well there is all kinds of bizarre Christian doctrines of what it is, and there are all kinds of strange cults with their interpretation of what it means. Within Bible believing born-again churches the debate varies to all kinds of positions, of when is it, where is it, who’s in and whose out, you name it.

### **Summation – Kingdom is about the King**

Here is the easiest and simplest summation I can make it – the Kingdom of God, is all about the King.

### **People – Ways**

The Kingdom of God, is all about the King, and then from there it is about His people, and about His ways. Anything outside the King and His ways, are not of His kingdom, nor are the people of His kingdom.

### **They ask When – Jesus says Before You**

The religious leaders here are asking Jesus when is the kingdom of God coming, and Jesus is basically saying to them, the King is standing before you right now. The King and His ways (being preached and declared unto them) is before them, and people are now being given the clear choice whether they want to be part of His kingdom, by pledging loyalty unto His Kingship.

### **Observe – Looking for Signs / Material – Political - Physical**

Verse 20 – does not come with observation - what exactly is Jesus saying here with that statement, does not come with observation? The word translated “observation” (Luke 17:20) is used only here in the New Testament and means in classical Greek “to observe the future by signs.” It carries the idea of spying, lying in wait, and even scientific investigation. The point Jesus made was that God’s kingdom would not come with great “outward show” so that people could predict its arrival and plot its progress. The Pharisees’ question was legitimate, but it was also tragic; for Jesus had been ministering among them for some three years, and these men were still in spiritual darkness. They did not understand who Jesus was or what He was seeking to accomplish. Their views of the kingdom were political (when is God going to overthrow Roman government), material (hey the economy is a little rough right now), physical (I want to see God move upon the earth). Jesus did not deny that there would be a future earthly kingdom, but He did emphasize the importance of the spiritual kingdom that could be entered only by the new birth (John 3:1–8).

### **Entos – Among You / You looking for Signs – I am In Front of You**

The Greek word entos, translated “within,” is more correctly rendered “among.” The kingdom of God was indeed among them because Jesus is the King, and where the King is, there is the kingdom. “You’re looking for a material, political, physical kingdom,” Jesus said, “all the while missing the true kingdom: Me, who stands in your midst.”

### **I wonder how they Miss It – But this Verse all Me**

Well there are so many times I read the scriptures and am saying what in the world were these religious leaders thinking? How could you be so blind not to see that, how in the world could you miss this or miss that? But this one, yea..... could easily just be translated to read, and Jesus said unto Ray, the kingdom of God is among you. Ray I am right in front of you, I am doing mighty things right in front of your eyes, I am showing you great and marvelous things that I am doing and you are totally missing them because you are looking at the political environment (wow look at what they are proposing now), materially (Lord this economy is really tough – upon me), and physical (Lord when are we going to see revival upon our land and city, when are You going to heal the sick). All the while, Jesus is right in my midst, more than walking in my midst, living within me.

### **Testimony of Missionaries / We get Distracted**

Today we hear amazing testimonies from missionaries of what God is doing, yet we can get so distracted with the political, material, and physical that we totally miss that He is moving in our midst, that He is right before us doing great works. And..... desiring to do more great works, willing and wanting to do them in our lives personally and presently.

### **I have had Rotten Month**

I have had a rotten first month of work to kick off this New Year. There has already been close to 25% of the company laid off. They laid off 200 people right before the end of the year, and still need 100 more before the end of the month. So the quandary is the work is still there, but now those remaining have to absorb those who have been laid off. The workload and the pressure is tremendous; you look at your bills, you look at your spouse, you look at your children, and you know they are counting on you, and then all of a sudden you are constantly looking at the political, the material, and the physical..... and then you miss, you can't even see that God is right there in front of you, saying I am your answer, I am your answer for I am your King, and you are My precious child.

### **Reached Point – Nothing Left to Do but Worship**

I reached a point, that there was nothing left to do, but worship the Lord. Everything was so (and still is) so far out of my control, brinking on the edge, all I could do was say “and Lord you brought here to this point – and I know You are with me”. And you know what happened once I took my eyes off the material, the physical, and the political..... I saw Jesus in my midst again, I saw Him right in front of me. The King of the universe personally saying “you are Mine, and ..... I am yours”. My heart broke forth into praise, I just had an amazing week of an attitude of gratitude. Things in my personal life didn't get better, they even got a little worse, yet in the midst of it all I couldn't help but just worship and praise Him.

### **Haven't Worshipped like that for 6 Years**

I haven't worshipped like that in a long time, actually about 6 years to be more precise, and it was when Camden was born (5 weeks premature) and they let Renee hold him for all of about 2 minutes until they rushed him off to intensive care (ICU). We had about three days where it could have gone either way; and somewhere around day two, I saw through the material and physical, and I said Lord “no matter what..... I thank You and praise You for this gift no matter how short or how long, for I know you love me and I am yours and you are mine. And worship and thanksgiving just flowed out of me like a river. In these times, I we, become the leper again, that one leper, and our hearts cant contain anymore the love and the thanksgiving that is within us for Him.

### **Jesus says – the Kingdom of God is Me**

How easy it is for me to be looking for the kingdom of God in the political (government makes things right), material (I need help with my financials), physical (I want to see healings and revivals).....yet what Jesus wants to say to us about the kingdom of God, as He stands before us He says, “the kingdom of God is Me”.

### **I Pray we See It Now – But Day is Coming**

I pray all of us recognize the mighty God who is living before us, and glean all that we can from His presence amongst us, and we can live within it every day, and thus we have to be on guard against looking for it in the political, material, and physical. But..... Yes there is a day that He will return to this earth, but first.....He says be ready for Him to call us all home and meet Him in the air.

### **Overview of Remaining Chapter**

So Jesus said there is no specific sign of when God will establish His earthly kingdom, when He will return to rule and reign and bring to end all things not of His kingdom and His ways, but there are some things you can be looking for to know when the time is getting near.

*Matthew 24:36–37 (NKJV)* <sup>36</sup> “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. <sup>37</sup> But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

### **Signs of the Second Coming**

- As in the Days of Jesus (17:22-25)

- As in the Days of Noah (17:26-27)
- As in the Days of Lot (17:28-30)
- The Actual Coming (17:31-37)

*As in the Days of Jesus (17:22-25)*

**Luke 17:22 Then He said to the disciples, “The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it.**

**Don’t become obsessed with Prophecy**

Having answered the Pharisees, Jesus then turned to His disciples to instruct them about the coming of the kingdom. He warned them not to become so obsessed with His return that they ended up doing nothing else but trying to track Him down. This is a good warning to believers who do nothing but study prophecy. Certainly we should look for His return and long to see Him come, but at the same time, we should be busy doing His work when He comes (note Acts 1:6–11).

**Luke 17:23 And they will say to you, ‘Look here!’ or ‘Look there!’ Do not go after them or follow them.**

**Luke 17:24 For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day.**

**Groups Today**

There are many a groups today who say Jesus has already returned to earth and has set up His kingdom on earth. Jehovah Witnesses are the most predominant and influential of them all. The JW’s has worldwide membership of close to 20 million people. Of those 20 million, they say they have consistently 8 million who are out knocking on doors actively evangelizing. The JW’s teach that Jesus came and established His kingdom here on earth back in 1914 (based on some twisting and turnings of the Book of Daniel). They teach that Satan is already bound into the bottomless pit (to which I say that is a long chain and a short pit).

**Clear as Lightening**

“My coming will not be an esoteric mystery perceived by only an enlightened few,” Jesus says, “but will be as obvious as lightning in the sky—visible to everyone.”

**Luke 17:25 But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.**

**Jesus always pointing to the Cross**

Jesus is always pointing to the cross, for the cross is where everyone will see clearly. Twenty-Two is what I like to say (John 20:20). Get back to the cross, His nailed scarred hands, and we are at the heart of Christianity, and once at the heart peoples heart will either be changed or not. I am not going to argue with the cultist about Jesus living in a cave, or preaching to the Indians in America after His resurrection (Mormonism), I am going to take them to the heart (the cross), and pray the cross pierces them just as it pierced Jesus, and just as it pierced me and you.

[John 20:20 \(NKJV\)](#) <sup>20</sup> When He had said this, He showed them *His* hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

*As in the Days of Noah (17:26-27)*

**Luke 17:26 And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man:**

**Luke 17:27 They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.**

**3 Things of the Day of Noah**

During “the days of Noah,” there were three things that were going on at that time, and He said in the last days so will it be a sign that His return is near.

1. population growth was significant (Gen. 6:1),
2. lawlessness was on the increase (Gen. 6:5),
3. and the earth was given over to violence (Gen. 6:11).

[Genesis 6:1 \(NKJV\)](#) <sup>1</sup> Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them,

**Genesis 6:5 (NKJV)** <sup>5</sup> Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

**Genesis 6:11 (NKJV)** <sup>11</sup> The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.

### **Sound Like Today**

Tell me if this is not the days that we currently live in.

1. Taking the age of man living before the flood, and the rate of reproduction, it is estimate that at the time of Noah there were 6-7 billion people on the planet. Today there are 7 billion people. Lawless means unrestrained carnality (predominately regarding sex).
2. Need I say more about the unrestrained sex and perversion that is widespread and accepted throughout society. Fornication is glorified, adultery is now a “lapse in judgment”, and homosexuality is not accepted, it is being endorsed by churches as ok in God’s eyes. Did you read this week that the Boys Scout of America said they are thinking about lifting the ban on denying homosexuals as club leaders. The flood gates will be open for pedophiles all over the Country to become Cub Masters. I would recommend every parent to seek the Lord if you child is in Boy Scouts, a predator may be lurking.
3. And thirdly the earth was filled with violence. Just look at the world around us with wars, terrorism, mass shootings. In the USA there is an average of 15,000 murders per year (FBI stat).

### **Eating & Drinking**

Yet people just went on eating and drinking, doing business as usual, totally rejecting the preaching of Noah. So too will it be in the days before Jesus returns as people just go on business as usual, ignoring the preaching, the warning signs.

### *As in the Days of Lot (17:28-30)*

**Luke 17:28** Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built;

**Luke 17:29** but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.

**Luke 17:30** Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.

### **Son of Man**

*Verse 30 – Son of Man* – Deep prophetic meaning here as Jesus refers to Himself as the repeatedly as the Son of Man (Luke 5:24, 6:5, 6:22, 7:34, 9:22, 9:26, 9:44, 9:56, 9:58, 11:30, 12:8, 12:10, 12:40) which the Jews believed was a reference to the Messiah. So Jesus is making the tie in here that He is Coming back.....something they can reflect on after they kill Him, and hear of his resurrection, and remember these words.....I’m Coming Back, be ready!

**Daniel 7:13–14 (NKJV)** <sup>13</sup> “I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. <sup>14</sup> Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.

**Luke 5:24 (NKJV)** <sup>24</sup> But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—He said to the man who was paralyzed, “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.”

**Revelation 1:12–16 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup> Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, <sup>13</sup> and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. <sup>14</sup> His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; <sup>15</sup> His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; <sup>16</sup> He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.

### **Days of Lot**

In Lot’s day, the unnatural lusts of Sodom and Gomorrah were so abhorrent to God that He completely destroyed the cities. Did ya hear, it mind blowing to me is that there is talk about making James Bond (007) bisexual. The comic book industry is on the increase of bringing out gay characters. Some notably and prominent ones is the Green Lantern, and Batwoman. And let me tell you, some of them when you see the clotng they wear, and the

scenes of the comic, it is soft porn. Do you see the assault upon the kids, get them indoctrinated when they are young, and they will follow when they are old. Satan will say the same thing we say, train up a child when he is young, and when he is old he shall return.

*Genesis 19:4–5 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> Now before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both old and young, all the people from every quarter, surrounded the house. <sup>5</sup> And they called to Lot and said to him, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may know them carnally.”

### **Warning to USA**

We are told why Sodom was so lustful, and it was because they were full of pride, full of food, and too much time on their hands. Rather than taking care of their needy and poor countryman, they sought out perversion.

*Ezekiel 16:49–50 (NKJV)* <sup>49</sup> Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. <sup>50</sup> And they were haughty and committed abomination before Me; therefore I took them away as I saw fit.

### **So we can See the Signs**

So we can see the signs, although we might not know the exact moment. Based on just these short verses, I can say that Jesus is coming back today, then He is coming back tomorrow, and if He doesn't come back today, ask me tomorrow and I will tell you the same thing.

### **In a Blink**

When He does it will be in a Blink

### *The Actual Coming (17:31-37)*

**Luke 17:31 “In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back.**

**Luke 17:32 Remember Lot's wife.**

### **Tribulation Period / Don't look Back – Follow the Lord**

This passage refers to the people (most specifically) the Nation of Israel who will be going through the Tribulation. And at the mid-point the Antichrist turns against them and come to destroy them, but will whisk them away and protect them (all that will come). Jesus is saying when that day comes, don't look back, don't worry about your possessions (goods in your home) or your job (one in the field), follow where the Lord leads.

### **Lot's Wife**

The story of Lot's wife was she longing looked back at her life of ease and abundance in Sodom, and you remember the story she was turned into salt. Jesus is saying don't look back at the world, for it will paralyze you and leave you dead in your tracks, not moving forward to where the Lord is leading you.

**Luke 17:33 Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it.**

### **Let Go of this World – Put your Full Trust in Him**

Jesus then issued a critical maxim: “Whoever tries to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it” (v. 33; cf. 9:24–25). On this occasion, Jesus was putting forth the need to let go of the world's possessions, so we can put our full trust in him. The constant hedging of one's life with things—home, investments, retirements—trying to keep one's life—is a sure way to lose it. Let go of this world for you will never fully see the kingdom of God (for the kingdom of God is about the King).

**Luke 17:34 I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left.**

**Luke 17:35 Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left.**

**Luke 17:36 Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left.”**

**Luke 17:37 And they answered and said to Him, “Where, Lord?” So He said to them, “Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together.”**

### **Rapture or Tribulation**

Many debate this passage. Some say it is the rapture (sounds good to me), others say no because the context is about judgment because it is speaking of vultures picking on human flesh. Whatever it is, it doesn't matter, as the point is that God knows how to divide the line between who is His, and who is not. And we are His, and we are going to see the King, soon and very soon.

### **Jesus Christ is Going to Interrupt Human History**

Jesus is going to interrupt human history, He is saying He is going to step into this world again at a time that know one knows, and people will be marrying, working, building homes, and going on as life as usual, but He is going to step into human history again, and this time to set up His Kingdom on earth. My hope is that He will interrupt human history today..... and if not today, then tomorrow, and ask me tomorrow and I will tell you the same thing.

### **When he Comes**

When He comes, I pray He finds us worshipping and serving Him. Come Jesus Come!

*Luke 12:37-40 (NKJV)* <sup>37</sup> Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them. <sup>38</sup> And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. <sup>39</sup> But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. <sup>40</sup> Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

# Luke 18

## Men Ought Always Pray and NOT Lose 18:1-8

### *Parable of the Woman and the Judge*

**Luke 18:1** Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart,

**Luke 18:2** saying: “There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man.

**Luke 18:3** Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, ‘Get justice for me from my adversary.’

**Luke 18:4** And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, ‘Though I do not fear God nor regard man,

**Luke 18:5** yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.’ ”

**Luke 18:6** Then the Lord said, “Hear what the unjust judge said.

**Luke 18:7** And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them?

**Luke 18:8** I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?”

### **Last Study – Going to see the King / I am Ready – this Fallen World / We live in the Not-Yet**

In our last chapter we studied the “Kingdom of God”, and soon and very soon we are going to see the King, for the Kingdom of God is all about the King, and the King is living in our midst. However..... we still wait for His Second Coming, so we can see Him face-to-face, and watch Him establish His Kingdom on this earth “literally and physically”. Oh what a day that will be, for I am so ready to leave this fallen world, and live in the world that is ruled by Him, and free of the ills of a fallen world. Thus, we have this struggle don’t we, living for the kingdom, while still not living in the literal and physical kingdom. The living in the “not yet” literal and physical kingdom is no easy task is it? There is a continual tension and struggle against our flesh, and the flesh of others. Seeing God do great things (people getting saved, missionaries taking the gospel to the outer corners of the earth), yet looking over this direction or that direction (see destruction and heartbreak) we go “oh Lord how long until you return?”

### **This Book Wonderfully Designed / Just Read – Days of Noah/Lot**

This Book in our hands today is wonderfully and perfect, and not only is every word divinely inspired, every chapter and passage are put in order by divine design also. The Kingdom of God is coming soon and very soon the Lord declares (just as in the Days of Noah/Days of Lot so will it be when the Son of Man returns) that is the good news, now the bad news is that just as it was in the Days of Noah/Days of Lot so will it be when the Son of Man returns, and the Days of Noah/Days of Lot were:

- people were wicked,
- people were evil
- people were exceedingly selfish,
- people mocked the preaching of Noah,
- people cursed the believers in God,
- people pursued after every self-indulgence,
- people did not look out for the cares of others.
- people’s own desires trumped all others.

How do we endure until all things come to pass? How do we not faint and lose heart in all that we see while we wait? Verse 1:

**Luke 18:1 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart,

### **Our Study Today – Jesus call to Prayer / That is how we Endure**

In our study in Luke, Jesus has, and will, give the call to us to pray. That is how we are to endure and not lose heart in these last days as we wait for His soon appearing. Prayer is:

- Prayer is the calling down of God into the work here on earth,

- Prayer is the response of the calling of us up into the presence of God, the fellowshiping with Him at His throne soaking in all of His glory and majesty.

### **Jesus said of Prayer here in Luke**

Regarding prayer, Jesus has said to date in our study, and thus we see a continual power theme:

*Luke 6:28 (NKJV)* <sup>28</sup> *bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.*

*Luke 10:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> *Then He said to them, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.*

*Luke 11:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> *So He said to them, "When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.*

*Luke 18:1 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> *Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart,*

Jesus has a lot more to say about prayer in our studies to come, to continual reiterate the power theme:

*Luke 18:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> *"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.*

*Luke 21:36 (NKJV)* <sup>36</sup> *Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."*

*Luke 22:32 (NKJV)* <sup>32</sup> *But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren."*

*Luke 22:40 (NKJV)* <sup>40</sup> *When He came to the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation."*

*Luke 22:46 (NKJV)* <sup>46</sup> *Then He said to them, "Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation."*

### **Jesus displayed Life of Prayer in Luke**

Of course not only did He speak of prayer, He modeled it and displayed it as His power source, His link to the Father, and His lifestyle.

*Luke 3:21 (NKJV)* <sup>21</sup> *When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened.*

*Luke 5:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> *So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.*

*Luke 6:12 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> *Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.*

*Luke 9:18 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> *And it happened, as He was alone praying, that His disciples joined Him, and He asked them, saying, "Who do the crowds say that I am?"*

*Luke 9:28 (NKJV)* <sup>28</sup> *Now it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, that He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray.*

*Luke 9:29 (NKJV)* <sup>29</sup> *As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe became white and glistening.*

*Luke 11:1 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> *Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."*

*Luke 22:32 (NKJV)* <sup>32</sup> *But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren."*

*Luke 22:44 (NKJV)* <sup>44</sup> *And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.*

### **Doctrine of Kenosis**

Understand this beloved of God, and it is vitally important to grab hold of, when Jesus performed miracles on the earth, He looked to heaven to His Father, and did so by the empowering of the Holy Spirit. It is called the doctrine of Kenosis, and we find this doctrine in Philippians chapter two.

*Mark 6:41 (NKJV)* <sup>41</sup> *And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fish, He looked up to heaven, blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and the two fish He divided among them all.*

### **Why Important? / Everything Jesus did – He did through Connection to Heaven**

Why is this so important, cause it means everything Jesus did (the feeding of the 5000, walking on water, water to wine) He did not do them because of His own power, but through the power of the Holy Spirit. We can read the miracles and so what, that Jesus – He’s God. But when we know the theology of Kenosis there in Philippians 2, His miracles take on a whole new meaning. It means that everything Jesus did as a man was through His personal contact with the Father, and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. The miracles and strengths of Jesus now become examples to me. The word there in Philippians 2:7 which says “made himself of no reputation” actually means to be emptied. Jesus did not empty Himself of His deity, that would be impossible for God to stop being God, but what He emptied was the self-use of His divine power. Jesus never would use His divine power for His own needs. I can’t explain it, but even though He had the power of the universe coursing through His veins, He would not use it. Everything Jesus did, He did as directed by the Father and Empowered by the Holy Spirit. He walked closely to the Father, praying to Him daily, and believing in the Father’s directives (that would include performing miracles and not yielding to temptations).

*Philippians 2:5–11 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, <sup>7</sup> but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. <sup>9</sup> Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

### **We therefore have Same Opportunity / Power & Victory over Temptations**

I therefore have the same opportunity for empowering as Jesus did. Special things can happen through me. And any temptation that comes my way, I know that I have all the power to overcome it, just like Jesus did. God is all the willing to exercise the same power in and through me as he exercised it through Jesus.. Jesus was a man just as me, and everything He did, I can do to if I am lead and directed by the Father. These are real examples for me. I am to pray with the same type of consistency and expectancies as Jesus did. Amazing.....if you believe it.

### **Now Verse-by-Verse**

Now let us look at this verse-by-verse and hear what the Lord wants to say to us today.

### **Luke 18:1 Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart,**

#### **Lose Heart – Enkakeo / Condition of the Heart – to be Discouraged / Don’t Pray - Lose**

The words “lose heart” is one word in the original language (Greek – enkakeo) and it means to lose heart, to be discouraged, become weary. It is a reference to the condition of one’s heart. But do you know another way this could be read? Men always ought to pray and not lose. Pray so you don’t lose Jesus is saying. Don’t pray, and you will lose Jesus is saying. Have you ever considered your prayer life as such..... don’t pray and I lose, pray and I won’t lose.

#### **We Live in Days of Noah – Easy to become Discouraged / People being Devoured**

I, we, live in the Days of Noah/Lot, and these are hard times to live in. I can become so discouraged as I watch the violence upon the land, the rejection of God in the Country, and the unbridled sexualizing of our society. The greater the population, the more it is multiplied. I watch a nation turning away from the Gospel, Christians walking away from the Lord, I watch people being deceived and devoured, and we cry out to them, and it seems futile and fruitless. The more futile and the more fruitless, the more I want to say what is the use, I/we can become so discouraged, then we say I give up, I quit, what is the purpose of prayer.....and Jesus says if you do, when you do, you lose.

#### **Satan’s Number One Weapon - Discouragement**

I will tell you the number one weapon that Satan uses against the believer, believe it or not it is not lust, money, power, drugs or alcohol, ..... It is discouragement. If the devil can get you discouraged, then the other stuff will become the replacement because everybody has to go somewhere and do something. Jesus says stop praying and you will lose.

#### **Passage about Persistent Prayer / But Much More**

This passage is always the go to passage on staying persistent in prayer about that thing you want or need, and that is true, but it is so much more than that, and I think we will see that before we are through here today. Let’s be honest,

there are things we pray for that just may never be granted, and that can be so discouraging, and we will just quit, and therein lies the loss of approaching this passage merely from the “getting” point, because it is so much more than that as we will see.

### **Contrasting not Comparison**

As we study we see striking contrasts, not comparisons, as the Lord want to paint bright and vivid colors on the background on a deep black canvas, so His goodness, His care, His love, and His compassion stand out like bright stars in the night skies.

#### Outline on Persistent Prayer:

- A Widow contrasted with a Bride (18:2-4)
- A Judge contrasted with a Father (18:5-6)
- A Court contrasted with a Throne (18:7-8)

#### *A Widow contrasted with a Bride (18:2-4)*

**Luke 18:2 saying: “There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man.**

**Luke 18:3 Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, ‘Get justice for me from my adversary.’**

**Luke 18:4 And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, ‘Though I do not fear God nor regard man,**

#### **Widows were Defenseless**

Widows were among the most defenseless in Hebrew society. The Old Testament refers to their being oppressed (cf. Malachi 3:5) and taken advantage of (cf. Exodus 22:22–24). They were often legal victims (cf. Isaiah 1:17, 23), and this was the case for this poor woman. Likely she was one of those later described in Luke as victims of men who “devour widows’ houses” (20:47). The poor woman did not want vengeance—just restorative justice.

#### **Someone took Advantage of Her**

What exactly was her cause we do not know, but obviously someone had wrongly taken advantage of her defenseless situation. Maybe someone tricked her into signing over her home, or forged papers saying there was a lien on the house and she was in default. Maybe they told her that she needed a whole new break system, when only she needed a quart of fluid. Maybe they tricked her into a reverse-mortgage. Maybe someone called her from the bank and said someone has stolen her identity and it looks like they are using her credit card around the town, so give us your social security number so we can call the Federal Fraud Bureau (FFB) a brank of the FBI to stop this now. Or maybe some guys came by and said she needed a new roof, and they would give her 20% off for being a senior citizen, and they only needed 50% down so they can go buy the material. Whatever it was, someone had taken her wrongly and unjustly, and now she wants the judge to help her.

#### **First Comparison – You are the Bride**

And so the first comparison that Jesus draws here about prayer is that we are not defenseless widows, but we are His special treasures, treasures so special that He calls us His Bride. I love how the Lord not only calls us His wife, but He calls us His Bride. People can be married so long that they forgot that their spouse is their bride/groom, they can forget the joy and excitement of when they asked will you marry me, and the response was a joyous yes. They can forget their wedding day and the pounding of their heart when they first saw each other. Jesus never forgets that, and He makes sure He reiterates that to us over and over, you are My wife and My bride, I love you with the full heart and excitement of when we first married.

*Ephesians 5:25–27 (NKJV)* <sup>25</sup> *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,* <sup>26</sup> *that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,* <sup>27</sup> *that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.*

*Revelation 22:17 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> *And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.*

#### **God Loves You / The Honeymoon never Ends**

God loves you, He is deeply and passionately in love with you. And, He loves spending time with His Bride. The honeymoon is to be never ending with between us and Him. Come away He says to His bride, come away that we may walk the fields together, embrace each other, behold each other, share tender kisses..... I know you live in the Days of Noah, I know it is hard and difficult..... But come away with Me.

*Song of Solomon 2:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> *My beloved spoke, and said to me: "Rise up, my love, my fair one, And come away.*

### **Come Away – You will never Lose**

Come away with Me the Lord says, you are my precious bride, come away with Me and you will never lose.

### *A Judge contrasted with a Father (18:5-6)*

**Luke 18:5 yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.' ”**

**Luke 18:6 Then the Lord said, “Hear what the unjust judge said.**

### **How Fitting – Judge and Prayer**

By the way I can't help but see the connection of Jesus speaking about prayer in the context of a judge, as we live in a Nation that a court decided that you can't pray in school. Do you know that SAT scores went dropped every year for the first 18 years after prayer was removed from school. It isn't dropping anymore.....you can only go so low haha. They call it the first amendment (separation of Church and State) but that is a total twist on what it was intended to mean by the forefathers of the County. Separation of Church and State was not to keep the Church out of the State but the State out of the Church. It was meant the State cant dictate what denomination had to be honored, a State could not declare this is a Catholic State and everyone here must be Catholic or get out. No it was meant to mean that you had the freedom of religion and no one could dictate what you had to believe.

### **Remove Bible and 10 Commandments**

Prayer removed in 1963. With removal of prayer, meant the removal of the bible from the schools too, along with the 10 commandments being removed from the walls. Shortly thereafter (1973) was Roe vs Wade, and thus 54 million abortions later. Men ought always to pray..... else they lose.

So back to our story.....

### **Judge no Regard for God or Man / That is 2 Tables of the Law / Judge regards Neither**

This judge had no regard to God or man. Interestingly that is the two tables of the Law (10 Commandments); the first table is man's relationship/honoring with/of God (have no other gods, not make idols, not use Lord's name in vain, remember the Sabbath), and the second table is man's relationship/honoring with/of another man (honor mother and father, not to murder (respect life), not to commit adultery (respect marriage), not to steal, not to lie, and not covet. This judge respected and regarding neither God nor man, thus the only person he cared about was himself.

### **Options for Widow were Few**

So for this widow, the options for obtaining reimbursement or justice from a rogue judge like this were few—a bribe, a threat, or a pathetic plea, the latter being her only recourse.

### **She Pleads - Everywhere**

And plead she did! Every day she begged him to help her. The language leaves open the possibility of confrontation everywhere, not just in court. She pleaded with him in front of his colleagues, she confronted him on the street, she pestered him in the market, and she called out to him at his home, he turns from getting his coffee at Starbucks and there she is, she takes her lunch and eats in the waiting area of his office, he walks off the racquetball court and she hands him a towel and says we need to talk, he bends down to pick his ball out of the hole on the golf course and there is a picture of her in the cup. She makes a facebook page called “Widows who have been Wronged” and she has 10,000 friends on her page. She just would not stop, she gave this judge no rest, and verse 5!

### **Black Eye**

Verse 5 – she weary me - The literal translation of “wear me out” (“blacken my eye”) conveys even better his frustration. This was a boxing expression (cf. 1 Corinthians 9:27). Her persistence had been “punching him out,” probably in the sense of public embarrassment, giving his reputation or prominence a black eye.

### **Comparison of Judge to a Father**

Jesus is building a comparison that God is not some corrupt heartless judge, but He is our Father..... And so how much more so does He want to move and work in our lives. If this judge reluctantly responds, how much more will our Father in Heaven want to meet with us..... His Bride. Jesus is saying come, the Father wants you to come, let nothing stop you from coming..... else you will lose, you will become disheartened when you quit coming, for living in the Days of Noah will be difficult, come and talk with your Dad who cares greatly for you.

### *A Court contrasted with a Throne (18:7-8)*

**Luke 18:7 And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them?**

**Luke 18:8 I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?”**

### **Contrast of a Court vs Throne**

So we have a final contrast in our story today and that is that we do not come to a court, but a throne, we are not coming to be judged but to be received. We are called, welcomed, into His presence.....

*Hebrews 4:15–16 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup> For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

### **Throne of GRACE**

That throne is a throne of grace at that.....God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense. Every spiritual blessing is ours to be had as we come to this throne of Grace:

*Ephesians 1:3 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

### **Come In spite of Failings**

Jesus is saying that we can come, even in spite of all our failings, because it is a Husband receiving his bride, a Father receiving his child, a throne not a court.

### **Consistent Prayer**

- P- Praise
- R - Rejoice
- A - Ask
- Y - You

### **Persistent and Consistent**

Another word for persistent is consistent, as this woman was persistently consistent in seeking the judge, so too should we stay “consistent” in our prayer life. Not just once in awhile in a time of need, but like this woman, daily and several times a day at that. Here is a simple outline to think about and remember when you pray, so as to keep your prayer life balanced and lopsided (asking, asking, asking), which can bring us to discouragement and defeat when we don’t see the answers coming soon enough.

**Praise** – so come and celebrate that we are His bride, chosen and adored, loved and cherished. Give Him praise for who He is, lift you voice to Him, and you will find even in the darkest of days, the driest of times, that your heart will be lifted into the heavens and even the Days of Noah can’t make you quit.

**Rejoice** – come and remember all that He has done, His goodness and His mercy how it endures forever. Spend time just thanking Him for all that He has done, and the Days of Noah will be put in perspective. Jesus..... you are coming back soon and very soon, if not today, tomorrow. You are coming back for me !

*The devotional book Springs in the Valley tells of a man who found a barn where Satan kept his seeds ready to be sown in the human heart. He found that the seeds of discouragement were more numerous than the others and he learned that those seeds could be made to grow almost*

anywhere. But when Satan was questioned, he reluctantly admitted that there was one place in which he could never get them to thrive. "And where is that?" asked the man. Satan replied sadly, "In the heart of a grateful person."\*

**Ask** – and then ask, trusting that He knows what is best, if it is best, and when it is best. Yes I know there are times where it just seems like it is a waste of time, but don't quit. ....else you will lose.

*The NFL career rushing leader is Emmitt Smith (a professing Christian I might add). He rushed for over 18 thousand yards, his career was 13 years long, and 18 yards equals about 9.5 miles, so that was a long time to go 9.5 miles. Here is what is really amazing when you think about it..... Emmitt was knocked down over 4,000 times, but you know what he did each time he was knocked down, he got back up, he got back up enough times to break and set the NFL career rushing mark. Don't quit praying beloved, else you will lose. Men ought always to pray, and not LOSE.*

**You** - We think prayer is all about getting, and this parable is applied so often and too often about keep asking and you will get; but the prayer is not about getting stuff (although we do as the Lord thinks best), but the parable is about God calling us to keep praying through these hard days (Days of Noah/Lot) because if we do not, we will LOSE! You see, because through it all, it is you that God wants. He wants you to come so He can spend time with His bride, to love and to cherish, and comfort and to hold, through the days of Noah until He holds you heart-to-heart..... on that day.

### Conclusion

#### **Jesus ends with a Question**

Verse 8 - Will He really find faith on the earth? Jesus ends with a question. He lays out the contrast, and then He closes with a question, will you come?

#### **2 Kings 13**

I am often reminded in my prayer life personally the story of one of the kings of Israel, his name was Joash. The Syrians constantly dogged him and the nation of Israel. He went to see the prophet Elisha. The prophet said take your bow and arrow and point it towards the east, and then the prophet put his hands on the king's hand and he said shoot the arrow..... then as the fly the prophet said the arrow of the Lord's deliverance and the arrow of deliverance from Syria, for you must strike the Syrians until you have destroyed them. Then Elisha said to the king, take your remaining arrows and strike the ground, and the king struck the ground three times, and Elisha became angry with him and said if you would have struck the ground five or six times then you would have totally destroyed Syria, but now you will only strike them three times (thus meaning and not utterly destroy them).

**2 Kings 13:14–19 (NKJV)** <sup>14</sup> Elisha had become sick with the illness of which he would die. Then Joash the king of Israel came down to him, and wept over his face, and said, "O my father, my father, the chariots of Israel and their horsemen!" <sup>15</sup> And Elisha said to him, "Take a bow and some arrows." So he took himself a bow and some arrows. <sup>16</sup> Then he said to the king of Israel, "Put your hand on the bow." So he put his hand on it, and Elisha put his hands on the king's hands. <sup>17</sup> And he said, "Open the east window"; and he opened it. Then Elisha said, "Shoot"; and he shot. And he said, "The arrow of the LORD's deliverance and the arrow of deliverance from Syria; for you must strike the Syrians at Aphek till you have destroyed them." <sup>18</sup> Then he said, "Take the arrows"; so he took them. And he said to the king of Israel, "Strike the ground"; so he struck three times, and stopped. <sup>19</sup> And the man of God was angry with him, and said, "You should have struck five or six times; then you would have struck Syria till you had destroyed it! But now you will strike Syria only three times."

#### **That can be Us**

Was there something mystical in the number five or six, no? What I see is that Joash three times had no passion in it. It was like oh hum, ok tap, tap, tap. There was no passion. The king didn't bang, bang, bang, bang, bang.... He did not have the passion to destroy his enemy, to have victory, to totally destroy his enemy. I see that so often in our lives, we pray (tap, tap, tap), those things of evil in our lives, personal sins (tap, tap, tap). We look at the world around us, the Days of Noah/Lot and we go (tap, tap, tap). And God is wanting us to go bang, bang, bang.....to have a passion in our heart to utterly destroy all those things around us that are dogging us, devouring our people, diminishing and destroying our nation. Like this woman, she had passion, she was driven, she gave the judge a black eye because she was not going to stop, she was not going to lose.....and Jesus asks in this mighty parable, is that the type of prayer I will find when I return?

# Will He?

## ***How to Always Pray (Having the Right Heart & the Right Mind)***

### ***Luke 18:9-17***

#### **Last Study / 18:1**

We finished our last study with the topic of “men ought always to pray and not lose (quit, become discouraged).

*Luke 18:1 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> *Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart,*

#### **Contrasting not Comparison / Come into His Presence / Boldly Come**

As we studied we saw striking contrasts, not comparisons, as the Lord want to paint bright and vivid colors on the background on a deep black canvas, so His goodness, His care, His love, and His compassion stand out like bright stars in the night skies. That we are His Bride, and He is a Father to us, and when we come to Him we are not coming into a court to be judged, but His throne of grace, mercy, and love. God gave us the calling to come unto Him, that He wants to spend precious time with His precious Bride, because He is so in love with you.

*Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

#### Outline on Persistent Prayer:

- A Widow contrasted with a Bride (18:2-4)
- A Judge contrasted with a Father (18:5-6)
- A Court contrasted with a Throne (18:7-8)

#### **Still Same Crowd – Rolls right into Next Story / Def of Parable / Pray Always – How to Always Pray**

Well in our passage today Jesus is still talking to the same crowd and as soon as He finished speaking the last parable, He starts to tell this one. A parable is when Jesus takes a spiritual truth and casts it along aside a story, to draw out and amplify the spiritual truth He wants to convey to the hearer. So Jesus is continuing on from “men ought always to pray and not lose”, and then comes into another parable “how you ought to always pray”. In it He shows reasons how and why our prayers can fall flat. And, by the divine design right after this parable we read of parents bringing their children unto Jesus, and thus we have two beautiful illustrations of how we can have beautiful prayer time with the Lord. So men ought to always pray, and then here is how you ought to “always pray”.

#### **How to Always Pray:**

- Having the Right Heart (18:9-14)
- Having the Right Mind (18:15-17)

#### **Having the Right Heart (18:9-14)**

##### ***Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector***

**Luke 18:9** Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

**Luke 18:10** “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

**Luke 18:11** The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector.

**Luke 18:12** I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’

**Luke 18:13** And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’

**Luke 18:14** I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

#### **The Right Heart – Else we are Blocked / Contrasts – Prideful vs Humble / We live in Days of Noah**

The right heart, in all that we do, we need the right heart, else we will be blocked and kept from freely entering into the presence of the Lord..... and like this first man, we may not even realize. Like the last study Jesus is giving a broad contrast, a black and white picture, so we clearly see what He declaring to us. The contrast is clear, a prideful heart versus a humble heart. Now I know this is very clear to us sitting here right now at this moment, and we would all agree the heart of the Pharisee is so wrong, but how important for us to go through passages like this (hence the great reason to go verse-by-verse through books of the Bible) so we reexamine ourselves, and guard

ourselves from becoming prideful like this Pharisee..... because you know what, we are in the context of the Days of Noah and we can become prideful and critical as we look at the world around us.

### **Days of Noah – Easy to Say Glad I am not Like Other Men / Days of Noah – Full of Self**

We would never view ourselves as this Pharisee, but it is easy to start looking at this world we live in, and start to say to the Lord, I am glad I am not like other men.....not only the unsaved world, but those who profess Christ; wow look at what they are doing, look at the movies they watch, no I did not watch the halftime show, wow haven't seen them in church for a long time..... summer is here so they will be on their boat every Sunday, and the list goes on. It is easy for us to be exactly like this Pharisee living today, in the Days of Noah/Lot (where men would be taking in all the worlds' lust and carnality, lovers of themselves, no care for others, and even the professing believer living absolutely no different from the rest of the world.

### **And – this Tax Collector – he Still Came / How many of us Quit after we Fall / The Throne of Grace**

And there is a powerful example giving in the tax collector, in that he came, even when he saw himself in all his failings that he still came to the Temple to cry out to the Lord. How many of us, and how often of us, that when we fail or drift away, we say oh what is the use to seek the Lord, I have blown it and there is no coming back at this point, God will not receive me. Jesus makes it very clearly..... even when you fail, come..... For it is a throne of grace and mercy.

*Hebrews 4:15–16 (NKJV) <sup>15</sup> For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

So.....verse 1

**Luke 18:9 Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:**

### **This should Perk every Ear – Strong Words**

This statement alone should perk every ear up, a frightening thought that God would say to someone, anyone that you trust in yourself, you are self-righteous, and that you despise and look down on others.

**Luke 18:10 “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.**

### **The Contrast / Life of Pharisee vs Life of a Tax Collector**

What a tremendous contrast to our story as the listeners would be well acquainted with both type of men mentioned.

- *The Pharisees* were known for their dedication and devotion to God, they were the keepers of the Law of God and the Holy Word of God. They were considered to be, on the inside with God. I fast twice a week” refers to the belief of the Pharisees that Moses went up on Mt. Sinai to receive the Law on a Thursday, and returned with it on a Monday. Thus, to the Pharisees, fasting on those two days is considered to be a special mark of holiness.
- *The tax collectors* were the most hated and despised people in Israel because they were considered traitors and robbers. Rome hired tax collectors right from the town's people. They did so because a local would know who lived there and who was business man traveling through, they would know who owned what and where, and based on that knowledge they would know who and how much to tax. Well the only person who could fill that job description was a local, a Jewish person. So to the fellow Jew, they felt betrayed that a countryman would join allegiance to Rome, who was occupying the land by force. The tax collector was backed by the Roman army, so when he came to collector taxes, there behind him were a handful of soldiers with full riot gear on. The tax collector would also, over tax, so he could take some extra for himself and pay bribes to the soldiers to keep his thievery going. Thus, absolutely hated and despised, and Jesus uses this extreme contrast to draw out his spiritual truth.

**Luke 18:11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector.**

**Luke 18:12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’**

### **Had all the Religious Steps Down – But had a Heart Problem / Never Entered into Presence of God**

Verse 11 - The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself - Yes this Pharisee had all the religious steps down, but Jesus makes it clear in our story that he had a heart problem, the wrong attitude, and here is where we see his greatest failing.....verse 11 says that he prayed with himself. He wasn't praying to God, but to himself. "You see, he never entered into the presence of the Lord, and thus his prayers could only be to himself."

### **Why not Enter? – He was Critical of Others / Comparison made him Proudful**

Why did he not enter into the presence of the Lord? Because he was critical of others (glad I am not like others), and thus that comparison to others made him proudful of himself.

### **What Important to us as Christians – We are Living in Days of Noah/Lot / Easy to Look Down at Others**

Here is what is so important for us today Christian, and that is because we are living in the Days of Noah/Lot it is not hard for us to be so different from this Pharisee as we look at and compare ourselves to others. And, for us today, Christianity is under attack more than ever in this County.

- Separation of Church and State,
- no prayer in the school,
- we are no longer being asked to accept immorality,
- we are being told to embrace it, and if you don't you are considered hateful and intolerant.

More and more Christians are being looked at as trouble makers, critical, hateful, and judgmental. We only speak the words of God, we only want to reach out and love, we believe in heaven and hell and we want to rescue people, and provide refuge for them, but then we can get slapped down for it.

### **Easy to Get Hardened after so many Slap-downs / Judgmental and Critical / Glad I am not like Others**

And after so many slap-downs, we can start to get hardened, we can start to become judgmental, we can start to become critical towards the offenders, and then we can actually become what they are accusing us of being! We can become self-righteous, and we can say to ourselves, say amongst ourselves, and like this Pharisee say to God – I thank God I am not like them!

### **How to Protect from becoming? / Right Heart – Doesn't Look Outward – but Inward**

How do we protect ourselves from becoming like this as we live in the Days of Noah/Lot and are surrounded by such wickedness? Jesus tells us in the next part of the story as he speaks about the heart that doesn't look outward in comparison, but inward with recognition..... Lord I am a sinner saved by grace, thank you for your mercy, love, and forgiveness.

### **Before we Move On / Be an Encourager**

But before we head into that can I just say something for all of us to glean. Can I suggest to you and remind myself the power in raising other people up. It is so easy for us to not want to say nice things to people because we do enjoy that feeling of being "more right" (which is a spiritual way of saying we like to be elevated over others whether that is in the church, at work, or in the world) and we can have a hard time lifting them up, because if/when we do, that brings them up closer to us, and we like being a notch up. When someone at work does something good, tell them, say that was great. When someone in the church does something good, tell them, say that was great, I love hearing it or seeing what the Lord did in and through you. You know what happens when you build others up, when you make it make of your everyday lifestyle (building others up), you find yourself being less critical of others, you find yourself being more drawn to others, having a heart for them (saved and unsaved), and that in turn draws you even more so into the presence of God.

*Proverbs 18:21 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.*

### **Those Words may Just Open another Door**

Those words of encouragement, uplifting, tenderness..... may just be a door that opens up their hearts to want to have what you have.

**Luke 18:13 And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!'**

**Luke 18:14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”**

### **Definite Article – The Sinner / Chief Sinner – God’s Holiness**

*Verse 13 - God, be merciful to me a sinner!* – The grammatical structure of this sentence has “definite article” in it, meaning that he is saying, “God be merciful to me THE sinner”. He is looking upon himself as the chief of sinners, exceedingly sinful, eminently sinful, especially wicked. He did not compare himself to others, but to God, and in that light of God (and not man) he saw how far short he fell.

### **Difference General Sinner vs Specific Sinner / In me is NO Good Thing**

I think it is so easy for us to be “general sinners”, rather than “Specific sinners”. Yea, I am a sinner, I am the chief of sinners, and that sound so noble, but it is a whole different story when we look at our sin as a “Definite article”, I am a very specific sinner, I have resentment in my heart, I lied again to cover myself, I have a problem with lust, and if I am completely honest I proud and critical of heart towards others – very specific sinner. This man in the story recognizes that in him dwells no good thing as he sees himself in light of the Holy God.

*Romans 7:18 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> *For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.*

### **Be my Propitiation / Mercy Seat**

*Verse 13 - God, be merciful to me a sinner!* – The word used here for merciful means “to make propitiation”. This is a deep word, but oh how rich it is in its depth. The Hebrew word for this Greek word can be found in Ex. 25:17 and elsewhere as the equivalent for the Hebrew kapporeth, which means “covering,” and is used in the Old Testament for the lid of the ark of the covenant (Ex. 25:21; 30:6). The Ark of the Covenant was in the Holy of Holies right there in the temple where this man was praying outside of from a distance. Once a year the High Priest went into the Holy of Holies with the blood of the sacrifice and sprinkled upon the mercy seat which was the lid of the Ark of the Covenant. Inside the ark were the 10 commandments that Moses brought down from the mountain when he was before God. The 10 commandments are the Law of God and what finds every man guilty. So now here in the New Testament, the Greek word (hilasterion) came to denote not only the mercy-seat or lid of the ark, but also propitiation or reconciliation by blood. On the great Day of Atonement the high priest carried the blood of the sacrifice he offered for all the people within the veil and sprinkled with it the “mercy-seat,” and so made propitiation. This tax collector is saying Lord cover my sins, blot them out by the sprinkling of the sacrifice upon the mercy seat.....and he is saying at the same time, Lord become the sacrifice, for my sacrifice can’t cover my sins, I need you to become my sacrifice so to become my covering for my sins before the Holy God.

*Exodus 25:17 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> *You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold; two and a half cubits shall be its length and a cubit and a half its width.*

*Galatians 3:24 (NKJV)* <sup>24</sup> *Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*

*Hebrews 2:17 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> *Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.*

### **This is the Right Attitude in Prayer / All God – not our Merits**

This is the right attitude that the Lord says to have.....humbled. We come cannot come into His presence any other way, except by having the right attitude, that it is all you Lord, and nothing about my merit or earnings, for I am simply a sinner saved by grace.

### **FREEDOM / Not Our performance or Merits / Not how Many Chapters or Works / Ray what Saying?**

And what we find is pure freedom, for then we don’t feel that coming into His presence is anything about our performance. We need not stay away because we didn’t read three chapters, or totally blew our witness at work, or yelled at our spouse, or missed church, or didn’t have devotions for a week. Jesus is showing a powerful truth for us here in this story, and that is we are free to come to Him, regardless of our spiritual state and He will receive us. Ray are you saying then that people can keep on sinning, not repent, not change and Jesus is saying it is ok? Not at all, for no person who comes into His presence will ever leave His presence the same way that they came in. This tax collector wanted change, and when he dared to come into the presence of God, he did not go home the same.....he was changed, and so too will we.

*Luke 18:14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”*

### **Hey – Guess who is Listening to this Story – Matthew / Justified / You come with all Your Past & Failings**

Do you know who is listening to this story as Jesus is telling it? Matthew, the former tax collector before the Lord called him to follow Him. How many times someone threw Matthew's past up in his face, how many times people probably said you aren't saved, your past will judge you for eternity, and you will not escape God's wrath for the things you have done. Oh how Matthew must have relished in this story, how moved he was to hear the story of the lowest of low being justified (Just-if-I-never-sinned). How much closer he probably walked to Jesus when they walked to the next town after this sermon. Matthew lived in the presence of Jesus, and no person will ever be the same when the do. So come with all your junk, come with all your scars, come with all your failings – come into His presence in prayer and you will not leave there the same.

*Matthew 9:9 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him.*

### **Someone Here Today – God says Come**

Listen, someone very well could be here today listen to this sermon and God wants you to know this.....bring it to Me, whatever it is, whatever you think is unforgiveable, and leave it, humble yourself, confess yourself, and I will justify you. You don't have to stay away from Me because of what you did or failed to do, you can come.....and I will receive you.

### *Having the Right Mind (18:15-17)*

#### ***Christ Blesses the Children***

**Luke 18:15 Then they also brought infants to Him that He might touch them; but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them.**

**Luke 18:16 But Jesus called them to Him and said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.**

**Luke 18:17 Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."**

### **The Right Mind – Simply Coming as a Child**

The right mind, is coming to Jesus (whether for salvation or fellowship), we are simply to come as a child.

### **God wants to Impress His Kids / Can You Dunk**

Can I tell you something today, the Father wants to impress you. Oh not in an egotistically way, or a needing affirmation way, but simply because He wants you to know that you have the greatest Dad in the universe, and that you can trust Him to take care of you, and that He will and always is looking out for you, and that He is intimately involved in every detail of your life, and wants you to come to Him with every detail. He wants to impress you so you can say, know, trust that he is the greatest dad in the universe. Case in point, what dad in this room today loves to hear his kids say, you are the greatest dad in the world; here a t-shirt and a coffee mug to go along with it. And how the dads love to pose with their shirt and coffee mug – yep my kids gave this to me. No dad wants to hear their kids say dad you are a good dad, but Johnny's dad is totally awesome – we be like, Johnny's dad, are you kidding me. The other day me and Camden my 6 year old were shooting hoops and he said daddy can you dunk, I said can I dunk, of course I can dunk son. So he says dunk it daddy. So I say give me that ball and I start to drive to the hoop, but suddenly thinks seem to go into slow motion as I drove, as I began my ascent I noticed that only my arms and chest were going airborne, everything else was gravity stricken, it appears it takes more booster engines then I anticipated to get this belly of mine airborne. So as my hand reached the separation point I could clearly see this large orange metal ring directly dead-centered of the ball. I see not only rejection coming, but a full-force opposite acceleration of the ball directly into my face. I winched and closed my eyes and thought how am I going to explain this busted face to everyone on Sunday. But somehow the ball went in, I saved face in front of my son in more ways than one. But I think I should disclaim in my story, that I keep the hoop lowered so Camden can shoot, thus my dunking feat was only on a 7.5 foot rim.

### **Your Heavenly Father can Dunk**

But I want to tell you something, your Heavenly Father can dunk.....and He wants to impress you with His greatness, so that you will ask Him for all your needs, seek Him for all His wisdom, and come to Him simply to sit with Him and be loved and adored by Him.

### **Mark's Account – Greatly Displeased**

So back to our story more specific, in Mark's gospel this same account is recorded and it is added that Jesus was greatly displeased with His disciples for keeping the little children from Him. This is the only time in the scriptures where we find Jesus was displeased with His disciples; in fact it is emphatically that He was greatly displeased. It is a word for us as parents as to our responsibility for bringing our children to Him, it is a word to us a church to make sure we invest on our children's ministry and bring the children to Him, but another word to us today.....

*Mark 10:13–16 (NKJV) <sup>13</sup> Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them. <sup>14</sup> But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. <sup>15</sup> Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it." <sup>16</sup> And He took them up in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them.*

### **How Jesus must have Longed for the Incarnation / Back off Boys - Dangerous / God wants to Touch You**

Since the fall, since God left the Garden, how He must have longed for the incarnation so he could walk among His creation, to speak to them, to look into their eyes, and to hold the again. God wants the physical touch with a person that same as we do. We love to hold a child, we love to hold each other, and how He loves to do the same. So the disciples say prevent them from coming, Jesus is on a schedule, we got to get Him to His next gig.....and Jesus says back off boys, you are treading in dangerous waters now. For almost 4,000 years I have been missing this, holding my kids, don't rush me.

### **Touch - Intimacy**

You know that word used there that they brought the kids so that Jesus might touch them is actually a word that was used for intimacy; Jesus touched these kids lovingly and tenderly, His heart beat for them.

### **His Heart beats for You – Just come with the Mind**

And so His heart beats for you. Just come with that mind, that the Lord wants to meet with you in a loving and tender way, and no worries about merit, no worries about yesterday or last month, just come into His presence.....and you will not leave the same.

### **Men Ought Always to Pray – and now How to Always Pray:**

- Having the Right Heart (18:9-14)
- Having the Right Mind (18:15-17)

## ***Dad's Ought Always to Pray***

***Luke 18:15-27***

**Luke 18:15** Then they also brought infants to Him that He might touch them; but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them.

**Luke 18:16** But Jesus called them to Him and said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.

**Luke 18:17** Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."

**Luke 18:18** Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

**Luke 18:19** So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.

**Luke 18:20** You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother.' "

**Luke 18:21** And he said, "All these things I have kept from my youth."

**Luke 18:22** So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

**Luke 18:23** But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich.

**Luke 18:24** And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!

**Luke 18:25** For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

**Luke 18:26** And those who heard it said, "Who then can be saved?"

**Luke 18:27** But He said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God."

### **Pressing to Jerusalem / To Pay a Debt He did not Owe / 3 Nails Await Him**

Jesus is pressing to Jerusalem; He has a Kingdom transaction to take care of, as He will willingly, freely, go to a brutal Roman cross to pay for your debt and my debt. It is a debt He did not owe, and a debt we could not pay, but with you and I on His mind, nothing would stop Him from a hill outside of Jerusalem called Golgotha where a cross and three nails awaited Him.

*Hebrews 12:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

### **Before Jericho / Days away from Jerusalem**

He is somewhere before Jericho as we see Him coming near to that city in verse thirty-five; so He is only a few days away now from coming into Jerusalem, and the start of what we call "Passion Week" because of His great passion for us, and to redeem us and make us His own, free from sin and death.

### **Outline of the Book of Luke:**

The Life of Christ – The God Man (Luke 1-24)

#### **The Prelude to Christ's Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- His Birth & Boyhood
- His Baptism & Temptation

#### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- His Mission Statement
- His Calling of Disciples

#### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- His March to the Cross
- His Calling of Disciples

#### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)

- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

#### **The Consummation of Christ’s Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

#### **Keeping it Simple in Complicated World / We can Overthink - No linger Enjoying Fellowship**

Well our passage before us today is titled “Keeping it Simple in a Complicated World” as life can become so complicated, so overburdened, that all of a sudden rather than being free to enjoy fellowshiping with the Lord, we can find ourselves overthinking all the things before us in our lives, that we lose the freedom that the Lord has come to set us free to.

#### **This is NOT a “No Think Zone” / When Think it Through – Find Jesus at the End / World comes to End**

Now, let me clearly say this, I am by no means, and never will, say to you – “stop thinking”. Some pastors and Christian lay this super-spirituality out there that if you question this or question that rather than accepting it by faith, you are weak in faith. We do and are called to live by faith, but that faith does not preclude us from thinking. Today we will read of a young man who comes to Jesus asking about how to obtain eternal life, and we will see Jesus call him to follow Him by faith, but we will also see Jesus engage him in logic and reason. Jesus doesn’t just say, it is all faith son, you either have it or not. In Isaiah 1:18 God says come let us **reason** together, and that word for reason means “*to prove to be right*”. Jesus wants us to think, because when we fully think and follow all things through, we will find Him, because as we follow all the other things (the things of the world) we see that in the end, they come to an end; but when we follow Jesus all the way through:

- we come to a cross (a God of Love),
- we come to an empty tomb (a God of power),
- and we come to a Throne in Heaven (a God waiting for us – life everlasting).

*Isaiah 1:18 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> “Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the LORD, “Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.”

#### **Youth Today – the World calls them to Consider / Young Man was once a Child**

So we will look at this young man who comes with questions (who is Jesus, is He God, and how can I have eternal life), but we start with little children coming unto Jesus, because consider this, the young man who comes to Jesus with question, once was a child raised in the faith, but now questions that faith. So parents, is that, could that be our kids someday? We need hear all the Lord has to say today. But, could you here today be this young man? Where once everything was so simple, simple as a child, but now you struggle with this, you struggle with that, the more you think about God and all that He says and you look at all the world is saying at the same time, you start to wonder.....is it that simple as I once believed? I pray you hear God say, yes it is that simple, and when you think it through, you will see that it is.

#### Outline: Keeping it Simple in a Complicated World

- A Child Comes (18:15-17)
- A Man Comes (18:18-30)

#### ***Christ Blesses the Children***

**Luke 18:15 Then they also brought infants to Him that He might touch them; but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them.**

**Luke 18:16 But Jesus called them to Him and said, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.**

**Luke 18:17 Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.”**

#### **Summation of Child – Simplicity / Face Value / Expect to See Milk / Adult – Worry / Kid sees Jesus - Hi**

What is the summation of a child? Simplicity! They don’t complicate things, that don’t over-think. They accept things at face-value and the go out and play and enjoy life. They expect to open the refrigerator and see milk there,

they don't pray and beg God before they open the refrigerator door (oh God please let there be milk). They expect cereal in the cupboard too! They might pray for Lucky Charms over Corn Flakes, but they expect cereal to be there. But sadly as we get older, we complicate things, oh Jesus how am I going to survive today.....will you provide? A kid sees Jesus and they say there is Jesus I am going to go talk to Him as we tell them about Jesus. Up in the Sunday school they might ask today how old is God, but not is there a God. They might ask who created God, but not who created the universe.

### **Sadly – Many Children start that Way / Then get Complicated**

Sadly as many children start that way, something happens along the way that changes us from simple child-like faith, into complications and questions can all this be that simple.

### **Reason they Walk Away**

I have found that when a child/person walks away from the faith, you can put your finger on one (or combination) of the following seven things. I see a pattern in those who walk away, and 99% seem to have always fallen into one (or combination) of the following.

- Challenge of Scriptures
- Challenge of Science
- Challenge of Christians
- Challenge of God of the Bible
- Challenge of Hell
- Challenge of Church
- Challenge of the World

### **Dad's Ought Always Pray**

After teaching on prayer, Jesus prays blessing on the children brought to Him. The Greek pronoun translated "they" is masculine, so it was the fathers who brought their children to Jesus. Dads, it is both your privilege and responsibility to bring your kids to the Lord that they might be blessed by Him. We have looked at "Men ought always to pray and not lose (Luke 18:1-8)", then "How men ought to always pray – having the right attitude and right heart (Luke 18:9-14), well a subtitle of today's passage is "Dad's ought always to pray" (Luke 18:15-17). Dads and moms, we need to always pray for our kids, and we need to make a part of our prayers these seven things on a regular basis for these are the things that Satan will use to take your child away from the faith. We need to weave these seven things into our teaching (Homeschoolers) and our conversations with our kids.

### **Challenge of Scriptures**

A person begins to question can this book really be the Word of God. And then the world with all its so-called intellect starts to say what about this contradiction and what about that contradiction (it was Satan's first and greatest attack all the way back in the Garden – to challenge what God says). And then a person starts to say, yea what about that. Parents the best thing we can do to have our children believe the scriptures is to teach them the scriptures because faith comes by hearing. But parents also teach them, as they mature about why the scriptures are reliable (our website has a study on the reliability of the scriptures). By the way parents, more is caught than taught, so live the scriptures before your kids. And start to in your devotions and everyday travels with them reinforce why the scriptures are reliable. Tell them about Jesus perfectly fulfilling 300 prophecies of the OT (birth, lineage, crucifixion), tell them about the rebirth of Israel, tell them about the day will come and all transactions will be cashless just like it says in Revelation). Parents, homeschool teachers, teach them the validity of the Bible now, because Satan will come at some point and say, does the Bible really say that?

*Genesis 3:1 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"*

*Romans 10:17 (NKJV) <sup>17</sup> So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

### **Challenge of Science**

The higher thinkers come with the Theory of Evolution, and say see science disproves creation and proves evolution. We have a study available on our website that challenges their challenges, so please read that. But two simple points (see below). Parents teach them the facts about science. You know what, evolution was never even a thought to me until I got saved, until I said I believe this Bible and I believe Jesus died for my sins, and then shortly

thereafter I began to have major doubts that all this was true, and I studied evolution to its nth degree. Why? Because my struggle really wasn't science, my struggle was that there could be a One who could really love as God says He does, and that He would love me. He does and He is.....and His love for you is the same!

[The First Law of Thermodynamics](#) is known as the "Law of Energy Conservation". It states that energy cannot be created nor destroyed; it can only change from one form to another. Simply meaning there is no new energy being created. So where did it come from? Takes faith, a lot of faith.

[The Law of Biogenesis](#) says that life can only arise from life which is similar to itself. Evolution defies laws, and thus why it is called a theory, not a law, because laws can't be defied.

### **Challenge of Christians**

People start looking at other Christians and say, what a bunch of hypocrites; I don't want anything to do with them. Where were they when I needed help, look how they treated me, where is the love, or look at them doing things just like the unbelievers, yet they say they are saved. Parents tell your kids what Jesus said, follow Me, not My people. Tell them not to put their trust and hope in man, but cast all their trust and hope unto Jesus. But dads (moms) we can't be those Christians that our kids look at some day. We have to be living this faith out to its fullest degree, we are leaders, we are pastors of our home, we are the kings of our homes. I am studying through all the kings of Israel, and making notes about them, and my last note is always whether they were a good king or a bad king. In the end, I summarize their whole life and kingship into one sentence, were they a good king or a bad king; imagine your whole life being summarized into one sentence. Some kings are so obvious how terrible they were (like Ahab). Others you will read that they did right in the sight of the Lord, so immediately other commentaries I read say they were a good king, but they miss what is said about nearly every king of Israel, and that is that they did not tear down the high places, and allowed the people of Israel to make sacrifices and burn incense at/on the high places (which is a term for idolatry – for they were not worshipping God). What I see there as I read those commentaries is what I see all over Christianity today, and I call it the 90% Christianity. And that is a Christian living out 90% of the Word of God, but allowing that 10% "stuff" to hang around, rather than utterly destroying it. Rather than going and destroying the high places, that little 10% that fully keeps a person from being totally set apart for God, they allow it to hang around. Dads, is there 10% still hanging around your life and your home? Is there something that is just a small thing in your mind, but you know it is not of the Lord? Tear it down, destroy it, leave it not around for your sons and daughter to come and worship on themselves when they are older, and "more complicated".

[John 14:6 \(NKJV\)](#) <sup>6</sup> Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

[Jeremiah 17:5 \(NKJV\)](#) <sup>5</sup> Thus says the LORD: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man And makes flesh his strength, Whose heart departs from the LORD.

### **Challenge of God of the Bible**

How could a God of love as this Bible says He is send someone to hell, and how can He allow all this violence today, why did He say in the Bible go destroy whole nations, if He is all knowing then why did He let that happen to me or my loved one, why does He allow natural disasters, why does He allow bad things to happen to good people (like hurricanes, murder, wars, disease, etc). Charles Templeton was at one time the evangelist to the nations, greater than Billy Graham, but this he says is where he walked away, he said I can't believe there is a god, because what god would allow all this suffering on this earth. Billy Graham said that Charles Templeton's reasoning was so strong that it even caused him to have a crisis of faith. Here is the simplest reason why there is evil on this earth, and that is the wheat and the tares. Evil is because of sin (all the way back to the Garden), and thus to rid the world of evil (and make it perfect), God would have to rid the world of sin, and to rid the world God would have to rid the world of every sinner. The world wants it all, they want to sin (live in the fallen world – of no rules, just right by their own standards), but not suffer the consequences of the fallen world. It is the wheat and the tares, and God says He can't tear it out, without tearing it all out. Parents teach your kids this truth.

[Matthew 13:24–30 \(NKJV\)](#) <sup>24</sup> Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; <sup>25</sup> but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. <sup>26</sup> But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. <sup>27</sup> So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' <sup>28</sup> He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' <sup>29</sup> But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. <sup>30</sup> Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn." ' "

### **Challenge of Hell**

How could a God of love send someone to hell? We have to teach our kids the heart of the Gospel, and that is why does He get to be called a God of love in the first place? And thus we take them to the cross, and we can challenge anyone anytime – show me the part where He is not a God of Love? 20/20 vision will always be found at the cross. I have heard the comments of why people don't like my teaching, they say I need to teach more on "how to live" (how to have a better marriage, control the tongue, 7 steps to overcoming addiction, how to raise children, etc), and they say I spend too much time on the blood and the cross. I consider it a compliment really, but in any case, the degree that a person will see the holiness of God (His purity and perfection), will be the degree that they will see His love. Teach your children the holiness of God, bring them continually back to the cross, and they will see that hell is a person's choice, not God's. Take your child to the cross, not to hell, never speak of hell without the cross, never get wrapped up in Satan's strategy but turn the tables and take the challenge from the God of Hell, to the God who would leave heaven, go to hell, but have victory over hell. By the way you will be in good company, for the Apostle Paul says to the church in Corinth that he desired only to speak one thing to them Jesus Christ and Him crucified; and Billy Graham was asked if he could do it all over again what would he change, and he said I would speak more about the cross and the blood of Jesus.

*John 3:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

*John 20:20 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

*Habakkuk 1:13 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he?

*2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

*1 Corinthians 2:1–5 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. <sup>2</sup> For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. <sup>3</sup> I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. <sup>4</sup> And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, <sup>5</sup> that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

### **Challenge of Church**

Then the challenges like the challenge of the Christians, where was the church when I needed them, or church is boring, or the church just wants money. I guess I would ask you to help me not make church boring for your kids; be excited about you coming to church. Talk to them about what they learned. Get involved in the children's and youth ministry somehow (ask the Lord how). The biggest battle is with the teens, because they would rather stay up all night Saturday, or go to the mall on Wednesday's. We need to recognize the war that is on for our kids, and go toe-to-toe with Satan, the world, and their flesh. I believe it is all of our responsibilities as a church family to see to that we invest in our children's ministry at the equal proportion we do for the adult church. But as with the challenge of other Christians, we need to teach our kids that church is all about meeting with and seeing Jesus, and not all about us, and what we get out of it. Teach your kids that church is equal parts getting, and equal parts giving, and start raising them up to serve others. The church can't compete with the world in entertainment, but the world can't compete with the church when it comes to God entering and attaining a persons heart.

*Luke 6:38 (NKJV)* <sup>38</sup> Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."

### **Challenge of the World**

And I think all of the above so much is the challenge because the child is drawn to the things of the world, and are looking for a reason to enter into and eat of that thing that draws them (materialism, money, power, pride, self-indulgence). The fact is, all the above are reasons for them to go and justify the entering in to the things of the world and flesh, and thus our counter to the world is all the things we just spoke of, because we want our kids to taste of God, and then they will not have a taste for the world.

*John 3:16–21 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. <sup>18</sup> "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. <sup>19</sup> And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. <sup>20</sup> For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. <sup>21</sup> But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

*Psalms 34:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!

### **Dad's ought always to Pray / Job Did**

Dads ought always to pray, that is what Job did. Job...Knowing his kids were vulnerable to sin perhaps due to his wealth and their youth, Job sacrificed a bull on their behalf lest they forget the Lord and sin in their hearts (Job 1:5). I believe this practice is recorded in the Word as an example for you and me. I have the opportunity in the morning hour to intercede on my kids' behalf—to ask that the Lord would bless them and use them. Conversely, my failure to do so leaves them vulnerable to the attacks of the Enemy. Expend the energy, Dad. Bring your children to the Lord in prayer. It's so important.

*Job 1:5 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup> So it was, when the days of feasting had run their course, that Job would send and sanctify them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, "It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." Thus Job did regularly.*

### **Parents teach them to Think – For they will Find Jesus in the End**

Parents we don't want to shut them down when and if they challenge on any of the above, because we want them to be thinkers because if they truly think any of the above things through, all those things will show they have their own end, and when truly thought all, all those things will end at Jesus.....because none of them can end Him.

# Merely Existing or Fully Living

## Luke 18:15-30

**Luke 18:15** Then they also brought infants to Him that He might touch them; but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them.

**Luke 18:16** But Jesus called them to Him and said, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.

**Luke 18:17** Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.”

### **Picking up Part 2 / Lost Child-like / Empty – Confused / Merely Existing**

We pick up here in chapter 18 of the story of the rich young ruler asking Jesus how he can inherit eternal life, and that comes off the passage of (15-17) of coming unto Jesus as a child. So somewhere along the way, this young man (who we will see was raised in a religious household) lost the simplicity of that child-like faith, his life has become complicated, and the life he is currently living (with riches and power) leaves him empty and confused. Even with all that the world says will make you happy (youth – riches – power), is leaving him empty.....he is merely existing, and not living an abundant life, even though he has an abundance of wealth.

**How are You Living Today? Do you feel a life of purpose, fulfillment, or if you were honest with yourself – you feel as if you are merely existing?**

### Outline: Merely Existing or Fully Living

- Are you Merely Existing or Fully Living? (18:18)
- Who is Jesus to You and What is He asking of You? (18:19)
- Is there One thing that is keeping you from Fully Living? (18:19-22)
- How close will you Follow Jesus? (18:22-24)
- Do you believe All things are Possible with God? (18:24-30)

**Luke 18:18** Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

**Luke 18:19** So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.

**Luke 18:20** You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother.’ ”

**Luke 18:21** And he said, “All these things I have kept from my youth.”

**Luke 18:22** So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”

**Luke 18:23** But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich.

**Luke 18:24** And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!

**Luke 18:25** For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

**Luke 18:26** And those who heard it said, “Who then can be saved?”

**Luke 18:27** But He said, “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.”

**Luke 18:28** Then Peter said, “See, we have left all and followed You.”

**Luke 18:29** So He said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God,

**Luke 18:30** who shall not receive many times more in this present time, and in the age to come eternal life.”

### *Are you Merely Existing or Fully Living? (18:18)*

#### *Rich Young Ruler*

**Luke 18:18** Now a **certain ruler** asked Him, saying, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

### **Rich (All) – Young (Matthew) – Ruler (Luke) / Had American Dream – Knew Something was Missing**

We have Matthew's and Mark's account of this event and each gives us a little piece that the others do not. And we gather three things (he was rich, he was young, and he was a ruler). He had the American dream, but still he knew something was lacking, and although he was religious as he tried to keep all the rules, there was still something missing in his heart and he knew it, and he knew that Jesus had the answer.

**Matthew 19:16–22 (NKJV)** <sup>16</sup> Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" <sup>17</sup> So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments." <sup>18</sup> He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, "'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' <sup>19</sup> 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" <sup>20</sup> The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?" <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." <sup>22</sup> But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

**Mark 10:17–22 (NKJV)** <sup>17</sup> Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" <sup>18</sup> So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. <sup>19</sup> You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Do not defraud,' 'Honor your father and your mother.'" <sup>20</sup> And he answered and said to Him, "Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth." <sup>21</sup> Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me." <sup>22</sup> But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

### **Asking more than about Salvation / Something Missing – Merely Existing**

I think that he is asking more than eternal life in terms of once he takes his last breath here on earth; but based on the whole story I believe he is asking Jesus also on the quality of life. The word used here for life is "zoe", it means fullness of life (there are other Greek words (psyche or bios) for life that mean "breath or to live"). So this young man is not just saying how can I have eternal breath, live forever, he is asking how can I have "fullness of life"! Jesus what must I do to live a quality of life, why is it that although I have it all, I still know deep in my heart something is missing. Jesus, I feel that I am merely existing, that my life is far from being fruitful and abundant, I feel that I am merely going through the motions of life, knowing that there is more to this life that I am living.

### **You can be Saved & Merely Exist**

I want to tell you that are here today that you can be saved and still merely exist. You can trust God to be Savior, but there is one thing (maybe more) that keeps you from having all that He desires for you to have, to have that abundant life, a life with purpose, a life that goes beyond just paying the rent, a life that has meaning.

### **Two Words**

There are two words that open the way into the abundant life, beyond merely existing, and those two words are "Follow Me".

**Luke 18:22** So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, **follow Me.**"

### **Came knowing Jesus has the Answer – Doesn't like the Answer / Leaves to Merely Exist**

This man comes to Jesus knowing that Jesus has the answer, but sadly for him, and sadly today many people know Jesus has the answer, but we will see in this passage today what we see in many people today, and that is that Jesus does have the answer, but I don't like His answer, and they go away sorrowful because they are not willing to trust Him and His answer, and they go away – to merely exist, never entering into living the abundant life.

### **The Honest Question**

So for every person, the honest question to that prompting in your heart, something is missing, what am I going to do about it? For, to not live to our fullest, regardless how much youth, power, and money we have, is still to not be living, but merely existing, and thus what are we going to do about it? It all begins with, who is Jesus and what is He asking of me personally?

### *Who is Jesus to You and What is He asking of You? (18:19)*

**Luke 18:19** So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.

### **Undermines New Age Mentality**

Jesus' statement completely undermines the New Age mentality that says Jesus was a good Teacher, but not God. Jesus is either God, or He's not good. Period. Anyone who claims to be God, and is not God, is not good, but either (or both) a lunatic or a liar. A lunatic and/or a liar cannot and will not be good!

### **Cults / Jesus making Point – I am God / That is where it Begins**

The cultists use this verse as their premier verse to quote when they knock on your door. They point to it and say see even Jesus Himself is saying He is not God. No, Jesus is making the point, there is no one good but God, therefore you are calling Me God. Good start young man, for who Jesus is determines then what we do with His Words.

*John 10:30–33 (NKJV)* <sup>30</sup> I and My Father are one.” <sup>31</sup> Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. <sup>32</sup> Jesus answered them, “Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?” <sup>33</sup> The Jews answered Him, saying, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God.”

*John 1:1 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

*John 1:14 (NKJV)* <sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

### **Good Start / Every Word – One Word Short / What does He Require of Us?**

Good start young man, for who Jesus is determines then what we do with His Words. If He is God, then every word that He says for us to do, we should do, for to live “ONE WORD SHORT” of what He calls for us to do, will leave us short, it leaves us lacking of living the abundantly life He desires for all of us, to fully live!

*Micah 6:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?

*John 10:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

### **Is there One thing that is keeping you from Fully Living? (18:19-22)**

**Luke 18:20** You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother.’ ”

**Luke 18:21** And he said, “All these things I have kept from my youth.”

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Table of the Law / Addressed 1<sup>st</sup> – None Good**

Notice that Jesus only addressed the second table of the Law (man's relationship with fellow man), and that He did not address the first table of the Law (man's relationship with God). But actually Jesus did address the first table of the Law when He said to this man, “no one is good but God”.

### **I've Done All these Things**

You can hear the despair in this young man's heart as he cries out I have done all these things, I've done them my whole life, but I am still empty and I still know something is missing, I have it all yet I feel like I have nothing; I am merely existing! This man was hoping that Jesus was going to say something that he had never heard before, something that would make a light bulb go on, and snap and a twinkle he would say alright, I can do that and then this void will be gone. Jesus first addressed his mind, now Jesus goes to his heart.

**Luke 18:22** So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”

### **Jesus knows how to Put Finger on Very Thing / Giving to Poor not get you to heaven / Man Trusting \$**

Jesus knows how to put His finger on the very thing that is keeping us from Him. He says go sell all you have, because Jesus knew this man's possessions posed him. It is not that giving away everything will earn a person heaven, for it is not by works that a person enters heaven but finished work of Christ, Jesus here is putting His finger on the thing that is keeping this man from making a commitment to following Jesus. This man was trusting in his

riches over putting his trust in Jesus. Jesus has now addressed the first table of the Law, man's relationship with God.

**Ephesians 2:8-9 (NKJV)** <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast.

**Titus 3:5-7 (NKJV)** <sup>5</sup> not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup> whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

### **Finger – keeping from Living Fullness / Man Left Sorrowful – Many People Today Walk Away / In Church**

Jesus puts His finger right on the thing that was keeping this man from living in the fullness he was created for, the things that was making him merely exist. This rich young man left, he left sorrowful at that; but how many people walk away from God when He puts His finger on that thing in their lives that is keeping them from entering into His presence, keeping them from following Him. People come to church and they are loving it, and then one day God puts His finger on something in their lives and says change this, and they leave here (Him) sorrowfully because they say no way, I can't do that, I am just not ready for that.

### **Notice Jesus doesn't Chase Him – Apologize – Change Tactic / Holy Spirit will Follow Him**

Notice that Jesus doesn't go after him, notice that Jesus doesn't change tactic.....oops that upset him, let Me change my Word else I will turn him off and he won't come to Me; notice Jesus doesn't say "give me ten percent and attend Temple once a week". Jesus doesn't go after Him (but the Holy Spirit will), Jesus doesn't beg with him, and Jesus doesn't change what he needs to do.

**John 16:7-8 (NKJV)** <sup>7</sup> Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. <sup>8</sup> And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

### **Young Man left with those Last Words / Not 10 other Things – Just that 1 Thing**

This young man is now left with those last words, the very words he needed to hear because his possessions were possessing him. Jesus didn't go on to talk about ten other things, rather left him to think about that one thing.....because once that one thing was dealt with, all other things would fall into place.

### **Puts His Finger on that SPECIFIC Thing / Will do it Again Today / Then Person has to Decide**

Jesus puts His finger on that specific thing in that man's life, and He will do it specifically again and again today. He may say to one person;

- You need to quit that job
- You need to quit that hobby
- You need to sell that thing
- You need to end that relationship
- You need to quit that habit
- You need to start doing this
- You need to start going there

And then the person has to decide.....regardless what the world says is "OK", and decide, to think it through for themselves, what does Jesus say. A person needs to think it through on where will following Jesus lead me, and where will this relationship, this hobby, this possession, this job, this habit, lead me. If a person will think it through to the end, they will see that all those things will come to an end, but only Jesus endures forever.

### *How close will you Follow Jesus? (18:22-24)*

**Luke 18:22** So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

**Luke 18:23** But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich.

**Luke 18:24** And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!"

### **90% Christianity / How Close do you want to Follow?**

Last week I talked about "90% Christianity". I talked about tearing down high places. I talked about how we can have all of Jesus Christ we want, but not one drop more. Are you content at 90%? How would you feel if your

employer gave you 90% of your paycheck every week? How much of Jesus Christ do we want? Do we want to walk side-by-side with Him, or are we content to be 3 steps back, 10, or 100?

**How Close are You willing and Desiring to Follow Him?**

It will determine the difference between “merely existing” or “living abundantly”.

**But – Have to go back to that 1 Thing / Not necessarily Sin**

But, you have to go back to that 1 Thing, and decide if you are going to walk away from that 1 thing. By the way that one thing doesn't necessarily mean it is sin, riches are not sinful, unless they become a man's god/idol. That one thing, may not be sinful, just that thing that is keeping you from following Jesus in fullness.

**Mark's Account – Jesus Loved him / No Condemnation nor Judgment / Enough Love to Tell the Truth**

By the way, Mark's account said that Jesus looked upon him and loved him. The word for love is agape, which is unconditional love. Jesus loved him as he was, but that love would not force him to follow. Can I ask you, can I point out. . . . . where is the condemnation that people accuse Jesus of, where is the critical and judgmental God they accuse Him of being? His heart pleads and cries for every person. Jesus loves him enough to tell him the truth.

*Mark 10:17–22 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, “Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?” <sup>18</sup> So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. <sup>19</sup> You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘Do not defraud,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother.’” <sup>20</sup> And he answered and said to Him, “Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth.” <sup>21</sup> Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.” <sup>22</sup> But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

*2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

*Do you believe All things are Possible with God? (18:24-30)*

**Luke 18:24 And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!**

**Luke 18:25 For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”**

**Luke 18:26 And those who heard it said, “Who then can be saved?”**

**Luke 18:27 But He said, “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.”**

**Poverty-Rich Theology / Rich need a Miracle – Jesus is the Miracle / Miracle standing before Them**

In the culture they attributed riches with favor of God. They thought the rich were shoe-ins to heaven. They also attributed poverty and illness with lack of God's favor so when they hear the rich are not shoe-ins for heaven they are like then who can be saved. Jesus is making the point that rich or poor, need a miracle, and Jesus is that miracle, and the miracle is standing before all men and woman today with outstretched arms saying will you come to this miracle, I can do the impossible, I can save you from your sin that separates you from the Holy God, I can help you walk away from “that one thing”. It is all Me, think it through all the way, and you will come to the end result that nothing in this world can save you, nothing you do will save you, and you will come to the end that I am the end, I am the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end, and I can bring you into the kingdom of God. . . . . will you follow Me?

*Revelation 1:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,” says the Lord, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

*Revelation 1:11 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> saying, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,” and, “What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.”

*Revelation 21:6 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.

*Revelation 22:13 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.”

**Errant Teaching on Eye of Needle / Bad Teaching – Everyone Needs a Miracle**

Pick up some commentaries and hear some sermons and may hear it said that there in the evenings all the gates of the city were closed so no armies could charge in and take the city. And so if you came in after hours, there was a little gate called the “camel’s gate” also known as the “eye of the needle”, and to get in the business traveler would have to unpack the camel of all the stuff, and then the camel would have to get down on its knees and crawl through the gate. So then it is taught that if a person wants to salvation they have to unpack all their stuff and their sins, and then get down on their knees (humble themselves) and then they can enter into the Kingdom of God. Well that is bad teaching, because that lends itself that man can do something to be saved on his behalf and his efforts, which it is all because of Jesus.....He did all the work, He paid the penalty, it is not by our works least we boast. And.....Jesus says it right here, it is impossible for man to be saved in and of himself, but the things that are impossible with men are possible with God.

*Ephesians 2:8-9 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast.

*Titus 3:5-7 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup> whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

### **But the Balance**

But as we have seen in our story, Jesus is the miracle, but each man and woman have to choose if they want that miracle. God offers it, but leaves it up to the person to step forward and take it.

### **Christ Will Reward Sacrifice**

**Luke 18:28** Then Peter said, “See, we have left all and followed You.”

**Luke 18:29** So He said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God,

**Luke 18:30** who shall not receive many times more in this present time, and in the age to come eternal life.”

### **Wealth – Closest thing to Omnipotence / No Small Thing to walk away From**

I guess if you think about it, the closest thing for a person today being omnipotent (all powerful) is riches, wealth. Wealth buys us a certain level of control, of personal comfort, the best doctors, the best diet and health club, and influence in this world. Asking this rich young ruler to walk away from it was no small thing, nor is it today either.

### **Story is left Open**

This story is left open, we really do not know what this man later did. Did he later do all that Jesus said to do, or did he say no way, I just can’t do it. The story is left open so every man and woman can read themselves into the story and ask themselves what would I have done? Am I this man? Is there something, that one thing that you are asking me to walk away from Lord so that I may fully follow closely to you?

### **Lasting Question / The Right God**

God has one last question for you today, it is a “lasting question” do you believe that all things are possible with God. First let me say it has to be the right God (Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ), but do you believe that all things are possible with the right God? So if He is able to save you to the uttermost from your sin, can He save you from that one thing? By that I mean, exactly what He is saying in response to Peter, and that is that no one will lack, be diminished, be empty who leaves that one thing, and fully and closely follows Him.

### **He has Better for You**

Listen Christian, He has better for you.....if you will just let that “one thing” go.

# The Key (the Resurrection)

## Luke 18:31-43

### Near Jericho / Days away from Jerusalem – Start Passion Week / Because His Passion for You

Jesus is somewhere near Jericho as we see Him coming near to that city in verse thirty-five; so He is only a few days away now from coming into Jerusalem, and the start of what we call “Passion Week” because of His great passion for us, and to redeem us and make us His own, free from sin and death.

### Outline of the Book of Luke:

#### The Life of Christ – The God Man (Luke 1-24)

##### **The Prelude to Christ’s Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- His Birth & Boyhood
- His Baptism & Temptation

##### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- His Mission Statement
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- His March to the Cross
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

##### **The Consummation of Christ’s Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

### Everywhere He goes – 2 Things – Demonstrate His Love & Say Follow Me

Everywhere Jesus has gone He has done two things:

- demonstrate His heart and passion for man,
- and then say follow Me.

That is still what He does today as God is demonstrating His love and passion for every man, woman, and child, and then he says “follow Me”. I pray for each and every one of you here today that you are following Him, fully, freely, for in that you will find life, a full life, and one with purpose.

### Last Study – Rich Young Man / Walked away even more Empty / Jesus says no one will be Lacking

In our last study a rich young ruler, someone who had it all from the world’s standards came to Jesus and we saw that although he had all that the world could offer him, he was still empty, and he knew that Jesus was the answer to that emptiness, but when Jesus put His finger on that “*one thing*” that was keeping that young man from merely existing to fully living, we saw that the young man couldn’t do it, wouldn’t give it up, and he walked away all the more empty. And Jesus told us last week that no matter what you walk away from in order to be His disciple, you will be no means left lacking. That thing, those things, that a person thinks they are giving up to follow Jesus, Jesus makes it clear that those things are not fulfilling life as a person thinks they are, but they are robbing and draining a life. In 2005 the self-improvement market in the USA was 9.5 Billion dollars, and in 2010 it was 14 billion dollars, which is almost a 50% increase in just 5 years. In a recent survey 94% of the people interviewed said that they were still looking forward to something more than they had at that present moment. Everyone is looking to improve their lives, everyone wants more to this life, and everyone is feeling that there is more to this life. Jesus gives two words for an abundant life, for the ways to live a full life.....Follow Me.

*Luke 5:27 (NKJV)* <sup>27</sup> After these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, “Follow Me.”

*Luke 9:23 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

*Luke 9:59 (NKJV)* <sup>59</sup> Then He said to another, “Follow Me.” But he said, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.”

*Luke 18:22 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”

### **Last Week the Challenge – How Close will you Follow / Did you do Something – or Postpone to later Date**

So last week the challenge was given on how close you and I will be willing to follow Him, was there something, that “*one thing*”, that had to go in our lives because it is keeping us from following Him closely, if at all? Is there some sin, some distraction, some hobby, some person, some habit or addiction that is keeping us from having all of Him? What did you do with it? Did you respond, or did you say I will think about it later?

### **Today – Full-Court-Press / While Thinking about “One Thing” – Verse 31 I’m going to Jerusalem**

Well today’s passage the Holy Spirit keeps the full-court-press on our hearts, and right after Jesus says no man, woman, or child who will forsake anything to “fully and completely” Follow Me, will ever lack for doing so, but will have life more abundant.....and then and now Jesus immediately brings clarity to the whole issue..... you can talk about all your struggle to walk away from that things or those things, but while you are thinking about them, let Me (Jesus) tell you all something, verse 31 behold we are going to Jerusalem in a few days and I am going to be mocked, insulted, spit upon, beaten and scourged, and then eventually killed! By the way what was that thing you were telling me, what was that habit that was so important to you, that indulgence you said you could leave, that lifestyle that was so great to you that you could n leave it and fully follow Me? What was that again?

*Verse 31*

### **Christ Foretells His Death and Resurrection**

**Luke 18:31** Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished.

**Luke 18:32** For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon.

**Luke 18:33** They will scourge Him and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.”

**Luke 18:34** But they understood none of these things; this saying was hidden from them, and they did not know the things which were spoken.

### **Hidden – Krypto / Was Jesus hiding this from Them/ / Telling Them – Not Hand of Man – but heart of God**

The Greek word here for “hidden” is “krypto”; it can be used to mean (hidden, secret, locked, and veiled). Was Jesus trying to hide these things from them, was He trying to keep them a secret, absolutely not. Jesus is plainly and clearly telling them what is going to happen, so when it happens, they will remember he told them it would be so. Jesus is telling them so that they see that Jesus will not go to the cross by the hand of man, but the heart of God (who so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life – John 3:16).

### **Why was it Hidden / Encryption – We use it Everyday / Without Key – Information has no Meaning**

But why was it hidden, why couldn’t they understand what He was saying? Encryption, we use encryption in world every day. In our intelligence and military we use encryption so the enemy doesn’t get our secrets. Many of your emails software have encryption within them so that if the email is hacked, the hacker only gets a bunch of jumbled letters that make no sense. All our banking and credit card transactions have encryption as they are sent over the internet so if a hacker intercepts it on its way all they get is a bunch of numbers that have no meaning. The key, is the key, at the other end which unlocks all the jumbled information. Without the key, there is no meaning.

### **The Christian Key – is the Resurrection / Disciples walked 3 Years / Trial – Scourge – Nails - Cross**

The key to Christian faith, the key that unlocks, organizes, and puts into sense all this information of this Bible, this Gospel..... is the resurrection. These disciples will not understand what all this means as

- Jesus speaks it before them,

- just days away from Jerusalem (and after 3 years of walking with Him),
- they won't understand it when the mock trial happens (as they warm themselves by the fire),
- they won't understand it when the scourge Him with a whip (no mention of them anywhere),
- and they won't understand it when they drive nails through His body (they have long been scattered),
- they won't understand it when He will hang on the cross for 6 hours,
- they won't understand it when He dies and is put into the grave (as they are huddled together in fear waiting for the Romans to come get them next),
- and they won't understand all this for the three days after He goes into the tomb (as no one is camped out at the tomb but the Roman guards).

But then they will get it, all of them will get it, it will all make sense, the key will be given to them that unlocks the “krypto” and that is the resurrection. After the resurrection they will see and understand all that Jesus meant.

*Luke 24:1–8 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. <sup>2</sup> But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. <sup>3</sup> Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. <sup>4</sup> And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. <sup>5</sup> Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead? <sup>6</sup> He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, <sup>7</sup> saying, ‘The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.’” <sup>8</sup> And they remembered His words.

### **The Key to Our Life – Unlocks Confusion of Life & Word of God / Is the Resurrection**

Beloved, the key to life, the key that unlocks all the confusion of life, the key that unlocks all the Words of God and why He said what He said, is the resurrection. They had heard about the resurrection, but it wasn't until they experienced the resurrection that they got it, the keys to the “krypto”, and it all became clear!

*Philippians 3:7–11 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. <sup>8</sup> Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; <sup>10</sup> that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, <sup>11</sup> if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

### **You See – The Difference is “Dead Powerless God – Living All Powerful God / King over All - Me**

The difference is between a dead powerless God, or a living all powerful God! A dead powerless God who died for my sins my how nice. But a living all powerful God who had victory over sin and death, proving He is King over all .....and that would include me, now I have a new whole perspective of who Jesus is, and thus what is Jesus asking of me! Hugo Chavez died this week and they embalmed his body, like the body of other world leaders before him (Stalin, Lenin, Marcos, Kim Jong) and they put them in a museum for people to walk by and to say oh to have him back, oh the good ole days, I wish we could live like that again; and how so many Christians do the same looking at a dead Christ on a dead cross.....and they don't see the empty cross, the empty, the resurrection and the living Christ who is seated on the throne, living to make intercession for you today.

### **Some throw back the Keys – Give me the Dead God / Don't want what comes with Risen God**

There are many people who see the resurrection and fully understand what it means, and thus throw back the keys to the “krypto” and say no thanks, give me the dead God, because I don't want to do the things that come with the Risen God. But the person that wants life, and a life that is full and alive, takes the keys and unlocks the information, they ..... roll away the stone and live. Jesus you have the power in everything and all things, I have the keys (for You are the Key) to walk away from the fears that hound me, the depression that dogs me, the bondage that chains. If you can rise from the dead, then You can do all things in my life too!

*Ephesians 1:17–21 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, <sup>18</sup> the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, <sup>19</sup> and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power <sup>20</sup> which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup> far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

### **Are you Living the Resurrected Life?**

Christian are you living the resurrected life?

## **Christ Heals Bartimaeus**

**Luke 18:35** Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging.

### **Mark names him**

We know from Mark's account that this man was named Bartimaeus.

*Mark 10:46 (NKJV)* <sup>46</sup> Now they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging.

### **Errant Bible?**

In Matthew's account of this event he tells us that there were two blind men. Some will call that a discrepancy and I say so what. Luke chooses to focus on telling us about a blind man whom he doesn't give by name, Matthew tells there were two blind men and he doesn't give us their names, but Mark chooses to tell us about one man specifically by name. There is no discrepancy (and thus errant) in the Bible. It is just three people giving their account as they were inspired by the Holy Spirit to tell this story to that specific audience they wrote to. It is always interesting to me when I have been with the Police on something that turns out to make the newspaper; and what interests me is how the writer tells the story sometimes exactly as I saw it from being there, and other times from a whole different perspective. The main story is the same, but they go focus on another area, while I was thinking man I would have focused totally on something else. I remember a chemical spill that closed down a whole neighborhood; it was just after 911 so everyone was very sensitive to terrorism. This guy had a chlorine bottle for his swimming pool leak into the fertilizer he had for his yard and when they mixed they sent noxious fumes into the neighborhood and before you knew it there was helicopters, State Police, FBI, HAZMAT, you name it, probably 100,000 dollars of manpower for those 4 hours. So the news journalist he writes this story that makes the front page about the threat of terrorism (Living in Fear), and how the world has changed, and I am like yeah I hear ya, but I would have wrote hey homeowners don't be so stupid to put chlorine next to fertilizer in your garage (Stupid Homeowner cost County 100 Grand). So different writers and different views to reach the audience they wrote to.

*Matthew 20:29-30 (NKJV)* <sup>29</sup> Now as they went out of Jericho, a great multitude followed Him. <sup>30</sup> And behold, two blind men sitting by the road, when they heard that Jesus was passing by, cried out, saying, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!"

### **Jericho Delta**

But ought-oh, how do we get out of this one? One account says they were coming into Jericho, while another says they went out of Jericho – we have us a contradiction and thus all it takes for one contradiction and the bible cannot be inspired by God. How could Jesus be coming out of Jericho and coming into Jericho at the same time? Do you remember two studied ago when I said think it through, be thinkers, search it out until you have the answer? Well here we go here to do just that. You continually hear people saying the Bible is full of contradictions (even Bill O'Riley Fox News said that this past week). I think some people (not referring to Bill) want an excuse, any excuse, to say oh the Bible is full of contradictions so it has to be written by man, therefore I am not going to follow it; where I say they are just looking for an excuse, any excuse, to go live for themselves and their self-indulgences, and have no God to answer to (so they think). Do you know I read a story of a young man who walked away from God because of Vitamin C. Humans have a gene that should produce vitamin C, but it doesn't, whereas animals have a gene that naturally produces vitamin C in their bodies. He said it proves evolution over creation, because God should have made the human body naturally produce vitamin C. Maybe, God said I have something better, wait until you taste this orange, it is going to blow you away (or chili peppers, bell peppers, guavas, broccoli, cauliflowers, Brussels sprouts, kiwi, papayas, and strawberries just to name a few). Walked away from God over Vitamin C. Well some walk away from God over this passage because of a preposition (in / out). Too bad they just didn't think it through, because they would have found the Bible to be perfect. Did ya know there were two Jericho's recognized at that time. The OT Jericho that Joshua destroyed and said never to be rebuilt, so Israel didn't recognize the old city, but then over the valley there was a new Jericho that people were living in. So depending on the background of the writer and the audience he was writing to, he was identifying that Jesus was walking out of one of the Jericho's and into another.

*2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

*Joshua 6:20 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> So the people shouted when the priests blew the trumpets. And it happened when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat. Then the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.

*Joshua 6:26 (NKJV)* <sup>26</sup> Then Joshua charged them at that time, saying, "Cursed be the man before the LORD who rises up and builds this city Jericho; he shall lay its foundation with his firstborn, and with his youngest he shall set up its gates."

### **Too bad – because then they Miss the Rest of the Story**

Well too bad, because they get hung up on a preposition they stop reading the rest of the story where we see a passionate God, reaching out to all who are hurting, and all who will call out to them.

**Luke 18:36 And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant.**

**Luke 18:37 So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by.**

### **It is Passover / Great Time to Beg**

We can tell by the context of the future passages we are going to read in the weeks to come, that it is spring, most specifically it is Passover. Passover was one of the mandatory Feasts that the children of Israel were to celebrate. Historical writings tell us that some 2 million maybe even 3 million people would come to Jerusalem for the Passover. They would be coming from all over the region; many (hundreds of thousands) would be traveling on the same road through Jericho to Jerusalem. So this blind man is out at his spot, he knows the alms for the poor will be great this week as maybe people filled with joy will have compassion and toss a coin or two in his cup, or those who were feeling a little guilty over the past year thought maybe they could bribe God with some generosity to the poor.

### **The Streets are Buzzing / He asks What is Happening – The Energy & Pitch are Different**

The streets are filled with excitement and are a buzzing with all kinds of voices, animal hoofs, slapping sandals, bleating sheep (for the Temple sacrifice), laughing and playful children on their big adventure (and no homeschool). But this man hears something different even in all the festive sounds, the pitch is elevated, the energy is increased, there is something different of this crowd that is coming upon him, then the crowds the days and hours before. So he asks, what is it, what is happening, and someone says Jesus of Nazareth is coming.

**Luke 18:38 And he cried out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"**

**Luke 18:39 Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"**

### **The Miracle Worker Comes – Jesus of Nazareth / He Cries – Son of David / Sensitive Ears – Sensitive Heart**

The people told him that Jesus of Nazareth is passing by, but he cries out Jesus Son of David. The people identified Jesus as where He was from, Nazareth, His hometown. But this blind man, He identifies Jesus for who He was, the Son of David, the identification of the Messiah's Kingship (as the Messiah would come through the lineage of King David as promised in the Scriptures). The crowds saw an interesting man from Nazareth, the blind man "heard" the King was coming. This man's physical limitation made him more sensitive to other things. His hearing operated at maximum capacity to compensate for his lost sight, and thus although it was Passover festivities passing by him, when Jesus came his senses alerted him that something different was happening. And you know what, so too it is with our hearts. The person who is hurting, the person who has a need that only God can touch, are so more sensitive to the things of the Lord than the person who "all is well – life is good for me". I know there are people here today who are hurting, life isn't well, you are hurting inside because of a health issue, a relationship issue, a life situation, and you are hurting and asking the Lord when will you heal. Listen loved one, I know it hurts, I know it is hard, and God the more so does too.....but there is also a sweetness in this pain and hardship, and that is that you are ever the more sensitive to the God that is around you. While others (maybe even believers) are celebrating hey Jesus of Nazareth is passing by, He is so interesting, this is fun to be on the same road He is traveling; you will be saying more than that, you will be saying "the King is Coming", because you in your current limitation will be more sensitive to who it is that is before you. He loves you.

*2 Samuel 7:12 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> "When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.

*Isaiah 9:7 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

**Luke 18:40** So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him,

**Luke 18:41** saying, “What do you want Me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, that I may receive my sight.”

### **What a Scene – Party Atmosphere / Silenced in a Moment / Tense Moment – Poverty Theology**

I love the scene, how awesome this must have been; it is a festive and celebratory atmosphere as they are heading to the Passover Feast, 7 days of no work but enjoying family and friends, eating and celebrating, a time to forget work and Rome (the Roman occupation upon them). It is loud and boisterous, and then in a moment it is silent. When Jesus stopped, everyone stopped, and in a moment a holy hush has fallen upon the crowd and all eyes (and ears) are upon Jesus and Bartimaeus. And then Jesus says ‘what do you want Me to do for you’. This would be a tense moment because as we have said many times before, in their theology of that day as they were taught by the rabbis, Bartimaeus was blind because of his personal sin, for his disobedience to God, and thus God displeasure with him. So the crowd is waiting to see, what will Jesus do? Will Jesus lay him out, give his sensitive ears an ear full?

### **Bring Him to Me / Hearing his Heart Pound**

In Mark’s account we are told that Jesus calls Bart to come to Him. I imagine Bart must have thought his heart was outside his body, with every step it would beat louder and louder, as he himself must have wondered what would Jesus do.

*Mark 10:49–51 (NKJV) <sup>49</sup> So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called. Then they called the blind man, saying to him, “Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you.” <sup>50</sup> And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus. <sup>51</sup> So Jesus answered and said to him, “What do you want Me to do for you?” The blind man said to Him, “Rabboni, that I may receive my sight.”*

### **God wants you to Ask / Will meet with You even in Sea of People**

Beloved do you know that God wants you to ask Him, because he wants to meet with you personally and intimately, even in the midst of a crowd, even right here in the midst of this church, you can be in a sea of people, yet God will meet with you individually and personally and intimately. He loves you.

### **Don’t let the Crowd Keep You**

And I want you young and new believers, even seasoned believers, to take the illustration of Bartimaeus and do not let anything stop you from getting to Jesus. Notice the crowd was saying be quiet, settle down, you are being too loud about this Jesus, you are messing up our celebration time, just be quiet. And so will people around you today, they will be saying be quiet, settle down about this Jesus stuff. They will say what do you mean you are going to church again, didn’t you just go last week, hey I thought Easter was still a month away. And, religion was and had already judged this man, but he didn’t let religion (which said God doesn’t want you) to stop him from crying out to God. There are lots of people, religious people, who will say your sin is wicked, and you are kidding yourself if you think God would receive you after all you have done. Don’t listen to them, look at Bartimaeus and cry out to Him even the louder to Him when they say that too, or.....you say that to yourself.

### **Someone Told Bartimaeus about Jesus / Not a Dead God – But Resurrected God**

And, for all of us, someone had told Bartimaeus about Jesus. He heard Jesus could heal, that Jesus was stopping and touching the blind, the lepers, and the lame. Whoever told Bartimaeus, must have told him with a passion in their heart, that Bartimaeus believed it, and when he and Jesus crossed paths, Bartimaeus was ready. So Christian go tell it to the world, Jesus Christ has come, and He is coming to them, and tell them like you believe it, tell them not about a dead God, but a resurrected God who has changed your life through the resurrection power.

**Luke 18:42** Then Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight; your faith has made you well.”

**Luke 18:43** And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

### **The Religious Parade – Life passed him By / Jesus stopped and Bartimaeus Lived Again**

The religious parade was passing Bartimaeus by, life was passing Bartimaeus by, but when Jesus stopped, Bartimaeus began to live again. His life was resurrected.

### **Contrast Rich Young Ruler and Bartimaeus**

Bartimaeus follows Jesus, but no record that the rich young man did. So we see the blind could see, and the rich was blinded. I see an amazing contrast here between Bartimaeus and the rich young ruler, and that is the rich young

ruler couldn't part with anything he had, but Bartimaeus left all that he had when Jesus called. Mark's account says that when Jesus said come here, Bartimaeus threw his garment aside and came to Jesus. Doesn't sound like much to us, but to a blind beggar, Bartimaeus was leaving the only possession he had (that garment was his raincoat, his sleeping bag, maybe even his home). He was blind, he was in a sea of people, how would he find that garment again, what if someone picked it up and walk away with it; but to Bartimaeus that garment was just something that was going to slow him down from getting to Jesus, and he wanted to let anything stop him from getting to Jesus. You would do well today to do the same.

*Mark 10:49–51 (NKJV)* <sup>49</sup> So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called. Then they called the blind man, saying to him, "Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you." <sup>50</sup> And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus. <sup>51</sup> So Jesus answered and said to him, "What do you want Me to do for you?" The blind man said to Him, "Rabboni, that I may receive my sight."

## **2 Words – Followed Him**

And then there are those two words, the two words that differentiate between merely existing or fully living, "Follow Him". Bartimaeus throws it all aside and follows Jesus.

### **My what he Saw**

Imagine after all this time of being blind that he finally sees. The first thing he sees is Jesus! The face of Jesus, His eyes, those eyes that looked upon him with love, acceptance, and compassion. And then he follows Jesus, and where is Jesus going but to Jerusalem. Imagine his eyes as he sees the city of gold (wow), all the people come to celebrate (awesome), then to see the Temple (spectacular). My what these eyes are seeing, he probably didn't sleep for days; picking up an apple, so this is what it looks like. Looking into the face of the child. Watching the sun rise and the set, the full moon (it is spring now), the stars in the sky. Oh my what these eyes are seeing. But then, what is this, are my eyes betraying me.....is that Jesus I see coming my way on this Via Delarosa, is that a cross on His back. I can hardly recognize Him he has been beaten so badly. I can tell they pulled His beard out, and oh my what did they use on His back, it looks shredded. Why are they spitting on Him, why are they mocking Him, He has done nothing to deserve this, stop that He is a good man, He has done nothing, He has hurt no one, but only loves. My what these eyes are seeing. And then the nails, and then I can't watch anymore.

### **But Then**

Jesus none of this makes sense, I'd rather be blind again then see the King, my King, slaughtered on the cross.....But then, oh I don't know if Bartimaeus was one of the 500 that saw Jesus after the resurrection (1 Cor 15:6), but then on that Resurrection Sunday, it all made sense when the word would come to Bartimaeus – He is Alive! The Tomb is Empty.....you can go "SEE" it for yourself, He is not there!

### **So Too Can We**

And so too can we as we look at and see the emptiness, depravity, and hopelessness of this world, but once we look at the empty tomb, the "encryption" is broken, we now have the keys to live life, and that more abundantly.

*John 10:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

# Luke 19

## ***The Story of Zacchaeus – It's Your Story Too*** ***(Luke 19:1-10)***

### **Near Jericho / Days away from Jerusalem – Start Passion Week / Because His Passion for You**

Jesus is near Jericho (about 15 miles from Jerusalem) as we see Him coming into the city in verse one; so He is only a few days away now from coming into Jerusalem, and the start of what we call “Passion Week” because of His great passion for us, and to redeem us and make us His own, free from sin and death.

### **Outline of the Book of Luke:**

The Life of Christ – The God Man (Luke 1-24)

#### **The Prelude to Christ's Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- His Birth & Boyhood
- His Baptism & Temptation

#### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- His Mission Statement
- His Calling of Disciples

#### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- His March to the Cross
- His Calling of Disciples

#### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

#### **The Consummation of Christ's Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

### **Everywhere He goes – 2 Things – Demonstrate His Love & Say Follow Me**

Everywhere Jesus has gone He has done two things:

- demonstrate His heart and passion for man,
- and then say follow Me.

That is still what He does today as God is demonstrating His love and passion for every man, woman, and child, and then he says “follow Me”. I pray for each and every one of you here today that you are following Him, fully, freely, for in that you will find life, a full life, and one with purpose.

### **Today**

Today we read the story of Zacchaeus, who was the chief tax collector, his name means “pure” but his life as a tax collector was anything but; but.....he wanted to see Jesus and as much so, Jesus wanted to see Him. Jesus wanted to see him, and Jesus is going to perform a miracle right here again in Jericho, but this miracle is a little different from giving sight to the blind (Bartimaues – last study), but in this miracle Jesus is going to pass a camel through the eye of a needle, as we see a rich man get saved.

*Luke 18:24–27 (NKJV)*<sup>24</sup> And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!”<sup>25</sup> For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”<sup>26</sup> And those who heard it said, “Who then can be saved?”<sup>27</sup> But He said, “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.”

## ***Christ Abides with Zacchaeus***

**Luke 19:1** Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho.

**Luke 19:2** Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich.

**Luke 19:3** And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature.

**Luke 19:4** So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way.

**Luke 19:5** And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, “Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.”

**Luke 19:6** So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully.

**Luke 19:7** But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, “He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner.”

**Luke 19:8** Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold.”

**Luke 19:9** And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham;

**Luke 19:10** for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

### *Verse-by-Verse*

**Luke 19:1** Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho.

#### **Jericho – Beverly Hills**

Jericho is said by many historians to be the oldest city in the world; and good reason why it would be. Jericho was one of the most beautiful areas and cities in Israel at this time. Numerous springs in and around the city attracted human habitation for thousands of years. It is situated with a natural valley in it, surrounded by hills and mountains, thus creating a natural greenhouse (if you will) that keeps the tropical warmth and moisture in the valley. It makes for very fertile ground, so fertile was the land it was also called the “City of Palm Trees” because of its many palm trees. So beautiful and warm it was that Jericho was the winter capital (palace) for Herod the Great (King of Israel appointed by Roman Government at time of Jesus). Economically, Jericho was one of the 5 major trade routes of the day, and thus lots of travelers passing through it created much opportunity for various enterprises, which thus caused quite the economic boom for the area. Jericho was a beautiful and wealthy area; we could liken it to our Beverly Hills. So imagine Rodeo Drive, palm trees, Rolls Royce’s, and lots of rich people. With all the rich people would be rich and fabulous mansions too, even 2,000 years ago. But of course, every rich area has it down and out people (Blind Bartimaues lived there). So this is the scene of where Jesus is passing through.

*Deuteronomy 34:3 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> the South, and the plain of the Valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar.

**Luke 19:2** Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich.

#### **Tax Collector**

Now as we have studied tax collectors were extremely hated in Israel, not just because they collected taxes, but because they were considered traitors by their fellow countryman. Israel is under Roman occupation at this time. Rome wants its taxes. So who better to know who is who in the land than to hire someone from the land? Hence they would hire Israeli’s to collect the taxes. Imagine if Russia invaded us and took occupation of our County; then they wanted taxes gathered and they hired a fellow American. Now that would be one thing, but then add on to this that we all knew what the tax rate was (say 50%), and then that fellow American said to you, ok you owe 60%. We would be like what, it is 50%, and they would be no it is 60%. Standing behind him were 2 Russian soldiers with AK-47’s (you don’t have a gun because yours was taken long ago – haha) saying is there a problem here? So these tax collectors had the backing of the Roman government, with their personal roman soldiers, and they would collect taxes over and above taking advantage of their countryman for their own personal gain. They were traitors, they were heartless, they were crooks, and they were filthy stinking rich.

#### **The Chief Tax Collector**

Taxes were collected at three places inland—Capernaum, Jericho, and Jerusalem—and he had one of the big three. It is the Passover Feast in Israel so millions are traveling, and thus no greater time to exhort, I mean collect some money. Now here is something important for our context today, and that is that Zacchaeus wasn't just one of the tax collectors, he was the chief tax collector. That means he oversaw all the other tax collectors in that region, possibly all of Israel. So what you have here is a massive Ponzi scheme. Every tax collector had to collect enough for Rome, and then more than enough for themselves, and then had to collect over that number to pay off their boss to keep their job. So now you have crook feeding crook, and Zacchaeus was the Bernie Maddoff at the top of the Ponzi scheme (Maddoff has been declared possibly the biggest Ponzi scheme in the history of world – 65 billion dollars). Zacchaeus is hated, especially every time you passed his house, which no doubt was like a Beverly Hills mansion.

### **Resume**

I was think about who Zacchaeus would hire, and thus he would hire some scoundrel just like himself. I remember some time ago a guy wanted me to come work in his department. So he went on the company database and got my resume, and then he created the job posting with the HR department. Well wouldn't ya know I fit the job description perfectly? The only thing missing was had to have brown hair and green eyes. All applicants had to be interviewed because that was company policy, but only one person meet all requirements by 100% and that was me. Well I can imagine the job posting Zacchaeus put out there on the Roman Monster.com. Candidate must be heartless, cares not for others but himself, ruthless, no conscience, willing to raid 401K, college funds, seize homes, leave people homeless and hungry, and still be able to sleep like a baby at night. You know that saying, how do they sleep at night? My answer is very well in their 6,000 dollar bed; they have a sleep number bed and the number is always set at number 1, for I am number 1, and I care nothing for others. I see these people left and right as we try to strike a deal for our church rental, for as soon as they see we have more ten bucks in our savings account they want to grab every penny of it, and they don't care that we are no profit helping the community, doing what we can to help those in needs, reaching out to the families and kids with special needs – they could care less about the needs of others, they just want their “sleep number 1 bed”. Zacchaeus was rotten. Zacchaeus basically posted his resume out on Roman Monster.com and was looking for exact carbon copies of himself. Zacchaeus was hated by his countryman, and all who looked upon him in this story today (except one).

### **Think God Wont Love you**

All except one.....think God won't come to you? Can't receive you just as you are? Can't forgive your past, and use your future? Let's read on.

**Luke 19:3 And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature.**

**Luke 19:4 So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way.**

### **Small Man**

Zacchaeus was a short man so we can picture the scene here with the throngs of people already walking next to, in front of, behind, and possibly there are people lining the streets to watching the parade go by. So we can picture the scene of Zacchaeus trying to stand on his tippy-toes, jump up to look and see, and he comes to the conclusion it is not to happen. Zacchaeus knows better than to try to push through the crowds, because that is one mosh-pit he doesn't want to get into because he knows he will get crushed by the people once they recognize who he is, because he is hated and dispised.

### **Plan B / Runs & Climbs**

So Zacchaeus does plan B, he runs ahead and climbs a tree. He does two things that men in that culture didn't do, one he runs and two he climbs. Men (distinguished and men of position) never ran, that would be dishonoring, slaves ran to serve their masters, but masters never ran – reason being is you had to hike up your robe else you would trip over it while you ran, and when you hiked up your robe then your knees and legs would be exposed, and that was to lower yourself to the common class worker. I would be likened to a respected public figure taking off his 3,000 dollar suit and climbing a tree in his boxer shorts. Men didn't climb tree either, only workers picking fruit, but not distinguished respectable men. You know just maybe, Zacchaeus has his couple Roman guards with him and he was saying come on now give me a boost – definitely not thinking about his reputation at this moment.

## **Jesus stripped of His Robe / Hung on a Cross**

By the way, when Jesus was stripped of His robe and hung bare on the cross, it was all part of the humiliation process, but He would do that for you and for me. Was there, is there, something this week that you were upset about with Jesus, was there something you questioned His love and commitment to you? Men, distinguished and those of honor never went before the public without their robe, only the servants did.....what was your challenge again this week, what did you question of His faithfulness to you, maybe even where His love was? Men never ran in public, and I am reminded of the father of the prodigal hiking his robe and going into sprint mode, in front of his servants, yet he cared not what they thought of him for the sooner he reached his son, the sooner restoration and communion would be. And another thing distinguished men never did, was climb trees; and the King of the Universe, the Son of Royalty, did just that as He climbed a cross for your sake and my sake.

*Luke 15:20 (NKJV) <sup>20</sup> "And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.*

*John 3:14–15 (NKJV) <sup>14</sup> And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.*

## **Plan B**

Zacchaeus went to Plan B, for nothing was going to keep him from seeing Jesus, especially the crowds. Christian we live in the day when the crowds want to block us from seeing Jesus, do whatever it takes to get above the crowd. Christian go vertical, rise up above the crowd, the world, and get to the place where you can see Jesus. If Plan A doesn't work, then make a Plan B. Lots of Christians just stop on Plan A and go oh well that didn't work so I guess I won't make it to church today, or that ministry, or that fellowship because the world is crowding in and blocking me. First you need to realize right from the start that Satan will do whatever he can to keep you from seeing Jesus, and so be ready to make a Plan B, in fact expect to make a Plan B, consider making Plan B, C, D, and E as normal for your life today, because if Satan knows all he needs is a Plan A, he will launch it every time. I am reminded of many years ago I somehow got myself roped into being part of a drama skit, I was reluctant at first, in fact said no, but knew God was telling me to do it, even though I said that is not my calling or gifting. There were two roles for a man, one was Jesus and the other was a sinner, for some reason I never go to play Jesus, I always had to play the sinner. So we practiced and practiced, and it was a lot of work, but it was truly an awesome drama skit. So awesome was it that every time we did it someone got saved. So I remember the day that we would do our first presentation, it was a Sunday morning, and it would be at two services, each with 500 people. I remember walking out to my car that morning, prayed up and dressed up, ready to go, and when I entered the parking lot it hit me, the place Satan could stop this whole thing was my car, and having it not start (even though it was a mechanically sound car). I literally had a flash in my mind of a demon with a sword pushed through my engine. Sure enough I turn the key and the car would start but seemed as if it was running on 1 cylinder (for the first time ever it happened). It was way too late to call someone to come get me, and besides it was before the day of cell phones so chances of getting help was slim. I was like now what? Call the church and say sorry we will have to cancel? I said you know Lord it is obviously this is Satan and he has to stop this, so let's roll and see how far we can make it. So there I am the 20 minute drive took 45, and I am billowing smoke out the exhaust, it was like bull-riding as the car would lunge and buck and sputter and kick, people were ducking for cover as the car backfired thinking there were gunshots in the hood. But I made it, we presented, and people got saved in both services. Plan B, is saying I am not going to be stopped by this world, Satan, or this crowd and I am getting to Jesus at whatever it takes. Zacchaeus was going to see Jesus at whatever lengths it took, and he would never regret for so doing.

**Luke 19:5 And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house."**

## **Jesus sees Him**

The sycamore tree is a very leafy tree, it is spring in Israel, and this is Jericho the City of Palms, and thus Zacchaeus would not be standing out as much as we may think he does. Yes if you were looking up, I doubt you could miss him, but eyes are upon Jesus, eyes are upon the road, people are not looking into trees, they are looking at the parade. But Jesus sees him, Jesus sees past and through and beyond the crowd, and Jesus sees Zacchaeus. Jesus knows all who are looking to Him, regardless of what all is going on around the world. Wars and rumors of world, world leaders being appointed and put down, nations rising and falling, economies booming and imploding, and yet through the hustle and bustle of them all, our God can see through it all, and see one person, a person (you and me individually) and stop and say, "you wanted to see Me, and I you – let's talk and fellowship together, tell me what is

on your heart, and I will tell you what is on My heart too). Jesus always goes over and beyond what we can ever think, as Zach just wanted to see Him, but Jesus wanted more than to be seen, He wanted to talk and to dine with him.

### **Invisible**

My six-year-old has an interesting view of this passage, he thinks Zacchaeus wanted to be invisible there in the tree. Yesterday he came into my office where his black thermal pants and shirt (which are meant to be tight fitting), and he says look daddy I am a ninja, you can't see me. So I said I can hear you son, but you are right I can't see you, and then he did a couple ninja moves. As he was leaving I said ninja man give me a hug, and he said no, ninjas don't hug. But anyways he thinks Zacchaeus wanted to be invisible in the tree, that nobody could see him. He is probably right, Zacchaeus didn't want to be seen. And I think there are many people, us included, who don't want to be seen, who would rather be hidden, because they can think God doesn't want to see them because of who they are and what they have done. But not only does Jesus see Zacchaeus, he stops for Zacchaeus, and not only that He calls out to Zacchaeus, and calls out to him by name. I see you Zacchaeus and I know you by name. Zacchaeus means righteous one, pure one, and Jesus calls him by his name, not who he was or what he was doing. He says pure one, come down from there today I must dine with you. He doesn't say traitor, scoundrel, wood for the flames of hell, come down from there; He says pure one, come down from there. And so Jesus when He looks upon you he doesn't see your past or what you once did, or struggling with presently, but who you are to Him and Him, and what he is making you to be.

*Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) 6 being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;*

*Romans 8:29–30 (NKJV) <sup>29</sup> For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. <sup>30</sup> Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.*

### **The Invisible People of the World**

You know, before I go on, there are people all around us every day who feel invisible in this world, they nobody sees them, nobody knows their name, nobody cares for them or about them. Want to be like Jesus, go look for them, know their name, know their story, dine with them, tell them what God thinks of them. You can cross the sea, you can cross the street. They are in the orphanages, the special need homes, the homeless on the street, or even rich living in the mansion. But like Jesus, we have to be looking for them, and I will promise you this, you go look for them, God will make sure you find them.

**Luke 19:6 So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully.**

**Luke 19:7 But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, “He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner.”**

### **They Complained**

So they complained that Jesus is going to eat at the house of a sinner. Well, if Jesus was not going to eat with a sinner that day, that only left Him eating by Himself under that sycamore tree, for there is not a person in the town He could have eaten with. Funny how people have their ranking of sin (of which one are little sins and which ones are big sins), and it is even more humorous as people view where they fall in amongst others. Yea I'm a sinner, but nothing like ole Joe over there (no offense if your name is Joe). All have sinned and fall short, yet the amazing part is that Jesus would eat with any one of us – yet he does because He is in love with us.

*Romans 3:23 (NKJV) 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

### **Received Him**

The word here for “received” means to ‘receive as a guest’. And how interesting the word in verse 7 for “guest” is the Greek word “katalyo”. We will find a use of that word back in Luke 2 as Mary lays Jesus in a manger because there was no room for Him in the inn (katalyma). When Jesus came into the world there was no room for Him, no place that he would be the guest of honor, and now here we see He is being made the guest of honor in a sinner's home. And mind you what this means before the people, as tax collectors were considered to be the greatest sinners, and Zacchaeus is the chief of them, therefore he is the chief amongst sinners, and Jesus is being invited into his home to become a guest.

*Luke 2:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.*

### **When you Do – Life will Change**

Beloved, when you do invite Jesus into your home, your heart, to be an honored guest, your life will never be the same, and you will be radically changed. Look at verse 8

**Luke 19:8 Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold.”**

**Luke 19:9 And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham;**

### **Time Elapsed / Commune with Jesus – Never the Same / Some won’t Stay Long enough**

We don’t know how much time elapsed between verses 7 and 8, but whatever it was, something mighty and radical happened in the heart of Zacchaeus. No person who communes and fellowships with Jesus will ever leave the same. We say here to all, come and fellowship with Jesus, all are welcomed, but don’t leave here the same. Jesus will put his finger on something every time we come into His presence, and he will give us the opportunity and blessings to be set free by it, and to enter into the joy of the Lord. Too bad for the rich young ruler that he didn’t have dinner with Jesus, because if he would have stayed around Jesus long enough he too would have been changed, because it is impossible to spend time in His presence and not be changed. Lots of people won’t come to church, read the word, or entertain a discuss of Jesus (one that goes into any depth) because they can feel the finger of God pressing, and they say I got to get out of His presence else I will have to make a change and I do not want to do that.

### **Rich Young Ruler vs Zacchaeus**

The rich young ruler couldn’t walk away from his possessions, that thing, for his possession posed him; but for Zacchaeus, he saw it and knew it, and said gladly I will give it away. Jesus Christ is God, and when God takes up residence within a person, there is change, because God starts to do house cleaning. The word of God says to us in Ephesians 3 that Christ may dwell in your hearts (and there is that word again “katoikeo”), saying that Christ may dwell in your heart as a guest of honor. So as the guest of honor, the house is prepared to honor Him, and He is given the ok to make some changes.

*Ephesians 3:16–19 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, <sup>17</sup> that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, <sup>18</sup> may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— <sup>19</sup> to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

### **Zacchaeus is Changed**

Zacchaeus is changed; it is evident in his life.

### **Son of Abraham**

Jesus sends a zinger here to all who were murmuring. Abraham was the father of the faith to the Jewish people. By calling Zacchaeus a son of Abraham He is making two very specific points, and first is that salvation doesn’t come by works, but by faith, as Abraham was justified by faith. And secondly, even though everyone had written Zacchaeus off as wood for the fires of hell, Jesus saw him as one of His own, one of the family, and even being the chief of sinners (if you will), no man could ever go so far that God could forgive him and restore him, and make him part of the family – regardless what others may think of that person. It is between that person and God Himself, and no other person has a say in the matter.

*Genesis 15:6 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.*

**Luke 19:10 for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”**

### **How about You**

Jesus came to seek and save that which was lost – how about you, has He found you? If you do not know Christ today, will you invite Him into your life and then really start to live? You can, all you need to do is stay long enough in His presence to hear Him, and He to hear you.

# Occupy Until I Come!

## (Luke 19:11-27)

### Near Jericho / Days away from Jerusalem – Start Passion Week / Because His Passion for You

Jesus is in Jericho (about 15 miles from Jerusalem); He is only a few days away now from coming into Jerusalem, and the start of what we call “Passion Week” because of His great passion for us, and to redeem us and make us His own, free from sin and death. We left off our last study where Jesus was having dinner at Zacchaeus the tax collector's house, and Zacchaeus gives his life to Jesus, and makes restitution for the all people he has ripped off, and as we studied something truly wonderful and amazing happened between him and the Lord. And let me just start off today by saying, and so too you, to anybody, who will take time to spend with the Lord, for if you do, when you do, something wonderful and amazing happens. It is not just wonderful and amazing the moment we commit our lives to Christ, but each time we separate time, divide time, undivided time, to be with Him. Have you done that this week?

*Luke 19:9-10 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; <sup>10</sup> for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

### After 450 Pages / Passion Week – Triumphal Entry / 3 Nails & 1 Cross

So after 450 pages of notes, and 60 bible studies, which probably close to 50 hours, we come to our last passage of scripture before we begin “Passion Week” the last seven days of the life of Christ as He goes to the cross for your sin, and my sin. Next week we begin with the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, and final countdown begins to 3 Nails, and 1 Cross.

*Luke 19:28 (NKJV)* <sup>28</sup> When He had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

### Outline of the Book of Luke:

#### The Life of Christ – The God Man (Luke 1-24)

##### **The Prelude to Christ’s Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- His Birth & Boyhood
- His Baptism & Temptation

##### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- His Mission Statement
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- His March to the Cross
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

##### **The Consummation of Christ’s Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

### Everywhere He goes – 2 Things – Demonstrate His Love & Say Follow Me

Everywhere Jesus has gone He has done two things:

- demonstrate His heart and passion for man,
- and then say follow Me.

That is still what He does today as God is demonstrating His love and passion for every man, woman, and child, and then he says “follow Me”. I pray for each and every one of you here today that you are following Him, fully, freely, for in that you will find life, a full life, and one with purpose.

### **Still at Zacchaeus House / Last Words**

So for context of our study today, Jesus is outside the home of Zacchaeus, the people were murmuring against Jesus for eating with of Zacchaeus who would be considered the worst sinner in the whole region, someone who should be fuel for the fires of hell, not proclaimed part of the family (and that is one of the simplest meanings of salvation, and that is to be made part of the family). So the people are murmuring about Jesus being with Zacchaeus, and then Jesus says today salvation has come to this home, this man is part of my family, and the whole purpose of My life Jesus says is to seek and save those who are lost, to gather a family together. And so the crowds who were following Jesus to the Passover are waiting out front of the home, the complainers and backbiters are waiting out front, and you can imagine all hate and discontent they were stirring up amongst the people all the time Jesus is in there, all the lies and misinformation they were spreading (hmm I bet they are eating steak and a blooming onion, all at our expense after ripping us off our taxes. I bet they are comfy on those fine Italian sofas). Imagine the discontent being stirred up as they waited, and then the zinger comes when Jesus says let me introduce you to the son of My family. And now Jesus speaks these words to them, and to us, the last words before we start the accent to Jerusalem and the count down to 3 nails and 1 cross, and the words are not meek and mild, and they spoke to us His servants, and to a world who would say, I don't care about Your 3 nails and 1 cross, I will not have You rule over me.

### ***Christ Gives the Parable of the Ten Minas***

**Luke 19:11** Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately.

**Luke 19:12** Therefore He said: “A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.

**Luke 19:13** So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, ‘Do business till I come.’

**Luke 19:14** But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We will not have this man to reign over us.’

**Luke 19:15** “And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

**Luke 19:16** Then came the first, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned ten minas.’

**Luke 19:17** And he said to him, ‘Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.’

**Luke 19:18** And the second came, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned five minas.’

**Luke 19:19** Likewise he said to him, ‘You also be over five cities.’

**Luke 19:20** “Then another came, saying, ‘Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief.

**Luke 19:21** For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.’

**Luke 19:22** And he said to him, ‘Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow.

**Luke 19:23** Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?’

**Luke 19:24** “And he said to those who stood by, ‘Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.’

**Luke 19:25** (But they said to him, ‘Master, he has ten minas.’)

**Luke 19:26** ‘For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.

**Luke 19:27** But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.’ ”

## Strong Words

We are on the immediate heels of the love-soaked passage we studied last week of Jesus saving Zacchaeus, but the words of Christ spoken now are strong, undeniable, and immovable. For many they say, where is the love, I was so enjoying the past studies of Jesus being so gentle and kind, loving and forgiving, we felt we were touching heaven, and now these words are strong, maybe even quenching to some, difficult to receive that Jesus could say them.

## Prophet – Priest – King

As we have studied in the past, we see the life of Christ here on earth had three very defined roles, yet all rolled into One, as he was prophet, priest, and King.

- We have studied Jesus the prophet, the promised one of God and how He fulfills the OT prophecies, and at the same time he speaks the words of God and proclaims the promises of God.
- We all have loved Jesus the priest as we have seen Him minister and love people, heal the sick and love the hurting, representing the heart of the Father before the people.
- And, He is also the King, he is King Jesus, and the King is giving a command to His servants, of what He expects of them, while He is away, until He returns. His command, clear and simple (and I like the OKJV), to occupy. Occupy means to work, to carry on a business, to make transactions, to undertake a work for sake gain and profit, to invest, to advance. So Jesus says while I am away, advance My Kingdom, make investments that will bring godly gain, do My work on My behalf.

*Luke 19:13 (KJV 1900) <sup>13</sup> And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.*

## The Commodity is Salvation

What are we to occupy, transact, bring to gain? What is the commodity if you will? It is “Salvation” as that is the context of the story. Salvation is more than just getting saved, it is a person’s whole life. The person is brought into the family, and then raised up in the family. Salvation means to rescue (so there is the evangelism), and it also means to preserve, keep from harm (so there is the teaching, protecting, nurturing, and growing of people in Christ). That is what we have been called to bring increase, to transact in the world and inside the Body of Christ. Salvation is what we are to occupy and be busy about.

*Luke 19:9–10 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; <sup>10</sup> for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”*

## Occupy DC

When I think of the word occupy I have to think of the occupy movement that swept through the Nation several months ago, even to the outer parts of the world, and their motto was “occupy”. They had all kinds of agenda, stop corporate greed, then it morphed into save the planet, stop offshore drilling, fracking, human rights, end the war, tax the rich, and feed the poor. Millions of people were involved; all kinds of tent cities were set up, as people occupied grounds to advance their message. I walked amongst the tent city in DC as I happened to be in DC in the first week when the movement began, it was quite the site (and smell), and there was not an inch of ground to spare (see pictures). I was down there last week, walked through Freedom Park, where hundreds occupied, and as I walked across I walked straight through the middle of the park, STRAIGHT THROUGH because me and Renee were the only people in the park, it was empty. It was empty, all the tents were down, the sleeping bags rolled up, the signs were gone, the trash cleaned up, the microphones and the voices speaking behind them, gone. Occupy DC is over, well at least from a personal human involvement, they still have a website you can go to “occupy” from the comfort of your home after you get off work or while you sip your 4 dollar Mocha at Starbucks. My favorite is there is a live feed from the park, but it is turned off and all you get is an advertisement. All that is left is the website (which you can donate to if you would like), and the cause goes on in their mind because they still have a website, but the people are long gone. They did not occupy until victory, and thus they quit.

## The Church

Church, are we occupying? Are we occupying until He comes or are we just posting tweets and populating websites? Have we folded up our tents, taken down our signs, packed up our microphones, and turned off our loud speakers, and have gone back to life as usual?

**Luke 19:11 Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately.**

## **Thought Kingdom Now**

Jesus is making a prophetic declaration to them in our passage so they wouldn't be confused after He goes to the cross. Many see Him as the King, so they think He is marching towards Jerusalem to claim His Kingdom and overthrow Rome. Jesus is preparing them that first He comes to die for the sins of man, and then He will return at a later time to claim His kingdom (see Revelation 19). And the whole point of the parable is that while He is gone we are to occupy. Even after His resurrection He reinforces this point to occupy, do business for Him, advance the kingdom, and he promises the power to do it through His Holy Spirit that he freely pours out upon everyone.

*Revelation 19:11–16 (KJV 1900)* <sup>11</sup> And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. <sup>12</sup> His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. <sup>13</sup> And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. <sup>14</sup> And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. <sup>15</sup> And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. <sup>16</sup> And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

*Acts 1:6–8 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" <sup>7</sup> And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. <sup>8</sup> But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

## **Tells a Parable**

So Jesus is going to tell a parable, which is taking a spiritual truth and casting it alongside of a story to amplify the meaning and point of the truth.

**Luke 19:12 Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.**

**Luke 19:13 So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.'**

**Luke 19:14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.'**

## **2 Groups / Prophetic Word / Do Business**

So we have in our story two groups and one King. One group are the Kings servants and they have been given a command from the King to do His business while He is away. The other group, are a people who hate the King and do not want to yield to His rule. How prophetic the very words that will be spoke in only few days of the life of Jesus.

*John 19:15–16 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup> But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!" <sup>16</sup> Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. Then they took Jesus and led Him away.

## **It will not be Easy**

Jesus is telling us that there are those who hate Him, many people who want to do their own thing and not be under His rule, and so we should not think it strange when we meet them, and they in turn have resentment towards us because we are His servants. Even with that resistance, we are to continue to occupy, invest, do His business in His kingdom while He is away, until He returns.

## **Each Given Equal / 3 months Wages / Advance the Kingdom while the King is Gone**

So ten people each get the same amount of money (mina or pound depending on your translation). The mina/pound was equivalent to about 3 months wages, so it was no small thing. They are told to go do business, occupy, make profit, advance the kingdom, while the king is gone. Salvation - We are to be saving the lost and keeping the saved.

**Luke 19:15 "And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.**

## **We Living in Period Between Verses 14 - 15**

We are living today in the period between Luke 19:14 and 15 when our Master is absent but will return according to His promise. We have been given a task to perform, and we must be faithful until He comes. What will the King say

to us when He returns? Will His words mean reward, rebuke, or possibly retribution? “Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful” (1 Cor. 4:2).

*1 Corinthians 4:2 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup> Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.*

### **Word for Steward is Slave**

When they were translating the Bible into English in the 1600, there was an un-comfortableness to use certain words because they were derogatory at that time, just as they are today, and one such word was the word “slave”. So to soften up the bible, instead of using the word slave, they used the word servant. But the fact is the word used here in this passage is slave (doulos). You see we have been bought with a price, a high price, the blood of Jesus Christ, for we were slaves to sin and death, but Jesus bought us back off the slave block and made us His own.

*1 Corinthians 6:20 (NKJV) <sup>20</sup> For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.*

### **Before You Turn me Off - Bondslave**

And maybe that word offends some of you today, but if it does then you don't understand this type of slavery. Because when the Bible talks about slaves in the context of a person being a slave to God it is making the reference to a person who freely desires to be His slave, and not forced into it by compulsion. In that day of Jesus if a person failed on their bills and commitments, they couldn't just walk away in foreclosure or bankruptcy, they had to pay their debt, and if they did not have the money or property to pay off they had to pay with themselves by becoming a slave/servant to the person they were indebted to. The term was for 7 years, and then at the end they were free of their debt. But at the end of their term many would say I love my master, I love how he treats me, I love how he provides for me, and protects me; so they would say I want to be a bondslave/bondservant for the rest of my life to you. And so as an act of a contract/covenant, the person and the owner would go to the door of the home, the owner would pierce the ear of the slave right there on the doorpost of the home, and then place an earring on the ear, and the covenant was that the owner would promise to provide for every need of the slave, and the slave promised to do the will and commands of the owner. And so it is when a person sees how good God is, how He loves them, provides for them, takes care of them, proving His love all the way to sending His only begotten Son, the person says I want to be your bondslave for life and do you will and your commands.

*1 Peter 2:15–17 (NKJV) <sup>15</sup> For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men— <sup>16</sup> as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God. <sup>17</sup> Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.*

**Luke 19:16 Then came the first, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned ten minas.’**

**Luke 19:17 And he said to him, ‘Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.’**

**Luke 19:18 And the second came, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned five minas.’**

**Luke 19:19 Likewise he said to him, ‘You also be over five cities.’**

### **Reward for Faithful – Is More Work**

Oh to hear those words, amen! To hear God say I trust you with this and you were faithful and diligent to use it for my sake, to advance my kingdom, to bring me a profit, I shall give you more to manage in My Name. I believe these rewards are specifically about when we rule and reign with Him in the Millennial Kingdom, but they also apply for today too. The reward for being faithful is more work, but it is a good work, it is a profitable work, it is an eternal work, with an eternal reward.

**Luke 19:20 “Then another came, saying, ‘Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief.**

**Luke 19:21 For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.’**

**Luke 19:22 And he said to him, ‘Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow.**

**Luke 19:23 Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?’**

**Luke 19:24 “And he said to those who stood by, ‘Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.’**

**Luke 19:25 (But they said to him, ‘Master, he has ten minas.’)**

**Luke 19:26 ‘For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.**

### **Now the Unfaithful One / Don't worry about the other 7**

And so we have the story of two of the servants being faithful, and now the story of one being unfaithful. Just a note we don't know about the other seven, and it doesn't matter, so we don't need to worry about everyone else's work and what they are doing and how they are doing, we really just need to worry about our work.

### **Servants Failure is Disobedience**

So here we have this one who was unfaithful, who did nothing with what was given to him. The servant's failure is not so much of not bringing profit, the failure was that the servant was disobedient to the king's command to go do busy (occupy) until he returned. He did not try, he wrapped it in a handkerchief and then went on to do his thing, not the king's thing.

### **Mina will produce Gain by Itself – Just as Long as not Put Away**

The king said if you would had at least put it in the bank you would have made interest. What he is saying is that the money given will bring interest simply by investing it. The only reason it doesn't bring a profit or gain is when it is hidden away, buried, wrapped in a handkerchief. Christian, you can bring gain to your king, advance His kingdom simply by putting yourself out there and living for Him openly. The only way you can come up empty is by hiding yourself away, living in the folded handkerchief.

### **Yes it is Hard Today / Coming out of the Closet**

Yes it can be very difficult and uncomfortable living openly as a Christian today as more and more people are openly making their voices known, I will not have this man rule over me, and I hate all His servant too. Amazing how the gays are coming out of the closet and the Christians are going into one.

### **Don't Judge the Work**

I know the other reason many are folding up their tents, putting the sound system away, taking down the signs, and that is because they don't see the fruit and thus they want to quit. Christian keep sowing seed, don't grow weary. [\*Galatians 6:9 \(NKJV\)\*](#)<sup>9</sup> *And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.*

### **Norman Geisler**

Norman Geisler (one of the great Christian apologist living today), as a child, went to a VBS because he was invited by some neighbor children. He went back to the same church for Sunday School classes for 400 Sundays. Each week he was faithfully picked up by a bus driver. Week after week he attended church, but never made a commitment to Christ. Finally, during his senior year in High School, after being picked up for church over 400 times, he did commit his life to Christ. What if that bus driver had given up on Geisler at 395? What if the bus driver had said, "This kid is going nowhere spiritually, why waste any more time on him?"

[\*Ecclesiastes 11:6 \(NKJV\)\*](#)<sup>6</sup> *In the morning sow your seed, And in the evening do not withhold your hand; For you do not know which will prosper, Either this or that, Or whether both alike will be good.*

### **Stop Judging the Work**

Half the ministers I know are sitting in judgment on their own work. And it's not looking good for them. They decide the Kingdom work is not going very well, feel guilty because they are so ineffective, and grow discouraged. Instead of giving their all day in and day out over a long life of service and obedience, they turn inward, give less and less of themselves, while the visible results they so long for become more and more scarce. Stop it. You're not the judge, just a worker in the field of the Lord. Now, get back out there and trust that the Lord knows what He was doing when He assigned you to this corner of the Kingdom.

### **Jeff Christopherson**

Jeff Christopherson could tell you. In an article "Re-defining success," published in the Fall 2012 edition of "On Mission" (pastors' edition), the publication of Southern Baptists' North American Mission Board, Jeff talks about something that happened to his father Allan:

*In the 1960s, Allan and Helen Christopherson were living in Prince Albert, Canada, where Allan cleaned beer storage tanks for a brewery. The low pay had a special benefit: free beer. As a result, alcoholism was rampant and Allan succumbed to its hold.*

*In 1967, Allan and Helen found themselves at a drive-in theater watching "The Restless Ones," a Billy-Graham-produced movie with a strong evangelistic thrust. Toward the end, Mr. Graham extended Heaven's invitation for the audience to repent and turn to Christ. In the solitude of their car, a 1958 VW Beetle, the Christophersons held hands and gave their hearts to Christ.*

*As the movie ended, a man in a suit and tie took the microphone in the drive-in and invited anyone wishing to respond to the Lord to come up and pray with him. No one came.*

*But Allan Christopherson quit his job, learned a new trade, and got active in serving the Lord. Under the leadership and tutelage of Pastor Jack Conner, they started a new church.*

*Now, fast-forward a full generation. Allan was one of a group sponsoring Franklin Graham for a meeting in Saskatoon. The chairman of the planning session welcomed everyone, then invited anyone whose life had been changed through the ministry of Billy Graham to take the mike and share his/her story.*

*Even though he kept telling himself "You're just a welder," Allan Christopherson began to speak. He told of watching "The Restless Ones" in the drive-in, of the commitment he and his wife made in the car, and the church they had started, and how both their children were now serving the Lord starting new congregations in Toronto and in Chile.*

*Allan said, "I do not know how many hundreds of lives are now in the kingdom because my wife and I went to the movies that day."*

*In the silence that followed his testimony, an elderly man took the floor. Through his tears, the old gentleman said, "Allan, my name is Tom Dice. I am a retired family counselor in the area. I want you to know something. God asked me to bring that movie to Prince Albert. I rallied my friends and colleagues, and we really expected great things to happen. Night after night we played the movie and night after night I stood before the audience and asked them to respond to Christ. Night after night I went home very disappointed."*

*"Until this day," Tom Dice said, "to my knowledge, nobody ever responded. I thought my project was a failure. I wondered if I had heard God right in the first place. But I did hear him, Allan. I now see that it wasn't a failure." The men hugged. The old man wept, "Now I see. Praise Jesus, now I see."*

### **Don't Know how many Lives Changed**

To paraphrase Allan Christopherson's testimony to the Franklin Graham leadership team that day, "I do not know how many hundreds of lives are now in the kingdom because of this couple." You touch a life and they move on and touch others. Only Heaven can keep score. Only God can trace the mustard seed beginnings into all its limbs and branches and leaves. And that's how it should be. Keep working Christian worker, just keep working, occupy until He comes.

**Luke 19:24** "And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.'

**Luke 19:25** (But they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas.')

**Luke 19:26** 'For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.'

### **The Shelf**

God says take his away and give it to another. Listen Christian, God has no problem of putting you on a shelf; but in actuality, it is really you who has put yourself on the shelf.

### **Pastor Gino**

I'd like to read you an email from a pastor (Pastor Gino Geraci – Calvary Chapel South Denver). It was after Bible College, I was kind of just sitting around wondering and asking God if I should go plant a church. Gino was pastor of a friend of mine 2,000 miles away, he had never met me, but here was his response to me (way back in 1996).

*Dear Ray,*

*I agree with your Pastor. Go start a Bible Study and see what happens.*

*How do you know? You don't--that's why its called faith. If you know--if God says go to Florida, and he confirms it with a scripture (there is no mention of Florida specifically--go into all the world--Florida is part of the world--therefore it qualifies as a place you can go).*

*I don't mean to be sarcastic. The truth is--go. Go and try. If you fail--so what! The only way you shouldn't go is if God commands you not to go, closes the door for you to go, or opens the door to go somewhere else.*

*The real issue isn't where you go----it's who you are! Are you a Pastor? Are you called to be a Bible Teacher? If you are---go and do it! If you are not---go and do it and find out! Perhaps God will use to find the person who is the right person and you can support and encourage that person!*

*Who are you? Has God given you the desire? Do you know the Bible? Are you able to instruct others? Do you love Jesus? When you teach are people taught?*

*Then go. This is why it is called a venture in faith---you trust God. If this is a venture in obedience--then go.*

*Apart from faith it is impossible to please God. Go in faith that pleases God. Stay in obedience (God told you not to go) that pleases God. YOU must hear from God and do what he tells you. If you don't hear from God---maybe he's asking you step out in faith.*

*Does this sound complicated? It is not. You must be sure of the gift and calling on your life. When you start a church, you don't pick them---they pick you!!!*

*If you are insecure about your gift and calling---so will they! If you are secure and gifted, then fulfill the ministry God has given to you, through the laying on of hands.*

*"and say to Archippus (really Ray) "Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it." Colossians 4:17*

*Sorry--I did not mean to beat up on you. If I can discourage you--the devil can discourage you more. If I can encourage you, the Holy Spirit can encourage you more. Fulfill your ministry. You cannot fulfill it by sitting around. Get up and do something. Go somewhere. If God closes the door, he will open another one. The Lord cares about you and does not want to waste you, but he is willing to waste you, if you don't step out in faith.*

*DON'T FIND YOURSELF ON THE SHELF. Plant seed wherever you are. Serve where you are. If you go---serve where you go. Whatever you do, begin today.*

*Never forget, who you are is far more important than where you go. Pick a spot. Then serve you guts out. That's what I did.*

*In Christ,*

*Gino*

**Luke 19:27 But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.'**

### **Two who Misunderstand Him**

In our passage there are two people who totally misunderstand the King. The unfaithful servant acknowledges he is king, but is not obedient to the king in serving the king. He says oh you are a harsh man and I feared you, but the king said if you really believed that I was harsh you would have worked harder than all the others out of fear. This man didn't really fear the Lord, he was just selfish, self-absorbed, and lazy. Then there is the group of people who do not fear the Lord, don't honor the king, to the point they rebel against the king. To them the king says you are my enemy.

### **Neither Understand He is a Good King**

Neither of these two know Him intimately, because if they would they would see He is a good King, He is a great King. The unfaithful servant doesn't see Him as the Master that provides, protects, loves and cherish him, for if he did he would naturally just say pierce my ear to the door, I want to serve you and I want to tell others of how good I have because I have you and you have me! To any person today who would say to me that I do not want Him as my king, to them I would say you just do not know Him, because if you did you would come running to Him and say pierce my ear upon the door. He wants you to have salvation, salvation remember means to "come into the family". He has given Himself to provide a way for you to come into His perfect and Holy presence, to cleanse you from your sin and make you white as snow, and it was by 3 nails and a cross!

*Isaiah 1:18 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool."*

### **You have to Come to King on His Terms**

But you have to come to the King on His terms, for it is His Kingdom, and it is a beautiful kingdom at that, and His terms were 3 nails and a cross, and you saying pierce my ear to the doorpost of Your house, I accept your offer of forgiveness and provision, and I agree to follow your word and your ways.

### **Let Your Words Judge You**

Let God judge you by your own words, just as He said to this servant; say to the Lord I know that I am a sinner, I know that my sin offends you and separates me from You. I know I need a savior, and Jesus is the Savior, and I lay my sin upon Him, and believe He took it and died for it. I repent and turn from my sins, and now Lord I will follow You. You are my Savior, and my King.

## **So for my Christian Brethren – How are You Spending your Life**

Christian, spend your life for the Kingdom of God. Christian how are you spending your life?

*We've Only One Life ~ It Soon Will Be Past ~ Only What's Done For Christ Will Last*

### **A Word to All – Remember these Words**

It is a calling for all of us, and these passages that may be hard for people to swallow because they want Jesus the priest not Jesus the King, we have to serve the King faithfully. I am reminded of King Jehoshaphat, as he sent out judges to speak to the people of his kingdom, to rule in accordance with the word of God. Please read, and take special note on the words in red. So the word unto you is to “Behave courageously, and the Lord will be with the good.”

**2 Chronicles 19:4–11 (NKJV)** <sup>4</sup> So Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusalem; and he went out again among the people from Beersheba to the mountains of Ephraim, and brought them back to the LORD God of their fathers. <sup>5</sup> Then he set judges in the land throughout all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city, <sup>6</sup> and said to the judges, “Take heed to what you are doing, for you do not judge for man but for the LORD, who is with you in the judgment.” <sup>7</sup> Now therefore, let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take care and do it, for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, no partiality, nor taking of bribes.” <sup>8</sup> Moreover in Jerusalem, for the judgment of the LORD and for controversies, Jehoshaphat appointed some of the Levites and priests, and some of the chief fathers of Israel, when they returned to Jerusalem. <sup>9</sup> And he commanded them, saying, “Thus you shall act in the fear of the LORD, faithfully and with a loyal heart: <sup>10</sup> Whatever case comes to you from your brethren who dwell in their cities, whether of bloodshed or offenses against law or commandment, against statutes or ordinances, you shall warn them, lest they trespass against the LORD and wrath come upon you and your brethren. Do this, and you will not be guilty. <sup>11</sup> And take notice: Amariah the chief priest is over you in all matters of the LORD; and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, for all the king's matters; also the Levites will be officials before you. Behave courageously, and the LORD will be with the good.”

# Exactly as He said it Would Be (The Triumphal Entry)

Luke 19:28-41

Easter Sunday 2013

## Luke's Gospel

We are in Luke's Gospel chapter 19, starting in verse 28. We have studied Jesus' birth, His Baptism, His 40 days in the wilderness, His ministry in Galilee, and we followed Him on His approximately 9 month journey from Galilee to Jerusalem, which covered at least 35 cities and towns, and now today we come to Jesus riding a lowly donkey into Jerusalem where the people will proclaim Him as the King that has come.

## Outline of the Book of Luke:

The Life of Christ – The God Man (Luke 1-24)

### **The Prelude to Christ's Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- His Birth & Boyhood
- His Baptism & Temptation

### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- His Mission Statement
- His Calling of Disciples

### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- His March to the Cross
- His Calling of Disciples

### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

### **The Consummation of Christ's Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

## Everywhere He goes – 2 Things – Demonstrate His Love & Say Follow Me

Everywhere Jesus has gone He has done two things:

- demonstrate His heart and passion for man,
- and then say follow Me.

## Today this Easter Sunday

Today in our passage Jesus heads into Jerusalem, it is what we call Palm Sunday, as Jesus is now only 5 days from the cross, 5 days from a relentless beating, 5 days from 3 nails, and 5 days from saying "It is Done". And today, this Easter Sunday 2013, as we read this passage, He says to us, come follow Me, see my heart for you, mediate on my passion and compassion for you, and trust that My words are true, and every one of them concerning you will come to pass; the words I love you, the words you will have eternal life, and the words that I am with you now, you can be sure every last one of them is true, and will come to pass.....so follow Me!

## *The Triumphal Entry*

**Luke 19:28** When He had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

**Luke 19:29** And it came to pass, when He drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mountain called Olivet, that He sent two of His disciples,

**Luke 19:30** saying, “Go into the village opposite you, where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Loose it and bring it here.

**Luke 19:31** And if anyone asks you, ‘Why are you loosing it?’ thus you shall say to him, ‘Because the Lord has need of it.’ ”

**Luke 19:32** So those who were sent went their way and found it just as He had said to them.

**Luke 19:33** But as they were loosing the colt, the owners of it said to them, “Why are you loosing the colt?”

**Luke 19:34** And they said, “The Lord has need of him.”

**Luke 19:35** Then they brought him to Jesus. And they threw their own clothes on the colt, and they set Jesus on him.

**Luke 19:36** And as He went, many spread their clothes on the road.

**Luke 19:37** Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen,

**Luke 19:38** saying: “ ‘Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD!’ Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

**Luke 19:39** And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, “Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.”

**Luke 19:40** But He answered and said to them, “I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.”

**Luke 19:41** Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it,

*Let’s go verse-by-verse*

**Luke 19:28** When He had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

### **The Scene**

To capture the scene here, it is Passover which is one of the three annual feasts that all males over the age of 18 were to attend. It was a time of celebration, it was a time to put work aside, to put the cares of the world aside, and many time whole families would go up to Jerusalem for this festive and wonderful celebration. Passover was the celebration on remembering how God had delivered the people out of the 400 years of slavery in Egypt. The historian Josephus said that Jerusalem would swell to 2.5 to 3.0 million people. The roads would be packed with travelers, there was a joy and an excitement in the air. Well this Passover was different from all the rest, as the news and accounts of Jesus had reached epic proportions, and many of the people now believe Jesus was the Messiah that God had promised all through the Old Testament, and many of the people thought that He had come to deliver them from the tyranny of the Roman occupation of Israel, and many of them think that Jesus is coming into Jerusalem to declare Himself King.

### **He is Coming as King – But not as they Thought / First the greatest Need**

Jesus is coming to declare He is King, but not as most people thought. He was first coming to prove He is King over sin and death (as He will go to the cross in 5 days, but raise from the dead on the third day). Jesus will come back to rule and reign as King on the earth, and based on all that I see in the news, that day is soon, and very soon. But first, the truest need, mans’ greatest need, the forgiveness of sin, and to be made right before the Perfect and Holy God.

### **Sometime He doesn’t do what we Expect**

You know beloved, sometimes (maybe even many times) Jesus doesn’t do what we expect Him to do. We have this need, we are in this situation, we feel we need it and we need it now, and then Jesus does something totally different than we expected, and we say what was that, that is not what I need at this moment, that is not the priority – but Christian, may your heart be warmed and convinced, may you hear Him say to you today, this is exactly what you need, what I did, what I am doing, is exactly what you need at this moment, at this junction, in this situation, and what I did is the priority.....I always meet the priority, not necessarily the problem. And when and if you doubt that, remember this story of my Triumphal Entry, and you will be comforted and convinced that I will always meet your priority.

**Luke 19:29 And it came to pass, when He drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mountain called Olivet, that He sent two of His disciples,**

### **2 Miles Out / 3 Ascents: Jerusalem – Golgotha – Cross / 777**

Bethany is about 2 miles east of Jerusalem. Jerusalem is up, so they are going upward. So Jesus starts His ascent up to Jerusalem, and then 5 days from now He will make one more final ascent to a hill outside Jerusalem called Golgotha, where He will climb a tree (a rugged cross) for your sake and my sake, so that He can wipe our sins away, and wipe our reputations away (sinner, drunkard, blasphemer, liar, murder at heart, adultery at heart), and give us a new name (sons and daughters) and new reputations that can never be wiped away (holy, pure, righteous, right before the Perfect and Pure God of heaven). Three ascents (Jerusalem – Golgotha – the Cross), with you and I on His mind on each one of them. By the way, according to Dr. Chuck Missler, Golgotha is exactly 777 meters in elevation; seven being the number of completion, and thus the cross perfect completion to our redemption, and when Jesus said it, it became fact.....”It is Done”, our sin has been judged and separated from us, so we can be united with our Father in heaven.

*John 19:30 (NKJV) <sup>30</sup> So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.*

**Luke 19:30 saying, “Go into the village opposite you, where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Loose it and bring it here.**

**Luke 19:31 And if anyone asks you, ‘Why are you loosing it?’ thus you shall say to him, ‘Because the Lord has need of it.’ ”**

### **Lord wants to partner with You**

*Verse 31 - “Because the Lord hath need of him.”* What an irony it is that the Lord would have need of anything. But He does.

- He needed a boat from which to preach (Luke 5:3–6).
- He needed some loaves and fishes with which to feed the crowd (Matthew 14:16–18).
- He needed a coin through which to make a point (Matthew 22:19).
- He needed a room in which to share the Last Supper with His disciples (Matthew 26:18).
- He needed a tomb from which to rise from the dead (Matthew 27:60).

Our Lord has chosen to place Himself in a position of need. Paul said He who was rich became poor for our sake (2 Corinthians 8:9). Why? I believe one of the reasons was in order that we might partner with Him in what He wants to do on the earth. Whether it’s preaching the Word or feeding the multitude, the Lord has chosen to say, “I need you.” Maybe better said is, “I want you”, I like doing things with my kids, just like any dad does, so let’s do something together. He is not a distant far away God, He is a here and now God who loves doing things with His kids. That makes life exciting, fulfilling, and has meaning.

**Luke 19:32 So those who were sent went their way and found it just as He had said to them.**

### **Just as he Said**

*Verse 32 - and found it just as He had said to them* – They found it just as Jesus said it would be, and that is always the way it is and will be, in that whatever Jesus said it will be, it will be. If He has given you a word or a promise, that word and/or promise will be just as He said it will be. When you read this Bible, all the words He gives us, you will find it will be exactly like He said it would be. You know, even those words of warning, those times He says don’t do that, do go there, stay away from that or them. I remember, and I have told it often, but I remember as a young Christians, when I first committed my life to Him, I read His word and I said oh I love this word, I have eternal life, oh I love this word that He is going never leave me nor forsake me, oh I love this word that He want to partner with me (wow); but oh no not this word, I am not digging that where He is saying don’t do that, do go there, stay away a from that or them. Nope don’t like that at all, in fact Lord I think that is kind of archaic thinking, old school for a time gone by, but life is different, times have changed. But you know what, God said don’t go there, it is going to hurt you, rob you, leave you joyless in the end; and you know what, when I go there, did that, it was exactly just how God said it would be, to the T! His word is perfect, His word is true, and He will prove it out here in our passage today in a mighty and powerful way, and he will prove it out in our lives today. Oh Christian, trust His word, believe it is perfect, because you find it is always exactly as He said it will be. Apply that to that He loves you, that He will never leave you, that He will provide all your needs, and that His ways are better than ours. And, may I add, I remember the night as I laid in my bed and had come to an end of my doubting which word to believe

and apply and which of His words to not, and I said to the Lord, your ways are perfect and I know they are true, thus I commit myself to following them regardless if I understand and agree; and all I can describe at that moment was as if waves of liquid love washed over me, and I felt a peace and a love upon me as if I was in God's very presence. Beloved, His words are perfect, and as He said it, so shall it be, exactly!

**Luke 19:33 But as they were loosing the colt, the owners of it said to them, "Why are you loosing the colt?"**

**Luke 19:34 And they said, "The Lord has need of him."**

#### **What a Day for the Donkey / So too He says of You**

*Verse 34 - And they said, "The Lord has need of him."* – what a day for this donkey, to be used by the Lord, to be said of, "the Lord has need of it". God wants to use you too, and maybe you have never considered it or ever thought He would, but He is saying of you, "the Lord has need of him/her".

#### **Before Used – had to be Loosed / Take of the Grave Clothes**

Notice that before the donkey could be used by the Lord, it first had to be loosed. That's exactly what we're to do. Even though we are born again, like Lazarus coming forth from the grave, oftentimes, we're still bound (John 11:44). But as we come and hear the Word, as we stand hand in hand with our brothers and sisters in prayer, we find ourselves loosed, released from that which so easily binds us.

#### **Before Used – Loosed – had to be Redeemed**

Want to hear something powerful, and that is that before a donkey could be used it had to be redeemed, and it had to be redeemed by the sacrifice of a lamb. Before the Lord can use us, He has to release us from our grave clothes, and before He releases us, He had to redeem us, and so here He is riding into Jerusalem to redeem us, so He might release us, so He might use us.

*Exodus 13:13 (NKJV) 13 But every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb; and if you will not redeem it, then you shall break its neck. And all the firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem.*

**Luke 19:35 Then they brought him to Jesus. And they threw their own clothes on the colt, and they set Jesus on him.**

**Luke 19:36 And as He went, many spread their clothes on the road.**

#### **Revelation 4**

In Revelation 4 we know the story of before the throne of God and the casting of crowns before Jesus' feet. And we say, when we get to heaven we are going to cast our crowns at His feet, and oh it is going to be wonderful. Here is a preview of that right here in our passage before us.

*Revelation 4:10–11 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: <sup>11</sup> "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."*

#### **Threw with Violence**

The word here for "threw" was used to denote violence, quick action, sure action, an action with a passion. They aren't just laying it down, or saying oh here comes Jesus this will be cute; no they are saying get out of the way I have something to give Him, I don't want this moment to pass me by.

#### **Cast them Today / Do It now before Moment Passes**

Hey Christian, can I make a suggestion, why wait until heaven to cast these crowns, why not today? And do it now before the moment passes. Give Him praise from your lips, say "blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord", tell Him He is glorious, thank Him for His goodness and His mercy. And, what is it that is in your hand that you can cast at His feet today. They threw their coats, it was a sign of laying their lives before the King, a sign of saying what I have as small as it may be, I give to you for your glory sake. What will you lay down before Him, to show that He is King of your life, and what will you lay down before Him and say use this for your glory. Is there something He has been speaking to you about walking away from, then lay it down and walk away from it. Is there something that he has been calling you to be involved in to proclaim His Kingdom has come, then get involved in it now before the time passes. And for you who are involved in something that proclaims His kingdom has come, that brings Him glory, stay passionate about it, don't let your love grow cold over it.

### **Story of Construction Worker and Cross**

Yesterday I was talking with someone at work about the cross and he told me a story about the church he went to. This church ordered a handmade cross from a group somewhere in Central America. The cross is 8 foot handmade out of wood, and they make a life-sized body of Jesus (about 6 feet). When the workers start the process, they fast through the whole making and fashioning of the cross and the body of Christ. Then it is shipped to America in two separate boxes (the cross and the body). Well when it arrived at the church they contacted a construction service to put the body of Christ on the cross and then hang it on the wall. To attach the body they used actual nails in the hands and feet right where it would have been on the day of the crucifixion 2000 years ago. When the construction worker placed the body of Christ on the cross, then put the first nail to the hand of Jesus, as he lifted the nail he stopped, looked into the eyes of Jesus, and He put the hammer down and said I can't do this, I am not right before God. And right there on the spot he bowed at the feet of Jesus and asked for forgiveness of sin, and to become his Lord and Savior. If that is you, the hammer is in your hand, you need to finish driving that nail through the hand of the Body of Christ that took your sin to the cross so that your sin may be dealt with and forgiven. Today, do it quickly, before this moment passes, and Jesus is way down the road and you go back on with life and missed the moment of God speaking to your heart.

**Luke 19:37 Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, Luke 19:38 saying: “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”**

### **Donkey – Sign of Peace**

Riding a donkey was a sign of peace, not war. When a conquering general rode into a conquered city, he rode in on a horse. But when a king rode into a city on a donkey, it was a sign that he had not come to make war but peace. Jesus is coming into Jerusalem saying I have come to make peace with all who will receive it.

### **Familiar Praise – Luke 2 / Notice Subtle Difference**

This praise sound so familiar doesn't it, as it takes us back to His birth (Luke 2). But do you notice a subtle difference in that at His birth it says “peace on earth”, but here it says “peace in heaven” and that is because a war is now going to break out on earth. A war between good and evil, sin and death, God and Satan.

*Luke 2:13–14 (NKJV) <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: <sup>14</sup> “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”*

### **But we have Peace with Him**

There is a war on earth, but for us who have allowed the Lord to break us, to loose us, to set us free, we are at peace with Him, because we have picked up the hammer and admitted that it was our sin that put Him on the cross.

*Romans 5:1 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,*

**Luke 19:39 And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, “Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.”**

**Luke 19:40 But He answered and said to them, “I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.”**

### **Pharisees help Unlock the Scene for Us**

Any time that we, as Gentiles, might miss the full significance of an event, it seems that the Pharisees come to our rescue! When they are especially upset, we need to understand why!

### **Solomon rode Donkey / Jesus rides Donkey to Herald – People cry Out Blessed is the King**

When David proclaimed Solomon to be the next king of Israel, he had Solomon ride into Jerusalem on his donkey. It was recognized, especially in Israel, that the king of Israel rides upon a donkey before the people to be heralded as the new king. The religious leaders know that Jesus is declaring Himself to be the King of Israel, and the people are in agreement because of them saying yelling out, “Blessed is the King who come in the name of the Lord”. Thus why they are telling Jesus to tell the people to shut up, and essentially for Jesus to get off that donkey.

*1 Kings 1:33–35 (NKJV) <sup>33</sup> The king also said to them, “Take with you the servants of your lord, and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and take him down to Gihon. <sup>34</sup> There let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel; and blow the horn, and say, ‘Long live King Solomon!’ <sup>35</sup> Then you shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne, and he shall be king in my place. For I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah.”*

### **This is the Day – Psalm 118**

Oh when we have a beautiful day, where the sun is shining, the birds are singing, the sky is blue, the warmth of the sun is upon us – and we say “this is the day the Lord has made”. That is true, as every day is made by the Lord (blue skies or grey), but that statement is a direct quote from Psalm 118, and that statement is a direct prophetic passage regarding the Messiah:

*Psalm 118:22–26 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> *The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. <sup>23</sup> This was the LORD’s doing; It is marvelous in our eyes. <sup>24</sup> This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it. <sup>25</sup> Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity. <sup>26</sup> Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.*

### **Lowly Riding a Donkey – Zechariah 9:9**

And, you would know that day because your King will come in riding on a donkey, lowly and gentle, coming in peace, not war.

*Zechariah 9:9 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> *“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.*

### **To the Day – Daniel 9**

Has to be to the day at that. Back in the Book of Daniel (written some 500 years before this event) the prophecy was given that Israel would know when their Messiah would come because even though they were currently in captivity in Babylon God gave the promise that they would be returned to their homeland of Israel, and from the time that the decree would be given to rebuild the walls of the depilated city at that time, but when the decree was given to rebuild the walls of the city, start counting because in exactly 483 years the Messiah would come into the city and be declared, but then killed. The decree was given on March 14, 445 BC by Artaxerxes the King of the Persian Empire, and exactly 483 years later 173,880 days, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 32AD (the 10<sup>th</sup> of Nissan on the Jewish calendar).....Jesus is on this donkey riding into this city, and for the first time allows the people to publically proclaim Him as the King of the Jews.

*Daniel 9:24–26 (NKJV)* <sup>24</sup> *“Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy. <sup>25</sup> “Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times. <sup>26</sup> “And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.*

### **4 for 4 / Always Just as God said it would Be**

That is four-for-four, of perfect fulfillment of the word, because the Word will always be, just as Jesus said it would be.

### **The Pharisees Plot to Kill Him / Now He is Either King or Criminal / Forcing their Hand**

See, all along now the Pharisees were figuring out how and when they were going to kill Jesus. The Pharisees had plotted to kill Jesus after the Passover (Matthew 26:3-5). Jesus’ usual mode was to shun publicity (John 6:15). However, He knew that once the multitude cried out to Him and once He received their praise, His enemies had to either coronate Him King or crucify Him as a criminal. Thus, He’s forcing their hand. Jesus must die on the Passover (John 1:29 / 1 Cor 5:7), for He has to be the Lamb of God who will take away the sins of the world, on the exact day. Both the day he is heralded the King, and the day He will be crucified (which has to be the same day they are sacrificing the Passover Lamb, which is the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan in the Jewish calendar).

*Matthew 26:3–5 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> *Then the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people assembled at the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, <sup>4</sup> and plotted to take Jesus by trickery and kill Him. <sup>5</sup> But they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people.”*

*John 6:15 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup> *Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone.*

*John 1:29 (NKJV)* <sup>29</sup> *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*

*1 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> *Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.*

### **The Wheel of History / Every Word / What has He Promised You – Stand on His Promises**

Every detail of this day we read here, and every day before and thereafter were in God's hand, and thus are all your days in His hands. We need not fear as we watch the world unfolding before us, for the wheel of history did not direct Jesus, it was Jesus who turning the wheel. So it shall be in our lives, and our Kings words will be exactly as He said they would be. What has he promised you? Do you trust Him? Christian stand on His promises!

### **If Not People – Then Stones / Word always Exactly as God said it would Be**

The stones would have to cry out, because someone or something has to fulfill the prophecy spoken, because the word of God will always be just as God said it will be.

- The word says that you will have eternal Life – so you will
- The word says the he will complete the work He began in you - so He shall
- The word says you have been made clean, forgive – so you are
- The word says you are free – so you are

So now go live it my friend, claim that this is the day that the Lord has made and I will rejoice in it.

*Psalm 118:24 (NKJV)* <sup>24</sup> *This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.*

## **He is a good King!**

**Luke 19:41** Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it,

### **Donkey never Ridden**

This donkey had never been ridden before; that is a subtle yet still miracle, as even beast of burden has to first be broken before it can be ridden. The beast of burden tries to throw the rider off because it is saying I will not have you rule over me. To break a beast of burden is to establish who has the authority. This donkey knew who its creator was, whose its authority was, and yielded itself to Him (Jesus – God). Actually another word of God fulfilled:

*Isaiah 1:3 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> *The ox knows its owner And the donkey its master's crib; But Israel does not know, My people do not consider."*

### **Cries Convulsively**

The word for wept here actually means to "convulse, bewail". Jesus doesn't just have a tear rolling down His cheek, He is crying with great grief, it is the word they used when someone mourned the death of a loved one". This is the same word that is used in Matthew 2 when it spoke about when Herod went out and slaughtered all the male babies under 2 years old. Jesus is convulsing here, He is crying here like any one of us would if we lost our child in a tragic accident.

*Matthew 2:18 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> *"A voice was heard in Ramah, Lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, Refusing to be comforted, Because they are no more."*

### **Weeps Because of Man's Rejection**

Jesus weeps not because what lies ahead of Him, he gladly goes to the cross, He weeps because He knows that men and woman will choose to reject Him, and self-judge themselves into eternal separation from Him and God the Father, and will be separated from Him into eternal hell. The beast of burden knows whose its creator and master is, yet men and woman today buck Him off saying I will not have this man rule over me. Jesus weeps..... may He not weep here today, I pray and beg you, that you will see your King riding today on a donkey, coming in peace, and offering you peace, and that you will see what so many of us have seen, He is a good King, and He is worthy to be praised and served, and it will be the best decision you will ever make in your life, and it is a necessary decision, and it needs to be made today (2 Corinthians 6:1-2 / 2 Corinthians 5:20) .

*Hebrews 12:1-2 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> *Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

*2 Corinthians 6:1-2 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> *We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. <sup>2</sup> For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*

*2 Corinthians 5:20-21 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> *Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup> For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

### **He will be Bound**

He will be bound to the altar for you and for me, the next verses of Psalm 118. Jesus will go to the cross to take your sin and mine so that we might be forgiven of our sin that offends the Holy and Perfect God. He will suffer, die, and be buried.....

*Psalm 118:27–29 (NKJV)* <sup>27</sup> God is the LORD, And He has given us light; Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar. <sup>28</sup> You are my God, and I will praise You; You are my God, I will exalt You. <sup>29</sup> Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.

### **On the 3<sup>rd</sup> Day**

But on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, exactly as he said it would be, He will rise again. He is THE AWESOME GOD and KING!

*Luke 18:31–33 (NKJV)* <sup>31</sup> Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. <sup>32</sup> For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. <sup>33</sup> They will scourge Him and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.”

### **Video / As Long as I have a Breath**

Verse 40 - “I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.” – I have vowed, regardless of how dark this world gets, and regardless of how much the world tells me to shut up and quit talking about Jesus, quit proclaiming Him as Lord and King, I have vowed that my last breath until this candle of life flickers out, I will praise His name. As long as I have a breath, the rocks will remain silent. And you too I know!

### **God Bless You – Happy Easter**

## **Hanging on His Every Word** (Luke 19:41-48)

**Luke 19:30** saying, “Go into the village opposite you, where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Loose it and bring it here.

**Luke 19:31** And if anyone asks you, ‘Why are you loosing it?’ thus you shall say to him, ‘Because the Lord has need of it.’ ”

**Luke 19:32** So those who were sent went their way and found it just as He had said to them.

**Luke 19:33** But as they were loosing the colt, the owners of it said to them, “Why are you loosing the colt?”

**Luke 19:34** And they said, “The Lord has need of him.”

**Luke 19:35** Then they brought him to Jesus. And they threw their own clothes on the colt, and they set Jesus on him.

**Luke 19:36** And as He went, many spread their clothes on the road.

**Luke 19:37** Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen,

**Luke 19:38** saying: “ ‘Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD!’ Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

**Luke 19:39** And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, “Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.”

**Luke 19:40** But He answered and said to them, “I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.”

**Luke 19:41** Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it,

**Luke 19:42** saying, “If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.

**Luke 19:43** For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side,

**Luke 19:44** and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation.”

**Luke 19:45** Then He went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in it,

**Luke 19:46** saying to them, “It is written, ‘My house is a house of prayer,’ but you have made it a ‘den of thieves.’”

**Luke 19:47** And He was teaching daily in the temple. But the chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people sought to destroy Him,

**Luke 19:48** and were unable to do anything; for all the people were very attentive to hear Him.

### **Very Exciting Time / 2.5 Million for Passover / Not a Seeker Sensitive Approach by Jesus**

What a very exciting and emotional time. Thousands of people flowing into Jerusalem with Jesus, it is written by Josephus the historian there are some 2.5 million people in Jerusalem at this time for the Passover celebration.

There are tens of thousands at/around the temple mount, and then we read the words of destruction and commendation in the midst of the party. Surely not a seeker-sensitive approach by Jesus, He must have missed that seminar while He was at Zacchaeus’ house.

### **A Side of Jesus / Direct Correlation / Misrepresentation – Misapplication / Hebrews 13:8**

So we see a side of Jesus that is very clear and very direct. We see Jesus foretelling a horrendous destruction that is soon to come upon Jerusalem (about 40 years away – we will discuss that in a bit), and then we see Him flipping tables in the Temple. It seems Jesus had a bad night sleep – Not! What we have here is a direct correlation between destruction of the city, and the commercialization of the faith, the misrepresentation of God by the leaders, and the misapplication of the whole purpose of the Temple (and in today’s term, the Church). We will see plenty of present day application for a religious cultural from 2,000 years ago, to today’s Christianity; and I will tell you, Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and His heart is as critical today as it was then regarding this, and His purpose for the Church has not changed with the cultural, and with the times.

*Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV) 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*

## **Luke's Gospel**

To recap the last 33 years of Jesus' life, we have studied Jesus' birth, His Baptism, His 40 days in the wilderness, His ministry in Galilee, and we followed Him on His approximately 9 month journey from Galilee to Jerusalem, which covered at least 35 cities and towns, and now today (it is Sunday in this Gospel account) we come to Jesus riding a lowly donkey into Jerusalem where the people will proclaim Him as the King that has come.

### **Outline of the Book of Luke:**

#### The Life of Christ – The God Man (Luke 1-24)

##### **The Prelude to Christ's Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- His Birth & Boyhood
- His Baptism & Temptation

##### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- His Mission Statement
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- His March to the Cross
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

##### **The Consummation of Christ's Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

### **Everywhere He goes – 2 Things – Demonstrate His Love & Say Follow Me**

Everywhere Jesus has gone He has done two things:

- demonstrate His heart and passion for man,
- and then say follow Me.

### **One of the Followers is Matthew / Gazed Intently – Look Right Through / Choose a Disciple – You Today**

One of the people following Jesus into Jerusalem is a man named Matthew. One day awhile back, Jesus saw Matthew and said two words that would forever change Matthew's life: "As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, 'Follow Me.' So he arose and followed Him." (Matt. 9:9). The word "saw" in this verse is very suggestive. It means "to gaze intently upon, to stare, to fix one's eyes constantly upon an object." I'm sure that when people walked by Matthew, normally they would either turn away their eyes or look at him with scorn. This word also means, "to look right through." Have you ever had someone look right through you? Or, let me put it another way: do you have a mother? Jesus intentionally made eye contact with Matthew. And in the eyes of Jesus, Matthew saw many things: holiness and purity, to name a few. But I'm certain he also saw love, compassion, and understanding. With their eyes fixed on each other, Jesus said two words that would reverberate through Matthew's soul, words that he never thought he would hear: "Follow Me" (v. 9). Jesus was choosing, selecting, and calling him out to be His disciple. And Jesus is saying the same thing to you right now.

### **What does the Mean to Follow / Lot's Claim – But we Called to Examine**

But what does it mean to "follow Jesus?" There are a lot of us today who claim to be His followers, but are we? As 2 Corinthians 13:5 reminds us, "Examine and test and evaluate your own selves to see whether you are holding to your faith and showing the proper fruits of it. Test and prove yourselves (not Christ). Do you not yourselves realize and know (thoroughly by an ever-increasing experience) that Jesus Christ is in you—unless you are (counterfeits)"

disapproved on trial and rejected?” (AMPLIFIED). There was a lot of religious activity going on at the temple, but for many it was all counterfeit.

*2 Corinthians 13:5 (NKJV) 5 Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.*

### **Follow “with” Me / Companionship & Friendship/ Bare your Heart**

This phrase, “follow Me,” could also be translated, “follow with Me,” meaning companionship and friendship. Jesus was saying, “Matthew, I want you to be My friend!” Did you know that Jesus is saying the same to you right now? He wants you to bare your heart to Him, to tell Him your secrets, your fears, your hopes, and your dreams. Jesus said, “You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you” (John 15:14–15). It is the ultimate friend request.

*John 15:14–15 (NKJV) 14 You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. 15 No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.*

### **People Think Jesus ready to Pounce on Them / Parrot and the Bugler**

Yea some people think God is out to ruin their lives; they totally do not know Him, how great of a King He is, that He is a good King. A key word is “king” as that makes Him more than a “buddy” but a Holy God who is to be fully respected and obeyed. But being a good King, means all His words (edicts if you will) are for the good of His people and His Kingdom. And.....yes there are some Bible teachers and Pastors who preach like Jesus always mad at the people ready to pounce on them, and some people who only read bits and pieces of the Bible so they never have a full understanding of God (often times thinking He is a mean God – calling fire down from heaven, and like this passage today destruction upon a city for rejecting Him). People think Jesus is ready to pounce on them for wrong step, and it reminds of the bugler who broke into a house one night. As he quietly made his way around, a voice suddenly spoke through the darkness: “I see you, and Jesus sees you too.” He stopped, amazed at what he had just heard. He waited for a few moments, and when nothing happened, he continued on. For a second time the voice said, “I see you, and Jesus sees you too.” Stunned, the burglar turned on his flashlight for a look around the room. To his surprise and relief, he saw a large bird cage in the corner with a parrot inside. “Did you say that?” he asked the parrot. “I see you, and Jesus sees you too,” the parrot repeated for the third time. “Why, it’s a parrot!” laughed the burglar, then as he lowered his flashlight the burglar saw a large Doberman with its teeth bared, looking at him. The parrot then said to the Doberman, “Sic ‘em, Jesus!”

### **Lot’s Think Jesus ready to Pounce / But some Pastors are Afraid to Speak the Truth**

That’s how a lot of people see Jesus: ready to pounce on them and ruin their lives. Nothing could be further from the truth. The fact is, God loves you, and His plan for you is good. God says, “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you,... thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope” (Jer. 29:11). However, there are lots of pastors today who will never tell people anything about destruction because that would upset them, and they might not come back, and thus that would crush their egos, and no people also means no money, and that would crush their comfortable lifestyles and their mighty empire they have built. But what we see here in our passage today is a direct correlation with leaders and people not knowing the Word of God, and destruction and loss. But we read at the end, there were many who listened to the words of Jesus as He taught, and they were getting it, they were captivated by the word, as the literal translation is that they were “hanging in His every word”.

*Jeremiah 29:11 (NKJV) 11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.*

*Luke 19:47–48 (NKJV) 47 And He was teaching daily in the temple. But the chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people sought to destroy Him, 48 and were unable to do anything; for all the people were very attentive to hear Him.*

*Let’s hit this Verse-by-Verse*

**Luke 19:41 Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it,  
Luke 19:42 saying, “If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.**

## **Pharisees help Unlock the Scene for Us**

*Verse 42 – in this your day* - - Any time that we, as Gentiles, might miss the full significance of an event, it seems that the Pharisees come to our rescue! When they are especially upset, we need to understand why! What is this day that Jesus is referring to?

## **Solomon rode Donkey / Jesus rides Donkey to Herald – People cry Out Blessed is the King**

When David proclaimed Solomon to be the next king of Israel, he had Solomon ride into Jerusalem on his donkey. It was recognized, especially in Israel, that the king of Israel rides upon a donkey before the people to be heralded as the new king. The religious leaders know that Jesus is declaring Himself to be the King of Israel, and the people are in agreement because of them saying yelling out, “Blessed is the King who come in the name of the Lord”. Thus why they are telling Jesus to tell the people to shut up, and essentially for Jesus to get off that donkey.

*1 Kings 1:33–35 (NKJV)* <sup>33</sup> *The king also said to them, “Take with you the servants of your lord, and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and take him down to Gihon. <sup>34</sup> There let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel; and blow the horn, and say, ‘Long live King Solomon!’ <sup>35</sup> Then you shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne, and he shall be king in my place. For I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah.”*

## **This is the Day – Psalm 118**

Oh when we have a beautiful day, where the sun is shining, the birds are singing, the sky is blue, the warmth of the sun is upon us – and we say “this is the day the Lord has made”. That is true, as every day is made by the Lord (blue skies or grey), but that statement is a direct quote from Psalm 118, and that statement is a direct prophetic passage regarding the Messiah:

*Psalm 118:22–26 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> *The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. <sup>23</sup> This was the LORD’s doing; It is marvelous in our eyes. <sup>24</sup> This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it. <sup>25</sup> Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity. <sup>26</sup> Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.*

## **Lowly Riding a Donkey – Zechariah 9:9**

And, you would know that day because your King will come in riding on a donkey, lowly and gentle, coming in peace, not war.

*Zechariah 9:9 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> *“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.*

## **To the Day – Daniel 9**

Has to be to the day at that. Back in the Book of Daniel (written some 500 years before this event) the prophecy was given that Israel would know when their Messiah would come because even though they were currently in captivity in Babylon God gave the promise that they would be returned to their homeland of Israel, and from the time that the decree would be given to rebuild the walls of the depilated city at that time, but when the decree was given to rebuild the walls of the city, start counting because in exactly 483 years the Messiah would come into the city and be declared, but then killed. The decree was given on March 14, 445 BC by Artaxerxes the King of the Persian Empire, and exactly 483 years later 173,880 days, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 32AD (the 10<sup>th</sup> of Nissan on the Jewish calendar).....Jesus is on this donkey riding into this city, and for the first time allows the people to publically proclaim Him as the King of the Jews.

*Daniel 9:24–26 (NKJV)* <sup>24</sup> *“Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy. <sup>25</sup> “Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times. <sup>26</sup> “And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.*

## **4 for 4 / Always Just as God said it would Be**

That is four-for-four, of perfect fulfillment of the word, because the Word will always be, just as Jesus said it would be.

**Luke 19:43** For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side,

**Luke 19:44** and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation.”

### **Day of Visitation / Didn't Know because Nobody was Teaching /**

They did not know the day of their visitation, they didn't know 4-for-4. They did not know because nobody was teaching, nobody was digging out the truths of the scriptures and teaching them to the people. Surely once they did long-long ago, but those types of sermons were turning the people off, thus they started to lighten it up, to keep the people coming, to keep the coffers full and the egos stroked. Maybe it took one generation, maybe two or three, but now they were more into the commercialization than the word and prayer, and now there is a generation who no longer knows the truths of the scriptures.

### **Jesus weeps – What lies Ahead / 70 AD / Lasted 143 Days / Not 1 Stone Left Standing**

As Jesus looked ahead, He wept (which means weeping convulsively) as He saw the terrible judgment that was coming to the nation, the city, and the temple. He isn't filled with anger and hatred, He isn't mean, He is weeping convulsively..... where is this mean and angry God that people accuse Him of being. It is currently 32AD, and in less than 40 years, In A.D. 70 (history books tell us), the General Titus and Roman army would come and, after a siege of 143 days, kill 600,000 Jews, take thousands more captive, and then destroy the temple and the city. All the way to the point it was written that not one stone was left standing. It was written that in the siege the temple caught on fire, and the heat was so intense that the gold-overlay melted, and the gold bonded to the stones of the temple. The only way to break the gold from the stones was to throw the stones over the ridge so that when they hit the gold would break loose from the stones. Thus not one stone was left upon another, exactly as Jesus said it would be.

### **Titus came April 9 – During Passover / Cut off Supplies / Built Embankment /**

*Verse 43 - your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side -* This is precisely the method used by Titus when he laid siege to Jerusalem in A.D. 70. He surrounded the city on Apr. 9, cutting off all supplies, and trapping thousands of people who had been in Jerusalem for the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread (just completed). The Romans systematically built embankments around the city, gradually starving the city's inhabitants. The Romans held the city in this manner through the summer, defeating various sections of the city one by one. The final overthrow of the city occurred in early Sep.

### **Josephus describes Pure Horror / Starvation – Marauders - Anarchy**

Josephus describes this siege that took place under Titus, the Roman general. He describes the horror of the people within the city of Jerusalem who began to kill each other for food. The horrible starvation. According to Josephus in his book, The Wars of the Jews, more Jews were killed by their fellow Jews than by the Roman soldiers. Marauding bands began to go through the city raiding houses and killing people and taking the goods and the food. Anarchy broke out within the city. And the horrors of it are described by Josephus.

### **Why – They didn't know Day of Visitation / Rejected Jesus = Rejected his Word**

Why did all of this happen? Because the people did not know that God had visited them! “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not” (John 1:11). “We will not have this man to reign over us!” (Luke 19:14)

*John 1:11 (NKJV) 11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.*

*Luke 19:14 (NKJV) 14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.'*

### **Luke 19:45 Then He went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in it,**

#### **Learn secrets of His Tears**

As W. H. Griffith Thomas has said, “Let us sit at Christ's feet until we learn the secret of His tears, and beholding the sins and sorrows of city and countryside, weep over them too.

#### **It is Now Monday**

For understanding, it is now Monday. Jesus lodged in Bethany that night after riding into Jerusalem and came into the city early the next morning. It was then that He cursed the fig tree (Mark 11:12–14) and cleansed the temple for the second time. (See John 2:13–22 for the record of the first cleansing of the temple.)

*Mark 11:9-17 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> Then those who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' <sup>10</sup> Blessed is the kingdom of our father David That comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" <sup>11</sup> And Jesus went into Jerusalem and into the temple. So when He had looked around at all things, as the hour was already late, He went out to Bethany with the twelve. <sup>12</sup> Now the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, He was hungry. <sup>13</sup> And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. <sup>14</sup> In response Jesus said to it, "Let no one eat fruit from you ever again." And His disciples heard it. <sup>15</sup> So they came to Jerusalem. Then Jesus went into the*

*temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. <sup>16</sup> And He would not allow anyone to carry wares through the temple. <sup>17</sup> Then He taught, saying to them, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations' ? But you have made it a 'den of thieves.'"*

### **Why Important**

Why is this important, because Mark's gospel tells us that Jesus went into temple on Sunday, checked out the scene, and then returned the next day. Jesus wasn't impulsive, Jesus didn't lose control; Jesus was very much under the control of His emotions. Jesus we know awoke early in the morning to pray, and thus Jesus has a very clear plan on what He was going to do when He came to Jerusalem and the temple that day. That is a pretty cool morning prayer session 😊

### **Jesus Weeps / Before you Whip – You have to Weep**

Jesus weeps, convulsively, because He knew what was to come. Now He brings out the whip. Let me say this, you can't whip, unless you first weep. You have to have the heart and the burden for people, before you can bring out the whip of correction. Lots of people like to bring out the whip and straighten people out, but few will weep over them, cry out for their condition, awake early in the morning and pray for them, and lay themselves out there to be whipped themselves (just as Jesus took the whip for us). Before we whip and correct, we need to be a people who will weep.

### **Now Imagine / Clear Message**

Now imagine, that you are sitting here in church and someone comes in and starts turning over tables. I would say whatever he says next he will have your full attention. People has their full attention, and what He says next, is to bring a clarity, a clarity on what He intends church and the body to be and to do, and that is to be a place of prayer and teaching of the word. It is not to be a place of being ripped off, taken advantage of, but a place of refuge, and a place of peace.

**Luke 19:46** saying to them, **"It is written, 'My house is a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'"**

**Luke 19:47** **And He was teaching daily in the temple. But the chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people sought to destroy Him,**

**Luke 19:48** **and were unable to do anything; for all the people were very attentive to hear Him**

### **Pilgrims from All Over**

You see pilgrims came from all over Palestine and beyond for the annual feast days, and it was required of these visitors to the temple to offer certain sacrifices, according to the customs of the feasts. It was very inconvenient for many pilgrims to carry livestock with them on a long and arduous journey and so they would wait until they arrived in Jerusalem to purchase the necessary sacrificial animals. The religious officials in charge of the maintenance of the temple found it very lucrative to make available these necessary provisions for sacrifice, presumably in the court of the Gentiles or in the outer court of the temple. Because of the high demand, they could charge exorbitant fees for these animals, and they took advantage of the pilgrims' need to acquire the appropriate local coinage by charging very high rates of exchange. Some scholars think that there were also booths selling religious trinkets or souvenirs, just as you would find in present day Jerusalem. No doubt these transactions were accompanied by loud discussions or arguments creating an atmosphere that was a far cry from the sense of peace appropriate for acts of worship and prayer.

### **Instead of Praying – Preying / Name There / For all the Nations / People Turned Off – Mock God**

Instead of praying for the people, the priests were preying on the people! The temple was not a "house of prayer" (Isa. 56:7); it was a "den of thieves" (Jer. 7:11). Notice that God says this temple has His name on it, and notice it is not just for the people of Israel, but for all the Nations of the world. It was a place that people, Jew and Gentile were to come and see and experience God, and know that they could have a personal relationship with Him. But oh to see this mess, the ripping off and the fleecing, how turned off people would be about God; and how people would mock God because these were His "so-called" representatives.

***Isaiah 56:7 (NKJV)** <sup>7</sup> Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices Will be accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations."*

**Jeremiah 7:11 (NKJV)** <sup>11</sup> *Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it," says the LORD.*

### **Den of Thieves – Den is a Place to Hide**

Campbell Morgan reminds us that a “den of thieves” is a place where thieves run to hide after they have committed their wicked deeds. The religious leaders were using the services of the holy temple to cover up their sins (see Isa. 1:1–20).

### **How many times we hear Mocking**

How many times have we heard mocking from others about the way some churches and preachers are behaving. How many times have we heard it about all the church wants is money, and sadly many times they are right.

### **Jesus would flip some Tables Today / People don't see Destruction Coming – Nobody warning Them**

If Jesus came back right now, and walked into some of the churches today, he would be flipping some tables. He has a passion for His people, and when a church and ministry turns it from feeding to fleecing, He rolls up His sleeves. And, oh how hurt breaking to me, that so many people do not even see destruction that is imminent, and they not only go to a church that feeds them false security, that church attacks true churches and true shepherds, thus leaving the people all set with false, self-righteous, arrogant, assurance.

### **Examples**

Some Examples – just to get your blood boiling, so you can get a feel for Jesus' blood boiling that day in the temple:

### **Easter – Luis Leon**

Here is this past Easter's sermon from where the president went to church:

*President Obama attended an Easter service with his family today at St. John's Episcopal Church near the White House, and the Pastor delivering the sermon at the service veered into political territory when he slammed the religious right for living in the past and lionizing "the good old days." As the first family trekked across Lafayette Square to the church, Mr. Obama offered a "Happy Easter, everybody" to the press and onlookers assembled. The sermon at the service, delivered by Dr. Luis Leon, an Episcopal pastor who delivered the benediction at Mr. Obama's second inauguration, took a turn for the political when the pastor decried those who wax nostalgic about the way things once were. "I hear all the time the expression 'the good old days'," Leon said. "Well, the good old days, we forget they have been good for some, but they weren't good for everybody. "You can't go back, you can't live in the past," he added. "It drives me crazy when the captains of the religious right are always calling people back...*

- *for Blacks to be back in the back of the bus,*
- *for women to be back in the kitchen,*
- *for gays to be in the closet and*
- *for immigrants to be on their side of the border."*

*"What you and I understand," Leon said, "is that when Jesus says, 'You can't hang onto me,' he says, 'You know it's not about the past, it's not about the before, it's not about the way things were, but about the way things can be in the now.'" Luis asked his audience, "Will you accept the invitation from our Gospel today to see things with Easter vision, recognizing reality in a different and new and wonderful way?" "Today the choice is yours," he said. "Jesus Christ is risen today - that's the proclamation. May God bless you with Easter vision now and forever. Amen."*

### **Notice – attack on Fundamentalist**

Religious right refers to people who believe the Bible is the word of God, also called the fundamentalist. Notice how he tries to liken bible believers to bigotry, male chauvinistic pigs, gay haters, and immigrant despisers. Yet somehow this guy got the audience of the president of the greatest nation in the world. I'd be flipping some tables if I was there – hence the headline news “Visiting pastor loses it during Easter Sermon”

### **Perry Noble**

Here is one that got me going this week, his name is Pastor Perry Noble, and he leads a megachurch that house close to 20,000 across all its campus. Plus he teaches other pastors on how to build church just like him. Here is what he says about you in a past sermon:

*So what about the jackass. The jackass is just the person who always says: "I want to go deeper." You know what I tell people when they say that around here: "You're only as deep as the last person you served. You wanna go deep? Let's take a look at your tithe record and see how deep you are. Deep, Deep." Most Christians are educated way beyond their level of obedience anyway. What you're really saying is: you want me to stand on the stage and confuse the heck out of you - so you don't have to apply what I teach you. I can do that! How about the people that say I want more worship. How about the other six days in the week. If you were full of Jesus when you walked in here it wouldn't matter to you how much we sang.*

Notice that little manipulation there? He tries to convince people that tithing is the ultimate depth of spiritually. So as long as you give, you are ok, regardless of you never apply His word. This is the guy that starts off church services with carnal songs like Garth Brooks “Friends in Low Places”, a song about drinking and carousing. Then

they go right into worship. His campus in tens of millions of dollars, thus the empire must be maintained, and thus cant upset the people with the truth, even if destruction is imminent. He said if you were full of Jesus when you walked in here it would matter how much we sang, and I say if I was full of Jesus when I walked in there (while visiting friends in the area), and heard that speech, they would be dragging me out of that place, and hence the headlines again!

### **Todd Coontz**

Todd Coontz regularly asks for “miracle-seed” donations—often in the amount of \$273. According to Coontz, “Several years ago, God gave me the single greatest miracle of my lifetime in one day... and the numbers 273 were involved...” Jim Bradley of Eyewitenss News discovered that is the unit number of his 7th floor \$1.38 million dollar high-rise condominium! He is fleecing the flock, and living large off of it.

### **Peter Poopoff**

How about the televangelist Peter Poopoff, who will guarantee you to be debt free if you drink his miracle water, and while you are at could you send us a “love offering so we can stay on the air”. He will be wishing for a sip of that miracle water as the flames of hell lick his body. Jesus would be flipping tables today if He was here. When you watch and listen to these men, you can feel the blood boiling on the taking advantage of the weak for personal gain, and you get a little glimpse of how Jesus felt as He saw what men were doing to His Father’s house, in His name at that!

### **Rob Bell**

I will tell you who I think is one of the most dangerous men in the United States of America is, and they call him pastor. Rob Bell, has millions of people who follow his ministry and read his books, and he too leads training conferences to train other men on how to replicate his success. His church alone is 20,000 people. He has a labyrinth on the grounds that you can walk and contemplate your naval. He says there is no Hell, and that God loves all gays, and that they are not in sin. His words are of love only, until you hear him refer to those who still teach that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He says that ‘we’ make God out to be like an Oldsmobile, a relic that has lost touch with today’s new ways, new technology, and new culture. That we need to change with the culture because we are turning people off and away from God. So buy his book for 20 bucks and learn more about the new supped up God. If he does a book signing in the area, please don’t let me know about it ok? Else there will be some table flipping going on, and hence those headlines again.

### **Last 2 Verses**

Listen to these last two verses..... For God is not an Oldsmobile, He has not changed, and He has given us this perfect word, and we can hang our whole lives on it.

*Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV) 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*

**Luke 19:47 And He was teaching daily in the temple. But the chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people sought to destroy Him,**

**Luke 19:48 and were unable to do anything; for all the people were very attentive to hear Him.**

### **People Hung on His Words**

As your margin may render this passage, the people hung on every word Jesus spoke. I find the choice of words interesting, for as they hung on His words, He was about to hang on the Cross for them. The people hung on His words. His words will change our lives, and they are true, every last one of them.

*Isaiah 55:10–11 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> “For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater, <sup>11</sup> So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.*

*Hebrews 4:12–14 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. <sup>13</sup> And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account. <sup>14</sup> Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.*

### **My Vow to You**

I want to say this to you, and that is I know that you come here because we are all like-minded, we all believe the Bible is the Word of God, and that it is true! I know that you trust me in that when you come here, I will not water it down, and I will not compromise it for the sake of not offending people, and for the sake of the coffers, So I commit to you that as it has been, as is it, so it shall be – I will not compromise this word. The role of a shepherd is to make the sheep the most loved, and best fed sheep in the region, and so it shall be.

### **To You who Wonder – Follow me**

But let me close with this to you who may be here who question if you truly can trust His word, maybe you question certain things that he says and call them archaic. When Jesus said to Matthew, “Follow Me,” the word “follow” that He used comes from a Greek word meaning “to walk the same road.” It is in the imperative, meaning that Jesus’ statement was not only an invitation, but also a command. The word is also a verb in the present tense, commanding the beginning of an action and continuing habitually in it. In other words, Jesus was essentially saying, “I command you to follow Me each and every day.” Following Jesus is not something we do only on Sunday. He is not Sunday Jesus, but everyday Jesus. He wants to go with you to church, to school, to work, to the movies, as you surf the Net, and wherever you go. The Bible tells us that Matthew “Arose and followed Him” (Matt. 9:9). Luke’s Gospel adds this detail: “So he [Matthew] left all, rose up, and followed Him” (Luke 5:28). Matthew, recognizing the immense privilege being offered here, without hesitation stood up and followed Jesus. Do you realize what a privilege it is that Jesus is calling you? I wonder where I would be today if I hadn’t followed Him. You may wonder, “If I follow Jesus, will I have to give up anything?” You will give up emptiness, loneliness, guilt, and the fear of death. In its place, Jesus will give you fulfillment, friendship, forgiveness, and the guarantee of heaven when you die. It is God’s “trade-in deal,” and it is here for you right now.

### **Knock at the Door**

It would be like hearing a knock at the front door at your home. “Who is it?” you call out. “It’s Jesus!” a voice replies. “I stand at the door and knock, and if you will hear My voice and open the door, I will come in!” You quickly open the door, and there He stands: Jesus Christ. You quickly invite Him into your front room. Nervously you ask, “Could I get you something to eat. Jesus?” “Of course. Thank you,” He answers. You rush into your kitchen, open the door to the refrigerator, and all that is there is day-old pizza and a few deviled eggs. Somehow these do not seem appropriate. As you are thinking about what to give Jesus to eat, you hear a lot of noise coming from the front room, so you run back in, and there stands Jesus, taking down your pictures from the wall. In the short time you were out of the room, He has already thrown all your furniture onto the front lawn. Now He is proceeding to tear up your carpet, so you cry out, “Jesus, with all due respect, what are You doing?” “A little spring-cleaning,” He calmly responds. “But Jesus, this is all my stuff here, and frankly, if I would have known you were going to get rid of it, I might not have let You in to begin with!” He ignores your outburst and gives a loud whistle as He gestures to the large moving truck backing up to your driveway. Emblazoned on the sides of it are the words, “Father and Son Moving Company.” “Bring it in, boys!” Jesus smiles. Two very large men lay down the most beautiful carpet you have ever seen. Then they begin to put up color-coordinated, lush wall covering. Then new hand-done works of art are hung in the place of your old ones. “You have really good taste, Jesus!” “Yes, I do. Don’t forget, I did create the heavens and Earth,” He answers. “Good point there, Lord!” you sheepishly respond. Then gorgeous, hand-crafted furniture is carefully laid on your new carpet, and suddenly it dawns on you: Jesus only took away the old things to put something better in their place. When a person really meets Jesus Christ, he or she cannot leave the old life fast enough. Old habits, standards, and practices are no longer appealing and are gladly left behind. But far from being depressed about what he left behind, Matthew’s heart overflowed with joy. He lost a career, but gained a destiny. He lost his material possessions, but gained a spiritual fortune. He lost his temporary security, but gained eternal life. He gave up all this world had to offer, but found Jesus.

### **You can Trust His Words**

You can trust His words, and I would say that to any pastor who is afraid to speak and teach His words – you really just don’t know Him, and His power. You hang your whole life on His word, and you will be hanging it on the most sure thing there is in this world – because Jesus is the SURE THING.

# **Luke 20**

## **Whose Are We? (part 1)**

### **(Luke 20:1-26)**

#### **Outline of the Book of Luke:**

The Life of Christ – The God Man (Luke 1-24)

#### **The Prelude to Christ's Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- His Birth & Boyhood
- His Baptism & Temptation

#### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- His Mission Statement
- His Calling of Disciples

#### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- His March to the Cross
- His Calling of Disciples

#### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

#### **The Consummation of Christ's Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

#### **To Recap / 33yrs – 3.5yrs – 3 days away / Sunday – Monday – Now Tuesday / What Authority**

To recap, we have been studying the 33 years of the life of Jesus Christ here on the earth, we have studied the 3.5 years of His public ministry, and we are now in final week of His life, we are only 3 days away from the cross. Two days ago (Sunday) He had rode into Jerusalem and was heralded by all as the Coming King, the day after that (Monday – yesterday in our timeline of today's study) He went into the Temple and flipped tables and drove out all the people who were ripping off the people. And now today, Tuesday in our account, the religious leaders come and say to Him, just who do you think you are! By what authority, under whose direction do you think you have the right to be proclaimed the King of the Jews, and come in here and start flipping tables.

#### **Good Question – Responsible to Test / Not Genuine / 21 – Last Days / 22 – Last Supper / His Authority?**

Good questions....it was their responsibility to test anyone who said they had come in the name of the Lord, it was their responsibility to expose false prophets; good questions but they totally were not coming to Him with a genuine question, they are coming to challenge Him and find reason to reject Him and carry on with life as usual. We could just read through the passages today (see outline below) and go how foolish they were, but let's move on quickly because chapter 21 Jesus speaks about End Times stuff, and that is fascinating stuff, and then chapter 22 we get into the Last Supper, the Betrayal, and all the things of the heart of this great and marvelous Gospel. But oh what then we would miss, because even in these stories today, God speaks a deep and powerful message to us believers today. Christian, have you ever said to Him yourself, what are you doing, why are you allowing this, in essence I don't like what you are doing in my life, this is not what wanted you to do..... Without saying it, we too are questioning His right to do what He does in our life, His authority over our lives, we want to limit His authority as we want to have a say in what He can and can't do in our lives. We in our passage today, we get to come back to a place that we can drift from and forget often – Whose Are We?

## **Whose Are We?**

- Religious Leaders Question Christ's Authority (20:1-8)
- Parable of the Vineyard Owner (20:9-18)
- Herodians Question Tribute Money (20:19-26)

### **Before You Turn me Off – Jesus Knocks on the Door**

And for those who don't know Him, who question His authority over their life, don't trust that He knows what is best for them, I would like to repeat the illustration that I close our last study with.....Imagine the day you hear a knock at the front door at your home. "Who is it?" you call out. "It's Jesus!" a voice replies. "I stand at the door and knock, and if you will hear My voice and open the door, I will come in!" You quickly open the door, and there He stands: Jesus Christ. You quickly invite Him into your front room. Nervously you ask, "Could I get you something to eat. Jesus?" "Of course. Thank you," He answers. You rush into your kitchen, open the door to the refrigerator, and all that is there is day-old pizza and a few deviled eggs. Somehow these do not seem appropriate. As you are thinking about what to give Jesus to eat, you hear a lot of noise coming from the front room, so you run back in, and there stands Jesus, taking down your pictures from the wall. In the short time you were out of the room, He has already thrown all your furniture onto the front lawn. Now He is proceeding to tear up your carpet, so you cry out, "Jesus, with all due respect, what are You doing?" "A little spring-cleaning," He calmly responds. "But Jesus, this is all my stuff here, and frankly, if I would have known you were going to get rid of it, I might not have let You in to begin with!" He ignores your outburst and gives a loud whistle as He gestures to the large moving truck backing up to your driveway. Emblazoned on the sides of it are the words, "Father and Son Moving Company." "Bring it in, boys!" Jesus smiles. Two very large men lay down the most beautiful carpet you have ever seen. Then they begin to put up color-coordinated, lush wall covering. Then new hand-done works of art are hung in the place of your old ones. "You have really good taste, Jesus!" "Yes, I do. Don't forget, I did create the heavens and Earth," He answers. "Good point there, Lord!" you sheepishly respond. Then gorgeous, hand-crafted furniture is carefully laid on your new carpet, and suddenly it dawns on you: Jesus only took away the old things to put something better in their place.

### **Always knows what He is Doing**

Jesus always knows what is best for our lives; He allows all things into our lives, and He glorifies Himself through our lives that we yield to Him.

### **Religious Leaders Question Christ's Authority**

**Luke 20:1** Now it happened on one of those days, as He taught the people in the temple and preached the gospel, that the chief priests and the scribes, together with the elders, confronted Him

**Luke 20:2** and spoke to Him, saying, "Tell us, by what authority are You doing these things? Or who is he who gave You this authority?"

### **Things Referred to King & Tables**

The things He was doing is referring to Jesus riding into Jerusalem and allowing Himself to be publically proclaimed the King of Israel by the Jewish people; and Him flipping tables in the Temple and driving out the money changers, and now here Jesus is preaching and teaching the Word of God.

### **Don't Realize – Antonia Fortress / Whose we Are – to a God nobody Touches**

Just a little note here regarding Jesus flipping tables in the Temple but the temple area wasn't just run by a bunch of guys in robes and funny hats; the temple had temple guards and those guards did not stop or lay a hand on Jesus, and on top of that there was a Roman Army Guard that was stationed there (Antonia Fortress) that overlooked the Temple Mount area, and those guards did not come and stop Jesus nor lay a hand on Him. Case in point, regarding "Whose are We?" We belong to a God that nobody dictates too, that nobody does anything unless He allows it.....and that is your God.....strong and mighty!

### **Teach & Preach**

*Verse 20 - as He taught the people in the temple and preached the gospel* - For us here at CCAAC we like to do the same, as we teach and preach. We have a Bible study on Sunday mornings so we can be equipped, so we can mature in our faith. But we also take the opportunity to preach the good news so people can hear the Gospel and

respond to His invitation. So Jesus doesn't just preach, and He doesn't just teach, He preaches and teaches. Preaching is the Savior part, and teaching is the Lord part.

*Ephesians 4:11–13 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup> till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

*2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV 1900)* <sup>15</sup> Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

### **We are so Blessed to have this Word**

We are so blessed to have this word, are we not. You see this video of people in China getting a Bible, they are so joyous and excited.....we truly forget how blessed we are to have the freedom to read and study this word anytime we want.

**Luke 20:3 But He answered and said to them, “I also will ask you one thing, and answer Me:**

**Luke 20:4 The baptism of John—was it from heaven or from men?”**

**Luke 20:5 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ He will say, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’”**

**Luke 20:6 But if we say, ‘From men,’ all the people will stone us, for they are persuaded that John was a prophet.”**

**Luke 20:7 So they answered that they did not know where it was from.**

**Luke 20:8 And Jesus said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.”**

### **Love Word Picture – Pompous Religious Men / Still today So-called Brilliant People try to Trap Jesus**

I love the word picture here in my head as these pompous religious men come thinking they are going to outsmart Jesus. Nothing changed in 2,000 years either as many of the so-called brilliant minds try to destroy the words, the life, the history of Jesus, only to be left looking foolish as their trap entraps them.

### **They Thought they Trapped Him – Blasphemer or Anarchists**

See they thought they had Jesus trapped here because if Jesus said He was sent by God, then they could have Him stoned for blaspheme, if Jesus said because He was the King of Israel then they could tell the Romans that Jesus was causing an uprising against Caesar and then the Romans would have reason to kill Him, and if Jesus said He was sent by God or was not the King, then the people would think Him a coward and they would all walk away from Him.

### **Trapped Them / John 1:29 Lamb / Matthew 6:25 - Hero**

So the trap the set, ended up entrapping them because they knew that if they said John was sent from God, then Jesus would say then why didn't you listen to his words that I am the Lamb of God, and if the religious leaders spoke out against John, they would probably have been stoned themselves at that moment because John was a beloved prophet of the people, and he was a hero to them because he had been killed by King Herod who they all hated, and he was killed for standing up to him and not backing down, thus a hero in the eyes of the people.

*John 1:29 (NKJV)* <sup>29</sup> The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

*Mark 6:25 (NKJV)* <sup>25</sup> Immediately she came in with haste to the king and asked, saying, “I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.”

### **Won't Answer – Today is only 12 of Nissan**

Why didn't Jesus plainly answer Him, because the day is the 12<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, and the Passover lamb was to be killed on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Jesus was in control, not the people, and not Satan.

*Exodus 12:6 (KJV 1900)* <sup>6</sup> And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.

### **Christian – By what Degree of Authority does God have in your Life?**

They challenged His authority but went away with nothing, sadly absolutely nothing, in that their hearts were not changed. That is the way it is even for us, for when we challenge God, asking Him why He is doing what He is doing, we go away with nothing, a heart unchanged. But ..... all through the scriptures anyone asking sincerely, God always answered (Nicodemus is a great example in John 3). But let me ask this question to you about His

authority; Christian, by what authority does Jesus have in your life today? Is it full-authority, is it partial-authority, is it no-authority? He could dictate every step of the future because He had full-authority, and His future was perfect, it was right on-time, and it brought God the Father glory. Christian, your life, your future, the timing of events, the degree your life brings God glory will all come down to this.....what degree of authority does He have in your life, for the degree He has authority will be the degree of the glory you bring Him.

### **You can Trust Him – Give Him Full Authority**

Christian you can trust Him, you can give Him full authority in your life, even when you question what He is doing, why is this happening, don't you care?. He is a God who is awesome in power, so awesome that this earth He created would fit 1.3 million times inside the sun, yet our sun is only considered an average star. Imagine that our earth fits 1.3 million times inside the sun, yet our God says not a sparrow falls nor a hair on head that He doesn't know it. And, a God who would send His only Son to die for your sin....He demonstrated His great love there upon the cross.

*Matthew 10:29–31 (NKJV) <sup>29</sup> Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. <sup>30</sup> But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. <sup>31</sup> Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.*

*John 3:16 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

*Romans 5:8 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

### **Parable of the Vineyard Owner**

**Luke 20:9 Then He began to tell the people this parable: “A certain man planted a vineyard, leased it to vinedressers, and went into a far country for a long time.**

### **End before Beginning – Israel is Vineyard**

Just to tell you the end at the beginning this is a parable about the Nation Israel. Isaiah also used a vineyard to portray Israel's relationship with God (Isaiah 5:7). Therefore, Jesus' audience would have recognized the vineyard as a picture of themselves and the vineyard owner as God. But the story isn't going to end well for the hearers of this.

*Isaiah 5:1–7 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Now let me sing to my Well-beloved A song of my Beloved regarding His vineyard: My Well-beloved has a vineyard On a very fruitful hill. <sup>2</sup> He dug it up and cleared out its stones, And planted it with the choicest vine. He built a tower in its midst, And also made a winepress in it; So He expected it to bring forth good grapes, But it brought forth wild grapes. <sup>3</sup> “And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, Judge, please, between Me and My vineyard. <sup>4</sup> What more could have been done to My vineyard That I have not done in it? Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes, Did it bring forth wild grapes? <sup>5</sup> And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned; And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. <sup>6</sup> I will lay it waste; It shall not be pruned or dug, But there shall come up briers and thorns. I will also command the clouds That they rain no rain on it.” <sup>7</sup> For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, And the men of Judah are His pleasant plant. He looked for justice, but behold, oppression; For righteousness, but behold, a cry for help.*

**Luke 20:10 Now at vintage-time he sent a servant to the vinedressers, that they might give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the vinedressers beat him and sent him away empty-handed.**

**Luke 20:11 Again he sent another servant; and they beat him also, treated him shamefully, and sent him away empty-handed.**

**Luke 20:12 And again he sent a third; and they wounded him also and cast him out.**

**Luke 20:13 “Then the owner of the vineyard said, ‘What shall I do? I will send my beloved son. Probably they will respect him when they see him.’**

**Luke 20:14 But when the vinedressers saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.’**

### **Prophet after Prophet / Stiff-Necked**

So Jesus describing how Israel had hardened their heart towards God, how God sent them prophet after prophet calling out to them to turn from their sin and come unto God, but time after time we read in the OT of the Nation Israel rejecting the prophets. God the Father blessed the nation abundantly and gave the Jews a land that was rich and pleasant. All He asked was that they obey His statutes and give Him the “spiritual harvest” He deserved. Instead of being grateful for their blessings and joyfully giving the Lord His due, the nation proceeded to rob God and reject His messengers (see Neh. 9:26; Jer. 7:25–26; 25:4). God was patient and sent them one servant after

another, but they refused to obey (Matt. 23:29–39). Many of these prophets are mentioned in the Hall of Faith (Hebrews 11)

*Jeremiah 7:23–26 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> But this is what I commanded them, saying, 'Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people. And walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you.' <sup>24</sup> Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but followed the counsels and the dictates of their evil hearts, and went backward and not forward. <sup>25</sup> Since the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt until this day, I have even sent to you all My servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them. <sup>26</sup> Yet they did not obey Me or incline their ear, but stiffened their neck. They did worse than their fathers.

*Hebrews 11:35–38 (NKJV)* <sup>35</sup> Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. <sup>36</sup> Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. <sup>37</sup> They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented— <sup>38</sup> of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.

### **Finally Sent Son – Jesus Announces His Death**

Finally, He sent His beloved Son (Luke 3:22) and they killed Him. In this story, Jesus gave His own death announcement.

**Luke 20:15 So they cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do to them?**

**Luke 20:16 He will come and destroy those vinedressers and give the vineyard to others.” And when they heard it they said, “Certainly not!”**

### **Jesus giving Opportunity – Not Protecting Self**

In giving the Jewish leaders yet another opportunity to repent, Jesus wasn't trying to protect His own life. He knew He would die on the Cross to pay for their sins. Rather, He was pleading with them to save their own lives. What was their answer? A tragically defensive, “God forbid.”

### **If you Have not given your Life to Christ**

If you are here today and have yet to give your life fully to Christ, he is pleading with you to do it today, for you know not what tomorrow may bring.

**Luke 20:17 Then He looked at them and said, “What then is this that is written: ‘The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone’ ?**

### **Quotes Psalm 118 / Cornerstone when Building Temple**

The verse Jesus quotes—Psalm 118:22—is the most oft-quoted Old Testament verse in the New Testament. It refers to the construction of the temple under Solomon's reign when the massive stones were chiseled miles away from the building site in order that no sound be heard upon the temple mount. When the stones arrived, one stone didn't fit and was thrown down the hill into the Kidron Valley. When it became evident that the cornerstone was missing, the stone that had been rejected turned out to be the one that fit perfectly. Jesus applies this to Himself. “You're trying to build your religion apart from Me,” He says, “but you're going to see that I am the Cornerstone. Without Me, nothing stands.”

*Psalm 118:22 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone.

**Luke 20:18 Whoever falls on that stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.”**

### **Fall Upon and Be Broken – by Admitting need a Savior / It Falls On - Rejection**

The one who falls upon Jesus, the Cornerstone, will indeed be broken, for its only in admitting our sin and our need that we can be saved. You see, those who aren't broken before Him will one day be broken by Him. Every knee shall bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord (Philippians 2:10). The only question is when will this happen? Will you do it now in brokenness before Him and be saved? Or will you wait too long and be broken by Him?

*Philippians 2:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,

### **This is an Invitation / Invitation to Build a Life upon Solid Foundation / God who Loves Us**

Falling on this stone, rather than the stone falling on us, is an invitation to build a life upon that which is solid and unmovable. We fall on a God who loves us deeply, and bleed for us profusely from the Cross as He demonstrated the depth of His love for us.

### **Brokenness is Beautiful – But can only Build off of Brokenness**

Brokenness is a beautiful thing, you can only build off of brokenness, for we must first be broken of our self. We have to be broken of who has the authority in our lives, come to the place where He has full-authority in our lives, not partial.

### **Everything is Built off of Him**

Everything is built off of Him, but everything first must be built off of brokenness. God is saying to you today, let's build something together, let's build something great together. Jesus had said to this same people "oh if only you knew the day of your visitation", here I am right before You and you don't even see it. And here God is right before you today saying here I am, and I am so wanting and desiring to do something great together with you – Today!

- Let's build a great marriage together, but first you have to be broken. You have to die to your desires and live wholly unto your spouse.
- Let's build a great witness together at your workplace, but first you have to be broken, you have to die to your career plans and ambitions and just say Lord I am your voice and witness in this workplace
- Let's build a great ministry together, but first you have to be broken, you have to die to your terms of how you will be used and let Me use you as I deem, submitting to My authority.
- Let's build a great child together, but first you have to be broken, you have to die to your career path, your free time, your hobby, and fully engage them at whatever the cost.
- Let's build something great together, but time is short (count you days), and be willing to be broken on each of those days.

*Luke 19:42 (NKJV) <sup>42</sup> saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.*

*Psalms 90:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> So teach us to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom.*

### **Herodians Question Tribute Money**

**Luke 20:19 And the chief priests and the scribes that very hour sought to lay hands on Him, but they feared the people—for they knew He had spoken this parable against them.**

**Luke 20:20 So they watched Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, that they might seize on His words, in order to deliver Him to the power and the authority of the governor.**

### **They got it – But it didn't get Them / No Heart Change**

Well they got it the parable of the vineyard, but unfortunately the parable didn't "get" them to change their hearts and see it was an invitation to repent and come unto the vineyard owner.

### **They are Furious – Kill Him / Pretend to be Righteous / They will Succeed**

They are furious and they want to kill Jesus right there, but know they cant do it in front of the people at this point, to they have to set a new trap. This new trap, I love the wording, is to "pretend to be righteous". We are going to act like we are the righteous ones, the protectors of the faith, and thus swing the popular vote back to us.....and they will be successful (but only as God allows it) for in just 3 days the crowds will not be hanging on his every word (Luke 19:48), but will yell out crucify Him (Luke 23:21).

*Luke 19:48 (NKJV) <sup>48</sup> and were unable to do anything; for all the people were very attentive to hear Him.*

*Luke 23:21 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> But they shouted, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!"*

### **Be on Guard / Grace out the Window**

We all must continually be on guard for people pretending to be righteous, but truly have a self-seeking motive behind their agenda. And just so you are not surprised, if a wolf comes in here and you hear about us dealing harshly with them, don't be surprised, for we will not tolerate anyone who comes in here to harm you.

*Matthew 7:15 (NKJV) <sup>15</sup> "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.*

**Luke 20:21 Then they asked Him, saying, “Teacher, we know that You say and teach rightly, and You do not show personal favoritism, but teach the way of God in truth:**

#### **Perfumed with Flattery / Reverse of Gossip**

Their strategy was perfumed with flattery. Flattery is the reverse mirror-image of gossip. Gossip involves saying behind a person’s back what you would never say to his face. Flattery is saying to a person’s face what you would never say behind his back. How ingratiating their language was—like puffs from a perfume bottle: (squeeze) “Teacher, you’re always right.” (squeeze) “Preacher, you don’t play favorites. You show us the true way.” How sweet it seemed!

**Luke 20:22 Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”**

**Luke 20:23 But He perceived their craftiness, and said to them, “Why do you test Me?”**

#### **Dual Horns to Impale Self / Zealots had Raised up over Taxes**

Jesus was ready for the question that followed their flattery: “Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?” (v. 22). The question was meant to hang Jesus over the dual horns of a dilemma, so he would impale himself on one or the other. The tax issue was explosive. When Jesus was a little boy, Roman taxation had been the cause of a serious revolt (cf. Josephus, War 2, 8, 1; Antiquities 18, 1, 1).<sup>1</sup> That revolt spawned the Zealot movement that would ultimately issue in the revolt of A.D. 70 and the destruction of Jerusalem. If Jesus answered “No, it is not right to pay taxes to Caesar,” he would be impaled on the horn of arrest. The Herodians would sprint to Pilate, and he would be arrested as an insurrectionist and summarily executed. Rome tolerated diversity in religion but used cold steel to deal with political problems. But if Jesus answered, “Yes, it is right to pay taxes to Caesar,” he would be impaled on the horn of alienation from his people. The Pharisees would gleefully spread the message that he was a collaborationist, and the people would abandon him in disgust. They were confident that they had him. They had imitated his brilliance by creating a dilemma question much like the one with which he had embarrassed them when he asked, “Tell me, John’s baptism—was it from Heaven or from men?” (v. 3). They had been bested then, but at least they were good learners. Jesus, let’s see you get out of this one! they thought. His antagonists waited with bated breath—the Pharisees hoping for a yes they could herald to the nation, and the Herodians equally eager for a no that could be taken to the Romans.

**Luke 20:24 Show Me a denarius. Whose image and inscription does it have?” They answered and said, “Caesar’s.”**

**Luke 20:25 And He said to them, “Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”**

**Luke 20:26 But they could not catch Him in His words in the presence of the people. And they marveled at His answer and kept silent.**

#### **The Image of Caesar / Not have Graven Images / They had it in their Pockets**

What followed was astonishing. “He saw through their duplicity and said to them, ‘Show me a denarius’ ” (vv. 23, 24a). The denarius was a small silver coin weighing about 3.8 grams. One side bore the head of Caesar and the abbreviated inscription TI. CAESAR DIVI AVG. F. AVGVSTVS (“Tiberius Caesar, son of the divine Augustus, Augustus”). The denarius was the amount that had to be paid into the Roman fiscus (treasury) by all adult men and women just for the privilege of existing. It could only be paid with that coin bearing Caesar’s image and inscription. As our Lord regarded the coin, a hush fell upon the entire throng. The demand was sobering because for an upright Jew the image of Caesar on a coin was an abomination. The inscription “divine Augustus” was considered a transgression of the Second Commandment against graven images (Exodus 20:4) and thus obvious blasphemy. Moreover, Jesus’ asking that they show the coin implied that his upright detractors were carrying such a coin. The scene became very quiet indeed. His counterquestion broke the silence: “Whose portrait and inscription are on it?” (v. 24b). “Caesar’s” (v. 25a) came the grudging reply. They had hoped to avoid using that name.

#### **Give Caesar his Due / Man Created in Image of God**

Jesus put Caesar in his place, and again there was nothing that Jesus’ enemies could do about it. On top of this, Jesus’ demand to give “to God what is God’s” implicitly declared God’s claim to total ownership. The coin belonged to Caesar because it bore his image, and we are God’s because we bear his image! “So God created man in

his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them” (Genesis 1:27). Jesus’ Jewish listeners, with their mental listening habits, automatically made this connection. Every human is cast in the image of God, and the superscription on every human coin should remind us of God’s ownership.

*Genesis 1:27 (NKJV) 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.*

### **Render – Pay your Debt**

Render means to “pay debt to”. So Jesus is saying pay your debt to Caesar and the government (as should you – hope you fulfilled that with your taxes); and thus we pay debt to government, but we are also to pay debt to God, whose image we are created. Our debt, is our lives. Not a message that is being preached much today, as today people want to hear a message about what God is to do for them, what is expected of God. ....whereas here Jesus is making the statement to all who call Him Lord, “You are Mine” – bought with a Great Price – Now live like it.

*1 Corinthians 6:20 (NKJV) 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.*

### **Richard Wurmbrand**

I close with this story, it is about a man you may have heard about, his name is Richard Wurmbrand. Richard was a pastor in communist Romania and the communist government took all Christians who spoke openly about Christ and put them in prison. He was placed in mostly solitary confinement for most of his 14 years. He was beaten daily, forced to stand on a stool for hours with razor and nails next to his feet so that if he moved they would slice his feet. For some days he would have to sit and hear a recording (Communism is good, Christianity is stupid, give up, nobody loves you). Years of this torture and abuse. He said they had nothing, 1 slice of bread a week to eat, no clothing, no light, no color, no faces to see, no communication, no bible, no worship, no fellowship, and no communion. He said one night after many years he said Lord I have nothing, but you have in times past spoken to your servants like Paul, so Lord would speak to me. And he said God did speak, but not what he had expected. He expected a word of encouragement and comfort, but God said to him, what is your name? he knew that God knew his name, so he knew God was working to reveal something in him. He thought to answer Him with his name Richard, but then he remembered the story of a man named Richard who was martyred for his faith. In fact when that man went to the be hanged the executioner could not get the rope untangled, so this man Richard said I am a famer, I am good with ropes, let me help untangle it for you, and he did, and then he told the executioner that he had no resentment towards him and he knew he simply doing his job, and then he was hung. So Richard Wurmbrand said I could not say my name was Richard because God might say are you like that Richard? Then he thought of other names of people and he said I dare not liken myself to Mary the mother of Jesus because God might say are you pure like her? Or Mary Magdalene because God might say do you weep and repent of your sins like here? Are you like John the apostle of love? So he thought to say I am a Pastor, but he said how could I for I was not a shepherd as I should have been. So then he said I could not answer that I was a Christian because I thought of all the first century Christians who had laid their life down for their faith. Then he said oh Lord I have no name, allow me that I might only bear Your name. Richard then quotes what the apostle Paul said, it is no longer I that lives, but Christ in me. Are you willing to become nothing, so that Christ may live in and through you, the one whose image you bear? We can trust Him, we can give Him full authority in our lives for He knows what He is doing. But the only way for Him to build something with us, is for us to be broken, to come to nothingness, so He can build something great together with us.

*Galatians 2:20 (NKJV) 20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

*2 Corinthians 12:11 (NKJV) 11 I have become a fool in boasting; you have compelled me. For I ought to have been commended by you; for in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, though I am nothing.*

### **Not Whom Am I – but Whose Am I**

It is not “whom am I am” but “whose am I” – it is life changing when we leave the place of elevating who we are, and enter a life of whose we are.

# Whose Are We? (part 2)

## (Luke 20:27 – 21:4)

### Outline of the Book of Luke:

#### The Life of Christ – The God Man (Luke 1-24)

##### **The Prelude to Christ's Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- His Birth & Boyhood
- His Baptism & Temptation

##### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- His Mission Statement
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- His March to the Cross
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

##### **The Consummation of Christ's Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

### **To Recap / 33yrs – 3.5yrs – 3 days away / Sunday – Monday – Now Tuesday / What Authority**

To recap, we have been studying the 33 years of the life of Jesus Christ here on the earth, we have studied the 3.5 years of His public ministry, and we are now in final week of His life, we are only 3 days away from the cross. Two days ago (Sunday) He had rode into Jerusalem and was heralded by all as the Coming King, the day after that (Monday – yesterday in our timeline of today's study) He went into the Temple and flipped tables and drove out all the people who were ripping off the people. And now today, Tuesday in our account, the religious leaders come and say to Him, just who do you think you are! By what authority, under whose direction do you think you have the right to be proclaimed the King of the Jews, and come in here and start flipping tables.

### **Testing Jesus / It is Passover – the 12<sup>th</sup> of Nissan / 10<sup>th</sup> bring Lamb into Home – Little Puppy / Sin Personal**

So they are testing Jesus, they are looking for some flaw, so chink in the armor, but they have not and will not find a flaw. You see it is Passover right now, and currently the day is the 12th of Nissan, and in accordance with the Mosaic Law that was established all the way back when the children of Israel were delivered from Egypt, the Passover sacrificial lamb was to be sacrificed on the 14th of Nissan. The lamb was supposed to be brought into the home of the house on the 10th, and live among the family, to become personal and intimate so there would be an emotional bond established between the innocent lamb and the people of the home. It would be like getting a puppy today and bringing it into your home for four days and then after everyone is attached to the innocent and sweet puppy they take it down and have to watch it be sacrificed for the sins of the family.....and to everyone sin would become real personal. Imagine the children at such a young age saying "but daddy why" why does the lamb have to die, what did the lamb ever do, and the dad would have to explain the substitutionary atoning death of how the lamb took their place and his place because of sin so that they might have their sins covered before the holy God, and that someday God Himself will come and take our sin away.

*Exodus 12:3 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup> Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household.'*

*Exodus 12:6 (KJV 1900)* <sup>6</sup> And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.

*Genesis 3:15 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup> And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."

### **Lamb had to be Spotless / Inspected by Priests & Pilate**

Well one of the other things that went on during this time was that the lamb was to be inspected to ensure that it had no imperfections, for it had to be perfect/spotless, and so at some point the priests at the temple inspected the lamb to declare it faultless. In our story today we see that on the 10th of Nissan (which was Sunday), Jesus was brought into the House of Israel, and now today He is being inspected by the priests to see whether He has fault, in which they will not, and later in the week Pilate will declare to all "I find no fault in this Man".

*Exodus 12:5 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

*Luke 20:39–40 (NKJV)* <sup>39</sup> Then some of the scribes answered and said, "Teacher, You have spoken well." <sup>40</sup> But after that they dared not question Him anymore.

*John 19:4 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> Pilate then went out again, and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you, that you may know that I find no fault in Him."

### **Come with Challenge – Leave Silenced / But Leave with the Truth**

So they come with challenge after challenge, and go away silenced every time, and so too will they again today as we look at the remaining chapter. Yes they will go away silenced each time, but they also go away with something else, and that is the truth. In each encounter, and every encounter, Jesus gives them the truth. Pilate will challenge it himself, but challenge it as he may; the truth is still the truth, even when men reject it as such.

*John 18:37–38 (NKJV)* <sup>37</sup> Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered, "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." <sup>38</sup> Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, "I find no fault in Him at all.

### **I Love that about Jesus – No matter what I ask – He answers with Truth / Truth Leads to Growth/Freedom**

I so love that about Jesus, in that no matter what I ever ask Him, He always gives me the truth, regardless if it stings me, or humbles me, or even angers me because of my pride, but He always gives the truth, because every question we ask and seek of the Lord is to take us somewhere, lead us to the next step, free us from some past, open an opportunity for today or tomorrow, and it set us free, free to grow, free to live, free to love, free to build something great together with Him.

*John 8:31–32 (NKJV)* <sup>31</sup> Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. <sup>32</sup> And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

*John 8:36 (NKJV)* <sup>36</sup> Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

### **We Teach Truth / We gain Understanding – we gain Wisdom**

We teach the truth here, we always will teach the truth, even when it may upset, anger, sting, humble.....because we know that for those who are truly seeking Him in Spirit and Truth..... the Word is the truth and we will grow and build great things together with Him.

*Psalms 119:97–104 (NKJV)* <sup>97</sup> Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day. <sup>98</sup> You, through Your commandments, make me wiser than my enemies; For they are ever with me. <sup>99</sup> I have more understanding than all my teachers, For Your testimonies are my meditation. <sup>100</sup> I understand more than the ancients, Because I keep Your precepts. <sup>101</sup> I have restrained my feet from every evil way, That I may keep Your word. <sup>102</sup> I have not departed from Your judgments, For You Yourself have taught me. <sup>103</sup> How sweet are Your words to my taste, Sweeter than honey to my mouth! <sup>104</sup> Through Your precepts I get understanding; Therefore I hate every false way.

### **Last Time Together – Made in His Image / Did you Live in His Image this Week?**

And last time we were together God told us the truth about something didn't He, He said we are made in His image, and we are to give to God what is God's, and that is our life, our heart, all that we are. He is showing us and giving us confidence that we can give ourselves to Him fully. It is beautiful freedom when we live in that place of knowing "Whose we Are", for we then know that He is in total control, and we can rest in that control. Did you live in His image this week? God wants all of you, He wants you to give Him all of yourself, and He promises He will build something great together with you.

## **Whose Are We?**

- Religious Leaders Question Christ's Authority (20:1-8)
- Parable of the Vineyard Owner (20:9-18)
- Herodians Question Tribute Money (20:19-26)
- Sadducees Question Resurrection (20:27-38)
- Jesus Questions the Scribes (20:39-47)
- The Widow's Mites (21:1-4)

*Luke 20:2 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup> and spoke to Him, saying, "Tell us, by what authority are You doing these things? Or who is he who gave You this authority?"*

*Luke 20:18 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> Whoever falls on that stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."*

*Luke 20:23–25 (NKJV) <sup>23</sup> But He perceived their craftiness, and said to them, "Why do you test Me? <sup>24</sup> Show Me a denarius. Whose image and inscription does it have?" They answered and said, "Caesar's." <sup>25</sup> And He said to them, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."*

## **Sadducees Question Resurrection**

**Luke 20:27 Then some of the Sadducees, who deny that there is a resurrection, came to Him and asked Him,**

### **Denied anything Spiritual – Life only what you See**

Basically the Sadducees denied anything supernatural. They denied the resurrection, angels, miracles, hell, and demons. There are lots of people like that today who deny everything that is supernatural. They say life is only what you can see.

### **Pharisee - Sadducees**

- Pharisees = the legalists / conservatives. They took the Bible seriously.
- Sadducees = the modernists / liberals. They did not believe in a resurrection.

### **Liberals – Separate from Heritage / Crept into Church Today / There is no Hell**

Liberal" is the euphemistic term for spiritually bankrupt degenerates, subversives seeking to separate us from our heritage. There was a time that the unregenerates were outside the church. An unbeliever = a skeptic, denying the authority of Scripture, the deity of Christ and the supernatural. Today, they've crept into the church. They are a people who may not say there is no resurrection, but what they will say is that there is no hell – which is the same damage.

### **Sad-you- See / It is a Rule**

Sadducees believed there was no resurrection - that is why they are sad you see, again i have to say that as that is a rule you have agree to say that every time or else they won't give your preaching license. We have to say that:

- apostles drove a Honda because they were all in one Accord,
- and we have to say that men make the coffee because it says He-brews.
- How long did Cain hate his brother? As long as he was Abel
- What kind of man was Boaz before he got married? He was Ruth-less

So these are rules I have to abide by and comply else I lose my preaching license from the State.

**Luke 20:28 saying: "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, having a wife, and he dies without children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother.**

**Luke 20:29 Now there were seven brothers. And the first took a wife, and died without children.**

**Luke 20:30 And the second took her as wife, and he died childless.**

**Luke 20:31 Then the third took her, and in like manner the seven also; and they left no children, and died.**

**Luke 20:32 Last of all the woman died also.**

**Luke 20:33 Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife does she become? For all seven had her as wife."**

### **Sounds Strange – but Family takes Care of Family**

I tell you it is a strange practice this story of raising up kin; but that was God's way of keeping the Nation pure and from going out and intermarrying with the surrounding heathen nations; and also, a big point of this is that family is supposed to take care of family. It is a beautiful thing when we take care of each other around here.

**Deuteronomy 25:5–10 (NKJV)** <sup>5</sup> "If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not be married to a stranger outside the family; her husband's brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. <sup>6</sup> And it shall be that the firstborn son which she bears will succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel. <sup>7</sup> But if the man does not want to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate to the elders, and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to raise up a name to his brother in Israel; he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother.' <sup>8</sup> Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him. But if he stands firm and says, 'I do not want to take her,' <sup>9</sup> then his brother's wife shall come to him in the presence of the elders, remove his sandal from his foot, spit in his face, and answer and say, 'So shall it be done to the man who will not build up his brother's house.' <sup>10</sup> And his name shall be called in Israel, 'The house of him who had his sandal removed.'

### **I smell a Rat**

They don't believe in the resurrection, yet they are asking a question a question about the resurrection - I smell a rat.

**Luke 20:34** Jesus answered and said to them, "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage.

### **You Error for you Know not the Scriptures or Power of God / Many Error Today**

Mark and Matthews Gospel Jesus first says to them that they error in that they do not know the scriptures nor the power of God. May that never be said of us. When I met people who do not believe in God, or that Jesus is the way to God, I always, if they give me the chance, ask them well how much of the Bible have you read. Usually the answer is none, or they try to make it sound like they studied a lot of it, but when you get down to it they have hardly read any of it. They may say they went to church for years and I say that is great but how much of the Bible have you personally read all by yourself. I always challenge them and ask them how can you make a decision about your eternity and not have ever read this Bible from cover to cover. Really are you that busy? You can read the whole Bible in 2-3 months if you just read a couple hours a day. How much time do you cruise the internet or watch TV every day and yet you couldn't spend a couple months of your life reading the book that can tell you how to have a personal relationship with God. If you read it and at the end don't believe it, at least you could say and have the confidence in knowing that you searched it out and have formed a conclusion you are confident of.

**Matthew 22:29 (NKJV)** <sup>29</sup> Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.

**Proverbs 30:5 (NKJV)** <sup>5</sup> Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.

### **What a Blessings for us to Study / Connection between Word and Power / Overcome Fear & Hopelessness**

Oh what a joy and blessing for us who come here and we study this word verse-by-verse, chapter-by-chapter, book-by-book. What a beautiful book and do you see here a subtle connection, and that is Jesus connects knowing the word with the power of God. There is power in this book, power to overcome fear, power to overcome addictions, depression, and hopelessness. How often I come to meet with people who are suffering, depressed, hopeless and say they want to give up, and I nearly every time when I ask them how much time are you spending in the word, and they most always say zero. No word, no power.

### **Boston Bombing**

As I reflected on the Bombing in Boston, I felt myself totally down, sickened, that 8 year old boys face churning over and over in my mind - and then I opened to the word, and I read Isaiah, and I found myself mounting up upon wings like eagles - and was reminded that there is coming a day when Jesus is going to rule and reign on this earth, and 8 year old boys will not be killed, there sister will not loss a limb, and evil wont rejoice over it. Let me just read it to you, before I move on to our study, and may we remember together, there will come a day where there will be peace on earth.

**Isaiah 65:17–25 (NKJV)** <sup>17</sup> "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. <sup>18</sup> But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, And her people a joy. <sup>19</sup> I will rejoice in Jerusalem, And joy in My people; The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, Nor the voice of crying. <sup>20</sup> "No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, Nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; For the child shall die one hundred years old, But the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed. <sup>21</sup> They shall build houses and inhabit them; They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. <sup>22</sup> They shall not build and another inhabit; They shall not plant and another eat; For as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, And My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. <sup>23</sup> They shall not labor in vain, Nor bring forth children for trouble; For they shall be the descendants of the blessed of the LORD, And their offspring with them. <sup>24</sup> "It shall come to pass That before they call, I will answer; And while they are still speaking, I will hear. <sup>25</sup> The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, The lion shall eat straw like the ox, And dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain," Says the LORD.

**Luke 20:34** Jesus answered and said to them, “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage.  
**Luke 20:35** But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage;  
**Luke 20:36** nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.

### **No Marriage in Heaven**

Jesus clearly is saying that there is no marriage in heaven (excuse me did I just see you whip your forehead)

### **We Live Forever**

And really Jesus is doing so much more than putting these guys in their place for trying to entrap Him; He is declaring to man that you are precious, you are eternal, and you can live with Me forever in heaven. What a beautiful invitation.

### **Mormon’s / But we won’t Error**

There will be no marriage in heaven, so should the Mormons come to your house and tell you about celestial marriage, and how you and your spouse will be married and be gods, and have your own plants, and rule and reign over it, you can stop them there and bring them to this verse. We won’t error because we know the scriptures.

### **Equal to Angels – eternal / But we are not Angels – no Wings**

We are equal to the angels in the sense that we are eternal beings, we are not angels, thus we don’t get wings and we don’t play a harp on a cloud. We won’t error because we know the scriptures. You can still watch *It is a Wonderful Life*, and enjoy the movie, but you know that we don’t become angels and get wings, and thus every time that a bell rings it is an angel getting its wing. Oh ZuuZuu petals aren’t in there either there George. We are like angels in that we do not marry, and we do not die, and we are eternal beings.

### **Communism**

In our modern era, we see communism wants to destroy that there is an after-life, so does socialism, because then they promote the doctrine/ideology that all that there is to live for is now, and that man should live for something greater than themselves (they have that part right), but that greater than self is not God (for there is not God), but for others, for the motherland. And thus they indoctrinate and brainwash people to that ideology. They say all the world is only matter, and that man is only matter, and is not a spiritual being.

### **Richard Warmbrand**

Here is an expert from Rich Warmbrands (who was imprisoned for 14 years in Communist Romania for preaching Christ) book – *Tortured for Christ*:

*On one occasion a Communist was giving a lecture on atheism. All factory workers were required to attend; among these workers were many Christians. They sat quietly hearing all the arguments against God and about the stupidity of believing in Christ. The lecturer attempted to prove that there is no spiritual world, no God, no Christ, and no hereafter; man is only matter with no soul. He said over and over that only matter exists. A Christian stood up and asked to speak. Permission was given. The Christian picked up his folding chair and threw it down. He paused, looking at it He then walked up and slapped the Communist lecturer in the face. The lecturer became very angry. His face flushed red with indignation. He shouted obscenities and called for fellow Communists to arrest the Christian. He demanded, 'How dare you slap me? What is the reason?' The Christian replied, 'You have just proved yourself a liar. You said everything is matter...nothing else. I picked up a chair and threw it down. It is truly matter. The chair did not become angry. It is only matter. When I slapped you, you did not react like the chair. You reacted differently. Matter does not get mad or angry, but you did. Therefore, comrade professor, you are wrong. Man is more than matter. We are spiritual beings!'*

**Luke 20:37** But even Moses showed in the burning bush passage that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord ‘the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’

**Luke 20:38** For He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live to Him.”

### **I am – not I was / Quotes Exodus 3**

Jesus said I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob..... He did not say I was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jesus is clearly saying that they are still alive, and thus there is life after death, and that man is an eternal being. Jesus quotes Exodus 3, so He is using scripture to prove His point, and the Sadducee only believed in the first five books of the bible, and not the rest (prophets and poetry).

*Exodus 3:4–6 (NKJV) <sup>4</sup> So when the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." <sup>5</sup> Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground." <sup>6</sup> Moreover He said, "I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.*

### **Parents – Only thing we Create that Last Forever**

You know parents, the only thing you can create on this earth that will last forever is your children. So let's not get to wrapped up in the things that are going to fade into dust, let's invest heavily, or better said, heavenly.

### **Jesus doing So Much More – Declaring Man is Eternal and Precious**

And really Jesus is doing so much more than putting these guys in their place for trying to entrap Him; He is declaring to man that you are precious, you are eternal, and you can live with Me forever in heaven. What a beautiful invitation.

### **Sick man – What is on the Other Side**

A sick man turned to his doctor one evening, as he was preparing to leave the examination room and said, "Doctor, I am afraid to die -- tell me what lies on the other side, will you?" "I'm really not sure," said the doctor. "You don't know? You, a Christian man, don't know what's on the other side?" Suddenly, there came a sound of scratching and whining at the door. As the doctor turned the handle, a dog sprang into the room and leapt on him with an eager show of gladness. Lovingly bending down and holding the cute pup, the doctor turned to his patient and said "Have you met my dog? I do apologize; He usually comes and sits with me in my office when I work late. After a short pause, he continued. "He's actually never been in this room before. He didn't know what was inside. He knew nothing except that his master was here, and when the door opened, he sprang in without fear... I know little of what is on the other side of death, my friend, but I do know one thing... I know my Master is there and that's I all I need." Saints we may not know exactly what we will find in that glorious home that awaits us, but those of us who know the Lord Jesus, know He's there! Be encouraged today! Our long journey here will end in our loving master's arms.

### ***Christ Questions the Scribes***

**Luke 20:39** Then some of the scribes answered and said, "Teacher, You have spoken well."

**Luke 20:40** But after that they dared not question Him anymore.

### **The Lamb Inspected**

So the Passover Lamb has been inspected, and found spotless.

**Luke 20:41** And He said to them, "How can they say that the Christ is the Son of David?"

**Luke 20:42** Now David himself said in the Book of Psalms: 'The LORD said to my Lord, " Sit at My right hand,

**Luke 20:43** Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'"

**Luke 20:44** Therefore David calls Him 'Lord'; how is He then his Son?"

**Luke 20:45** Then, in the hearing of all the people, He said to His disciples,

**Luke 20:46** "Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces, the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts,

**Luke 20:47** who devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation."

### **Messiah through Lineage of David**

How did they say Messiah is David's son - How could David call his son Lord, who was not even born. Jesus is drawing out the prophecy that the Messiah will come through the lineage of David, and thus David could call his son Lord. What is amazing is that Jesus is through the lineage of David through Mary

*Psalm 110:1–2 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." <sup>2</sup> The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies!*

### **If Sadducees would have Thought it Through / But they didn't seek Openly**

If these Sadducees would have thought that through, they could have come to a saving knowledge, but they would not invest into the study of the scriptures with a seeking and open heart, and thus they were lost.

### **Why Not? – Loved Praise of Man & Material Comfort**

Why wouldn't they invest, because they loved this present life, and they loved the praises and accolades of men.

### **See if you Miss Resurrection – Miss whole Purpose of Life / Give your Life to Christ Today**

See if you miss the resurrection then you miss the whole purpose of life. If you are here today and do not know Christ, then your life is out of balance, that is why you are here because you know there is something missing, that this world is lacking. Give your life to Christ!

### ***Christ Teaches on the Widow's Mites***

**Luke 20:46** “Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces, the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts,

**Luke 20:47** who devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation.”

**Luke 21:1** And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury,

**Luke 21:2** and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites.

**Luke 21:3** So He said, “Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all;

**Luke 21:4** for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had.”

### **Purposely Side-by-Side**

God purposely puts these two stories side-by-side, the self-righteous seek praise and power, and the humble widow just seeking God.

### **Religious take advantage of widows – then Pray on the Corner**

These religious leaders, they would take advantage of widows, as they would go and swoop in after their husbands died, and buy the house from the debtor, and then make the widow pay outrageous rent. They didn't know the scriptures, they ignored the scriptures that said take care of the widow and orphans, and they took advantage of them for personal gain. But then where everyone could see them during the week make long prayers in their long robes, pretending to be so holy and righteous.

### **Practice what you Preach**

You know the saying, hey practice what you preach.... but here is one for consideration, could you get up here today and preach what you practiced yesterday? Imagine what that would be like? what would your sermon sound like today?

### **God not Fundraising – wants something Greater**

God is not fund raising, asking for money, He is not asking for me to give something to someone else like my extra car, couch, or computer - God doesn't want your stuff, for your stuff is trinkets and bob bets to Him, He wants something that is priceless, He wants your heart, all of it.

**2 Corinthians 12:14 (NKJV)** <sup>14</sup> Now for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you; for I do not seek yours, but you. For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

### **A Mite = lowest Denomination / Jesus sees who gave What**

A mite was the smallest denomination in that day. It was worth about 1/5 of a cent, so she isn't giving 2 cents in today's standard, she is give a half of a cent. Yet notice how Jesus praises her for her giving. Notice, that Jesus notices what the people were giving.

### **May I not Rob You / Money separates us from Earth**

I know sometimes I am so far to the other side of not wanting to talk about money, that I have to be careful that I don't rob you of a tremendous spiritual truth. That spiritual truth is that giving, separates you from this world, and attaches you unto heaven. This woman was a widow, but she had a lover, and it was God. This woman was greatly in love with her lover, and she wanted to put herself out to Him. She did not just give out of poverty which would be amazing in that, but she gave it says here “ALL” her livelihood. When she left the temple that day, she left financially broke; but she was far from broke, for she poured herself out before her God. Lord, I give you all that I have, so that I might have all of you. She is amazing; she is humbling to us Americans.

### **God doesn't need out Money / NT Principle / 3 uses for Tithe / Can't dictate where it Goes**

Listen Christian (and this only applies to Christians), God does not need your money, He is fine without it as He proved when He created the earth out of nothing; God gives this principle of tithing (which is New Testament applicable – Matt 23:23, in fact in everything Jesus did He elevated the OT principles), so that we may loosen our grip on the things of this earth, as even the well-off struggle with giving 10% even though their 90% still leaves them with more than 80% of the world's population. Tithing is God's way of losing our grip on this earth, and looking upward to our lover in heaven. Now we see in the OT how the money was to be used, as it was used to build and upkeep the Temple (we call that Church today), to provide for the priests in the Temple (we call them church staff today), and to take care of the poor (which we call benevolence today). What you see if God saying give your tithe to the temple. What is significant of that is that God commands His giving to be done where the person gives without having the control of where the money goes, simply giving as unto the Lord. For when it gets dictated to man where the money goes, it is no longer going to the Lord. But woe as Jesus says here to those leaders who miss use the money purposed for Him (instead of taking care of the widows they took care of themselves).

*Matthew 23:23 (NKJV) <sup>23</sup> "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone."*

### **Tithing comes with Wisdom**

And here is a great word I can give you about giving. Besides loosing us from this earth and attaches us to heaven, here is something else that happens supernaturally, and that is God gives us supernatural wisdom in the handling of the other 90%. Jesus saw here what everyone else had left. And what I have found to be true in my life is that once I started to tithe, God made me a wise steward over the other 90%. I immediately began to realize and recognize where I was spending the other 90%, and I immediately began to become wiser in how I spent it, I stopped wasting it on wasteful things. So I more than got my 10% back by tithing.

### **But God Wants You**

But beloved God wants you, He desires all of you. He wants to build something great together with you! A life set apart for Him, a marriage that is beautiful, a family that is united, a witness that all can see..... for all things all built off of Him.

*Luke 20:18 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> "Whoever falls on that stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."*

# Luke 21

## Time to be “All In”

(Luke 21:1-38)

### Outline of the Book of Luke:

#### The Life of Christ – The God Man (Luke 1-24)

##### **The Prelude to Christ’s Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- His Birth & Boyhood
- His Baptism & Temptation

##### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- His Mission Statement
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- His March to the Cross
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

##### **The Consummation of Christ’s Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

### **Overview / Final Week / Beautiful God / Widow’s Mite – a Heart that Beats for God / Separated from World**

We are in the final week of the life of our Lord and Savior; what a beautiful Savior He is. Let’s just stop right there and give Him praise and honor for all that He has done in our lives. So, Last week we ended with the story of the widow putting in her 2 mites (about a ¼ of a cent in today’s currency) into the treasury at the temple. She puts a ¼ cent into the treasury for the temple that in today’s currency would be in the billions, for even 2,000 years ago it was in the millions to build. A ¼ cent (but it was the last ¼ cent to her name, and she was a widow) and Jesus takes note of her, and says look at that heart, a heart for her God. It isn’t about the money that is clear, but a heart that beats for God, a heart deeply in love with Him, desiring Him, passionate for Him. A heart that is separated from the distractions of the world, and longing just for Him.

*Luke 21:1 And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury,*

*Luke 21:2 and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites.*

*Luke 21:3 So He said, “Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all;*

*Luke 21:4 for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had.”*

### **Widow the Culmination of Chapter 20 – Sets Stage for Chp 21**

This widow is the culmination of all of chapter 20, where God is saying to each and every person, “I want all of you, not just part of you, you were made in My image, and you are precious to me”. And now, rarely realized, we come into the chapter on prophecy, last days, end times, and rarely realized it is prefaced by a widow giving ¼ cent. .... until we realize it is about a widow (overlooked by the world at that time – but not God) who gave her all to God, not her stuff, but her heart! And now Jesus will build from there, I want all of you, not just part of you, and now as you read the words ahead.....Christian, it is time to be “All In”, not just partially in!

### **Whose Are We? / God wants All of Us – Not just Part of Us**

- Religious Leaders Question Christ's Authority (20:1-8)
- Parable of the Vineyard Owner (20:9-18)
- Herodians Question Tribute Money (20:19-26)
- Sadducees Question Resurrection (20:27-38)
- Jesus Questions the Scribes (20:39-47)
- The Widow's Mites (21:1-4)

### ***The Disciples' Two Questions***

**Luke 21:5** Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations, He said,

**Luke 21:6** "These things which you see—the days will come in which not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down."

### **Temple Great Wonder of the World / 46 Years / Josephus Description / 70 – 8 - 9**

The temple was considered one of the great wonders of the Roman world. It had been under reconstruction for forty-six years (cf. John 2:20) and was nearing completion, which would come in A.D. 63, a mere seven years before it was destroyed. Its spectacular location on Mt. Moriah gave it an imposing dominance over ancient Jerusalem. From a distance it looked like a mountain of gold, because its nine massive gates and much of its exterior were plated with gold and silver and jeweled sculptures such as the famous grapevine bearing a cluster the size of a man. Josephus wrote:

*The exterior of the building wanted nothing that could astound either mind or eye. For, being covered on all sides with massive plates of gold, the sun was no sooner up than it radiated so fiery a flash that persons straining to look at it were compelled to avert their eyes, as from the solar rays. To approaching strangers it appeared from a distance like a snow-clad mountain; for all that was not overlaid with gold was of purest white. From its summit protruded sharp golden spikes to prevent birds from settling upon and polluting the roof. Some of the stones in the building were forty-five cubits in length, five in height and six in breadth.*

The incredible size of the foundation's stones, almost the size of boxcars, was breathtaking.

**John 2:20 (NKJV)** 20 Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?"

### **Sounds Impossible / Titus destroys It**

As impossible as it must have seemed to those hearing Jesus' statement, a mere forty years later, the Roman siege of Jerusalem resulted in the burning of the temple. This, in turn, caused all of the gold inside to melt into the cracks of the huge stones. After it had cooled, the soldiers pulled down every single stone to get the hardened gold—just as Jesus had prophesied.

**Luke 21:7** So they asked Him, saying, "Teacher, but when will these things be? And what sign will there be when these things are about to take place?"

### **Mt Olivets – 150 feet Above Jerusalem / What a Scene / But Remember – Spirit had already Departed**

To say the Temple was going to be destroyed, in their minds it equated to the end of the world, some massive earth upheaval had to happen for the temple to be destroyed, because to the Jew the temple was equated to the presence of God, the favor of God upon the people and the nation. Other gospel accounts tell us that this question is asked after they leave the temple area, obviously those words were churning in their mind, and so they bring it back up to Jesus after they left the temple and now on what is called the Mount of Olivets, which is a short hike from the temple and overlooks the temple and the whole city. Rising 150 feet higher than Jerusalem, the mountain afforded a dramatic view of the temple. So there, with the ivory and gold temple lying below them, the disciples asked Jesus the questions that precipitated the Olivet Discourse: " 'Teacher,' they asked, 'when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are about to take place?' " (v. 7). We need to keep this stunning scene and these questions before us as we proceed. What will be the times and the signs that will precede the destruction of the temple? To say the temple would be utterly toppled meant to them the end of the world, but we should also remember that it was on this very mount that the Shekinah glory had departed from the temple 600 years before (Ezekiel 11:22–25). Also, it would be upon the Mount of Olives that the Lord would return (Zechariah 14:4). The glory of God had departed long ago from the building, yet none of the people had realized it, they still took the temple as confirmation God was still dwelling amongst them. They marveled in the beauty and splendor of the building, but inside was no spirit. All

that was going on in the temple for the most part was religious activities. And how sad it is today, that for so many Christians they have an outward display of spirituality, but inside is nothing, the Spirit of God is not moving. It is time for us here today to “be all in”.

*Ezekiel 11:22–23 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> So the cherubim lifted up their wings, with the wheels beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel was high above them. <sup>23</sup> And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain, which is on the east side of the city.

*Zechariah 14:4 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, Making a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward the south.

### **Spirit Return in Millennial Temple**

There will be a third temple built, and (it appears that it will be during the Millennial Kingdom), the glory of the Lord will return to the Temple:

*Ezekiel 43:1–5 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Afterward he brought me to the gate, the gate that faces toward the east. <sup>2</sup> And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east. His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory. <sup>3</sup> It was like the appearance of the vision which I saw—like the vision which I saw when I came to destroy the city. The visions were like the vision which I saw by the River Chebar; and I fell on my face. <sup>4</sup> And the glory of the LORD came into the temple by way of the gate which faces toward the east. <sup>5</sup> The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the temple.

### **Jesus goes far beyond their Question / But no Date Setting**

Jesus would answer their questions, but some of his replies would go far beyond their initial inquiries, instructing his Church about his return. We will also see that Jesus was not interested in giving date-setting details, but in encouraging his own to be steadfast and faithful until he returns. Jesus spoke pastorally.

### **Signs of Christ's Coming**

**Luke 21:8** And He said: “Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am He,’ and, ‘The time has drawn near.’ Therefore do not go after them.

### **Christ in Italics – Just “I Am” / New Age /**

The word “Christ” is in italics. Therefore, the actual statement is, “Many will come saying, I Am—Ego Eimi”—a name of deity. For years, people wondered who would have the audacity to claim deity. But in our day of New Age thinking, it is common for people to walk along the beach with outstretched arms saying, “I am God.”

*Exodus 3:13–14 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> Then Moses said to God, “Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?” <sup>14</sup> And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

### **I Am – Becoming One**

By the way, the literal meaning of the phrase “I Am”, is “the Becoming One”. God wants to become to you, all that you need. He wants to become your comforter, your lover, your counselor, your peace, your provision. . . . . He wants to and will be, all that you need, and when you come to Him you will see He is all that you need.

*Isaiah 9:6–7 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

### **Take Heed – Don’t be Deceived / Two-Way Conversation / Prayer Notebook**

Jesus says to take heed, don’t be deceived, fooled. You know why He said that, because people are going to be deceived. But we won’t be deceived because we know this word. Christian, you need to stay in the word, and not just here on Sunday. You need to pray, and not just at home, you need to join us Tuesday for corporate prayer. It is time to be all in. And when you pray, when you read, make it a two-way conversation. When I do my devotions, I have a notebook, and on the right side of the notebook I write notes of words that God gives me as I read the passage, and then on the left side, I write requests to God for that day. It is a two-way conversation, and it keeps my mind from wondering.

*Luke 18:1 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart,

**Luke 21:9 But when you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end will not come immediately.”**

**Luke 21:10 Then He said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.**

### **Not a Day of Peace / 23 million since WW2**

There has been a war going on somewhere on this earth every day of the week since WW1. World War 2 was suppose to be the war that ended all wars as it was called (82 million lives lost – 32 million in war, 25 million civilians, 25 million in concentration camps), but since the end of the war just 70 years ago, there have been 23 million people killed by war. Today there is 40 tons of TNT per person living on the planet, and there is more destruction capability in just one of our warships than all the weaponry that was expended in WW2, which included the use of 2 atomic bombs.

### **Rumors of War**

How interesting in Matthew 24 Jesus said “rumors of war”. Do you know the most expensive war ever fought, and not bullet was fired? It was the Cold War, which was rumor of war. Now, the rumor of war is “terrorism” as you know there is a war out there somewhere, but you can’t see the enemy because they have no country, no uniform, and no base. ....they live among the people they fight, they go to our schools, they fly on our planes, they eat in our restaurants, we pass them on the streets, and then one day unleash their fury and disappear into the crowds again. That is rumor of war, and it is on the increase.

*(Matthew 24:6 NKJV) "And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.*

**Luke 21:11 And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.**

### **Wars Produce Famine / 1 Day Military Spending feed the Whole World**

Wars and military spending are the greatest producer of famines in the world today. Take our military spending for just 1 day and we could feed the whole world for a year. One tomahawk missile could feed a whole elementary school for 5 years.

### **Aids, Ebola, Bird Flu / Bubonic Plague**

Today we deal with AIDS, Ebola, Avian Bird Flu, not to mention things like the bubonic plague in the past.

### **Aids Statistics (from World Health Organization)**

People living with HIV/AIDS - 39.5 million

People newly infected with HIV per year - 4.3 million

More than 40 million people have died of AIDS since 1981.

Africa has 12 million AIDS orphans.

Americans living with AIDS – 1 million (that is 1 in 300 people)

### **Aids Survive 7 days dry Blood / Univ Pitt – 48hrs in Sewage / Condoms**

A study I read said that the AIDS virus can survive up to 7 days, even after the blood has dried. University of Pittsburgh study said that the AIDS virus has the ability to live 48 hours waste water (sewage). They concluded by encouraging all the workers who had to work with raw sewage to wear 2 pairs of surgical gloves under their work gloves to protect themselves from the AIDS virus. But our government and health professionals are telling the teenagers and others to make sure that they wear a condom and practice safe sex, even though they sewage worker is encouraged to wear double surgical gloves. God says abstained because He knows.....He is not a kill-joy, but joy-producer, and when you do things God’s way, your life will avoid these self-inflicted pains.

### **Earthquake Statistics**

14th century – 147 major

15 century – 174

16 century – 253

17 century – 378

18 century - 640

19 century – 2119

This century – over 5,000, resulting in over 500, 000 deaths.

### **US Geological Survey Reports**

**(Number of Killer Earthquakes – Ratings 6.0 magnitude or greater)**

1890-1899 – 1

1900 – 1910 - 3

1910 – 1920 - 2

1920 – 1930 - 2

1930 – 1940 – 5

1940 – 1950 - 4

1950 – 1960 – 9

1960 – 1970 – 13

1970 – 1980 – 51

1980 – 1990 – 86

1990 – 2000 – 100

### **Could be Underground Testing / Oil Sucking**

Could it be our underground testing of nukes that has caused the raise, is it the sucking of the oil out of the ground? Something is causing the increase.

**Luke 21:12 But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake.**

### **First 250 Years of the Church – 6 Million Martyred**

In the first two hundred fifty years of the church—beginning with Caesar Nero and extending through the ten waves of persecution that followed—a minimum of six million Christians were killed for their belief in Jesus Christ.

### **Appian Way / Nero Light of the World**

History books tell us of Rome taking Christians and covering them in tar, and then lighting them on fire to light a main road called the Appian Way. It was written that Nero would dip Christians (your brothers and sisters) in tar and light them on fire in his garden, and then ride his chariot around the garden (naked) and as he passed scream at them, you are the light of the world, laughing.

### **20<sup>th</sup> Century – 100,000 a Year / 75 out of 100 – Christians / 1 every 5 minutes**

In the 20th century, Christians have been persecuted by various groups, and by atheistic states such as the USSR and North Korea. The Christian missionary organization Open Doors (UK) estimates 100 million Christians face persecution, particularly in Muslim-dominated countries such as Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. A recent study, cited by the Vatican, reported that 75 out of every 100 people killed due to religious hatred were Christian. Massimo Introvigne, a human rights representative for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, has told an OSCE meeting in Bodollo, Hungary, that 105,000 people are killed every year because of their Christian faith (that equals 1 killed every 5 minutes).

### **American Theology**

American theology is so skewed, people think Christianity should be easy, prosperous, and then when it is not they say God is unjust. American theology seems to skip these passages about suffering and being treated unjustly.

**Luke 21:12 But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake.**

**Luke 21:13 But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony.**

**Luke 21:14 Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer;**

**Luke 21:15 for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist.**

### **Don't be Intimidated / Be Blessed that Counted Worthy**

Jesus is saying do not be intimidated by these things, for God has allowed you to be put in that situation, in fact be blessed to know that He counted you worthy for the opportunity. I have had a couple of these in my life, and I can attest that God will give you the words to speak. I have found myself in a place and I am saying Lord why am I here, shouldn't you have arranged it for Pastor Chuck or Greg Laurie to be here, but I recognized God allowed for it to be me. And then He gave me words, He gave me power, and it was like I was watching the whole thing for I surely said afterwards I am not exactly sure who that guy was back there, but I wish I could be like him every day. God will do exactly what He says He will do, so Christian don't be intimidated when it happens, don't back down, say to Him You allowed it, therefore give me the words and the boldness.

*Acts 5:40–42 (NKJV)* <sup>40</sup> And they agreed with him, and when they had called for the apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. <sup>41</sup> So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. <sup>42</sup> And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

**Luke 21:16 You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death.**

**Luke 21:17 And you will be hated by all for My name's sake.**

**Luke 21:18 But not a hair of your head shall be lost.**

**Luke 21:19 By your patience possess your souls.**

### **What Resentment here in US / Don't back Down**

Boy the resentment against Christians is growing more and more every day in this Country isn't it? How about this week the Armed Forces saying that Christians who try to convert people will be court-marshaled. Did you read about the track team that was disqualified, stripped of their victory and thus excluded from going on to the State Finals because after winning the race the Christian boy pointed to heaven and was disqualified for excessive celebration. How about this week as the GLBT group was rallying saying Greg Laurie should not be the honorary chairman for the National Day of Prayer because he believes what the Bible says about homosexuality being wrong. Greg, in Greg fashion, said "I quote the great theologian Tom Petty, and that is that I stand my ground, and I won't back down". Christian, don't back down, stand your ground, don't think it strange as you family, friends, and co-workers come against you, it is just as Jesus said it will be.

### **I have been Removed from the List**

I did not hear Greg speak at NDP, but did read his transcript, and he spoke the name of Jesus and gave a word of power that comes from a relationship with the one true God – Jesus Christ. But I was saddened as I noticed how each speaker seemed to purposely exclude saying the name of Jesus, and how ecumenical the whole thing was. I am no longer welcomed or asked to pray at public events here in the County because I clearly told them I pray in the name of Jesus, and I speak His Name, and thus they said we will remove you from our list of speakers. Christian, stand your ground, don't back down.

*Acts 3:6 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk."

*Philippians 2:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,

*Acts 4:8–12 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel: <sup>9</sup> If we this day are judged for a good deed done to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well, <sup>10</sup> let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. <sup>11</sup> This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.' <sup>12</sup> Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

### **Destruction of Jerusalem**

**Luke 21:20 "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.**

**Luke 21:21 Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her.**

**Luke 21:22 For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.**

**Luke 21:23 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people.**

**Luke 21:24 And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.**

### **This would happen in 70AD**

Not only was the temple burned in A.D. 70, but also, by the end of the 143-day siege, over one million Jews were killed. Of those who survived, many were taken prisoner, leaving the rest to scatter throughout the world. They wandered as a people without a homeland until May 14, 1948, when Israel became a nation once again.

### **It was Horrible Siege**

The horror that Jesus predicted for Jerusalem came with the fall of the temple and is a matter of historical fact. The roofs were thronged with famished women with babes in arms, and the alleys with corpses of the elderly. Children and young people swollen from starvation “roamed like phantoms through the market-places and collapsed wherever their doom overtook them.” But there was no lamenting or wailing, because famine had strangled their emotions. Jerusalem could not bury all the bodies, so they were flung over the wall. The silence was broken only by the laughter of robbers stripping the bodies. Though “the times of the Gentiles” began with Jesus’ death when the veil of the temple was torn from top to bottom and with his subsequent resurrection, the symbol of this was the Gentiles’ trampling Jerusalem when they destroyed the temple. According to Romans 11, this era is a time of evangelizing the Gentiles:

### **Many gave heed to Warning**

The fourth-century historian Eusebius records that Christians gave heed to this warning:

*The people of the church in Jerusalem were commanded by an oracle given by revelation before the war to those in the city ... to depart and dwell in one of the cities of Perea which they called Pella. To it those who believed on Christ migrated from Jerusalem, that when holy men had altogether deserted the royal capital of the Jews and the whole land of Judea, the judgment of God might at last overtake them for all their crimes against the Christ and his Apostles, and all that generation of the wicked be utterly blotted out from among men.*

### **Josephus**

Josephus describes the people as leaving the city “as swimmers deserting a sinking ship,” an image that accords well with Jesus’ command to leave everything behind.

### **Take Heed / Wise is the Man / Youth – when you see Satan setting Tent up**

Jesus says for us to take heed, and wise is the man and woman who take His word serious. I will say that to anyone here today who you know what His word has said for you to do, but you are not liking it, and you are at a decision point of whether to obey or not..... be wise, do exactly what it says to do, regardless of the price, for His word is a shield to you. You young people (old too), when you see the enemy setting up his tents around you, don’t wait around to see how it plays out, get out of the city. When your friends call you to go to that party, when that non-believer asks you out, when you are offered that job that takes you away from church and youth group..... know that the enemy is setting up his tents to lay siege on your faith, on your very being, and get out of that city (per se) and head to safety, regardless what you have to leave behind.

*Proverbs 30:5 (NKJV) 5 Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.*

### **The Second Coming**

**Luke 21:24 And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.**

**Luke 21:25 “And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring;**

**Luke 21:26 men’s hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.**

### **Times of the Gentiles / God Calling You Now**

The times of the Gentiles is when God is dealing very specifically with the non-Jewish people, as the majority of the Jewish people refuse to acknowledge that Jesus is the Messiah. But there will come a day when God will once again be working amongst the Jewish people, and that will be in the Tribulation Period. See prior studies to go deeper in that area. But for now, God is working, being received, by the non-Jewish people. This period is now, and God is calling you now, and He is saying come to Me now. He is offering you a personal relationship with Himself, the perfect Holy God has provided a way for sinful man to be united with Him, and that is by sending His only Begotten

Son who took the hand of the Holy Father, and with the other hand took hold of sinful man, so that they may be united. That bridge was by way of a cross 2,000 years ago on a hill outside the city of Jerusalem. He is offering you His hand, but it is up to you to take it. Have you? Will You? God loves you, take it.....please!

**Romans 11:25–26 (NKJV)** <sup>25</sup> For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. <sup>26</sup> And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;

**John 3:16 (NKJV)** <sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

## **America's Stress**

Verse 26 - men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation - But speaking of men's hearts failing, look at the sheer stress of living in today's America is driving tens of millions to the point of illness, depression and self-destruction. Consider the following trends:

- •Suicide has surpassed car crashes as the leading cause of injury death for Americans. Even more disturbing, in the world's greatest military, more U.S. soldiers died last year by suicide than in combat;
- •Fully one-third of the nation's employees suffer chronic debilitating stress, and more than half of all "millennials" (18 to 33 year olds) experience a level of stress that keeps them awake at night, including large numbers diagnosed with depression or anxiety disorder.
- •Shocking new research from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows that one in five of all high-school-aged children in the United States has been diagnosed with ADHD, and likewise a large new study of New York City residents shows, sadly, that one in five preteens – children aged six to 12 – have been medically diagnosed with either ADHD, anxiety, depression or bipolar disorder;
- •New research concludes that stress renders people susceptible to serious illness, and a growing number of studies now confirm that chronic stress plays a major role in the progression of cancer, the nation's second-biggest killer. The biggest killer of all, heart disease, which causes one in four deaths in the U.S., is also known to have a huge stress component;

## **Jesus / Becoming One**

Jesus is the answer.

**1 Peter 5:7 (NKJV)** <sup>7</sup> casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

**Luke 21:27** Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

**Luke 21:28** Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near."

## **Beginning of Sorrows – Birth pains / Baby Coming**

We can look around this world, our Country, and have our heart grow faint as we watch the things around us unfolding; but Jesus says the quicker you see them unfolding, then know My return is near – and My return is for you. In Matthew's gospel it reads that all these are the beginning of sorrows (literally translated – birth pains). When a woman gives birth, the contractions start slowly, and increase and increase, until the baby is birthed. What we see is an increase that is going faster and faster, contractions that are closer and closer, and thus we know His return is near.

**Matthew 24:4–8 (NKJV)** <sup>4</sup> And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. <sup>5</sup> For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. <sup>6</sup> And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. <sup>7</sup> For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. <sup>8</sup> All these are the beginning of sorrows.

## **Verse 29-33 / Most Conclusive Sign- Israel**

And the most conclusive sign for us more than all the others, is verse 29-33, the rebirth of the Nation Israel.

## **Parable of the Fig Tree**

**Luke 21:29** Then He spoke to them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees.

## **Israel is Fig Tree**

The fig tree in Scripture is the symbol of the nation Israel.

*Hosea 9:10 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> "I found Israel Like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your fathers As the firstfruits on the fig tree in its first season. But they went to Baal Peor, And separated themselves to that shame; They became an abomination like the thing they loved.*

**Luke 21:30** When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near.

**Luke 21:31** So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near.

**Luke 21:32** Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place.

**Luke 21:33** Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

## **A Nation Reborn**

The Nation of Israel was reborn on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1948, after 2,000 years without a homeland they were made a nation again in a day. Verse 33 says the word will come to pass in all things, and here is one of those things, just as it was said in Isaiah 66. In a day, Israel was recognized as a sovereign nation by the United Nations.

*Isaiah 66:8 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion was in labor, She gave birth to her children.*

## **A Generation**

We live in the time of this prophecy. How long is a generation? Some say 40 years to that is why people gave 88 reasons Jesus returns in 1988, they were wrong. Some say 60 reasons for 2008 but they were wrong. I hate the idea of a generation being 70 years, because that is 2018. I don't think you can put a specific date on a generation, the idea is more about an era, a period, and we live in an era of time, and Israel has been reborn and thus the birth contractions are just moments from birth.

## **Warning to Watch for His Coming**

**Luke 21:34** "But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly.

**Luke 21:35** For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth.

**Luke 21:36** Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

## **Who is the Faithful One**

Who is the faithful one? They are marked by two traits, they watch and they pray. They stay on guard, they do not slumber and get caught up in all the distractions of the world, and they are proactively praying and interceding.

## **Time – All In**

Christian, it is time to be.....All In

## **Let nothing come Between You and the Lord / What is Important – be Honest**

Christian don't let anything come between you and the Lord. Christian, what is important to you; you have to be able to answer that honestly. Jesus loves you. How beautiful He is. He sought me out and bought me, and I didn't even know I was separated from Him and going to hell. Yet He still sought me and bought me, with divine blood. God loves you.

## **He needs to be On The Throne / Take Heed – Let nothing get Between You and the Lord**

Now He needs to be on the throne of my heart, and no one or no thing, can take that spot. Take heed to yourself, let nothing get between you and the Lord.

## **Put Jesus First – You will be a Better Dad**

Put Jesus Christ first and you will be a better dad, a better parent, a better friend, a better worker.

## **Are you Born-Again?**

Are you born-again? Then today!

**Don't let Anyone Trick You . Read your Bible / He Love You / When Hard Times Come – Don't Give Up**

Don't let anyone of anything trick, deceive you, read your bible, pray. He loves you, and when things don't go the way you think they should, family turns on you, people walk out of your life, financial hardship....don't you give up, you keep clinging to Jesus.

**He Loves You – Read your Bible / Get Involved / Trust Him / Put Him on Throne – Nothing in Between**

He loves you, keep reading your bible, you keep praying, get up early and spend time with Him, get involved in a ministry. Trust Him, He knows what He is doing, He saw and took care of the widow with ¼ cent, He will take care of you. Put Him on the throne of your life, and let nothing take His place. Keep looking up, for your redemption draws near.

**It is Time – Be All In**

Christian, it is time to be “All In”

**Luke 21:37 And in the daytime He was teaching in the temple, but at night He went out and stayed on the mountain called Olivet.**

**Luke 21:38 Then early in the morning all the people came to Him in the temple to hear Him.**

**Billy Borden**

In 1904 William Borden graduated from a Chicago high school. As heir to the Borden Dairy estate, he was already a millionaire. For his high school graduation present, his parents gave 16-year-old Borden a trip around the world. As the young man traveled through Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, he felt a growing burden for the world's hurting people. Finally, Bill Borden wrote home to say, "I'm going to give my life to prepare for the mission field." One friend expressed surprise that he was "throwing himself away as a missionary." In response, Bill wrote two words in the back of his Bible: "No reserves." He went to Yale and Princeton to study, and while there started a morning prayer group that started with 3 people his freshman year and ended with 1,500 his senior year. After school he turned down many lucrative and prestigious job offers and left for China to preach the gospel. He wrote two more words in his Bible before he left, "No retreats." While there in China, he contracted spinal meningitis. Within a month, 25-year-old William Borden was dead. The world questioned if Borden's untimely death was a waste. The answer is not in God's plan. Prior to his death, Borden had written two more words in his Bible. Underneath the words "No reserves" and "No retreats," he had written: "No regrets."

*No Reserves, Retreats, Regrets*

**It is Time**

Christian, it is time to be “All In”

# Rumors of War

(Luke 21:5-9)

## **Boston – Benghazi**

So, headlines that abound for the past few weeks here in America, Boston and Benghazi. Boston, April 15 2013, at the finish line 2 bombs placed (made from pressure cookers), by two young Muslim men, killing 3, and injuring 264 (several people losing limbs and severe head trauma). Benghazi (which is the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest city in the Mid-East country of Libya), September 11 2012, 4 American diplomats and security personnel were killed by a group of Muslim in an attack on their US compound by 200+ heavily armed men. What in the world is going on? Why attacks on innocent people running a race, why mob violence on 4 men simply because they were American citizens? What in the world is going on? Why a world where people would hijack airplanes and fly them into buildings and kill thousands? What in the world is going on?

**Luke 21:5–9 (NKJV)** <sup>5</sup> Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations, He said, <sup>6</sup> “These things which you see—the days will come in which not *one* stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down.” <sup>7</sup> So they asked Him, saying, “Teacher, but when will these things be? And what sign *will there be* when these things are about to take place?” <sup>8</sup> And He said: “Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am *He,*’ and, ‘The time has drawn near.’ Therefore do not go after them. <sup>9</sup> But when you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end *will not come* immediately.”

## **Terrorism is a Rumor of War**

Terrorism is war, when it strikes. Terrorism is also a rumor of war because for the most part it is not a nation, but more a kingdom (in ideology), and there is no specific location (for the most part) that you can go battle them at. They have no capital, they have no uniform, they hide in the shadows, yet walk in plain sight. Their threat is continual, but you never know when, it is merely a rumor, until it becomes true.

## **Not a Warm and Comforting Passage / But one that Keeps us Looking Up - Not being Distracted**

So our passage of scripture today is not a warm and comforting passage, but it is why we do go verse-by-verse so we get the whole counsel of God. For in the whole counsel of God we are well-balanced for the days that we live,

- we are not those who are asleep and miss the signs,
- and thus we are a people who are looking for His soon return,
- and we will not be caught up with all the fluff and distractions of this present world
- but be preparing ourselves and families of the kingdom to come.

**Luke 21:34–36 (NKJV)** <sup>34</sup> “But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. <sup>35</sup> For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. <sup>36</sup> Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

**Romans 13:11–14 (NKJV)** <sup>11</sup> And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. <sup>12</sup> The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. <sup>13</sup> Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. <sup>14</sup> But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

## **Martin Richards / The Pain the Family is Suffering**

Martin Richards was 8 years old boy who was killed at the Boston Marathon bombing. What a sweet boy, what a beautiful face. We all have his face, holding that sign he made at school that says "no more hurting people - PEACE". What a precious boy, what a tragic event, a life taken in senseless violence. I think of his mother and father, and the pain they are still living today, as the rest of us have gone back to life as usual, ballgames and barbeques. Their daughter survived the bombing but lost her leg; what pain this family is suffering today.

**Martin rooting his Father On / Senseless Violence by 2 Foreign Men / Walked amongst us – Never 1 of Us**  
Martin, standing at the finish line rooting his daddy on, his hero, a man who no doubt bigger than life to that little boy, as dads are to sons that age. And a senseless act of violence occurs by 2 men who were welcomed into this Country, one made a citizen, one living off of our welfare system, and although they walked amongst us and were given the bounty of this land, they never were one of us because they identified themselves with another culture, another people, another ideology (and a violent one at that).

### **Media said words Fundamental & Radical**

The media keep bringing words such as fundamentalist and radicalize. They say they were radicalized as if they went through some type of conditioning to change them from one state to another, and in that they were correct and I will explain that shortly.

### **Webster's Dictionary / Interesting how the Dictionary Changes**

It is interesting to me of looking through Webster's dictionary on some of the meaning of words. Interesting to the how the meaning changes from volume to volume, and on how some words didn't exist as you look back at earlier volumes. New words and abbreviations; internet (1985), LOL (2011)

### **Radicalism – nonexistent 1820 / Not until 1988**

Webster's 1820 - the word radicalism didn't exist. Not entered until the Webster's 1988. Today's version here is one of the definitions:

- 2a : of or relating to the origin : fundamental
- 3a: very different from the usual or traditional : extreme
- 3b: favoring extreme changes in existing views, habits, conditions, or institutions
- 3c: associated with political views, practices, and policies of extreme change
- 3d: advocating extreme measures to retain or restore a political state of affairs <the radical right>

### **Do you see 2 Worlds Colliding?**

Christian do you see two worlds, two words, colliding? Do you see that word "Fundamental", and can you think of others that are considered, FUNDAMENTAL?

### **Fundamental 1820**

What is the definition of Fundamental? In Webster's 1820 –

- basic essential, effecting the foundations of something.

### **Fundamental Definition Today**

Webster's Definition of Fundamental:

- 1a: serving as an original or generating source : primary <a discovery fundamental to modern computers>
- 1b: serving as a basis supporting existence or determining essential structure or function : basic
- 2a: of or relating to essential structure, function, or facts : radical <fundamental change>; also: of or dealing with general principles rather than practical application <fundamental science>
- 2b: adhering to fundamentalism
- 3: of, relating to, or produced by the lowest component of a complex vibration
- 4: of central importance : principal <fundamental purpose>
- 5: belonging to one's innate or ingrained characteristics : deep-rooted <her fundamental good humor>

Webster's Examples of Fundamental

- The Constitution ensures our fundamental rights.
- There's a fundamental difference between these two political parties.
- These ideas are of fundamental importance.
- The revolution brought about a fundamental change in the country.
- We need to make some fundamental changes in the way we do business.
- We need to address these problems on a more fundamental level.

## **Fundamentalism**

But I want to draw your attention to that word there used in 2b of the definition, “Fundamentalism”. In Webster’s 1820 - the word fundamentalism did not exist. It did not appear until the 1988 edition. And look at what it means today.

Webster’s Definition of FUNDAMENTALISM

- 1a - often capitalized: a movement in 20th century Protestantism emphasizing the literally interpreted Bible as fundamental to Christian life and teaching
- 1b: the beliefs of this movement
- 1c: adherence to such beliefs
- 2a: a movement or attitude stressing strict and literal adherence to a set of basic principles <Islamic fundamentalism> <political fundamentalism>

## **The World’s Collide**

So here we see the two worlds collide as extreme Islamic who kill in the name of their religion, are identified in the same word as a group of people who believe the Bible is the literal word of God.

## **Boston – Benghazi – Washington – New York / Muslim Thread – being Obedient**

Back to Boston and Benghazi for right now; there is a common thread between Boston, Benghazi, World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and that was the thread of the radical, fundamental, Muslim.... who believed that what they were doing was being done in obedience to the scriptures they consider sacred (the Quran). They believe they are commanded to make war against those who will not follow the way of Islam.

## **Not all Muslims Believe this / Muslim - Islam**

A Muslim is someone who follows that faith of Islam, and Muslim means “submitted to Allah”. But let me say this, not all Muslims believe they are to make war, not all Muslims believe the Quran is literally the word of god.

## **1820 Fundamental / 1820 – Only 1 Kind of Christianity / Secular Christians vs Fundamental Christians**

Let me make this parallel point between Islam and Christianity. Remember the definition of Fundamental in the 1820 dictionary? It said “the basic essential, effecting the foundations of something” In 1820 there pretty much was only one kind of Christian and they were the fundamentals who believed the Bible was the inspired and true word of God. They believed in the teachings of Jesus Christ and that men should adhere to them. The Bible was the foundation for living. But somewhere between 1820 and 1988 we see that the definition changed to only mean a certain group of Christians were Fundamental, believed the Bible was the literally word of God and that they were to live in accordance with what it taught, and they are known as the Protestants. What does that mean happened in America is that between 1820 and 1988, people could say they were Christians, but not that they believed in the foundations, the fundamentals of the Bible. They liked this part of the Bible, but not that part, they liked the part about heaven, but not hell, so throw that part out. They liked the part about forgiveness, but not repentance, so throw that part out. Over time from 1820 to today, Christianity has split into two main groups, those who believe the Bible is the word of God, and those who don’t. I simply divide that to mean this, Secular Christians and Fundamental Christians. There are the secular (worldly Christians) who go to church and get a happy thought on, sing a few songs (about God’s blessing to them – not them blessing God with a committed life), ask God to do a few things for them, and then leave and never apply anything they have read or heard. They do few good deeds when time permits and doesn’t interfere with their personal lives, and if they have season tickets they will see you in the spring. But then there are those (many of you) who believe the Bible is truly the word of God, and it shapes every aspect of your lives. It leads you in your marriage, child rearing, giving, serving, witnessing, and sacrifice. Simply put.....Jesus first!

**2 Timothy 3:10–16 (NKJV)** <sup>10</sup> But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, <sup>11</sup> persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. <sup>12</sup> Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. <sup>13</sup> But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. <sup>14</sup> But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, <sup>15</sup> and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

**53%**

In a recent survey 53% of the people surveyed who identified themselves as evangelical Christians say there others way to heaven, and Jesus is not the only way, even though Jesus said He is the only way.

*John 14:6 (NKJV) 6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*

### **Secular Christians vs Fundamental Muslim**

So if we have secular and fundamental Christians, then Islam is the same, in that you have Secular Muslims and Fundamental Muslims. You see Muslims that just want to go about life and have a nice day. They go to their Mosque, they have their time of worship, and then they go home and focus on their jobs, fixing up their home, enjoying their recreation. They simply just want to live their faith within their bubble, and not bother or be bothered by others. They just want peace, and mean nobody any harm. And I have met many of them, and they are truly just nice people, and very enjoyable to be with, and very gracious and hospitable I have found also.

**80%**

A recent survey amongst Muslims, 80% say they don't read the Koran. Sounds like a secular Muslim, but I bet that statistic is close to Christians today.

### **But the Fundamental Christian**

But there are the fundamental Christian and Fundamental Muslim, who believe their scriptures are holy and literally the word of God. I am such, I believe the Bible is the word of God, and believe I not only should live by it, but must live by it. Therefore when the Bible says I must be subject to the governing authorities (Rom 13:1), I am. I drive the speed limit, I pay my taxes, and I follow all the laws to build our church building. The Bible says do not steal, do not kill, do not commit adultery, I obey. And, when it says preach the word, go make disciples, do the work of an evangelist, I take that literal and I do it because the Bible says for me to. Even when I don't want to, even when I would rather avoid conflict, contention, or someone disliking me. There are many times I stand up here and I what I say is purely out of obedience because I know that many will be offended, and attack me (either verbally or behind my back), but I speak none the less out of obedience. And, I share Christ with others even when I know they are going to hate me for it, but I do it out of obedience, and my obedience is fueled by love because I know only the truth can set people free.. Because these things are nonnegotiable to me. And, hence the definition today of extremist, radical, fundamental. If necessary, I would lay my life down, allow myself to be killed, rather than deny His name. These foundational, fundamental truths, are non-negotiable to me and to you.

*Romans 13:1 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.*

*Matthew 28:18-20 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.*

*2 Timothy 4:2-5 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup> Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. <sup>3</sup> For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; <sup>4</sup> and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. <sup>5</sup> But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*

*John 8:32 (NKJV) <sup>32</sup> And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*

### **The Fundamental Muslim**

And so it is true for the Fundamental Muslim, and what they believe is nonnegotiable, even if they have to kill, or be killed. Here are a couple passages right out of the Koran. This also helps me understand their reasoning behind terror attacks. And, if you read them and believed they were the inspired word of God, you would have only one response to them, you would have to do what they say, out of obedience (but that obedience is not fueled by love). Mind of this also, many of these young man were raised in Fundamental Muslim homes, so they have had these passages recited to them over and over.

*Believers (Muslims), take neither Jews nor Christians to be your friends: they are friends with one another. Whoever of you seeks their friendship shall become one of their number, and God does not guide (those Jewish and Christian) wrong-doers. (Sura 5:51-5:74)*

*And the Jews say: Uzair is the son of Allah; and the Christians say: The Messiah is the son of Allah; these are the words of their mouths; they imitate the saying of those who disbelieved before; may Allah destroy them; how they are turned away! (Sura 9:30)*

O Prophet, fight against the disbelievers and the hypocrites and be harsh upon them. And their refuge is Hell, and wretched is the destination. (Sura 9:73)

Remember] when your Lord inspired to the angels, "I am with you, so strengthen those who have believed. I will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieved, so strike [them] upon the necks and strike from them every fingertip." (Sura 8:12)

And when the sacred months have passed, then kill the polytheists (that is a reference to Christians because they believe the Trinity is polytheistic) wherever you find them and capture them and besiege them and sit in wait for them at every place of ambush. But if they should repent, establish prayer, and give zakah, let them [go] on their way. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful (Sura 9:5)

So when you meet those who disbelieve [in battle], strike [their] necks until, when you have inflicted slaughter upon them, then secure their bonds, and either [confer] favor afterwards or ransom [them] until the war lays down its burdens. That [is the command]. And if Allah had willed, He could have taken vengeance upon them [Himself], but [He ordered armed struggle] to test some of you by means of others. And those who are killed in the cause of Allah - never will He waste their deeds. (Sura 47:4)

### **What can be Only Response to these Passages / And the Promises of Eternal Glory**

So what can be the only response to these passages (and there are about 150 others just like it)? The response is you believe the Koran is truly the inspired word of God, is to respond with action. And, you see in these passages that there is an eternal reward laid up for them that wage war against the unbelievers (mainly Jews and Christians). Their religious leaders have taught that if they die in Jihad (holy war) they will be rewarded with 72 virgins (either male or female depending on your choice). It is promised to have riches, a palace, servants, forgiven of all his sins, and he can request into heaven 70 of his relatives. Imagine that offer to a poor man, a lonely man, a desperate man. *"For the Shahid in the Divine presence there will be six qualities: [1] he will be forgiven from the first moment his blood is spilled; [2] he shall see his seat in Paradise and be protected against the punishment of the grave; [3] he shall be safe from the Greatest Terror [the rising of the dead]; [4] he shall be crowned with the diadem of dignity, one ruby of which is worth more than the entire world and its contents; [5] he shall be coupled with seventy-two spouses from the wide-eyed maidens of Paradise; and [6] he shall be granted to intercede for seventy of his relatives."* (Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Sunan al-Tirmidhi)

*Abu Sa'id al-Khudri said, Allah be well-pleased with him: The Messenger of Allah said, upon him blessings and peace: "The humblest of the People of Paradise shall have eighty thousand servants and seventy-two wives. A palace of pearl and peridot (a pale green variety of chrysolite; used as a gemstone) and sapphire shall be erected for him as wide as the distance between al-Jabiya [a valley about 70 kms. East of Makka] and San'a' [in Yemen]." (Sunan al-Tirmidhi Vol. IV, ch. 21, hadith 2687)*

### **Growing Daily /1.5 Billion**

Islam is on the rise and growing stronger daily. The religion Islam now is about 1.5 billion and growing. That is about 20% of the world's population. It only took two to for the Boston marathon, and it only took 19 for the 911 attacks.

### **The Twelvers / Hasten arrival of 12<sup>th</sup> Imam through Chaos / Ahmedinejad at UN**

The extremist Muslims (known as the Twelvers – AHMADINEJAD of Iran is one of the followers) believe that they can hasten the return of their messiah by inducing chaos into the world. They believe their messiah wants a world Islamic religion, and the destruction of Jews and Christians are a must if they refuse to follow Islam. It is the same story of Mohammed who created the religion around 600AD, in that he tried to unite all the religions into one, but when the Jews and the Christians refused, he turned it into a reign of blood and death for all who would not follow. Iran wants to go nuclear, for "energy purposes" they say. That is kind of hard to buy when you know their theology,

and the very fact they say Israel should not exist, and that America is the great Satan, and that their president every time he has spoken at the UN in the last 4 years prays for the Muslim Messiah to come.

### **There is a way for Peace – Submission**

Peace can be had with the Fundamental Muslims, and that is that all a people and nation have to do is recite and follow the Muslim decree, which is called the “Shahada”, which recites, *“There is no God but Allah, Muhammad is the messenger of Allah”*. Now how many Israelis and Americans are going to recite that?

### **Can’t Negotiate Peace if that is the Ultimate Requirement / Road sign to Mecca**

You see, terror will never stop. Their scriptures require them to wage war against the Jews and the Christians, and they/we will remain (Jew and Christian) until a person recites and follows the Shahada. I can sum up this whole Fundamental Muslim theology into one sign, and it is the road sign that leads into what they consider the most holy city, Mecca (in Saudi Arabia). And that sign has two lanes, one lane says “Muslims Only”, and the other says “for Non-Muslims”, as no non-Muslim can enter into their holy city they control. Israel can give them 99% of Israel, but as long as a Jew remains, there will be war.

### **Burn Bibles – Cartoons**

There is no negotiating with a group that will kill over a cartoon, or kill innocent people when some fool burns the Koran. You can’t negotiate with that because they believe the scriptures and promises we just read, and nothing will change that, just as nothing will ever make me stop preaching the gospel. By the way, my message to that pastor who wants to burn the Koran, go ahead, if you are so bold and committed to it.....just go to Tehran Iran and do it there town center and see how bold you really are; stop hiding behind the blood of American soldiers as you incite the fundamental Muslim to violence. We can’t negotiate with them, but let us not incite them either.

### **Application:**

Today’s application is just to know why Boston and Benghazi happened. Not to follow the soap bubbles of the politics as they try to make it anything other than what it is – Fundamental Muslims following their scriptures. The government immediately tries to disconnect these things with Fundamental Islam, they try to identify it as just a few bad apples, and they don’t want to call it what it is because they fear it will incite more attacks and more fear among the people. I don’t sit in on the meetings, I don’t know what they talk about behind closed doors, I don’t know if they call it what it is or are in some type of denial.....but us here today know why it happens, and not follow their soap bubbles to cause to not see it for what it is. Did you notice when Benghazi happened that two later General Petraeus thought it was time to admitted his adulterous affair that had been going on for years.....and there goes the world chasing that soap bubble and no longer saying what happened, why did they do it, why didn’t we help them get out of there (because if we went in and killed 100’s of fundamental Muslims - 10,000 would have come out the next day). You can’t appease them because they are fundamentalist, you can’t negotiate with them, don’t be foolish and incite them, but God help us when we “leave a man down” – you will never get me to agree that is the right thing to do – for that those are our countryman. But here it is this week, Benghazi makes it to the papers for the hearings on Capitol Hill this week, it was a good time to release the facts about the IRS targeting conservative groups.....more soap bubbles.

### **Your Salvation is Near – Time to be All In**

If you didn’t know, now you do. And thus may we not be caught “unexpected”, may we be a people who know the signs of the time, know what time it is (and it is soon), and not be weighed down by the cares and pleasures of this world.....It is Time to be “ALL IN”

*Luke 21:34-36 (NKJV)* <sup>34</sup> *“But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. <sup>35</sup> For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. <sup>36</sup> Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.”*

# Luke 22

## Communion

(Luke 22:1-20)

### Outline of the Book of Luke:

#### The Life of Christ – The God Man (Luke 1-24)

##### **The Prelude to Christ's Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- His Birth & Boyhood
- His Baptism & Temptation

##### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- His Mission Statement
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- His March to the Cross
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

##### **The Consummation of Christ's Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

### **Overview / 2 Things / Luke 4:18-19 / We come Celebrate / Jesus offers you Follow Him / Communion**

We have now covered 21 chapters of this glorious gospel. We have travelled with Jesus from His birth, His ministry, and everywhere He has gone He has shown His great love compassion for man. And then everywhere he has gone, he always gives the call, "Follow Me", and so here we are today doing just that. Jesus gave us His ministry statement, His reason for coming in Luke 4:18-19, and He has done just that as He has set us free and giving us new, and we come today to celebrate it together. If you have never made that personal choice to "Follow Him", this is what He is offering you today, you can be set free, He will heal your broken heart, and He will call you His son or daughter, you can have a personal and intimate relationship with Him. And our passage today will tell you how you can have that relationship, and for those who have made that decision to "Follow Him" we will celebrate the freedom and new life we have in Him as we study this passage on Communion, which means fellowship, oneness.....and it applies to fellowship and oneness with Him.

**Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)** <sup>18</sup> "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

### **Judas Agrees to Betray Christ**

**Luke 22:1** Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called Passover.

### **Feast of Unleavened Bread – When / Why / What it means to Us – Clean Out the Sin**

Unleavened Bread, Feast of the (also called 'The Feast of Mazzoth,' from Heb. matsōt, 'unleavened bread'), originally an agricultural festival marking the beginning of harvest; it was celebrated for seven days beginning on the fifteenth day of the month Abib (Nisan, the period March-April; Exod. 23:15; 34:18-20). It was later combined with the Passover (Exod. 12:1-20; Ezek. 45:21-24; Matt. 26:17; Luke 22:1). It starts the day after Passover which is

on the 14<sup>th</sup>. It is called “unleavened” because when the children were delivered from the bondage of slavery they were told not to put leaven (yeast – a substance that cause the bread to rise) because they were going to be delivered that next day and there was no time to for the bread to rise. Jesus would use leaven as a picture of sin in His teachings. So every year when the Feast of Unleavened Bread came, the household would go through the home and thoroughly clean the house out of any leaven before the Feast would begin. It was a picture of setting the house in order, make the home pure before the Lord, clearing out of sin. Christian, have you done that lately? Have you, do you, regularly go through your house and look for leaven (sin) that needs to be removed? You know leaven is so tiny, it is but the size of dust, you might not see it unless you stop to look for it. But all through our homes there are little bits of leaven that need to be cleaned out. Is there a TV channel that needs to be blocked, maybe the extreme needs to throw the whole TV out if it is polluting your mind with the carnality of the world. Websites? Video games? DVD’s? Magazines? Parents if you have teenagers, you need to change the passwords on the parental controls often – you will be surprised how “observant” they can be. Go through your house and cleanse it, say to the Lord I honor You with this house you gave me, and I will make it holy and clean before You, so You will come and fellowship with me and my family.

*Exodus 12:15 (NKJV) <sup>15</sup> Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.*

*Exodus 12:39 (NKJV) <sup>39</sup> And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they had brought out of Egypt; for it was not leavened, because they were driven out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared provisions for themselves.*

*1 Corinthians 5:6–8 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? <sup>7</sup> Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. <sup>8</sup> Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*

**Luke 22:2 And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might kill Him, for they feared the people.**

### **Looking for the Perfect Moment / 14<sup>th</sup> Nissan**

The chief priests and scribes wanted to get rid of Jesus, but they had to be careful lest they inadvertently incite the people to rally against them. They have been wanting to kill Jesus for some time now, but they think they have to wait for an opportune time, the perfect time, because lots of people are following Jesus and they are fearful to incite a riot against themselves. So they plot and scheme, looking for the perfect moment. It is to be the perfect moment indeed, but not by their design, but God’s, for as we have studied, for Jesus to be the Passover Lamb Himself, to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, He has to die exactly at the same time as all the other Passover lambs are, and that is on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan (Jewish calendar), at twilight (which is 3pm).

*Exodus 12:6 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.*

*1 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.*

*John 1:29 (NKJV) <sup>29</sup> The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*

### **The Day is Wednesday / Day= Sunset to Sunset**

The day at hand right now is Wednesday the 13<sup>th</sup>, so even though we will read in the next verse that Judas agrees to betray Him, it can’t and won’t happen until the next day the 14<sup>th</sup> which is Thursday. I know we are all use to the day Jesus was crucified as “Good Friday” but just for clarity the Jewish day goes from sunset to sunset, as we always look at our new days as midnight to midnight, or more literally sunrise to sunrise. We will develop this in more depth in a future study. So today is the 13<sup>th</sup>, Jesus must and will be crucified in the 14<sup>th</sup>, and as much as these religious leaders think they are in control, God is orchestrating it all.

### **He is in Control of Your Life Today / He is moving the Pieces / Scriptures are Perfect (14<sup>th</sup> Nissan)**

I can never say that enough to you that God is moving the pieces in your life today to bring to pass his best plans and purposes for you. That job that gets denied, that relationship that didn’t happen to you singles, that ministry you are or are not involved in, the very geographical State that you now live in, is fully orchestrated by God for you, to bring to pass the best plans and purposes for your life. We love to quote Jeremiah 29:11, but when you do just remember it comes in the context of them being in captivity in Babylon for 70 years, which no one wanted to be, but God still says I was working good for you. One of the reasons I continually prove out the perfection of prophecy (the 10<sup>th</sup>

time I said what day the Passover lamb is killed) is to prove out these scriptures are perfect, and thus every word regarding you too is perfect, and will come to pass exactly as God says it will. Be patient Christian, endure, and you will reap in due season.

**Jeremiah 29:10–14 (NKJV)** <sup>10</sup> For thus says the LORD: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place. <sup>11</sup> For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. <sup>12</sup> Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. <sup>13</sup> And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. <sup>14</sup> I will be found by you, says the LORD, and I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, says the LORD, and I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive.

**Luke 22:3 Then Satan entered Judas, surnamed Iscariot, who was numbered among the twelve.**

**Luke 22:4 So he went his way and conferred with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray Him to them.**

**Luke 22:5 And they were glad, and agreed to give him money.**

**Luke 22:6 So he promised and sought opportunity to betray Him to them in the absence of the multitude.**

### **Plan is Made / When Jesus Alone – Covert Plan**

So the plan is made, Judas tell us where we can find Jesus when He is not being surrounded by the crowds. A covert operation is hatched, a purely evil plan.

### **Where did 30 Pieces Come From?**

Where did the money come from? Historical writings say that during Passover, the priests carried small bags of money tied to their belts in order to purchase lambs to be used as sacrifices. Therefore, it is highly likely that the chief priests used money committed to their care for the purchase of sacrificial lambs to “purchase” Jesus, the ultimate sacrificial Lamb.

### **30 Pieces of Silver – Price of Slave / Jesus the Servant of All / He loves You – Is there Anything you Doubt**

Jesus Matthew tells us the chief priests gave Judas thirty pieces of silver. The 30 pieces of silver were exactly as prophesied in the OT (Zechariah 11:12), and Psalm 41 prophesied that the Messiah would be betrayed by a familiar friend.. The Old Testament price of a slave was 30 pieces of silver, this was a fitting amount, for Jesus came as the Servant of all. He loves you! The God of the universe loves you! He serves you, with His life. Is there anything you are doubting of Him, wondering where He is, why He hasn't saved the day yet, is there something you question His wisdom and dealing with in your life? Come back to 30 pieces of silver, that He would allow Himself to be sold for a mere 30 pieces of silver (equivalent to about 20 bucks in today's economy). God willing to be betrayed and humiliated, beaten and bruised, and nailed to a cross and be publically mocked for you, for me, for 20 bucks. Dinner for 2 at Chick-fil-a, for you and for me.

**Matthew 26:14–16 (NKJV)** <sup>14</sup> Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests <sup>15</sup> and said, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?” And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. <sup>16</sup> So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.

**Zechariah 11:12 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup> Then I said to them, “If it is agreeable to you, give me my wages; and if not, refrain.” So they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver.

**Psalms 41:9 (NKJV)** <sup>9</sup> Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.

### **Satan looking for Avenue to Separate you from Christ**

Verse 6 - So he promised and sought opportunity to betray Him – Hey Christian, realize, recognize, and understand that Satan is always looking for an angle, an avenue, for the opportunity to separate you from Christ. That angle, that avenue, comes in many forms, and Satan will seek it out, wait it out, for the opportune time, in the opportune place, in the opportune way to separate you from Christ.

### **Judas throws it Back / Never Enjoy what you Betray For**

Matthew's gospel says that Judas would say that he betrayed innocent blood, and threw back the thirty pieces of silver. Whatever it is that we succumb to, betray our Lord with, we (speaking to Christians) will never be able to fully enjoy it. Whatever it is that we choose to betray our loyalty and love to Him, ultimately we will see we only played the fool, was a pawn of Satan, and it cost us intimacy and fellowship with the Lord.

**Matthew 27:3–5 (NKJV)** <sup>3</sup> Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, <sup>4</sup> saying, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” And they said, “What is that to us? You see to it!” <sup>5</sup> Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself.

### **Why Not Today – Why not Right Now / Cast back the thing that Robs Intimacy / Innocent Blood**

Beloved, why not today, how about right now.....cast it down, throw back that thing, walk away from that thing, confess that thing, that you know in your heart you are doing that betrays your relationship with Jesus, that divides that intimacy and communion with Him. Judas knew he had betrayed innocent blood, but if only he would have stop to fully hear those words, that that innocent blood was perfect blood, it was divine blood, that just one drop of that precious blood was enough to wash away every sin; his past sins, this present sin (even betrayal), and all future sin.....if only he cast himself down at the feet of Jesus and ask for forgiveness. It says (Matthew 27:3) that he was remorseful (sorry), but not sorry enough to come ask Jesus for forgiveness. Jesus will forgive you Christian, but you have to come, you have to cast that thing down that betrays your relationship with Him, and He will cleanse you and forgive you. Today....say no more! You know He is talking to you right now, determine with Him .... Today!

**1 John 1:9 (NKJV)** <sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

### **The Upper Room is Prepared**

**Luke 22:7** Then came the Day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be killed.

### **It is now the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan**

It is now the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, it is Thursday, the day the Passover Lamb must be sacrificed.

**Exodus 12:6 (NKJV)** <sup>6</sup> Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.

### **Estimated 2.5 Million People / ¼ to 1/5 million Lambs**

It was estimated that 2.5 million people were in Jerusalem for the Passover, so if the average family was say 5 people, that would mean there were approximately 500,000 lambs sacrificed at this time. If families were poor they could share a lamb, so even if we cut the number in half, that is a quarter of a million lambs that are being sacrificed.

### **Imagine the Scene – Seeing and Hearing a Lamb Everywhere / Looked like Fresh Snow**

Imagine the scene through the week, all that you hear through Jerusalem and the countryside are the bleating of the sheep. Everywhere you went there was a lamb as they were to bring a lamb into their home on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Nissan; and remind you that the majority of the people were travelers so they were sleeping under the stars, open areas, outside the city. So for them, everywhere they went, the lamb went with them. The city probably looked like a fresh snow as the white of the lambs were everywhere. The Passover, was all about the lambs. Reminds me of the promise God gives in Isaiah that He will make us white as snow. How good it feels after being soiled through the day to take that clean shower, the refreshment, the cleansing, to be made clean. He is so good.

**Exodus 12:3 (NKJV)** <sup>3</sup> Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: ‘On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household.

**Exodus 12:6 (KJV 1900)** <sup>6</sup> And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.

**Isaiah 1:18 (NKJV)** <sup>18</sup> “Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the LORD, “Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.

**Luke 22:8** And He sent Peter and John, saying, “Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat.”

### **Passover – Celebrated by Families / Jesus is celebrating with His Family (You and Me)**

Verse 8 - that we may eat - Passover was to be celebrated by families. Therefore, in celebrating Passover with His disciples, Jesus looked at His disciples as His family. I like that because at this point, these men weren't very spiritual. Judas would betray Him. Peter would deny Him. Thomas would doubt Him. Yet Jesus treated them as family. And if He did that with them, He'll do it with us as well.

**Luke 22:9** So they said to Him, “Where do You want us to prepare?”

**Luke 22:10** And He said to them, “Behold, when you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house which he enters.

**Luke 22:11 Then you shall say to the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says to you, “Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?”’**

**Luke 22:12 Then he will show you a large, furnished upper room; there make ready.”**

### **Room not Rented Out / What will you Sacrifice so that you Might Host Jesus**

Mind you, there were about 2.5 million people in town, this room would have been prime season rental, this owner could have made considerable money for this one week. The room was a guest room, that is what it was designed for. Yet here it is the Passover week, and it is not rented out. I don’t know how, but we can clearly see that this owner knew he was hosting the Passover for Jesus. Was this divine, maybe? A pure miracle, could be? Or did Jesus just know the man and had prearranged this, equally possible. But whatever the case, this home owner knew he was hosting the Passover that night. Point being, he choose to pass on making extra income, so that He might host Jesus in his home. What are you willing to sacrifice so that you may host Jesus in your home, your life personally? Are there personal opportunities (whether that be financial, recreational, entertainment, etc) that you continually choose over meeting and having Jesus in your home, among your life, walking among your family?

### **Judas not Told / No Matter the Situation - Jesus prepares place of Communion / No Betrayer can Enter**

Something else for consideration is that Jesus doesn’t let Judas know where the supper is until it was supper time; he removed the opportunity for Judas to tell the leaders in where to get Jesus where there would only be Him and the other disciples. Jesus continues to orchestrate, He was not the victim, but He is the sacrifice. And you Christian no matter the situation in your life, hardships, betrayal by loved ones, whatever the situation you find yourself in, see that God can always prepare a place for you and He that you can have intimacy and communion, and no betrayer can enter in and take that away from you. No matter what is pressing in on you from around you, you can always go and get alone with God and have a time of intimacy and communion. Don’t believe the lie of Satan that you can’t, or the best lie is the one that says “after” you get through this hardship you will get back to intimacy. That is a lie and a deception, for God wants to commune with you now in the midst of your struggle, to comfort you, encourage you, and speak to you a special word that may only hear and be prepared to hear while you are being pressed upon from the outside.

### **Richard Wurmbrand / Communion out of Nothing**

I am reminded of the story Richard Wurmbrand tells, who was imprisoned for 14 years because of his faith in the Communist country of Romania. He said all the Christians longed to take Holy Communion, but they had nothing. That had no juice and they had no bread, and they prayed amongst themselves how they could celebrate communion together as a family with no elements. Then they said, well what is bread made out of but flour, and what is flour made out of but wheat, and what did God make wheat of – nothing (for God created wheat out of nothing). So we have nothing, so we now have the elements for the bread. And for the juice what is that made out of but grapes, and what are the grapes made out of – nothing (for God created the grapes out of nothing), so we have nothing and thus we now have the elements for the juice. So at a certain time they would come together as a family, in spirit as they were still confined to their dungeon cells, and they would lift up nothing, and break nothing, and eat nothing, and gave thanks for the body that was broken for them. And then they would lift the cup that did not exist, offer it to the Lord, then drink the cup that had nothing in it, because even the cup was nothing, and they gave thanks for the blood that was shed for them. God can create a place of intimate communion, that no hardship can stop, and no betrayer can enter.

**Luke 22:13 So they went and found it just as He had said to them, and they prepared the Passover.**

### **Always will be – Exactly as Jesus said it will Be**

“And they went and found as He had said unto them...” That’s not true only for the disciples in their day, but for us as well. Whatever Jesus says, you’ll find it to be true. There are no exceptions. When Jesus says something you can be sure it’s true.

### ***The Passover is Celebrated***

**Luke 22:14 When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him.**

**Luke 22:15 Then He said to them, “With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer;**

## Fervent Desire

With fervent desire he desired this Passover, for this Passover would be the last, this Passover would be the one that He spent two other Passovers with His disciples, but this one He desired the most. Why, because it would be this one that He would say – It is Done! Sin is finally wiped away once and for all (Hebrews 7:26-27). For it is this Last Passover that makes it so He can say the words and promise of Revelation 21:3-6).

*John 19:30 (NKJV)*<sup>30</sup> So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

*Hebrews 7:26–27 (NKJV)*<sup>26</sup> For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; <sup>27</sup> who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

*Revelation 21:3–6 (NKJV)*<sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. <sup>4</sup> And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." <sup>5</sup> Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful." <sup>6</sup> And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.

## Desire Like a Husband for His Wife

This word for desire is the word associated with a husband desiring his wife (in the purest sense). And how fitting as Jesus is going to the cross to purchase for Himself a Bride. Jesus knows what is coming in just a few hours, but His love and desire for you His bride He says He counts it all joy (Hebrews 12:1-2).

*Revelation 21:9 (NKJV)*<sup>9</sup> Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife."

*Hebrews 12:1–2 (NKJV)*<sup>1</sup> Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

**Luke 22:16 for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."**

**Luke 22:17 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves;**

**Luke 22:18 for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."**

## Jesus is Saying I have a Table set for You / He Waits for You / Have you Given your Life to Him?

Jesus is literally saying to you and I, I have a table set for you, and I waiting for the day where we can all sit together and partake of it together again. Jesus is waiting for you, and He is desiring you. Have you given your life to Jesus Christ, have you asked Him with your lips to come into your life and be the Lamb of God who takes away your sin, so that you might be made right before the Holy (perfect and pure) God?

*John 1:29 (NKJV)*<sup>29</sup> The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

*2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV)*<sup>21</sup> For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

*Isaiah 59:1–2 (NKJV)*<sup>1</sup> Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. <sup>2</sup> But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.

## The Lord's Supper is Instituted

**Luke 22:19 And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."**

**Luke 22:20 Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.**

## 3 Directions for Communion

There are three directions we are to look at every time we take communion:

- **Back** – Do this in remembrance of me. Remember the price has been paid in full, it is finished (John 19:30). All your sins have been forgiven, all your past failures buried in the grave that He entered. Christian, today, right now, the Lord wants you to bury all the lies that you keep hearing from yourself and others, into the grave. Bury the lie that you are not worthy, that you are a failure, that your past is unforgivable, that your failures define who you are today. Bury those lies in the grave, look back and see they were judged 2000 years ago, and you have been cleansed of them.

- *Inward* – in 1 Corinthians 11:28-29 the Lord tells us to look inward, examine ourselves, and to judge ourselves, make determination of ourselves if we living right before Him. You need to bury it, crucify those things right here, right now. This cup reminds us, that the power to do so is given. The grave buried your past, and the resurrection empowers your today (Ephesians 1:19-21), as that same power that rose Jesus from the dead is available to you today to walk and live the victorious Christian life.
- *Forward* – as Jesus said in verses 16-18 of this chapter, I have a table set for you, and I long for the day where we sit together and break bread together, and this fallen world and all its ills will be gone; just Me and My Bride have dinner together, My how I fervently desire you he says. I asked myself today, what would my business card really say if it was to sum up my life, of who I am, and what I live for. I came to the place I only want it to say “His”. That is a life with meaning. Let’s live it now, and let’s celebrate together in Communion.

*John 19:30 (NKJV)* <sup>30</sup> So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

*1 Corinthians 11:28–29 (NKJV)* <sup>28</sup> But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. <sup>29</sup> For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.

*Ephesians 1:19–21 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power <sup>20</sup> which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup> far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

*Luke 22:16–18 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” <sup>17</sup> Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, “Take this and divide it among yourselves; <sup>18</sup> for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”

## **Prayer**

Before we enter into and celebrate communion, let’s just take a few minutes to look inward, before we look back and forward.

Let’s celebrate Communion Together

*1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; <sup>24</sup> and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” <sup>25</sup> In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” <sup>26</sup> For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.

# How Great do you Want to Be?

## (Luke 22:21-34)

### Outline of the Book of Luke:

#### The Life of Christ – The God Man (Luke 1-24)

##### **The Prelude to Christ's Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- His Birth & Boyhood
- His Baptism & Temptation

##### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- His Mission Statement
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- His March to the Cross
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

##### **The Consummation of Christ's Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

### Today's Passage / Betrayer – Greatness / How Great do you want to Be? / A Story or a Question

The day is the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, the day the Passover lamb is to be sacrificed. It is Thursday. We pick up in verse 21 as Jesus announces that His betrayer is at hand, then it is utterly amazing, the disciples shortly thereafter argue over who will be the greatest. Then Jesus talks about who is the greatest, and it is the one who takes the lowest position, the one who yields to others, the one who serves others. So the question at hand today for you and for me, “how great do you want to be in His kingdom?” You can read this as a story today, or you can read this as a question, and God is asking you today, how great do you want to be in My kingdom? **You can be as great as you want to be, but not one bit more than you allow.**

### Why Serve

Why serve others, why make that your life? Because here is Jesus hours away from the cross, taking the time to make the point to serve others. It must be pretty important. If Jesus thinks it that important to tell His followers to serve, to be the lesser, to lift up others over ourselves.....not only is it important, I can tell you there is a spiritual principal that comes with it, and it is a principal that will release the power of God in your life. Take you to a new level of intimacy with Him, understanding, and joy. I pray God changes your life today!

### Context / Overview

We pick up today in verse 21, but to fully understand the magnitude of what is happening in this story, we have to go back to verse 14 and the read the context of this story.

*Luke 22:14–20 (NKJV)* <sup>14</sup> When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. <sup>15</sup> Then He said to them, “With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; <sup>16</sup> for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” <sup>17</sup> Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, “Take this and divide it among yourselves; <sup>18</sup> for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” <sup>19</sup> And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” <sup>20</sup> Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.

## **Beautiful Moment / A Moment he Fervently Desired**

- **Back** - So here is this beautiful moment, as Jesus is taking them back to the Exodus Passover, the memorial celebration of remembering how when the blood of the lamb was placed over the entrance of the home, when the angel of death saw that blood it would “pass-over” that home and not kill the first born.
- **Present** - Jesus looks back, and then He took them to the present (this very day), proclaiming He will be the Passover Lamb and His body and blood will be the sacrifice, that His blood applied not over the home, but every person, we cover them from the judgment of sin and death. All the sacrifices of the Old Testament (OT) could only cover their sin, until they sinned again, but Jesus would wipe away sin, once and forever, clean and forgotten. All the OT sacrifices were merely shadows of what was to come. Testament means covenant, and Jesus is making a new covenant, one that was not based on man works, but on the work of God Himself. Jesus said He has fervently desired this day, He could not wait for the day to die for us.
- **Forward** - And then He looks forward, and says I will not partake of it again until we are all in the kingdom together, home together, heaven. What a beautiful moment. A moment that Jesus said with fervent desire (passionate craving) He has looked forward to, and now it is here and now they are partaking together as a family – as communion is a family celebration, a sweet fellowship of oneness with the Lord. Simply a beautiful moment.

*Colossians 2:16–17 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, <sup>17</sup> which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

## **Christ Predicts His Betrayer**

**Luke 22:21 But behold, the hand of My betrayer is with Me on the table.**

### **On the Table – Referring to Communion**

*On the table* – is not so much about there were 12 guys and the guy whose hand was on the table was guilty one, as I’m sure they would have all immediately been sitting on their hands. The hand of my betrayer is on the table is referring to the communion they had just celebrated together. This beautiful precious moment, where Jesus is taking them back, talking of the pain of the present, and the promise of the future of being together, yet still in the midst of that beautiful moment, there was one who would betray.

### **Imagine**

Imagine us enjoying a sweet time of fellowshiping, communion, and then I announce to this room that there is someone here who desires to ruin this, divide us, hurt us, and later today someone is going to take my life. That is the setting of the upper room. It is rather shocking is it not?

**Luke 22:22 And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!”**

**Luke 22:23 Then they began to question among themselves, which of them it was who would do this thing.**

**Luke 22:24 Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest.**

### **Is it I (Matthew’s Gospel) / Jason / There is a Betrayer that Dwells in all of Us / How could I**

In Matthew’s gospel it said they all said is it I, is it I? When my nephew was a little one I bought him those animated videos of the Bible. He would watch them over and over. One of them was the story of the last Supper. Well something had broken in the house and my sister came into the room and said hey who was the last person to use the shower, dad was it you, no it wasn’t me he replied, mom was it you, no it wasn’t me said mom, and the my nephew runs in from the other room and says, “was it I”, was it I. I laugh, but in our story before us I think we all can relate in that as all the disciples asked “is it I”, it is because we all know that in us dwells a betrayer, who we are always fearful will come out. We desire to be so obedient to the Lord, but then find ourselves saying how in the world did I allow myself to do that, I thought I was so beyond that, I thought I would never do that again.

*Matthew 26:20–22 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> When evening had come, He sat down with the twelve. <sup>21</sup> Now as they were eating, He said, “Assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me.” <sup>22</sup> And they were exceedingly sorrowful, and each of them began to say to Him, “Lord, is it I?”

### **Pasted Verses – Side by Side / One Moment a Betrayer – Next the Greatest**

But here is what also so interesting to me as I pasted verse 23 and 24 into my note pad, at first I thought I had pasted the same verse twice because at the glance they align so closely when they sit right on top of one another (among/among), (themselves/them), (which/which), (them/them). How interesting to me because although one

moment the disciples were saying, “Am I the betrayer?” the next they were saying, “Aren’t I something?” It is amazing how at one moment we can question if we are really even saved, and then a moment later feel we are all that and a bag of chips, God’s chosen, over and above all others, my how I have arrived. How fine the line is between saint and sinner.

Two verses,

**Romans 7:18 (NKJV)** <sup>18</sup> For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but *how* to perform what is good I do not find.

**John 15:5 (NKJV)** <sup>5</sup> “I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

### **Don’t be Surprise “no good” Revealed / The Vine – Nothing with Out Him / Humility – Guards Discouraged**

In my flesh dwells no good thing, so don’t be surprised when “no good” things reveals itself. But immediately cling to the Vine (Jesus) and know you are clean and forgiven, and He meant it when He said “It is Finished”; He love You. And remember, when we are doing great, being used by the Lord, seeing His power, experiencing His power....just remember “in us dwells no good thing”, and all that we are, and all that we do, is because of Him, and without Him we can do nothing. That will keep us humble, but it will also keep us from being beaten down, discourage, and defeated. And, if I can’t do anything without Him, then that means I can do everything with Him (no pressure, no preforming, just abiding).

### **Stay in Systematic Reading / No Bible Rolette**

Can I encourage you stay in a systematic reading of your Bible in your devotions. God will speak to you through you devotion, and keep reading for that day until He does. I am not for Bible-Rolette, because I have never been very lucky in my life, and thus I know that if I was playing Bible-Rolette on the days I had blown it, I would open to verses such as:

**Matthew 7:23 (NKJV)** <sup>23</sup> And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

**1 Timothy 4:1 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,

**Revelation 3:16 (NKJV)** <sup>16</sup> So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

### **Remember Left Page & Right Page Devotion / God Loves You (through Failures & Betrayals)**

So stay in your systematic reading, and remember in your journal (or whatever your style is), one side of the page for God speaking to you through His word, and on the other side of the page you speaking to God, you pouring your heart out unto Him. Christian, God loves you, He loves you through your failures and betrayals, and that same love, acceptance, forgiveness, that God has given you, give it back to that person who needs it from you or this cold and many times uncaring world.

### **The Disciples Argue Over Who is the Greatest**

**Luke 22:24** Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest.

### **Line between Saint & Sinner / They Question until Look across the Table**

How fine the line is between saint and sinner. Jesus says one of you is going to betray me, and then they all say was it me, then almost immediately they go so who going to be the greatest? They being no different than the rest of us probably said oh no is it me, how could I do such a thing, but then they looked across the table at the others and said no it can’t be me, it got to be one of the others, just look at them. In fact as I look at the others I can actually see how wonderful I am, I mean after all I know the scriptures better than the rest of them, and they may be in the circle but I am in the inner circle. How about when Jesus sent us out to preach in His name, I was pretty awesome may I say.

### **Jesus give keys to Greatness – be the Lesser**

Jesus doesn't miss the opportunity tell them, to us, how to be great in His kingdom, and it is totally opposite of the world's ways. He will say, if you want to be great, then seek to be the lesser, seek to exalt others over yourself.

### **How Great**

Christian, how great do you want to be in God's kingdom? How great do you want to be in this world's kingdom?

**Luke 22:25 And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors.'**

### **Benefactor – Benefitted / Expect to be Honored & Served**

*Verse 25 - and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors.'* – Simply put, the people who have some place of authority, feel entitled to be "benefitted" from that position. They feel they should be honored and served. Sadly, this is an attitude that you can find within the church today, of people looking to be benefitted by others.

### **Sadly Miss Root of Word – Ergon (good work) / First Used – Matthew 5:16**

Sadly they miss the root of why they are put where they are put. The root of this word used here for "benefactor" is "ergon" which means good work, and the first time you find it used in the New Testament is Matthew 5, and it is about good works, so that God is glorified. Glorify God through your service.

*Matthew 5:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*

### **Serving Doesn't have to Move Mountains**

And may I point out, that service doesn't have to be moving mountains; little things I so often find bring tremendous glory to God. Like a

- letter to someone who is hurting,
- like a meal to someone who is in overload,
- like lending a helping hand,
- or just sitting with them when they are lonely.

### **Video on Serving**

### **How Great**

Christian, how great do you want to be in God's kingdom? How great do you want to be in this world's kingdom?

**Luke 22:26 But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves.**

**Luke 22:27 For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table?**

**Yet I am among you as the One who serves.**

### **World vs Jesus**

The world says, "Sit at the table and be served."

Jesus says, "I look for every opportunity to serve."

### **John 13 – Jesus washes Feet**

In John's gospel we know that at this meal Jesus washes all the disciples feet. The God of the universe washing dirty feet, right before He is to go to the cross.

*John 13:2–5 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> *And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, <sup>3</sup> Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, <sup>4</sup> rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. <sup>5</sup> After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.*

### **Height of Carnality**

These disciples, arguing over who is the greatest, we see here the height of carnality. Jesus just said I am going to be betrayed, I am going to give myself away and be killed, and these men argue over who is going to be the greatest. Someone is going to die, yet they argue about who is going to be great. And here we have people being hurt and

destroyed all around us, and yet still today in the church people argue over who is going to get the recognition over who is going to go serve the hurting.

### **Org Charts**

Every company I have ever worked has an organizational chart, and it always builds a pyramid up to the top person. Jesus' Org Chart is inverted, it flows downward, not upward.

### **Jesus is making Different World /**

Jesus is making a different kind of kingdom, a kingdom completely different from the world? A kingdom where people serve rather than being served.

### **Room Filled with People – Jesus always finds the one in Need**

If you recall some of our past studies, we saw that everyone knew one thing about Jesus, and that is that if you put Jesus in a room full of people, Jesus would always find the neediest person in the room. A room filled, but Jesus would find the one hurting, the one in need, the one that was overlooked, or looked over, looked down upon, but Jesus would always find them and touch them.

- Man with withered hand (Luke 6)
- Woman with hunched back for 18 years (Luke 13)
- Man with dropsy (Luke 14)
- Blind Bartimaeus (Luke 18)

### **Who are you Serving**

So, Christian.....who are you serving? Where are you serving. Who do you look for when you enter a room. Do you enter a room and say there you are, or do you enter a room and say here I am. Want to change your experience at church, don't just say I am going to church, say I am going to serve, and then find the least, the lesser, the hurting when you get there.

### **How Great**

Christian, how great do you want to be in God's kingdom? How great do you want to be in this world's kingdom?

**Luke 22:28 “But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials.**

**Luke 22:29 And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me,**

**Luke 22:30 that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”**

### **Right Call – Wrong Time**

They are still expecting Him to overthrow Rome right now, and that they will reign with Him, but that is not at this time or place. So often we get God's calling right, we just don't His timing right.

### **They are Going through A Lot / Old to New**

They are going through a lot when you think about it from 30,000 feet. They are in the midst of a covenant transition (from old covenant to new covenant), all the things they had seen and were familiar with (the shadow of things to come), have been uprooted and changed over the past years as they walked with Jesus, and now on this very eve they will see their Master, their Rabbi, their Friend....be led to the cross. And such are many of you, you have recently made a full-on commitment to follow Jesus and your whole life seems to be change. You are trying to process the old with the new, what needs to go and what can stay, when to stay and when to go, when to stand and when to run. Listen, it will come to pass, you will pass from that old to new, but for now just keep reading, keep coming, keep asking, start serving, and you will see the old get older and older, and the new .....newer and newer.

*Colossians 2:16–17 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, <sup>17</sup> which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

*Ephesians 4:20–24 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> But you have not so learned Christ, <sup>21</sup> if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: <sup>22</sup> that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, <sup>23</sup> and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, <sup>24</sup> and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

## **You who have Crossed Over**

And you who have crossed over, you know who they are, you know the struggle they are experiencing. Look for them when you come in here, find them, encourage them, strengthen the brethren.

## **Continue in Trials**

*Verse 28 - But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials -* It kills me, it more than disappointing, more than heartbroken, when I see someone follow Christ for years but then walk away. Years of the trials and suffering with Him, enduring hardship, going through the uphill walk, and then walk away. Christian don't give up, don't walk away. Don't walk away from your marriage, your ministry, your serving.....and don't walk away from your Lord.....we are almost home, just hang on a little while longer.

But listen to these next verses, they are not as "topic change" as you may think.

## **Christ Predicts Peter's Denial**

**Luke 22:31** And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat.

**Luke 22:32** But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren."

**Luke 22:33** But he said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death."

**Luke 22:34** Then He said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me."

## **Not as Separate as Think**

See, I don't think this text is as separate as we may think. I think it is divinely placed here so we can see the full context. Jesus has been talking about pride, the desire to be served, to be the greatest.....and Jesus talks about being the greatest by serving, and to watch out for pride of wanting to be exalted in man's eyes. And then He turns to Peter and says, Peter look out for Satan wants to devour you. Peter, your pride is going to bring you down, and we know that Peter is prideful because he says I will never deny you, I will die for you, but when the time comes he denies Jesus. He wants greatness, but when the time came to do something great, he didn't do it as he denies his very Lord.

## **Satan doesn't need a Big Gun to Destroy**

Satan doesn't need a big gun to destroy you, he can destroy us simply with a little tiny thing called pride (the desire to be served rather to serve, the desire to be recognized and exalted above everyone else), that can leave us dead in the spiritual waters, making everything else neutralized, regardless how well we know the Bible, or the great gifting, or spiritual heritage we have, the desire to be great will neutralized all of it.

## **The Bismark**

In the spring of 1940, war between England and Germany was beginning to wage in the Atlantic. The allied fleets of America and England were still abiding by a disarmament treaty that limited the size of warships. But the Germans were building ships of gigantic proportions. One such ship, the largest ever built up to that time, was the German battleship Bismarck.

The Bismarck displaced 42,800 tons making it 22% larger than the most powerful ships of the allied fleets. It had eight 15" guns and some 80 smaller guns, most of which were antiaircraft. It could reach speeds of 31 knots. Its armor was so thick that no existing British torpedo could penetrate its hull. If the British did not hunt down the great battleship, she had the potential to single-handedly destroy the British fleet at the loss of countless lives.

On May 21st, of 1940, two Spitfire reconnaissance planes stumbled upon the great warship as they searched a Norwegian fiord. Because of poor weather and other problems, it was several days before the British would have a crack at sinking the Bismarck.

With some of the oldest biplanes still in service, and torpedoes that were, for all intents and purposes, obsolete, the British Navy attacked the Bismarck. One of the planes, with both men wounded and 175 holes in the plane from the Bismarck antiaircraft guns, made it back to the British aircraft carrier. Several of the other planes in the squadron were badly damaged.

The pilots reported with excitement that they were sure at least one of the torpedoes found its mark. The mighty Bismarck had taken a torpedo in the rudder. She was dead in the water, only able to maneuver in circles like a wounded fish. Once the British neutralized the battleship's rudder, they had control of the entire ship. And on May 27th, the British navy converged on the Bismarck's position and sunk her.

Hitler's plan was to use the Bismarck to create a wake of destruction across the Atlantic, to bring the European fleets to their knees in submission and humiliation. Had the rudder not been damaged, it would have steered the great ship into battle after lopsided battle, destroying everything in its path.

### **Pride – Serve Me**

Satan doesn't need a big gun to destroy you, he can destroy us simply with a little tiny thing called pride (the desire to be served rather to serve, the desire to be recognized and exalted above everyone else), that can leave us dead in the spiritual waters, making everything else neutralized, regardless how well we know the Bible, or the great gifting, or spiritual heritage we have, the desire to be great will neutralized all of it.

### **Back / Present / Forward**

Jesus says I fervently desired this Passover meal with you. My passion was to give my body for you so that you might have new life, everlasting life, as I cannot wait to eat of it again when we are together in heaven. The two most important things Jesus speaks of, His body given for them/us, and the future day when we are together.....nothing on this earth can compare to that. And in between this salvation and eternity.....Serve!

### **How Great**

Christian, how great do you want to be in God's kingdom?

# Simple Faith

## (Luke 22:31-38)

### Outline of the Book of Luke:

The Life of Christ – The God Man (Luke 1-24)

#### **The Prelude to Christ's Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- His Birth & Boyhood
- His Baptism & Temptation

#### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- His Mission Statement
- His Calling of Disciples

#### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- His March to the Cross
- His Calling of Disciples

#### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

#### **The Consummation of Christ's Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

### Recap / Nothing Left but Simple Faith

We are here in Luke 22, a most wonderful and passionate passage. Jesus is only hours away from the cross, your cross and my cross. Supper has ended, Jesus has washed the disciples' feet demonstrating that greatness in His kingdom is to be a servant to others. Judas will shortly be bringing swords and torches as he leads a dispatch of Roman soldiers. And we pick up with Jesus telling Peter that Satan wanted to sift him like wheat, and in these eight verses today, we see God speaking to us "Simple Faith", of what is left, what matters, after everything in our lives are stripped away and burned away, and we come down to just the simple faith..... What really matters to us, and right now today where are we on our faith, do we really know ourselves the way we think we do?

### ***Christ Predicts Peter's Denial***

**Luke 22:31** And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat.

**Luke 22:32** But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren."

**Luke 22:33** But he said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death."

**Luke 22:34** Then He said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me."

### **Has Begged / Break the Husk – Crush / Satan wanted to Expose Peter –**

*v31 Satan has asked for you* - the word for ask here is to beg someone for something for themselves. Satan is begging the Lord to give him Peter so that he might have his way with him. Satan wants to sift Peter, and the sifting of wheat is the breaking off of the husk that is around the actual kernel, and that could only be done by crushing, pressing, twisting the husk around the kernel. Satan wanted to break apart Peter, he wanted to expose him, show what was really at the heart of Peter, just as his desire was with Job.

*Job 1:8–12 (NKJV)*<sup>8</sup> Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?"<sup>9</sup> So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing?"<sup>10</sup> Have You not made

*a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. <sup>11</sup> But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" <sup>12</sup> And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.*

### **Satan Thinks God will then Reject / But Jesus already Knew**

But see the funny thing is that Satan thinks he can sift Peter and expose him before the Lord and Jesus would go what a loser, away from me. But Jesus already knows what is in Peter, and it is prideful, foolishness, arrogance, and soon to be a failure..... and Jesus still wants him, all of him. Satan thinks he will expose the heart of man, which he does, but more so he reveals the heart of God, and the great love that God has for His people. Beloved, God knows what is in you, all of you, and He still loves you. Don't walk away, don't try to hide it, don't change the subject with Him.....He loves you still even in your ugliest moments and greatest failings. Don't walk away, don't buy the lie of Satan that you are worthless and weak.....keep walking with Jesus and He will complete the work in you that He has begun.

*(Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) 6 being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;)*

### **Me – Just Immature Believer / Not release to Sin – but Understanding of His Heart / He Loves You**

I remember one time I had been saved for a about 2 years, I did something stupid, can't remember what it is, that is one of the advantages of having Swiss cheese for a brain, things just fall into those holes never to be seen or heard of again. But I remember struggling with the Lord, just ready to quit and give up. I said Lord I don't understand how this happened, I am in the word, I am at the church, I am serving, my heart is to please You, but here I stand as a failure, and man I was doing so good, Lord what is wrong with me? And the Lord answered in the gentlest way, He say Ray you are still just an immature believer. He said it all in that statement that He was still working and we had a way to go. It wasn't a release to do it again, but pure power of understanding His heart that He had for me, that He loved me even when I failed, and that He was walking with me to grow me into maturity. That is the heart of the Lord for us today, and Beloved He loves you, and He knows you, and He still loves you, and He will complete the work He began in you, so keep walking with Him.

### **Satan wants to Break Peter – So Peter will Quit / But Jesus was Praying**

*Verse 32 - But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail* - Satan wants to break Peter apart so he can make Peter quit; God won't quit on Peter so Satan says I will get Peter to quit on God. But Jesus is praying for Peter, that his faith will not fail. Peter will fail in action, but His faith will not fail. Peter will be grounded up, sifted before the day is over, but he will still have when it is all over. How do I know that his faith did not fail, as some could argue that it did as he denied Jesus? I know that he failed in lots of things, but not faith, because Jesus was praying that his faith did not fail, and Jesus never fails. Christian, you here who are struggling, ready to quit and walk away, you will not fail! You may fall, you may blow it, but your faith will not fail because Jesus is praying for you, and Jesus never fails!

### **Sidebar – Parents Satan wants to Sift your Kids / Parents you Can't be Distracted**

I am going to come back to that in a minute, but first let me say this, and that is that Satan is begging God for you; but I want you to consider this, and that is that Satan is begging God for your spouse, and he is begging God for your kids. You cannot be distracted, you can't be sleeping, you can't be scattered from Jesus, you have to be fully engaged in this spiritual warfare for your family so you can hear God speak to you on how you are to lead them and protect them. You can't be chasing your dreams and provisions, while leaving your kids and spouse exposed to the sifting.

### **Back to Peter – Everything consumed Except his Faith / Left with Simple Faith / Yosemite - Fire**

So back to Peter, Satan will sift him, and everything will be consumed except Peters faith. Peter is left with simply faith! Sifting is never pleasant, but if it brings us back to that place of simple faith, then it was worth. I watched a documentary this week in how the ecosystem in the Yosemite was out of balance. They couldn't understand how certain species of both plant and insect were dying off and not being reproduced. But then there was a major fire that sweep through the land that they could not stop, because up to that point the policy was to fight the fire at all cost. But this fire couldn't be stopped as all the circumstances were ripe for a total wildfire, and it burned tens of thousands of acres in just a few days before it was finally contained. But what they discovered in the months and years to follow were the reemergence of plants and species that they thought had become extinct in that area, for

what they found was that it was part of the nature cycle that heat would burn away the overgrowth of the tree canopy and that allowed sub to penetrate the ground where it no longer could. They found that the fire actually opened up seed pods that had been laying dominate for years, awaiting the fire to open them.

### **Sometimes Fire is what God is Doing / Allowing us to see Son Light / Open up Seedlings / Simple Faith**

Sometimes that is what God is doing with the trials and fires in our lives as He is allowing us to see Son Light into an area of our life that we never would have and could have if it wasn't for the fire. And, that fire opens up a seed pod that is preprogrammed to grow and reproduce. Trials and fire are never pleasant, but God always does a work in them. And if that is what it takes to bring us back to one thing, that simple faith, then how blessed they are. After all this sifting, we will see Peter is back to where he began 3 years prior. Jesus called Peter to follow and he did, leaving everything behind. He would have been mocked and ridiculed for doing such a foolish thing (as the world would say), but Peter followed because He was drawn to Jesus. Then as he walked with Jesus, like us, he fell in love with Jesus. But then titles and positions, respect and admiration crept in, self-righteous, pride and arrogance crept into his relationship with the Lord. But after all the sifting, the burning, Peter will finally be taken back to the simple faith. He will follow Jesus because he loves Jesus, not titles and position, but simply because he loves Jesus.

### **Fire is not God's Judgment / His Great Love to not Leave you in Current State**

But I wish not a fire upon you, and should it come don't look at it as Gods judgment upon you but His great love to leave you not in the state you are in, as He wants to grow you into a beautiful masterpiece, a testimony of what He can do with a man or woman who submit themselves fully unto Him, just like Peter.

*Romans 8:1 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup> There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.*

### **Why wait for Fire – How about Right Now / Has your Christianity left “Simple Faith” / Start your Own Fire**

But why wait for a fire.....how about right now? Is your life at simple faith? Has your Christianity left simple faith? Remember when you were just happy to be saved, just happy to have a Christian friend, just happy to go to church and be part of a church family, to read the word and just enjoy hearing God speak His words of love to you. But maybe your faith has gotten complicated, overburdened. The word is now a chore, other Christians bug you, church is a drag. What about that? How do you get back to that place you once were? Simple, start your own fire! Go back to your first love, go back and do the things that you once did when you were so excited and in love with the Lord, and burn everything that has gotten in the way and quenched that first love. Are there things that get “first thought”, are there things that get “first action”, and there things that get “first dibs”, then you need to burn them. Take them to the Lord's altar and say Lord burn them, help me burn them, I want to get back to that place of “first love”, just “simple faith”.

*Revelation 2:4-5 (NKJV) <sup>4</sup> Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. <sup>5</sup> Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.*

### **The Former Understands – they walked the Ground / Wayward Children / Comfort those who Mourn**

*Verse 32 - and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.*” – Find someone who has been knocked down, dragged out, and they will be the person who understands and then ministers with compassion. The former addict strengthens the recovering addict, the former alcoholic strengthens the recovery alcoholic, the cancer survivor strengthens the cancer battler, because it is a place of common ground, a ground that not everyone has walked on, but for those that have walked that ground they know where the rocks are, they know where the thorns are, they know where the grassy fields are, and they know where the shade tree is located, the running streams, and soothing beaches..... they know because they are intimately familiar with that ground because they have been there, spent considerable time there, they didn't read about it in a magazine but they actually lived there. I was recently at a conference and the host says all you with wayward children or spouses, if you would like prayer for them stand up. Then he said all you who once were wayward children or spouses, please raise your hands, and 25% of the people raised their hands. The host said, look around you who are in the midst of your trial and see, God can do it, He can bring them home. Then he had all the wayward that had returned to lay hands on the ones standing and pray for them. You can be sure, the hurting listened to those prayers, because they knew they were from people who once walked the ground. Beloved, what is it that you have “returned from”, God wants to use that in your life today, just like He did with Peter, so He wants to do with you. Back in Luke 4 we read Jesus' ministry statement, and He was quoting from Isaiah 61. But look at the full passage of Isaiah 61, and you will see the heart He has, and the heart He desires us to have, and that is a heart that “comforts those who mourn:, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy,

the garments of praise. We can be just like our Lord when we do the things he did, as we comfort those who mourn, as we strengthen them as they enter into what we came out of.

*Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV)*<sup>18</sup> *“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed;<sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”*

*Isaiah 61:1–3 (NKJV)*<sup>1</sup> *“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;<sup>2</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn,<sup>3</sup> To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.”*

### **First he Falls / I don't know the Man / We think we Know Ourselves / My 9 Months**

*Verse 33 - But he said to Him, “Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death* – But before Peter will strengthen the brethren he will fall. Peter falls because Peter did not know himself. Peter thought himself so mighty that he would go to prison or die before he would leave the side of the Christ. But not only will Peter not die, nor go to prison (notice he didn't try to jailbreak Jesus), he would go farther than denying he was one of His apostles, he would go further than saying he was one of His twelve, Peter would go as far as saying I do not know the man. God was not shocked at this denial, God is never shocked with our failings, it was Peter who was shocked. Peter did not know himself, and that is something we must all be on guard about ourselves. We really think we know ourselves, but God has ways to allow things to come into our lives to reveal to us how far we are from who and where we think we are. I remember when I had graduated from the Bible College, man I was so sure of myself, I really thought I was a vessel ready to be used by the Lord. I saw myself as a warrior, ready to fight and battle the evil one with no fear and trembling. Lord, use me as You will, I am rock solid and nothing can move me. Well so the fire began, 9 months of unemployment (without benefits). For the first month I was like wow this is cool, God is taking me into the wilderness for some refiners, wow He did it with Moses, Paul, and Jesus and now doing it with me, what an honor. So what is it going to be Lord, 40 days, that won't be so bad. But then the 40 went to 60, to 80, to 120....and I am no longer saying cool, I am saying ok enough. But week after week, month after month, I can't get any work. People are saying what is wrong with you, people are saying are you sure you should have quit your job in the first place to go to Bible College, Ray is there some unrepentant habitual sin in your life, Ray we are going to dinner after church (but I went home because I didn't have money), weeks into months. Then one day, I just couldn't take it anymore, and I yelled at God, I rose fist of anger towards Him, I said forget....I don't want this anymore, I don't want to serve You anymore, I don't care about the ministry, all I want is a job and have my old life back. And right there in a moment, all that I had promised Him, of being His vessel, being His warrior who would preach and teach without compromise, a servant who would proclaim His name at whatever the cost.....disclaimed in one moment. It was then that God spoke to me and said, “See Ray, given the right set of circumstances even you will curse me.”. Before that moment I didn't think I was the greatest in the kingdom, but I thought I was up there. After that moment, I saw that all that I am, is by the grace of God, and given the right factors, I could curse Him. In one moment, I saw who I really was, and all self-reliance was crushed, and pride and arrogance were sifted along with it. Once I saw who I really was, it totally changed the way I ministered to people. I was much more compassionate and understanding, and I no longer looked at people who were struggling as weak and failures, but I had compassion on them knowing, there go I except by the grace of God. So, how well do you think you know yourself?

### **Christ Predicts Coming Conflict**

**Luke 22:35** And He said to them, “When I sent you without money bag, knapsack, and sandals, did you lack anything?” So they said, “Nothing.”

**Luke 22:36** Then He said to them, “But now, he who has a money bag, let him take it, and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.

**Luke 22:37** For I say to you that this which is written must still be accomplished in Me: ‘And He was numbered with the transgressors.’ For the things concerning Me have an end.”

**Luke 22:38** So they said, “Lord, look, here are two swords.” And He said to them, “It is enough.”

### 3 Things

I see a couple interesting things here.

**First** – them having a sword fulfills the prophetic passage of Isaiah 53 where He is numbered with the transgressors, and Peter definitely breaks the law when he lops the ear off of Malchus (John 18:10)

**Second** – Jesus is giving the message that those who are sent by God can and should prepare themselves for the mission God sends them on. Imagine sending an American missionary to a third world country and have the people support the missionary, when they can't even feed themselves. We have been a blessed Nation and we should send the blessing forward.

**Third** – but thirdly, I see a deeper more personal message for all of here today as we are so much like these disciples, and that is, in just a few hours they are going to be scattered. There is a message in the scattering.

*Isaiah 53:12 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

### **Before you lacked Nothing – now you will Lack / Lack because Scatter / Never Enough**

Jesus said when I sent you did you lack anything, and they said nothing. But now you will lack. They will lack because they will scatter, and when a person scatters, distances themselves, stands at a distance, walks their own path, they will never have enough. There will never be enough money, there will never be enough possessions in the knapsack, there will never be enough vacations/trips (sandals represent travel), and there will never be enough protection (swords). Jesus says when you were with Me and I sent you out, you had no worry of anything. When we walk with Him, are right with Him, submitting to Him, we are content with all things and know and trust that He will take care of all things. But when we walk in our own strength, our own ways, drift from this simple faith, we can't get enough of anything. Have you ever noticed that? There just isn't enough money, possessions, entertainment, and protection for us, as we are constantly seeking to add to them in our own strengths.

*Matthew 26:30-31 (NKJV)* <sup>30</sup> And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. <sup>31</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'

### **Person walking with Lord – Most Free**

I see that the person who is walking with the Lord, side-by-side, are the most free people on this planet. They have stability (even in the midst of having nothing), they have power (because they know it is God who is to provide and not them), they have peace (because they know their God is on the throne and in control). Yet a person can have all the resources, money bags and swords, and have no peace and no power.....because they are distant and scattered from the Lord.

### **Simple Faith**

I pray this day

- we come back to that place of simple faith
- we burn away all the things that has gotten in the way of simple faith
- we come back to our first love
- that we know ourselves – and know we need to cling to this simple faith – Jesus!
- And that Jesus.....is enough!

# There is no Other Way

(Luke 22:39-46)

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- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

## Recap

The day is the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan in the Jewish calendar, it is the day (Jewish day begins at sunset and ends at sunset) on which all the Passover lambs were to be sacrificed at twilight (starting about 3pmish). We are in the final hours of the life of Jesus Christ, the God-Man, fully God and fully human. The God who became man so that He might redeem man from his sins. This Passover celebration was a remembrance of how when the children of Israel applied the blood over the door of the home, that the angel of death would pass-over that home that was covered with the blood. Jesus would be the Passover Lamb, and all who would personally apply His blood over the door of their heart, death would pass over them, judgment for sin covered and remembered no more. So Jesus has just finished have the last supper with the disciples, they broke bread together, they had sweet communion and oneness, Judas is on his way to sell Jesus out to the religious leaders, and now Jesus and the other eleven are on their way to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. So we pick it up there today.

*1 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV) ? Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.*

## **Christ Prays in Gethsemane**

**Luke 22:39** Coming out, He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him.

**Luke 22:40** When He came to the place, He said to them, “Pray that you may not enter into temptation.”

**Luke 22:41** And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, **Luke 22:42** saying, “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.”

**Luke 22:43** Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him.

**Luke 22:44** And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

**Luke 22:45** When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow.

**Luke 22:46 Then He said to them, “Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation.”**

Now let's look at it verse-by-verse

**Luke 22:39 Coming out, He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him.**

#### **As He was Accustomed / Part of His Being / Christian where would they Find You**

The Mount of Olives, a place that Jesus went often (as He was accustomed). The Mount of Olives Jesus went often to pray and took His disciples there. In John 18:1-2 we are told that Judas knew this is a place you could find Jesus. I like this word “accustomed” as it means (practice, manner, rule, a way of behavior). This was a part of Jesus' nature, to go to the Mount of Olives and pray and spend time with the men He was discipline. So much a part that those who knew Him knew that was the place to find Him. Jesus didn't say after supper we are going to the garden, but Judas knew that is where you would find Him. Christian, where would people know to look for you? Where would they look for you in the early mornings, in the evenings, on Sunday mornings? The place others know you to be, is a good indicator of who we are. Jesus was found at the place of prayer and fellowship, where would we be found.

**John 18:1–2 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. <sup>2</sup> And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples.

**Luke 22:40 When He came to the place, He said to them, “Pray that you may not enter into temptation.”**

#### **Left the 8 – took the 3**

Matthews gospel tells us that Jesus left the eight at the entrance of the garden, and then took Peter, James, and John with Him as He went further in. It is remarkable to me, that the Creator of the universe would ask man to join Him in prayer, but He does.

**Matthew 26:36–37 (NKJV)** <sup>36</sup> Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, “Sit here while I go and pray over there.” <sup>37</sup> And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed.

#### **Not enter Temptation (examine with Purpose to find Fault) / Satan is Looking for Faults to Exploit**

Verse 40 - Pray that you may not enter into temptation – Jesus says to them to pray so that they might not enter into temptation. The word for temptation as it is used here means “an examination with the express purpose of producing (or proving) a fault in the examinee.” Jesus is saying to them you have faults, you have holes in your armor, and Satan wants to find them and exploit them, with one purpose in mind, and that is to take you out.

#### **Prayer – For Procurement and Protection / Place to Reinforce Holes in Armor**

You see, prayer is not only for procurement, but for protection. In other words, prayer is not simply to ask for things you need or want—but also to protect you from things you don't need or want. Stop praying, and Satan will find that opening and he will attack through there. Prayer is the place we cover (seal up and reinforce) the holes in our armor, the places we are susceptible to be defeated. Have you ever noticed that? That as you are in the word and prayer (and I consider the two synonymous because prayer is talking to God and the Bible is one of the ways God speaks to us), but have you ever noticed that the weaker your prayer life is, the stronger those weaknesses become? That is because we are not sealing up the holes, reinforcing the weak spots, and the enemy knows it, and attacks at those points.

#### **Jesus invites Disciples – What an Example / Pray for Kids – Satan on the Attack**

And, if Jesus invited these disciples to join Him in prayer, and that it was going to actually help and strengthen Him and them, then what an example for us. Jesus was saying to them boys there is a war coming upon you that is only hours away, prepare yourself for it so you can stand against it, reinforce the levee, for Satan is coming in like a flood. Parents, stop praying, and your kids will be vulnerable to attacks of the Enemy. Stop praying, and your marriage will be attacked constantly. Jesus said one of the keys to protection from temptation or trouble is prayer. We'll never know until we get to heaven just how important our prayers are.

**Matthew 26:38 (NKJV)** <sup>38</sup> Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.”

### **If you Prone to Weakness & Compromise - Pray**

If you or someone you know has a weakness, if they are prone to compromise, moral failings, fear, worry, loveless, hypocrisy....then pray.

**Luke 22:41 And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, Luke 22:42 saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done."**

### **The Cross Before Him**

The burden is upon Jesus, only hours away before the Lamb that was slain before the foundation of the world. Jewish tradition is that at the end of the Passover meal they would sing what is called the Hallel songs, which are Psalms 113-118. Let's read how the last Psalm 118 ends, and take specific note to verse 27, "Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar". These are the words that are going through Jesus' mind as the head out to the Mount of Olives, maybe even singing them as they walked (Matthew 26:30).

*Revelation 13:8 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

*Psalm 118:25-29 (NKJV) <sup>25</sup> Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity. <sup>26</sup> Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD. <sup>27</sup> God is the LORD, And He has given us light; Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar. <sup>28</sup> You are my God, and I will praise You; You are my God, I will exalt You. <sup>29</sup> Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.*

*Matthew 26:30 (NKJV) <sup>30</sup> And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.*

### **Cross the Brook Kidron – Flowing with Blood**

After celebrating the Passover, Jesus leaves the city to go to the Mount of Olives which is outside the city. Between the two one would have to cross over the little creek bed of the Kidron. The word "Kidron" means "dark" or "murky" because the blood of the sacrifices would drain out of the temple and into the brook below. Therefore, only hours before His death, Jesus would be stepping over a brook that ran blood red. Yes all the Passover lambs have yet to be slain as that won't happen until twilight (about 3pm – and right now it is somewhere near the midnight hour), and although those lambs have yet to be slain, the people would be making all kinds of sacrifices during this week leading up to the Passover. Sacrifices of bulls and goats, for sin offerings, peace offerings, and free-will offerings. Mind you there is close to 2.5 million people in Jerusalem for the celebration, and the sacrifices would have been plentiful and the blood would have been flowing. Imagine Jesus stepping over (maybe through and in) all that blood, knowing His blood would be flowing shortly.

### **Gethsemane – Olive Press**

Gethsemane was an appropriate place for Jesus to pray so passionately, for "Gethsemane" means "olive press," the place where olives were crushed to release their oil. The crushing, the pressing Jesus endured in Gethsemane as He was about to feel the wrath of His Father for the sin of all humanity, so far exceeds anything we can even begin to comprehend that it is rendered incomprehensible.

**Luke 22:43 Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him.**

### **Everybody has Garden Times – Every Garden has an Angel**

Every life has a Garden of Gethsemane. But every Gethsemane has an angel. The Lord will always send an angel into your Gethsemane—an unexpected person, a Bible study, a radio teaching, a book—to strengthen you in your time of need.

**Luke 22:44 And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.**

### **Hematidrosis / Can kill a Person**

Hematidrosis: under great emotional stress, tiny blood vessels rupture in the sweat glands and produce a mixture of blood and sweat. Doctors say that a man and woman have actually died from this load of stress upon their bodies, and that is died on the spot.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Time Jesus is Straining / Sea – Bread - Death**

So here for the first time we see Jesus straining. Even in His 40 days wilderness trial we don't see Him straining. It was no strain for Him to calm the winds and the sea, no strain for Him to say Lazarus come forth (back from the grave), no strain for Him to turn a few loaves into enough to feed 5,000, but here for the first time we see Him straining, to the extent that blood vessels are bursting.

### **Not Fear of Man – Nor Death – Nor Beating**

Is the fear of man, hardly as with a word He will make a whole cohort (which is 600 men) of soldiers fall over when they come to arrest Him. Would it be the fear of death, hardly as with mere words He rose Lazarus from the dead. Would it be the fear of being beaten, hardly as He could call a legion of angels down to save Him if He so desired. *John 18:5-6 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> They answered Him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "I am He." And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. <sup>6</sup> Now when He said to them, "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground.

*John 11:43 (NKJV)* <sup>43</sup> Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!"

*Matthew 26:53 (NKJV)* <sup>53</sup> Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?

### **Something much Greater / It is the Separation from the Father**

No something much greater than that, and I will tell the end before the beginning, it was knowing that He would fully experience the words that He was yet to speak, My God My God why have You forsaken Me? Forsaken, meaning to "abandon, desert, leave helpless, to leave behind". Jesus for the first time in eternity will be separated from His heavenly Father.

*Matthew 27:45-46 (NKJV)* <sup>45</sup> Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. <sup>46</sup> And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

### **Let's not Forget – a 2way Prayer / Abba Father – Intimacy / Imagine not stopping Childs Horrible Event**

But least we forget, this prayer is a two-way prayer, and there is the Father in heaven whose heart is being torn and pierced, as His only Begotten Son is saying, Dad is there any other way. In Mark's account we are told that Jesus says "Abba Father". We would translate that today into "daddy"; Abba was the most intimate and endearing word that a child uses with a father. Still today you can hear amongst the Jewish community children saying "Abba, Abba", a term for endearment. And here we have a son saying to a father, "is there any other way", and a father having to say, "son there is no other way". The agony and anguish of the garden was no greater than the agony and anguish there in heaven. Imagine you mothers and fathers, and your child is destined for a brutal and horrific event, and you had the ability to step in and stop it, and yet you would not say "I can't", but you would say "I won't", this has to be done. Imagine having to make that decision, and say those words.

*Mark 14:35-36 (NKJV)* <sup>35</sup> He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. <sup>36</sup> And He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will."

### **Father not Silent in Garden / They are in Agreement – There is no Other Way**

Some teachers believe that God the Father was silent during this time of prayer, I do not agree. God the Father will be silent at the cross, as He turns His back on His Son as His Son takes on the sins of the world, but not here in this garden prayer. Father and Son have unbroken communion and communication, and God the Father is answering the Son, and saying there is no other way. Imagine having to say that as a Father, imagine having to hear that as a son. Father and Son are in agreement, There is no other way! They will have to be separated so that a person can be united to Them.

### **This is Holy Ground / Father not Helping – Son saying I am going to bring You Shame / 10 Commandments**

We are on holy ground here. We can only scratch at what all this means. A Holy Father telling a Holy Son that I cannot help You, and then a Holy Son saying "I am willing to leave You". I will leave You Father, I will bring You shame as the world will shake their fist at Me and say He calls Himself God. I will take the shame as for that moment He will bear the sins of the world, He will be liar, the thief, the blasphemer, the idol worshipper. Imagine at that moment on the cross Jesus is taking on the penalty and judgment for being a person who breaks the commandments as he trades places with us. Imagine Jesus, perfect and pure, the apple of His Father's eye, then for those 6 hours He will He become the sins of the world; hey did you hear about that guy there on the cross, He worships other gods, and if you go to His house you will find all kinds of carved images and idols that He bows down to. And I hear that he uses the Lord's name in vain, the very God who gave Him His breath he uses as a four-letter filth word. And, forget finding Him taking a Sabbath, He takes work over worship every time, and if He isn't

working He is out playing on the Sabbath – he really doesn't care about honoring the Holy God. That guy there on the cross, He is so disrespectful to His Father, it is bad, really bad. He is a murderer, He kills the innocent. It is no wonder that He is a fornicator and adulterer, no doubt into pornography. Yea, well I heard He is a thief, he steals from the IRS, steals from His employer, steals from the grocery store. And, whatever He says, you just can't trust it because He is always lying. And, He can never have enough, covets this and covets that, He is so discontent with what God the Father has given Him that He is so unthankful and grateful.

#### 10 Commandments:

- #1. "You shall have no other gods before Me... (Exodus 20:3).
- #2. "You shall not make for yourself a carved image... (Exodus 20:4-6).
- #3. "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain... (Exodus 20:7)
- #4. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy...(Exodus 20:8-11)
- #5. "Honor your father and your mother... (Exodus 20:12)
- #6. "You shall not murder. (Exodus 20:13)
- #7. "You shall not commit adultery. (Exodus 20:14)
- #8. "You shall not steal. (Exodus 20:15)
- #9. "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. (Exodus 20:16)
- #10. "You shall not covet your neighbor's goods; (Exodus 20:17)

#### **6 Hours on a Hill / Depart from Me I never Knew You – Daddy where are You**

So for 6 hours on a hill outside the walls of Jerusalem, the city that is His, He will be rejected by man, and rejected by His Father, for being all these things. We can't fathom what is going on in this prayer in the garden. Jesus broken, the thought that this is what His Father would think of Him, and then His own Father is going to have to turn His back on Him and in essence say, depart from Me I never knew you. Jesus would cry out daddy where are you, but there would be no answer. Holy ground indeed, we have but a scratch of what is happening here in the garden.

*Matthew 27:45–46 (NKJV)* <sup>45</sup> Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. <sup>46</sup> And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

*Luke 13:23–27 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> Then one said to Him, "Lord, are there few who are saved?" And He said to them, <sup>24</sup> "Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. <sup>25</sup> When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from,' <sup>26</sup> then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.' <sup>27</sup> But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.'

#### **Pure God can't look Upon Sin / Turns Ears Away**

The Holy God, perfect and pure, cannot look upon (Habakkuk 1:13) and allow into His presence that which is impure and unholy. And He cannot and will not hear those who are impure (Ish 59:1-2), thus the words "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me". God says he will not hear their prayers. And, Jesus because of His love for you and me would not turn away from our sins, else we would have no way, because there is no other way.

*Habakkuk 1:13 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he?

*Isaiah 59:1–3 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. <sup>2</sup> But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear. <sup>3</sup> For your hands are defiled with blood, And your fingers with iniquity; Your lips have spoken lies, Your tongue has muttered perversity.

*Proverbs 28:9 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, Even his prayer is an abomination.

#### **The Garden was About Us – Complete Agreement – No Other Way**

But the garden really is all about us, as the Father and Son are in complete agreement when it is left, that there is no other way. If you are here today and do not know the Lord personally, maybe you are seeking, thinking, debating..... then know this, there is no other way by which you can be saved from your sins and come into the presence of the Holy God except through Jesus Christ's finished work upon the cross.

*Acts 4:12 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

*John 14:6 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

*John 10:9 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

## **No Other Way / Not Good Intentions or Works / No Other way – But Worth It**

There is no other way! Not good works, nor good intentions, not even terrible upbringings, or terrible life circumstances and events made me do the bad things I am doing. ....there is no other way except through Jesus Christ and the cross. And when He and the Father were in the garden together, they said there is no other way, but this way is worth it, you mean that much to God, that they would together endure the shame and the blame to make you their own. This was the cost of making you their own.

*Titus 3:5 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,

*Ephesians 2:8–9 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast.

## **The Cup – His Wrath**

Jesus said Lord let this cup pass before me. The cup He is referring to is the cup of the wrath of God that must be poured out on all those who break God's Holy Law, the 10 Commandments. When a man breaks man's law he must pay the penalty, and when man breaks God's law, he must pay the penalty (Romans 6:33).

*Psalms 75:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup, And the wine is red; It is fully mixed, and He pours it out; Surely its dregs shall all the wicked of the earth Drain and drink down.

*Isaiah 51:17 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> Awake, awake! Stand up, O Jerusalem, You who have drunk at the hand of the LORD The cup of His fury; You have drunk the dregs of the cup of trembling, And drained it out.

*Jeremiah 25:15 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup> For thus says the LORD God of Israel to me: "Take this wine cup of fury from My hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send you, to drink it.

*Romans 6:23 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## **You who think – My Sin isn't Hurting Anybody / 2 Gardens**

If you think your sin is not hurting anyone, then I take you to this garden, to the cross, and you can see that it does. Every person lives in one of two gardens, the Garden of Gethsemane, or the Garden of Eden. In the Garden of Eden a man agrees with Satan and says, did really say that, is that really what it means, am I really supposed to do that, I think not. Or, the person is living in the Garden of Gethsemane and they say "not my will, but Your will be done". Sin taste good, looks good, feels good. ....but for a season, and then it kills. If you are here today and are living in any type of moral compromise, I pray you hear the voice of God calling you to leave it, to see these two gardens.

*Genesis 3:1 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"

*Luke 22:41–42 (NKJV)* <sup>41</sup> And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, <sup>42</sup> saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done."

## **Propitiation**

All this in theological terms is called "propitiation", which means to appease wrath. God has to judge sin, Jesus stepped in and put our sin on His shoulders, and in a literal sense said, "fire away". Six hours on a brutal cross on a hill outside Jerusalem.

*1 John 4:9–11 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. <sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. <sup>11</sup> Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

## **This was the Cost – Evolution**

This was the cost to make us His own, to be separated from His Father, to take the beating and the piercing, for me and for you. You know when I got saved some 20 years shortly after I got save I started to doubt if there was even a God. My whole life I always believed there was a God, then I get saved and start to doubt that He even existed. I started to study evolution and science in depth, I started to read the Bible and look for contradictions. In the end I found a perfect Bible, full of prophecies that were backed up by the secular history books. I found the laws of science making evolution impossible, and thus it was all faith (to believe evolution or the Genesis account). But after about 6 months of all that I really came down to what my real issue was, and it wasn't evolution versus creation, but my real struggle was that I had a hard time believing that there was such a One that could love as God says that He does, and that that One would actually love me in all my offenses. ....but He does, and He not only

said it, He proved it! God loves Christian, believe it for it is true, He loved you so much that He was willing to do all that we have read here today. The Father willing to turn His back on His Son, for me and for You. The Son willing to be called all those things, to be a shame and offense before His Father, but He did because He loved us so much, and He like us too as He calls us friends.

*Hebrews 12:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> *looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

*John 15:12–14 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> *This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.* <sup>13</sup> *Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.* <sup>14</sup> *You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.*

**Luke 22:45 When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow.**

**Luke 22:46 Then He said to them, “Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation.”**

### **Sleeping – He understands our Weakness**

*Verse 45 - Sleeping from sorrow* – means that they were emotionally spent. Jesus understands our weaknesses, but He still tells us to push through them. He can't force it upon us, else he violate our free-will, but He does understand our weakness concerning our free-will.

### **Jesus looks at the 3**

Jesus isn't coming down on them, for He loves them. Jesus' heart is a shepherds heart and His heart no doubt was heavy for them. Looking at Peter knowing in only a few hours he will betray Me, and it will tear him apart. James, it won't be long that you will follow in my steps of being despised and rejected, and they become the first seed of the martyrs death. John, you will have to live a long life in this fallen world, reject and exiled to Patmos, but I will see you there, stand firm my friend and my love. Jesus looks upon and loves upon you the same today. He knows your weakness and he understands your frailty, but He is praying for you just like He prayed for Peter and the rest of them, and Jesus fails not, and He will see you through, just continue on my friends. I know it is hard, but don't quite and walk away.

### **Pray On / Where do You Turn**

Just a closing point, Jesus went into the Garden of Gethsemane, the place of crushing. Where do you go when you start to be pressed and crushed? Do you turn to drugs, your prescriptions, alcohol, the television, or that strong hold that you always return to when you feel stressed and pressed? I want you to notice something, after this prayer of Jesus here in the garden, notice that there is no stress from that point on. When they come for Him, He is in control, when the mock trial comes He is in control, when the cross comes he is in control. There is no stressing or straining, that was done here in the garden, and now as He goes out to face it, He faces it in power. What happened, what changed, it was that He left it in the garden. Beloved follow that example of power, and take that thing that is pressing and stressing you to a garden of prayer, and stay there until you can leave it there. Stay there until you have the peace that God is in control, that He is for you, and that He will do what is best for you.

### **Battle Won in the Garden**

We say that victory over sin death came at that cross, and indeed it did, but I will tell you the battle was won in the garden.

### **All we have Read – This was the Cost of Making you My Own**

For you, all that we have read comes down to this, God would say to you, “This was the cost of making you My own”, and you are absolutely worth it.

## **There is Power in Failure – if we Allow It** **(Luke 22:47-62)**

Failures, or were they?

In his early years, teachers told him he was "too stupid to learn anything." Work was no better, as he was fired from his first two jobs for not being productive enough. Even as an inventor, he made 1,000 unsuccessful attempts at inventing the light bulb. Of course, all those unsuccessful attempts finally resulted in the design that worked.....

***Thomas Edison***

These brothers battled depression and family illness before starting the bicycle shop that would lead them to experimenting with flight. After numerous attempts at creating flying machines, several years of hard work, and tons of failed prototypes, the brothers finally created a plane that could get airborne and stay there..... ***Orville and Wilbur Wright***

He struggled in school and failed the sixth grade. After school he faced many years of political failures, as he was defeated in every election for public office until he finally became the Prime Minister at the ripe old age of 62..... This Nobel Prize-winning, twice-elected Prime Minister of the United Kingdom wasn't always as well regarded as he is today ..... ***Winston Churchill***.

While today he is remembered as one of the greatest leaders of our nation, His life wasn't so easy. In his youth he went to war a captain and returned a private (if you're not familiar with military ranks, just know that private is as low as it goes.) He didn't stop failing there, however. He started numerous failed business and was defeated in numerous runs he made for public office..... ***Abraham Lincoln***

He raked in billions from merchandise, movies and theme parks around the world, but he himself had a bit of a rough start. He was fired by a newspaper editor because, "he lacked imagination and had no good ideas." After that, he started a number of businesses that didn't last too long and ended with bankruptcy and failure. He kept plugging along, however, and eventually found a recipe for success that worked, a little mouse and a magic kingdom.... ***Walt Disney***

This cartoonist had every cartoon he submitted rejected by his high school yearbook staff. Even after high school, he didn't have it easy, applying and being rejected for a position working with Walt Disney, but now one of the most endeared and enduring comic strips in the history of the world..... ***Charles Schultz author of Peanuts***

### **There is Power in Failure – If we allow them to Be**

There is power in failure, and in our passage today we will read of two failures, one of them if Judas who let failure be his end, and his failure is his identity. The other failure in our passage today is Peter, and in it we read of someone who turned failure into victory, and is known as one of the giants of the faith. Today we read his story and we gain mountains of personal application for our lives today. Today's passage I believe is one of the greatest in all the Bible on how to live victorious Christian lives, for read on how to avoid certain pitfalls so we don't find us in a place of compromise and failure, but we also read of a man who got up even after his greatest failing, to go on to do something great. But.....above it all, we will see and find a God of second and 10,000 chances, a God who loves us and restores us, and is always reconciling us to Himself. When we see that, and believe that, we will be the man or woman who though we may fall, we will rise again.....for nothing will be able to keep us down, even when we are knocked down, for we know there is a great and loving God extending a hand to lift us back up.

***Proverbs 24:16 (NKJV)*** <sup>16</sup> *For a righteous man may fall seven times And rise again, But the wicked shall fall by calamity.*

### ***Judas Betrays Christ***

**Luke 22:47** And while He was still speaking, behold, a multitude; and he who was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them and drew near to Jesus to kiss Him.

**Luke 22:48** But Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

### **Tail End of Garden Prayer**

*Verse 47 - And while He was still speaking –* this is the tail end of Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Victory will be had at the cross, but the battle was won in the garden. Jesus counted you worth it, the cost to make us His own.....He says worth it! Have you considered your worth today? That you are precious and priceless in the sight of the Lord, that you are not a number, a one in 7 billion, but a son, a daughter, His own special treasure? God died for you.....gladly, because He considered you worth the price. He is the same God today, at this very moment, His passion for you 2,000 years ago at the cross the is the same passion He has for you today. Your God, love you! Meditate on that.

*Luke 22:45-46 (NKJV)* <sup>45</sup> *When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow.* <sup>46</sup> *Then He said to them, "Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation."*

### **A Multitude / Jesus in Control / In Control of Our Lives – We are His**

*Verse 47 - behold, a multitude -* The multitude would include 600 Roman soldiers (a cohort). Imagine 600 plus men falling on the ground with torches and spears. Ouch, Ohh, being poked and being burned. Jesus is in control, Jesus is always in control, no man, government, or program is in control of our lives, because we are His. What are you facing today? You face it not alone, "I am He" is in control of your life just as he was in control in the Garden that night. You can trust Him that even in the darkness, He will bring you into the resurrection.

*John 18:3-6 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> *Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons.* <sup>4</sup> *Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?"* <sup>5</sup> *They answered Him, "Jesus of Nazareth."* *Jesus said to them, "I am He."* *And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them.* <sup>6</sup> *Now when He said to them, "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground.*

### **One of the Twelve / Don't Go**

*Verse 47 - one of the twelve –* What a sad statement that Judas was one of the twelve but is no more. Judas was one of the twelve, walked with Jesus, laughed with Jesus, ministered with Jesus, saw the power of Jesus and yet there came a place in his life where he went from an "is to a was". He went from he is one of the twelve to he was one of the twelve. Sad to say we are watching many of people who once walked so closely to the Lord, to walking away from Him. They go from an "is to a was". Beloved, don't go, there is nothing out there, there is nothing out there that can compare, anything else and everything else will leave you empty and wanting.....but my fear for you is that you will think that you can find your way back, that it is but for a moment and you will be back, but my fear for you is that will be like Judas and never find your way back and be gone and lost forever. Listen, whatever it is that you may be struggling with, tempted with, bitter about.....would you please come and talk to us about it so we can help you reason your way through it, because in the end I believe you will see that it is and will be a loss for you, and you will see God's love and protection for you in all things.

### **Verb Tense – Continually Kissed / Judas betrays with a Kiss / Have you Been Betrayed by a Kiss of Friend**

The verb tense used in the other accounts is that Judas continually kissed Jesus. Jesus says are you going to betray Me with a kiss. Betrayal is a bitter pill to swallow, yet how much harder to swallow when it is by the kiss of a friend, someone you count as friend and confidant. If you were Jesus what would you have said to Judas, what would you have done to Judas. Notice how far off Jesus' response and action is from yours. Jesus still extending love and grace to Judas, still leaving the door open for Judas to change his mind (repent) and come back to Jesus, for in Matthew's account that we read Jesus still calls him friend, even when Jesus sees through the phoniness of his kiss. Listen, there is nobody in this room who has not been betrayed by the kiss of a friend, someone near and dear to your heart, but yet they betrayed you with a kiss. They acted like they were your friend and dear to them, they give the kiss and the hug, yet in their heart they were anything but, and in their action they wounded you greatly. Listen, I know it hurts, no one here will say to another that it doesn't hurt.....but what Jesus will say to you in this powerful verse is that He knows what it is to be betrayed by a kiss of a friend, and He knows how to help you heal and have victory over the wounds of a friend. Jesus says to you, if you will lay down your sword, if you will not revile back, if you will let me take it to the cross for you, I will give you peace in your pain, I will give you beauty in your betrayal, because if I could turn the betrayal of the cross into beauty, if I could rise from the depths of that betrayal, can I not do the same for you.

*Matthew 26:50 (NKJV)* <sup>50</sup> *But Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come?" Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him.*

### **Let's Pray Now**

Before we move on I want to pray for you right now who have betrayed by the kiss of a friend, and I want to pray that you will lay it down at Jesus feet and say I give it to You, and I yield it to you, I will not pick up my sword against them, but I will still call them friend and love them, and look to You to turn betrayal into beauty.

**Luke 22:49** When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, “Lord, shall we strike with the sword?”

**Luke 22:50** And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear.

### **This is Peter / From Sleeping to Slicing**

We know this is Peter who strikes with the sword. We know that Peter was just sleeping, and jumps from sleep to slicing all within a second. He goes from sleeping to slicing, he skips the spiritual because he skipped the prayer in the garden, because he was physically exhausted.

*John 18:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

### **Fatigue will Rob of Spirituality**

Just a note on fatigue. Fatigue will rob us of spirituality. Man is body, spirit, and soul. The three are all intertwined together. We need to guard, protect, and invest in our rest else we will never enjoy the full bounty of the spiritual things when we are fatigue and exhausted. We have to get our appropriate rest else we have no energy to enter into the spiritual things, we will always just be acting out of the flesh because that is what is on top at that moment. Turn off the television, click off that app, and get your rest. Husbands and wives with little children (all couples for that matter) and working long hours, get together today and have an honest conversation about your energy level. See I am opening the door up for you to have this conversation (that you have been wanting to have but didn't know how to start it without it turning into a fight – I mean strong fellowship). Get together today and say alright lets chat about this, what can I do to help you, and here is what you can do to help me. You won't get 100% of what you want, but I pray you can make it up to 50-50. I say if the devil can't make you bad, he will make you busy, and that busy can make us real tired.

*1 Thessalonians 5:23 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### **From Sleeping to Slicing / Peter doesn't wait for the Answer**

So my beloved brother Peter, if I was born 2,000 years ago I would have been one of the apostles, I am sure of it. The verse would have read “and then Ray having a sword drew it and started swinging it everywhere, had not Jesus ducted Ray would have lopped off his ear too”. How many times in my life I am so like Peter. Notice carefully the verse, Peter says shall we strike by the sword, and then Peter strikes with the sword. Notice Peter did not wait for the answer. He assumes since Jesus had said go get a sword (verse 36), that it meant he was supposed to use the sword. How that is so me, how often I have heard a word of the Lord, said ok now I am going to put that word into action, but the Lord never told me that now was the time. I went out and put it into action, but had not gotten the ok from the Lord to do so. I don't want to give you a spiritual example of that regarding ministry else you will lose all faith in me, so I will tell you a story about everyday life. I had heard the Lord one day speak to me about having a house (this was when I lived in Florida). So one day I see this piece of property and I was like this is an awesome location, and the price was great. Lord do you want me to buy this property, ok I will, but the fact is the Lord never answered because I didn't give Him opportunity to, I thought He must want me to buy it because everything seemed to align so well. Man, what a bondage, what a nightmare, I was lopping off ears but they were my own as I brought so much unnecessary pain upon myself. I had to clear the land first, so I am out there clearing the land with a steel-bladed brush hog one day and I hit the city water line – yea it looked like Ole Faithful at Yellowstone. All the neighbors got a laugh out of that one. In the back was a pond that had become overcome with all kinds of algae and lily pods, and the only way to clear it was with a canoe, yea need I say more as I flipped the canoe, submerged under the algae and green slim, and came to the surface covered in green slim. My apartment was 40 minutes away. You can imagine the looks I got as I sat at the stop lights. I sold it for a loss, and was never so glad to walk away for a loss. I sold it when I came to the place, Lord I know you didn't give me the green light to buy this, I convinced myself it was your will because it all seemed to align so well, but the fact is you never said to do it. And my how many messes I have found myself in when I jump into something without hearing the Lord say “Yes – do it”.

- Lord shall we strike by the sword?
- Lord do you want me to date that person?

- Lord do you want me to take that job?
- Lord do you want me to get involved in that thing?

Beloved, only after you hear Him say .....Yes, do it! There is the place between asking and doing, and it is called “hearing”.

**Luke 22:51 But Jesus answered and said, “Permit even this.” And He touched his ear and healed him.**

### **Jesus submitted to this back in Garden**

*Verse 51 - Permit even this -* Jesus says permit even this boys, I have already submitted to this back in the garden.

### **Jesus puts the ear Back On**

John tells us the servants name was Malchus. Now I am not exactly sure how this all played out. Did Jesus bend down to pick the ear up and plop it back on? Or did Jesus touch his ear and heal it (aka a new ear immediately appeared). Looking to seeing this video in heaven. These things intrigue me, like when the ear was on the ground was it flopping around like a fish out of water? If Jesus picked it up did He like blow the dirt off it before He placed it back on? Did He speak into it while it was in His hand saying it is going to be ok Malchus, can you hear me now? Or did Jesus just touch his ear and a new one immediately appeared, and if so what did the do with the one on the ground? Here ya go Malchus put this on your keychain for a keepsake, everyone will know whose keys they are if you ever leave them someplace. Just wondering, these things intrigue me.

*John 18:10 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus.*

### **Jesus Cleans up Messes**

But what I do want you to grasp and glean today, and that is that Jesus cleans up our messes, and I am so thankful for that. How often I have totally made a mess with my mouth, my action, or my inaction. How through something that was totally all of me, nothing of the Lord, how I hurt someone and left them wounded, and yet God cleaned up my mess. Beloved there is power in this example, for there is still power in failure if we allow it to be, we don’t have to writeoff every failure as a total loss with no chance of redemption or profit. We can think once we blow it, it is done, all is loss, but the Lord will say not say. Believe that! I am somewhat embarrassed to say, but this is one of the most comforting verses, and a verse that I claim many a many a times, where I say Lord I have totally blew it, and now I ask you Lord, I need you Lord, to clean up this mess that I have just made. God will do it, but we have to believe He can and will. And in doing it we have to have sensitive ears (sorry for the pun) to hear what He says to us, on what He wants us to do, to clean up this mess. He may say make that call to say you are sorry, you were wrong, humble yourself and admit you were in the flesh and not in the spiritual. Sometimes God has cleaned up my mess without me even having to get involved. God will clean up our messes, so when we do mess up, just say Lord like you cleaned up Peter’s mess, please clean up mine.

### **Mess into a Miracle**

Here is the amazing thing, your God can turn your mess into a miracle. Amazing, how we can make such a big mess of something and then Jesus steps in and turns it into a miracle. I am going to take my most likely guess that Malchus became a follower of Christ, that is just a guess. What mess have you made lately, get with the Lord today and say Lord, please clean this mess up that I have made, and remember to ask Him what your role is in the cleanup.

### **Jesus even Heals the Enemy**

By the way, notice that Jesus even heals the enemy’s ear. Be like Jesus, don’t return evil for evil. Here we see yet another miracle, when an enemy is forgiven.

**Luke 22:52 Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, “Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs?**

**Luke 22:53 When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.”**

### **Hour of Power**

*Verse 53 - But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.”* – This was their hour of power, this was the hour that God allowed them to exercise all that was in their heart. Satan was fueling the whole thing, and Satan thinks he is

closing in on victory. It is amazing of what people will trade for an hour of power, for that hour where they exercise all that is in their heart, where they feel they are in total control and say. I call it an hour because in the grand scheme of eternity which even after a hundred billion hours, eternity has only just begun, and this hour of power, these 80-90 years on this earth really is only an hour in comparison to the length of eternity. I am ever so amazed at what people will trade for an hour of power. Beloved of God, it just isn't worth it, your power will collapse, it will fade, and in the end you will see that you only played the fool. Whatever it is, it just isn't worth it. Cut it off now, walk away from it now, walk away while you can. And know that God can still take that failure and turn it into great victory, that there is power in the failure because God can turn it and use it to shape you into a mighty man or woman of God.

### **Peter Denies Christ**

**Luke 22:54 Having arrested Him, they led Him and brought Him into the high priest's house. But Peter followed at a distance.**

### **High Priest \_ Annas**

The High Priest was Annas, and we will talk more up him next week.

*John 18:12-13 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> Then the detachment of troops and the captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him. <sup>13</sup> And they led Him away to Annas first, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas who was high priest that year.

**Luke 22:55 Now when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them.**

**Luke 22:56 And a certain servant girl, seeing him as he sat by the fire, looked intently at him and said, "This man was also with Him."**

**Luke 22:57 But he denied Him, saying, "Woman, I do not know Him."**

### **1<sup>st</sup> Denial**

So here is Peter's first denial of Christ.

### **Always starts with Kindle**

*Verse 55 - Now when they had kindled a fire* – Ever kindle a fire? Pretty simple and small process isn't it? You start with some small sticks and some small dry material. Light a match, fan a little air over the flame, and then you add more wood. But it starts with a small stuff. That is how it begins for Christians on their way to failure. It starts small, it starts with something that seems to be of no big deal.....but what Christians miss every time is that they are only kindling the bigger fire to come. How often we say

- I'm just going to check this out for a second or two,
- or I am just going to stop in there for minute or two,
- I am just going to hang out with them for just an hour or two....

but all that we are doing is kindling the bigger fire to come.

### **Fire Big Enough to see Face / Psalm 1**

*Verse 56 - seeing him as he sat by the fire* – See here in verse 56 that now the fire is big enough that the servant girl could see Peter's face. The fires always start small but then they grow. For all you new believers, even those who have been walking with Him for some time, hear this word of the Lord for all us in Psalm 1, and that is we are not to walk in the path of the ungodly. Notice the progression of Psalm 1, as this man goes from walking, to then standing, and now he is seated amongst them. Beloved, you can't stop, even for a minute, else you kindle a fire that will eventually grow and have you sitting amongst the world.

*Psalm 1:1-3 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; <sup>2</sup> But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. <sup>3</sup> He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.

### **Notice the Scattered**

And may I make note here for all of us....where are the other nine? Peter deserves credit that he is here, that he is at least following from a distance. But where are the other nine (we know from John's gospel that it is Peter and John), but where are the other nine? Let me make note about these other nine, and that is when the trials and storms of life come we need to gather together, not scatter apart. So often when a storm comes people scatter apart, and it should be at that time that we come together in prayer, sharing the word together, worshipping, and we gather

together to strengthen each other. That is the fire that should be kindled, the fire of brothers and sister together, burning together, bringing light and warmth. You can't be alone out there in this world, you can't do this Christian thing solo. You need to have an accountability, you need to be gathered to other Christians, else you can be out there all alone like Peter was, and the resultant wasn't good.

*John 18:15–16 (NKJV)*<sup>15</sup> *And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest. <sup>16</sup> But Peter stood at the door outside. Then the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to her who kept the door, and brought Peter in.*

### **Peter never Alone Again**

Interestingly, we do not find Peter ever alone again in the scriptures. Every time we read about him someone else is there, we never read of him being solo again, and there is a powerful example learned in failure, and he makes sure he is never alone again to fail alone again.

- The resurrection day (John 20)
- Fishing (John 21)
- Upper Room (Acts 1)
- Prayer at the Temple (Acts 3)
- Acts 12 – he is in prison but not by his choice (but covered in prayer)

**Luke 22:58** *And after a little while another saw him and said, “You also are of them.” But Peter said, “Man, I am not!”*

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Denial / Think Peter would Realize**

Here is the second denial. You would think Peter would realize after the second time that he is on his way down but he doesn't. It is so easy for us to miss the warning signs when we are in the thick of the decent. What is ashamed is that there are no brothers to take Peter aside and say Peter, you are falling my brother, remember the words of the Lord, He said this was going to happen, bro stop now and turn back. I was walking the beach up in Cape May this week, having a good ole time just strolling by myself, and then all of sudden these guys with guns come descending upon me. Come to find out I had walked right past a bunch of signs that said no trespassing, keep out, there was about 10 of them, but with my head down and walking by myself, I walked right by them. I also missed the sign that said, “danger live firing range”. It is good to not walk alone.

*Luke 22:34 (NKJV)*<sup>34</sup> *Then He said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me.”*

### **Be that Brother/Sister**

The Lord says for us not to forsake the assembling together, and how vital it is that we stay in fellowship so someone can speak to us and steer us away from failing, and how we need to be here so we can be the one who steers that brother or sister away. I know it is never easy to speak a word into someone's life who is on the slide, but that is what love does.

*Hebrews 10:25 (NKJV)*<sup>25</sup> *not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.*

**Luke 22:59** *Then after about an hour had passed, another confidently affirmed, saying, “Surely this fellow also was with Him, for he is a Galilean.”*

### **What did Peter Talk About**

See, I don't think Peter and John are together at this fire. John is within the camp, but there is no mention that he is with Peter and he is sitting at this fire. Else, why wouldn't we read that they challenged John too of being one of His disciples? Matthew's account says that Peter sat with the servants, and again makes no mention that John sat with him. What is my point and why make the point? Because it is an hour later, a whole hour later than someone at the fire looks at Peter and says you surely are with this man (for it is the whole talk of what is going on inside the walls at this moment). Everyone sees Jesus come in, everyone is talking about what is going on, it is the central topic, and here after an hour this one man is saying we know this Jesus' close followers were from the Galilee region, and your speech has that accent, so you must be one of His followers. Again what is my point? My point is what in the world did Peter talk about for one hour amongst these people? His accent gave him up, but not his topic. Peter wasn't talking about Jesus, else that would have been the conclusive evidence that he was with Jesus. So what did Peter have to talk about for that whole hour among these people that he sat around the fire with?

*Matthew 26:58 (NKJV) <sup>58</sup> But Peter followed Him at a distance to the high priest's courtyard. And he went in and sat with the servants to see the end.*

### **He Talked about Nothing**

What did he talk about? He talked about nothing! He talked about nothing that mattered. What he talked about couldn't keep him from falling, from denying, from walking away, from being defeated. He talked for an hour about nothing of value. So he began with kindling a fire, some small thing they all had in common, and then that small thing turned into a full fire where they could all see each other clearly, and they it turned into a full conversation, but one that had no value, as we see it had no value to keep Peter from his greatest testing.

### **For You – Where do you spend your Greatest Time**

So for each of us here today, where is it that you spend your greatest time, and those conversation that you are having, what value do they bring into your life and the life of others. Be careful, for they may just be leading you into the same path it led Peter. Am I saying that we are not to be amongst the world, absolutely not for how then can we reach them if we don't walk among them. In fact I am reminded of a gal at a church I went to in Florida and she was telling me how she was an avid member of the "Camaro Club", and I remember saying to myself what a waste of time, that is valueless; but you know what, she probably brought more people to church than all the "gifted evangelist" did in the whole church. She used the opportunity that she had in common with them, to engage them in valuable conversations about the Lord. But here we see Peter is not taking such opportunity and more so whatever conversation he was having with them, it was nothing to do about Jesus, and we should take note of that as we could find ourselves engaged in all kinds of conversations that lead and produce nothing, and even lead us away.

**Luke 22:60** But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are saying!" Immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed.

**Luke 22:61** And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times."

**Luke 22:62** So Peter went out and wept bitterly.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Denial / What a Far Fall**

So here is the third, just as Jesus said it would be, and you can be sure the Word of God will always come to pass exactly as God says it will. In another account it says that Peter actually cursed, and his cursing was towards Jesus Himself. What a far fall from someone who promised to go to prison or even death, to cursing His very name.

*Mark 14:71 (NKJV) <sup>71</sup> Then he began to curse and swear, "I do not know this Man of whom you speak!"*

### **I Remember**

I can remember a fall this far. I remember after one of my greatest failures, I remember lying face down in the carpet, saying it is over, don't even bother thinking you will be used by God, in fact the question at hand is are you really saved, do you really know the Lord? I remember saying give it up, and then with face planted in the carpet, I heard words in my heart as if audibly, and the Lord spoke to me and said get up, I have plans for you. The power in those words was not that God would use me, but the power in those words were that God was saying I still love you, you are still my son, nothing you do can turn my heart way from you, I love you.

### **Peter do You Love Me**

Peter will hear those same words when Jesus says Peter do you love Me, feed my sheep. For in those words are the power to Peter's heart, that God loves him, even after cursing and denying Him, God still extends His love, His grace, His mercy.....unto Peter.

*John 21:15 (NKJV) <sup>15</sup> So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs."*

### **Power in Failure because we Learn of Him**

There is power in failure because in them we learn of Him, we learn of His great love towards us, and we see that no failure is too great or too far to take us away from His love; and what we learn is there is a depth of His love that we had never even realized existed, until we experienced in this way via failure.

**There is Power in Failure – If You will Let It**

There is power in failure and Satan doesn't want you to know there is power in failure either. But God is telling you today that there is power in failure because God is saying wait until I show you what I can do through it, wait until I teach you something through it, wait until I humble you through it, wait until I show you my love, My power, My grace through it, and you will see there is power through failure, so don't let your failures fail you, take them and use them to bring you into His glory.

**Close Prayer – Turn Failure into Power**

May we take a moment right now and take our greatest failures, and see that they actually display the depth of His love. If there is something that has continually kept you down, may you today step over it (them) and hear the Lord speak to you the depth of His love to you.

# Tried & True (Christ's Mock Trial)

## Luke 22:63 – 23:25

### Outline of the Book of Luke:

#### The Life of Christ – The God Man (Luke 1-24)

##### **The Prelude to Christ's Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- His Birth & Boyhood
- His Baptism & Temptation

##### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- His Mission Statement
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- His March to the Cross
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

##### **The Consummation of Christ's Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

### **Recap / Bound in Darkness / Tried & True / Definition of Tried & True / Bound in Darkness - Light**

It is the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan (Jewish calendar), it is the day that the Passover lamb was to be sacrificed, a lamb that must be spotless. So Jesus has just finished celebrating what we call the “Last Supper” in our era today. Jesus has just had a time of intimacy and love partaking in the first communion with His disciples, Jesus and the disciples went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray, and we saw there was no other to redeem man except through the cross, Judas in our last study has betrayed the Lord, the men of evil have bound the Lord and are taking them in the darkness to stand trial before the religious leaders. What we will see is that during the trial, and after the trial, our Lord will be found “Tried and True”. There will be no fault found in Him (as the Passover Lamb must be spotless and without fault – Exodus 12:6) and even more so, we see a God who may be bound in darkness and by the darkness, but He always will come out of the darkness into the Light, and will be found “Tried and True”. Tried and True is a phrase we use in our modern world today, and it means Tried (examined and found solid and faultless), True (reliable, safe, and secure). And so we will find that in our passage today, we will find a God who is solid and faultless, and a God we can place our full trust and reliance on. And as always, as we watch how Jesus handles various situations in His earthly life, we too can apply the same principles, and we will find ourselves in our trials and challenges to come out the same way – “Tried & True”.

*Exodus 12:5–6 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. <sup>6</sup> Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.

*1 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

*John 1:29 (NKJV)* <sup>29</sup> The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

## **Christ is Beaten**

**Luke 22:63 Now the men who held Jesus mocked Him and beat Him.**

### **At House of High Priest**

Just a reminder we are the home of the high priest (there are two at this time – Annas and Caiaphas). The other gospel accounts tell us Jesus stood first before Annas and then before Caiaphas.

*Luke 22:54 (NKJV) <sup>54</sup> Having arrested Him, they led Him and brought Him into the high priest's house. But Peter followed at a distance.*

### **Staying on Verse**

Today we are reading the account as it was given to Luke to record. This account isn't all inclusive. I have a chronological study available if you would like to have it for your library, and I have taken the 4 gospels and done my best to lay the last 7 days of the life of Jesus out in chronological order cross referencing all 4 of the gospels. But when I teach as we go through the different books, I will gather the accounts from the other gospels to fill in the blanks where needed, or bring further understanding as required, but I don't fill in all the other things that may have happened so that I can have this perfect chronological account of events. Why, because the Holy Spirit chose not to do that, therefore I won't either. See God the Holy Spirit wrote this account as He saw fit, because God was writing in such a way to reach the reader as He so determined, Therefore I stay "on-page" for the most part, because that is how the Spirit chose to write it. I believe the Lord wants to speak to us in a unique way, just as He wrote this account so uniquely, and I pray the Lord speaks to you in a special unique way today, and I pray that I won't get in the way of that either. I pray God just meets with you and speaks with you today, specifically and uniquely.

**Luke 22:64 And having blindfolded Him, they struck Him on the face and asked Him, saying, "Prophecy! Who is the one who struck You?"**

### **High School Football**

Have you ever been blindsided, playing a sport, car accident, walking into something? Oh they are the worse hits because your body just can't prepare for it. Here they are covering Jesus with a bag/blindfold, they are surrounding Him (probably in a circle), they may be spinning Him around in by grabbing His shoulders, and then hitting Him in the face. These are the worse hits because there is something in our body/psyche (by marvelous design) to prepare the body for the blow, kind of like a shock absorber, but when you are blindsided your body takes the full blow, and it is ten-fold more painful. I remember playing junior high football and I was on the punt team, and I remember my rookie year my first punt coverage, and there I am running down the field with my head way up in the air tracking the ball, running full speed, and then I go from seeing a football to seeing stars literally. This defender locked into me running with my head up, and he ran at me full speed, and he put his helmet right under my facemask, right on to my chin, and he totally lit me up. I remember going to the sideline sucking air, because I was totally fighting off from starting to ball like a little baby in front of my teammates. Blindsided hits are ten-fold in pain, and here is the God of Creation taking them for you and for me.

### **Beginning of Jesus taking on Sin of World**

Theologically, the sins of the world laid upon Jesus at the cross. But for your consideration (as illustration not doctrine), I see here the beginning of sin being laid upon Jesus, the picture of what sin was like to Jesus who was perfect and pure – it was like being blindsided. We are so use to sin, it rarely shocks our core. But imagine Jesus so perfect and pure, sinless, white as snow, and imagine what sin is like to Him? It would be shocking, I can't fathom what it was like for Jesus perfect and pure taking on the sins of the world.....other than it was like being blindsided, nothing could prepare Him for that. Imagine some of the things that you yourself have done, they shock and sicken you, and now imagine you heap it upon Jesus Himself. The sins of the world are laid upon Him, and it would shock Him to the core, detest Him, grieve Him that this His Holy Father would see Him as such. But for you and for me, He who knew no sin became sin for us. Jesus is fully God and fully man, and here as the man we see He still won't crack, He still won't walk away, He is all in – in it for us!

*2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

### **Jesus was Blindsided so we don't have to Be**

But I want to tell you another thing to apply personally about this verse, and about me getting lit-up, and that is there is power in failure, and I can tell you I never ran down the field ever again with my head looking up. I covered probably another 1,000 punts in my career, but never got rocked like that again, in fact my senior year I was

awarded “MVP Special Team” (but don’t be too impressed we were 2-10 that year). But my point, one rocking was enough to change the next 1,000 punts. And, listen, Jesus Christ was blindsided for us, so we might never have to be blindsided by sin again. He took the blows, so we don’t have to, the penalty for sin taken in full by His body so we wouldn’t. And with that blow comes a beautiful spiritual dynamic, and that is that the blindfold never goes over our eyes, He gives us the spiritual wisdom and discernment to see the wiles of the enemy, and we need never to get blindsided by Satan again. Christian, keep your head in the game, we can’t get distracted watching the bouncy balls of this world, we have to be running full speed .....but knowing Satan wants to lay one us, but instead of being blindsided, we drop the shoulder and lay one into him. When that coworker gives you the wink, when that popup ad gives you the flicker, when Budlight calls you for just one, don’t be blindsided by it, lower the shoulder and deliver the blow rather than absorb the blow. We never need to be blindsided by sin again.

*1 Peter 5:8-9 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. <sup>9</sup> Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.*

### **Luke 22:65 And many other things they blasphemously spoke against Him.**

#### **Whose Your Dad? / Absorbing more Blows – Against Mary and Holy Father**

They spoke many blasphemous things, and I think I can gather a couple of them from past attacks. Remember John 8, they say to Jesus we were not born in fornication, they were laying a jab upon Jesus and His virgin birth. They were rejecting the account of the virgin birth and implying that Mary had an affair on Joseph. For years they would hear the whispers, the snickers, the jeers about being an adulterous, and Jesus the joke of who does He look like. Nazareth was the other side of the tracks, it was considered backwoods and low class, and right next door history books tell us there was a Roman post; so no doubt they would say Mary went and visited the post and was the shame of the town. All of life having to endure those rumors, imagine going to the market and saying there is the illegitimate child born in fornication (a strong enough rumor the religious leaders used it against Jesus). So here Jesus is taking on more than physical blows, but these blows from words against His mother Mary, and His Holy Father God. Depths of insults we can’t fathom, but He continually endured them for your sake and my sake, and he would not crack, he wouldn’t say enough I am not taking any more of this. He was tried but found solid, and He is ever so true to us, we are ever so safe and secure in Him because He proves He will never leave us nor forsake us.

*John 8:41 (NKJV) <sup>41</sup> You do the deeds of your father.” Then they said to Him, “We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God.”*

*Luke 1:34-35 (NKJV) <sup>34</sup> Then Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I do not know a man?” <sup>35</sup> And the angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.*

#### ***The Sanhedrin Tries Christ***

**Luke 22:66 As soon as it was day, the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, came together and led Him into their council, saying,**

**Luke 22:67 “If You are the Christ, tell us.” But He said to them, “If I tell you, you will by no means believe.**

**Luke 22:68 And if I also ask you, you will by no means answer Me or let Me go.**

**Luke 22:69 Hereafter the Son of Man will sit on the right hand of the power of God.”**

#### **Son will Sit in Power / Tried & True Principal / As World Lays Charge / I am His – He is Mine**

So the insults are coming one blow after the another, physical blows coming along with them, and the challenge after challenge of just who are You, are you really the Son of God? Jesus says you won’t believe, you already made your mind up of who you say that I am.....but hey let me say this, verse 69, the day is coming real soon I am going to be sitting at the right hand power God.....IN POWER! Christian, see this principal, apply this principal, for it is “tried and true” (solid and secure), and that is when the world lays challenge of who you are, oh you call yourself a Christian, what about this that you have done, what about that time, challenge after challenge, attack after attack, and all the while they have already made their mind up about you (and who can forget Satan and his attacks against us). But take this principal and apply it when it comes, and that is when the challenges comes, your answer is.....”I am the son/daughter of God”. Satan, you can challenge all my faults and failings, for us they may even be true, but today I am the son/daughter of God, and in a very near tomorrow, I will be sitting with Him in His Kingdom before His throne, in His Power! Today what you say to me means nothing because I am His and He is mine!

### **Being Vulnerable / Know whose we Are – We become Tried & True**

When we do not know whose we are, we are vulnerable, we are easily swayed and discouraged, dismayed and depressed, fearful and unsure, but when we know whose we are, and who we are, then the we become “tried and true”, sure and immovable.

### **Have you Fallen**

Have you fallen, is that so-called friend or family laying you out, is Satan piling on? You speak it, and you speak it loud and clear for all to hear (most importantly yourself).....I am the son/daughter of God, and nothing you can say can tear that down or take it away.....I will be with Him in glory, and right now today He is with me in power.....so be gone from me with all your miserable words and accusations, for I am His and He is Mine.

**Luke 22:70 Then they all said, “Are You then the Son of God?” So He said to them, “You rightly say that I am.”**

**Luke 22:71 And they said, “What further testimony do we need? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth.”**

### **Notice how Jesus Answered / Because they Ask – Proves there is a God**

Do you notice here that they ask a question, and Jesus answers with a statement. They say are you the Son of God, and Jesus answers with “it is as you say”. Notice, no one says, no we didn’t say you were the Son of God, we are asking you if you say You are the Son of God. They condemn Him for His answer, but they didn’t correct Him. Here is a very subtle spiritual truth, and that is that the very fact that a person would ask if there is a god, proves that there is a god. Man in and of themselves would never ask the question if there is a God, it takes a move of God to poke a person to even consider such a deep thing. You heard the statement, “I think therefore I am”, and the statement is true, the fact that we think proves we exist, And the fact that man asks if there is a God proves that there is a God, because it takes God to bring a person to even consider such a thing. Pretty deep stuff, but the application is that we need not fear to share conversations about Jesus with other people, we need not fear that we are doing it alone, or in our own strength, because the very fact that we are having the conversation is because God exists, He initiated it with that person, that something spiritual is going on. I am blown away every time I go out on the streets to do ministry, or conversation comes up with coworker, family, or friend. I am blown away every time we are out with the Open Air Campaigners, and I see people gather around to hear the presentation - I say it can only be a spiritual thing else people would never even be drawn to it let alone stay around to hear it. God puts it in to the heart of each person to ask the question, is there a God, and who is God. So go out and leave fear at home, just know it is a spiritual thing that God is doing and we are only along for the ride.

*Romans 3:10–11 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> As it is written: “There is none righteous, no, not one; <sup>11</sup> There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God.*

*John 6:44 (NKJV) 44 No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.*

*Revelation 4:11 (NKJV) 11 “You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created.”*

## **Luke 23**

### **Pilate Tries Christ**

**Luke 23:1 Then the whole multitude of them arose and led Him to Pilate.**

**Luke 23:2 And they began to accuse Him, saying, “We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ, a King.”**

### **Total Lie about the Taxes**

The religious leaders used the incident back in chapter 20 against Jesus in His trial, but they totally misrepresented his position.

### **They all Arose / No One had looked Him in the Eye – into His Heart**

Notice that they all arose, meaning that they were all sitting. They are asking the depth of such questions as to whether He is the Christ, the Son of God, yet they are all sitting (thus at a distance from Him). No one is standing face-to-face with Him, looking Him in the eyes, and asking Him the real questions; what is your story, why are you doing the things you are doing, tell us about you. What is on your heart? How I can be guilty of this so often, how I can be going through a hard time, a struggle, or just caught up life at 100mph, and I am asking Jesus where are you, why aren't You helping (as I lay challenge – whether directly or passively). I am so distant from Him, I am looking at Him, and not into Him, into His eyes. But when I look into His eyes, I slow down to look into His eyes, and I look into His heart for me by reading a psalm or the gospel, then I begin to see into Him, I see His heart, and then everything come into perspective. Beloved when we look into His eyes, see His heart for us, then all confusion of who He is disappears and all the questions of why and how fade away, and we see.....Son of God, Christ the King, My God and My Savior, the One who is tried (solid) and true (safe and secure) for us.

**Luke 23:3 Then Pilate asked Him, saying, “Are You the King of the Jews?” He answered him and said, “It is as you say.”**

### **Pilate falls so Short / God of Universe is before You / What is your Need Today – God Universe before You**

Another golden applet for us personally. Pilate falls so short, and so many people do the same regarding Jesus; are you the King of the Jews, how far short that question is, the question should be are you the King of the Universe? The King of the Universe is standing before him, and he ask if He is the King of the Jews. And so too do we often times as we look at Jesus as Savior, that is great, as Son of God, that is great too.....but standing before us is God, the King of the Universe, who is deeply and passionately in love with us. We sell Him so short in our lives, for the One who has the power of the whole universe surging through His being is our God, the God who is for us, the God who speaks and it exist, the God who says “It is Finished” and it is.....and that is our God. What is it that you need in your life today, the God of the universe is standing before you right now, ready and desiring to work in your life. The God of the Universe is saying “come unto Me and I will give you rest”, “learn of Me”, “Cast all your cares upon Me”.

*Matthew 11:28–30 (NKJV) <sup>28</sup> Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”*

*1 Peter 5:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.*

**Luke 23:4 So Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, “I find no fault in this Man.”**

### **Spotless Lamb – Exodus 12**

Again the Passover lamb must be spotless, and here we see Pilate declaring the Lamb is spotless.

*Exodus 12:5–6 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup> Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. <sup>6</sup> Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.*

*1 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.*

*John 1:29 (NKJV) <sup>29</sup> The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*

**Luke 23:5 But they were the more fierce, saying, “He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place.”**

### **I want this Accusation**

How I pray that this will be the charge that is laid against us as people will say that are stirring up this whole community from the East to the West, from the North to the South, that you can't go anywhere without someone saying everywhere they go there is someone from this church telling them about Jesus. At work, bulletin boards, tracts, street ministry, radio, community outreach, mailings.....everywhere they turn we as a church are getting the word of God out there. I am excited about this new season we are entering into, and I am glad to be with you as we go into it together. I am excited about the new season God is and has brought us into.

### **Herod Tries Christ**

**Luke 23:6 When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked if the Man were a Galilean.**

**Luke 23:7 And as soon as he knew that He belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time.**

### **Pilate passes Jesus Off**

Pilate knows the answer, he knows the truth, but in fear of man he tries to pass off what he knows to be truth. You know Christian, sometime we just have to give the answer regardless of the impact. Sometimes we have to be the heavy in the home, the downer in the conversation, the quencher of the party, and just tell it like it is. We don't say you'll have to ask your mother, or you should talk to the pastor, you already know the answer and the truth, and thus you have to speak it.....at whatever the cost.

**Luke 23:8 Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long time to see Him, because he had heard many things about Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him.**

**Luke 23:9 Then he questioned Him with many words, but He answered him nothing.**

**Luke 23:10 And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused Him.**

**Luke 23:11 Then Herod, with his men of war, treated Him with contempt and mocked Him, arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him back to Pilate.**

### **Herod wants to see Dog & Pony / The Word / Tried and True**

Herod is all glad to see Jesus, he wants to see some dog and pony show, but Jesus answers him not. This Herod is Herod Antipas who was the son of Herod the Great, who massacred the infants of Bethlehem (Matthew 2). It was Antipas who murdered John the Baptist for condemning his illicit relationship with his brother's wife (Mark 6). This was the Herod whom Jesus called "that fox" in Luke 13:32. So Herod wants a dog and pony show, but Jesus is not going to give it to him, and many people today want the dog and pony show out of Jesus, they want to be entertained, to be wowed, they want church and Jesus to be about them, and their senses. Jesus answers Herod not, and I believe He answers people today "not", even when they feel they had this emotional experience at church. You see, Herod wanted to see a show, and Jesus does not give Him one and I believe because it was Herod's responsibility to hand write a copy of the law (first five books of the Bible) as required by the law in Deuteronomy 18. Herod should have known the word, and the word would have been enough, he would have recognized his need for a Savior (Exodus 20), he would have known the promise of the Savior to come (Genesis 3:15-16), he would have known his relationship with his brother's wife was sin, and John the Baptist words to him were the words of God, and John's word regarding Jesus were the words of God. Jesus won't answer Herod, for Herod has already rejected the word, and no miracle is greater than the word of God, for it was the Word that became flesh and dwelt amongst us. Be careful not to go chasing after experiences or emotions, for the Word is enough, for Jesus is the Word, and Jesus is enough. And Jesus, has been tried and true!

*Deuteronomy 17:18-20 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> "Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. <sup>19</sup> And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, <sup>20</sup> that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel.

*John 1:14-15 (NKJV)* <sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. <sup>15</sup> John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.'"

### **The Gorgeous Robe**

What a mock against Jesus, and what restraint by God the Father. If you treated my son Camden like this I would pour out full wrath, for nobody is going to treat my son like that. Wow, what a restraint by God the Father. I say to you the restraint is not only restraint against these men as he still offers them grace and forgiveness; but the restraint is for our sake, for God the Father to rescue the Son at this point, would be to leave us doomed and damned.

### **Pilate Tries Christ Again**

**Luke 23:12 That very day Pilate and Herod became friends with each other, for previously they had been at enmity with each other.**

### **They become Friends**

Enemies become friends when they have a common enemy. The world seems to be gathering a common enemy in this Country, and that is the Christians, who as they say, are on the far right. Church and family we need to stay together, as the world is uniting against us and our beliefs.

### **Extreme Right vs Left**

I just have to make this point, do you notice how we are considered to be on the “extreme right”? We say homosexuality is a sin, and they label us as extremist right, we say abortion is a sin and they say the extreme right – which brings this negative, judgment, critical labeling on us. Well these things are either yes or no, for or against, there is no neutral or middle on these things (even the person who say they don’t care, then they are for it – because they don’t oppose it); so why aren’t they that believe these things are acceptable called extreme left? Why don’t they get the label, but only we do? Why are we labeled as haters and judgmental, but the others get to be labeled as loving and all accepting? They hate, and it is us, they judge and it is us, so why don’t they get a label?

### **If you at war against Brethren**

Before moving on, if you are at war against another brother or sister, please go make peace because we have enough people against us already.

**Luke 23:13 Then Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people,  
Luke 23:14 said to them, “You have brought this Man to me, as one who misleads the people. And indeed, having examined Him in your presence, I have found no fault in this Man concerning those things of which you accuse Him;  
Luke 23:15 no, neither did Herod, for I sent you back to him; and indeed nothing deserving of death has been done by Him.  
Luke 23:16 I will therefore chastise Him and release Him”**

### **Scourge**

Pilate again says I find no fault, so I will chastise Him and then release Him. The idea behind this beating was brutal. This beating (called scourging) was to take a whip that had broken pottery and bones, very sharp fragments embedded into a leather whip which had metal balls on the end so you could really get some force behind the whip. The idea was to extract information out of the guilty. As the person would be scourged, a scribe would be there to write down everything they confessed (it was a way to clear up cold cases). The more you confessed the easier the whipping became, the less you confessed the harder the strips. When you were done confessing your crimes, you went on to confess the crimes of others that you knew about. It was 40 lashes, but they would stop at 39 to so-call show they were merciful. So imagine Jesus’ scourging, what did He have to confess? Nothing, therefore the strikes would be greater and greater each time. What crimes did Jesus confess of yours and mine? None, because He would not dime us out, because He was taking our punishment for us. Thus the strikes harder and harder, and though not recorded, I would say He received a full 40 lashes, because there was no mercy for Him as He was taking the full wrath of God for sin.

### **Do You Feel God has Left You Hanging? / You didn’t see Him at Scourge or Cross / Tried & True**

Beloved, do you feel that God has left you hanging lately, do you feel He has deserted you? Come back to here, and see just how much and how long He hung in there for you, 40 full blows, each worse than the other, and you will still that God has never left you short, or left you hanging out there on your own. He is still there, you didn’t see Him at the scourging block but He was still there, you didn’t see Him at the cross, but He was still there, and you may not see Him working right now as you might expect, but He is still here. He, the Tried and True One, is there working for you.

**Luke 23:17 (for it was necessary for him to release one to them at the feast).**

**Luke 23:18 And they all cried out at once, saying, “Away with this Man, and release to us Barabbas”—**

**Luke 23:19 who had been thrown into prison for a certain rebellion made in the city, and for murder.**

**Luke 23:20 Pilate, therefore, wishing to release Jesus, again called out to them.**

**Luke 23:21 But they shouted, saying, “Crucify Him, crucify Him!”**

### **How Corrupted their System had Become / Moral Decline – National Decline**

How corrupt the Jewish's system had become, as the Law of Moses (as given by God) required that a murder was to be put to death, but the Jews will overlook that because Rome was willing to let him go. That verse 17 saying it was necessary to release someone at the feast was not a Jewish requirement, but the pagan Romans edict (notice it is Pilate deciding not a High Priest who is set free). It was Rome law, practice, not based on a moral principal. Listen, it does not matter what this Country deems as acceptable, the standard we live by is according to this Word, this spiritual and moral compass, that determine what is right and what is wrong. Look how far the high priest of Israel has fallen that he accepts this Roman principal to release the guilty who is deserving judgment, and yet the church is being sucked right into the same trap as the world says fornication, homosexuality, adultery, abortion are now all acceptable, and many in the church says great, that makes things easier on us. Barabbas should be put to death because he was a murder, nothing more to debate. When a nation leaves the moral standards of God, and makes their own standards or copies the standards of another nation, they are on their decline and ultimate demise – thus Israel will cease to be a nation in less than 40 years from this event. America needs to take note.

### **Who is Judge / Tried & True**

It is no longer the law judging man, but man judging the law. Just because the government says it is legal doesn't make it moral, just because it flows into our home via a cable doesn't make it acceptable. We have to make a decision about it and align it with the word of God, for the word of God is where we will find what is "Tried and True".

**Luke 23:22 Then he said to them the third time, "Why, what evil has He done? I have found no reason for death in Him. I will therefore chastise Him and let Him go."**

**Luke 23:23 But they were insistent, demanding with loud voices that He be crucified. And the voices of these men and of the chief priests prevailed.**

**Luke 23:24 So Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they requested.**

**Luke 23:25 And he released to them the one they requested, who for rebellion and murder had been thrown into prison; but he delivered Jesus to their will.**

### **First Substitute of the Innocent for the Guilty**

Here we see the first substitutionary atonement as the innocent trades places with the guilty. One who was in rebellion, a murderer, earned his judgment, and God trades places with him. So clear a picture of us who were in rebellion against God, our judgment was justified and due upon us, yet God trades places with us and takes our punishment.

### **Remember Man being Beaten**

I am reminded of a night some 30 years ago but I remember it was like yesterday, something I am not proud of at all. Me and a buddy were leaving a club (pre-Jesus days), and we came upon a group of men just pounding this guy. It was obvious to me they were pounding him because of his ethnic and nationality, being from one of the Arab countries. I remember as they grabbed him and where slamming him to the ground, his hand reached out to us as we walked by saying guys help me. I still remember that hand going up and reaching out. But me and Bobby just kept walking, we didn't stop to watch, we didn't stop to help, we just kept walking and we said to each other, it's not our fight. I still remember a plea for help from the helpless, but I kept walking because I said it wasn't my fight.

### **Jesus takes on a Fight not His / Tried and True**

Jesus takes on a fight that wasn't His, and He entered it to win. Here we are dead in our trespasses and sins, being pounded, and we reach out our hands "help", and Jesus enters a fight that wasn't His. Jesus is a warrior, He is a full armor, full battle array, full on assault in a fight that was not His, it was our fight yet He enters into the fight that we could not win, and He enters the battle that He cannot lose..... for you and for me. That is our God.....who is tried and true! We are safe in Him, he is reliable and we can place all of our trust in Him. He is has been tried, and found faultless, thus He can be our Passover Lamb that covers us, and death will have no sting.

**1 Corinthians 15:50–58 (NKJV)** <sup>50</sup> Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. <sup>51</sup> Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— <sup>52</sup> in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. <sup>53</sup> For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. <sup>54</sup> So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." <sup>55</sup> "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?" <sup>56</sup> The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. <sup>57</sup> But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory

*through our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>58</sup> Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.*

### **Communion**

Every time I read an account of my/our Jesus being beaten, I find my heart always drawn towards communion. Let's partake in it together as a family.

### **Dancing at the Coffin**

Camden went to his first funeral viewing this week, he is 6 years old. Renee explained to him what he was going to see, and she explained to him more about death of a believer and death of an unbeliever. When they got there they were greeted by the daughter of the woman that had passed away, both mother and daughter are believers in Christ. The daughter of the loved one who passed away has a son (George) who is Camden's playmate at homeschool. So Camden sees the casket and tugs Renee's arms to go see it up close, and so George goes with them. When they get there Camden takes a good long look, and then says to Renee, she is not moving; Renee says that is because she is dead. Renee says where is she, and Camden says in heaven. Renee says to Camden and George what do you think she is doing right now? And Camden and George look at each other, they smile, and then they start to dance. So there they are in the funeral home, at the coffin, dancing away with smiles on their faces. When Renee told the story, my immediate response was, there is only dancing at the graveside of a believer! We will dance my friends, because Jesus has been "tried and found true". All He is and all He has done is solid and sure, safe and reliable.

# What will You be Known For?

## (Luke 23:26)

### Looking back over the Canyon

Did anyone see the crazy Christian (Nik Wallenda) tightrope walk over the Grand Canyon this past Sunday? Yea pretty crazy stuff, had me on the edge of my seat. About a quarter of mile high and about a quarter of a mile walk on a 2 inch cable, a new world record. Winds reached upwards of 40mph gusts while he was on the wire. No net and no harness, on national television. They had a microphone on him, and he gave God the glory the whole way. What grabbed me the most was after it was over, after the death defying walk, after the family hugs at the end, after the interview, after all that and they started an interview with his father who rigged the wire, who was a tightrope walker himself, as all that was going on Nik slipped away from the crowd and walked over to the edge of the canyon, and looked back at where he had come from. He looked back over the quarter mile wide and quarter mile deep, death defying, and he began to weep, the realization and gravity of what he had just accomplished had finally set in. And as I watched, what came upon me was that someday I will look back at my life, I will look back at this journey, and I want to say "I made it". I didn't stumble, I didn't fall, I didn't say it is too hard, I didn't say I quit...but I made it all the way to the end, and in the end I brought my God glory by finishing well.

### Every Journey

Every journey has an end; how will your end be?

### Remembered For? / Graham – Luther – Chambers – Smith / Simon Cyrene / How about You?

Nik Wallenda will be known for his tightrope walking, and other things as well I am sure (like his Christian faith). If I were to say the name Billy Graham, what would come to your mind? Great evangelist would probably be number one, and then other things I am sure (like his Christian faith). How about Martin Luther, probably number one is the Protestant Reformation. Oswald Chambers, of course My Utmost for His Highest. Chuck Smith, probably the founding of the Calvary Chapel movement, and for some the father of the Jesus movement of the 60's. How about if I asked you the first thing that came into your mind when I say "Simon the Cyrene". We would all say, the man who carried Jesus' cross. We will all be, currently are, known for something. My question for you and I today is, what are we, what will we be known for? I would like to suggest to you today that you will be known for many things, but above all, like Simon the Cyrene, be known as a person who picked up the cross and followed Jesus.

### Let's Look at the Story of Simon the Cyrene / See God's Heart – His Power

Let's look at the story of Simon the Cyrene and ask God to show us His heart, extend His power unto us, and give us the strength and courage to pick up the cross and follow Jesus not holding anything back.

### Christ is Crucified

**Luke 23:26** Now as they led Him away, they laid hold of a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, who was coming from the country, and on him they laid the cross that he might bear it after Jesus.

### Context / Annas – Caiphas – Pilate – Herod – Pilate / Beating & Scouraging

The context is that Jesus has just finished a night of a mock trial with the high priests (Annas and Caiphas), he was beaten and mocked and then turned over to Pilate and King Herod, both finding no fault in Him but delivering the death sentence against Jesus to appease the crowd. But before the cross there was a brutal scourging with a whip that has shredded our Lord's back, and now it is on to Calvary.

*Luke 23:20–25 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> Pilate, therefore, wishing to release Jesus, again called out to them. <sup>21</sup> But they shouted, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" <sup>22</sup> Then he said to them the third time, "Why, what evil has He done? I have found no reason for death in Him. I will therefore chastise Him and let Him go." <sup>23</sup> But they were insistent, demanding with loud voices that He be crucified. And the voices of these men and of the chief priests prevailed. <sup>24</sup> So Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they requested. <sup>25</sup> And he released to them the one they requested, who for rebellion and murder had been thrown into prison; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

### Cross-Reference – Mark & Matthew

For cross-reference both Mark and Matthews account records this story of Simon the Cyrene being called to carry the cross.

*Matthew 27:32 (NKJV)* <sup>32</sup> Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear His cross.

*Mark 15:21 (NKJV)* <sup>21</sup> Then they compelled a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as he was coming out of the country and passing by, to bear His cross.

### **For Background Details / Cyrene – Crossbeam – 2.5 million – Little before 9am**

For further background Cyrene was located in our modern day Libya in the city Tripoli, which is one of the northern countries of the African continent. Cyrene is about 800 miles from Israel. According to historical writings the person convicted would carry the crossbeam of the cross (the horizontal piece – called patibulum) on their shoulders through the crowds of people so show people penalty for breaking the law. Usually there was sign nailed to it stating their crime so all would know what they were guilty of us. And usually the vertical piece of the cross (called stacticulum) was already at the site where the person would be crucified. Often the crossbeam was carried behind the nape of the neck like a yoke, with the condemned's arms pulled back and hooked over it. The time is a little bit before 9am, because the Jewish time reckoning began at sunrise and sunrise was probably around 6am being that it was spring. The city is packed with the people coming to the city to celebrate the Passover, and according to the historian Josephus it was estimated that close 2.5 million people were in the city for Passover celebrations. The day is the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, and at twilight the Passover lamb was to be sacrificed (that is about 3pm – the 9<sup>th</sup> hour), and then the next day is the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nissan and that is the start of the Feast of Unleavened bread, and that day is a Sabbath day (no work can be done). Ever go shopping on the 24<sup>th</sup> of December, yea total madness as everyone gets their last minute things done before all the stores close on the 25<sup>th</sup>. So you can relate to the setting here in our story, it is hustle and bustle, people trying to get last minute things done before the Sabbath day begins, 2.5 million people in town, there is not an inch of walkway space left, and here comes a procession of Roman soldiers clearing the way, parting the sea of people, and all stop and watch until the procession passes, and there in the procession is the King of the Universe going to be killed; beaten beyond recognition, still bleeding profusely from the beating and scourging. It is a little before 9am.

*Mark 15:25–26 (NKJV)* <sup>25</sup> Now it was the third hour, and they crucified Him. <sup>26</sup> And the inscription of His accusation was written above: THE KING OF THE JEWS.

*Exodus 12:5–6 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. <sup>6</sup> Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.

*Numbers 28:16–18 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> 'On the fourteenth day of the first month is the Passover of the LORD. <sup>17</sup> And on the fifteenth day of this month is the feast; unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days. <sup>18</sup> On the first day you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work.

### **Jesus hoists the Cross / Stanley Cup Champions – Hoist the Trophy / Jesus Counts all Joy**

So somewhere before 9am Jesus hoists the cross upon His shoulder. Interesting to me as in the last few months here in the USA we have watched champions hoist the Lombardi trophy as winners of the Super Bowl, and then just this past week the Stanley Cup trophy was lifted for the NHL champions. It symbolizes and declares that on this day, I was the best, I defeated all opponents to be declared the champion. I will tell you that is what is happening here in Jerusalem on this 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, as Jesus hoists this crossbeam upon His shoulders, He is lifting a trophy! I am carrying my victory trophy as I go to defeat sin and death, and I count it joy, because I am so in love with them (that is you and that is me). Jesus lifting His trophy upon His shoulder and for the joy set before starts the march towards Calvary.

*Hebrews 12:1–2 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

### **The Scene takes a Change – Simon the Cyrene / Jesus is Weakened / Roman Law – 1 Mile / Divine Dsgn**

So Jesus begins His march to your punishment and mine, but it appears that His body is getting ready to collapse after a night of no sleep, a severe beating when they placed a bag over His head, and then 40 lashes with the whip that shredded His back, as He is bleeding profusely, mounting all this up Jesus is ready to collapse. So the roman soldier seeing this, exercises the Roman law which gave any soldier or Roman official the right to make someone carry their burden for up to one mile, and at one mile the person could drop it and be free from carrying it any further. So Simon gets tapped, and it is by Divine design because everything written is for our example, and everything God does is for reason.

*Romans 15:4 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

**2 Timothy 3:16 (NKJV)** <sup>16</sup> *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,*

### **Imagine Simon – why Me / 800 miles / Jesus' Blood Stains Simon / Not my Dream**

Imagine Simon, out of probably a half of a million able body men, he is the one who gets tapped to carry the cross. Think about the probability of this for Simon. He has traveled 800 miles to get there for the Passover. That would be like us traveling from here to Central Florida. At 70mph and a rest break or two we are looking at 14 hours. So let's go from 70mph to say 5mph if he was on a camel caravan, if they could cover 80 miles a day it was still 10 days to get there. Simon has spent considerable time getting there, considerable money (not to mention not making money while traveling). If ya could traveling to and from and his time there, Simon will have close to a month invested in this Passover celebration. And there is a key word, celebration, for Jesus is bleeding profusely, His blood is all over that cross and imagine as Simon picks up the cross all that blood drops on to him, his garment, Simon is now covered with the blood of Jesus. This isn't the Passover celebration he had dreamed about.

### **But He is Touching Precious Blood / His Name Recoded – His Son's Recorded / Everywhere – Follow Me**

But the blood that now is upon Simon, the blood that runs down his cheek, the blood that stains his clothes, this blood is divine blood, and remember that cross reference we had read in Mark? Two things I want you to consider. One is that Simon's name and where he was from is recorded. Someone had to have grabbed him after it was over and said what is your name, where are you from? And notice the specific reference to his sons, they are recorded as if they are known among the readers. If I said there is Matt the father of Gwen and Eli you would be so what who are they to me, but since you know them, you know their kids, it means something to you. I don't think it is a stretch to say, Simon became a believer, and so did his children. Everywhere Jesus went we have studied for 23 chapters Jesus is displaying His heart to all people, and then He called them to follow Him. I think after studying these 31,102 verses in this Bible, the 70 some studies we have covered just here in Luke, I think Jesus would not have missed the opportunity to look into Simon's eyes with His eyes, and Simon would have seen he didn't need to the Temple and sacrifice a lamb that day at twilight, but he was beholding the Final Passover Lamb right before his very eyes.

**Mark 15:21 (NKJV)** <sup>21</sup> *Then they compelled a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as he was coming out of the country and passing by, to bear His cross.*

**Luke 5:27 (NKJV)** <sup>27</sup> *After these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me."*

**Luke 9:23 (NKJV)** <sup>23</sup> *Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."*

**Luke 9:59 (NKJV)** <sup>59</sup> *Then He said to another, "Follow Me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father."*

**Luke 18:22 (NKJV)** <sup>22</sup> *So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."*

### **God will move the Pieces / Heard – Sovereign / Simon came because Passover**

We don't know for sure if Simon got saved that day or a shortly thereafter, but what I do know absolutely is that God moved a couple million pieces get Simon before Him for that moment in time. God had to move Simon 800 miles, and several days, to bring him to that specific spot at that very specific time, so Simon could see God personally for himself, and see the final Passover Lamb. Simon you had it on your heart to come to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover Feast, you were looking forward to sacrificing for yourself a lamb in just a few hours, I love your heart and desire to make the trip and sacrifice to worship Me your God, and today I am going to show you – all that your heart desires. I was looking up the meaning of these names in that area, and Simon means "heard" and Cyrene means "sovereign"; and the sovereign God hears the heart of every person, and moves the pieces to place them before Him personally so they can look into His eyes and see the love and compassion He has for them.

### **Christian – God will move the World for You / Does same in our Prayers / When God Delays**

No doubt when that sword touched Simon's shoulder he said no this is terrible, this is not what I came to Jerusalem for. This is ruining my day, he may have even prayed to God why did you allow this to happen.....not seeing that God moved the pieces of the world to align him to this very moment. Christian God will move the world for you, to show you Himself in a real and special way, unique and personal way. He loves you that much. He will do it in answer to our prayers also. When God begins to delay something it is not because He is angry, but because He is

our Father and because He is our Father he not only knows WHAT we need, He knows the best time to give us what we need because He is working something inside of us. This is Simon's year, not last year, not next year, but this year is the one God purposed for him. Secondly, don't miss this part, you pray one thing and God has to work ten thousand things to make the one thing happen. Imagine all the pieces that had to be moved to bring Simon 800 miles, into Jerusalem at that exact moment, and at that street location exactly. Ok, got to get his crops in the ground by this day so I got to get him planting by this day, got to get him to Jerusalem at this time exactly so I have to break that cart wheel at this time, and need him to be at this point on the street so I will move the street vendors to block this street to put him on the next street. I am going to sell out his favorite figs on 9<sup>th</sup> avenue so he has to go all the way up to 20<sup>th</sup> avenue to get them (as some man who was at the 9<sup>th</sup> avenue shop for some reason felt a craving for 5 pounds of figs and his wife yells at him for she hates figs. We don't understand that. We say, Um God, I want to go into the ministry. Do you understand the magnitude of a request like this? Do you know what God has to do to go into action? Do you know what God has already been preparing and planning? Not just now, but what He has been preparing and working on in the past up to this point? He is doing things that don't even seem to relate. God says, "I'm working things out that you think has nothing to do with the script, but it has everything to do with it because I'm putting things in action and things in motion to get this request to you. There are things I have to do. It's not just a matter of you saying, "God save my child." Its God saying, "Well here's what I have to do to save your child... I have to save another child over here who is going to witness to your child because your child isn't going to listen to you. So they have to get saved and I'm gonna put them over here and I'm going to give them a scholarship and put them in the same school and they're going to happen to live in the same apartment complex and they're going to come down and get there mail together and while they're standing there getting there mail you prayed, "God save my son!" God had to go and start ten thousand things to get your son saved and to bring that boy to Jesus! Because that's the kind of God we serve!

### **Pastor Tim Dulaney**

Jim Cymbala's assistant pastor is Tim Dulaney, and I love to hear him when opportunity arises, here is a story he tells about God moving the pieces of the world to make one thing happen. God used him in the ministry to bring a girl to salvation, and we say yea that is common, that is what happens in the ministry, but he says imagine all the pieces that went into play to save that girl that day.

*I asked permission from my mom to tell this story. She is here tonight. She is 90 years old. She is a godly woman. I have been so blessed to have godly parents. She told me this only 15 years ago. I'm not angry. It made me realize God can use us even despite our mistakes. I am the youngest in my family. I have a sister 15 years older than me and a brother who is 10 years older. Some people would say I was a mistake. At 43 years old in the 1960's my mom had me. Getting pregnant in the 60's at 43 is a lot different than getting pregnant today. When mom found out she was pregnant she told me she said, "Oh no God I thought I was finished with diapers. My daughter is 15 and my son is 10 and now you're going to give me a baby when I'm an old woman or a very mature woman? In those times there was no pregnancy test. You had to go the doctor. You had to ask the doctor. He gave you the news. I'll never forget where I was. I was crying. And look I'm just so thankful for my mom. I'm thankful for the miracle of God. She went to a Jewish doctor who was not a believer and he said, "Look you're pregnant." And my mom said her heart just dropped. I didn't want to be pregnant. I was finished with children. And this doctor said, "You don't know, maybe this baby will be blessing to you." My mom went home still facing the shock of being pregnant. Medical technology wasn't what it is today. She woke up one day, there was blood all over the bed. She was hemorrhaging. She called the doctor. He said, "Sonia at this age you've probably lost the baby. This baby probably isn't going to be born. But listen, here is what I need you to do. I need you to lie perfectly still in the bed until I can get over there and examine you and see where this baby is at. She said I was just having a lapse and I just didn't want this baby. I went into the garage and got a jump rope and jumped for the next ten minutes to try to lose this baby. But she said she felt something happen like, "thank God it's done." The doctor comes and examines her and says, "Sonia don't worry everything is ok. The baby is fine! There are no worries. You must be a godly woman. And out popped me. And here's the thing, "God will get done whatever He wants to get done not matter what you try to do in any situation. So I had someone come up to me and I just did a service and she said, "I just gave my life to Jesus for the first time." Think about it! think about what God had to do to get that person saved! Some mom in north Carolina was praying, "God save my daughter. She went to new York to live a life for the devil but sent her to church and somehow she gets invited to Brooklyn tabernacle and comes here but what God had to do was put up there some kid who splits from Detroit up here but he knew there would be a lady who would get pregnant at 43 years old with a baby and she wasn't sure she wanted that baby, but God said, "You gotta have that baby because I gotta answer a prayer to save that kid down there so I gotta save that baby right here and I'm going to get that person to church and then I'm gonna bring those two things together and that's how I answer prayer! You pray one thing and God does ten thousand things to save that person! If we knew all that God was doing behind the scenes we would never be discouraged! If we knew what God was up to! Just because you don't see it doesn't mean God is not active! God is on the throne!*

### **God will move the Pieces Just for You**

God will move 10,000 pieces to align one piece for you. he did it for Simon and He will do it for you.

### **If Lived in this Day**

If I had lived in the times of Christ, the two greatest honors I could ever have in life would have got to do what Simon the Cyrene did, and carry the cross of Christ up that hill, and the other would have been Joseph of Arimathea and carry the body of Jesus to the tomb. Guess what we get those honors today.

### **Pick up Your Cross / What will you be Known For**

Simon the Cyrene is known for carrying the cross of Jesus. Jesus said if anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. Christian, what will you be known for? When you look back, look back in joy! I made it and I was faithful.

*Luke 9:23-24 (NKJV) <sup>23</sup> Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.*

### **Salvation is Free.....but Discipleship will cost you your life!**

### **4 Things a Disciple Does**

Jesus gives four things a disciple is to do:

- **Desire to Come** - If anyone desires to come – Jesus says “if a person desires to”, He leaves it up to them if they want to come, as He doesn’t force anyone to come. Discipleship starts with a decision.
- **Deny Self** – means to forget one’s self, lose sight of one’s self and one’s own interests.
- **Take up the Cross Daily** – means more than it does today, but when a person picked up a cross in those times they carried it to their death, and they carried it through the most crowded streets, and they were put on display of their guilt. And notice the word daily, as it is a call for moment-by-moment, not a one-time profession.
- **Follow Him** – Where did Jesus go? To do the will of the Father, even to the point of death. But notice, that Jesus never spoke of His death without speaking of His resurrection, and notice that He doesn’t speak to His disciples to die to self until after He spoke of His death and His resurrection, for the only way a person can die to self and live unto Him, is through His death and His resurrection power.

### **Parents what will you Be Known For**

Parents, imagine Alexander and Rufus when they gave their testimony. My father is Simon the Cyrene, he carried the cross for our Lord. What pride they would have as they told that story over and over again. Parents what will we be known for in the eyes of our children?

### **Pressed into Service**

The word “compelled” is *aggareuō* (ἀγγαρεύω), a word of Persian origin. The *aggaroi* (ἀγγαροί) were public couriers, stationed by appointment of the king of Persia at fixed localities, with horses ready for use, in order to transmit royal messages from one to another, and so convey them the more speedily to their destination. These couriers had authority to press into service, in case of need, horses, vessels, even men they met. The verb therefore means “to impress into service.”

### **When the Lord taps you - Respond**

When the Lord taps you, pick up that which He taps you for. Don’t wait around until He taps you for what you want to do, but if He has tapped you, then pick it up and start doing it and you won’t be sorry that you have. I see way too many people waiting for “their ministry” and thus have no ears, or feelings (to feel the tap of God on their shoulder) and they miss it. Simon wasn’t sorry after he carried the cross, but I can tell you who was, Simon Peter.....as that was supposed to be his honor, but he was nowhere to be found. God will find someone else if you choose not to respond, and that person will be blessed and recorded in heaven for doing it, but you will have missed it.

### **Hoover Dam**

It is tough to live this life of deny self, America has so many options (which really are distractions), Simon of Cyrene is meant to be a picture of us and for us. You were and are created for greatness, we regardless of our education or lack thereof, regardless of many gifting or just one (for we all have been given some measure), can do great things for the Lord with this life that we have been given. At the end, when we look back, what will be known for, how will we look back on it? I close with this illustration, as I see it so fitting, as this challenge has been given to us from the Lord to deny ourselves and pick up the cross and follow Him. Hoover dam, what an amazing

engineering marvel. Took 4 years to build, enough concrete to lay a 4 lane road from California to New York. It is 726 feet high, 1,244 feet long, and at its base it is 660 feet wide, and at its top it is 45 feet wide. It creates a reservoir of some 16 million acres, and its total area is some 168,000 square miles. It is huge and it is beautiful. With its beauty is the merge between Lake Meade and the Colorado river. It is the recreation dream world. Every recreation you can image, white water rafting down the Colorado river, snorkeling, scuba diving, water skiing, jet skiing, house boats, yachts, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, hiking, hunting, parasailing, million dollar vacation homes, hotels, log cabins, camping, mountain biking, horseback riding, swimming, photography, and picnics. It is a recreation dream world. But here is the thing, it wasn't created for that, as beautiful and wonderful as those things are, it was created for something greater than that. It was created to produce light and power. The whole design was made to flow the massive amount of water to one location, and then flow that water through generators at the bottom of the dam. The generators have turbines on them, and the water pressure is so great that it flows the water through those turbines at 80mph, and it produces over 4.2 billion KWh of power a year, which provides power and light to over 1.2 million homes in California, Arizona, and Nevada.

### **We Made for So Much More**

Beloved of God, recreation and leisure are a gift, and we should enjoy them. But remember, that is not what we are made for, we are made for so much more, we are made to produce power and light. . . . .and let us live out our lives as such, let's look back and say we made it, let us be known for whose we were, and how we lived sold-out for Him.

**Matthew 5:14–16 (NKJV)** <sup>14</sup> *"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.<sup>16</sup> Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*

**Luke 9:23–24 (NKJV)** <sup>23</sup> *Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.*

# Leaning Into Jesus

## Luke 23:27-43

### Outline of the Book of Luke:

#### The Life of Christ – The God Man (Luke 1-24)

##### **The Prelude to Christ's Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- His Birth & Boyhood
- His Baptism & Temptation

##### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- His Mission Statement
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- His March to the Cross
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

##### **The Consummation of Christ's Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

### **Context / Annas – Caiphias – Pilate – Herod – Pilate / Beating & Scouraging**

The context is that Jesus has just finished a night of a mock trial with the high priests (Annas and Caiphias), he was beaten and mocked and then turned over to Pilate and King Herod, both finding no fault in Him but delivering the death sentence against Jesus to appease the crowd. But before the cross there was a brutal scourging with a whip that has shredded our Lord's back, and now it is on to Calvary.

*Luke 23:20–25 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> Pilate, therefore, wishing to release Jesus, again called out to them. <sup>21</sup> But they shouted, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" <sup>22</sup> Then he said to them the third time, "Why, what evil has He done? I have found no reason for death in Him. I will therefore chastise Him and let Him go." <sup>23</sup> But they were insistent, demanding with loud voices that He be crucified. And the voices of these men and of the chief priests prevailed. <sup>24</sup> So Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they requested. <sup>25</sup> And he released to them the one they requested, who for rebellion and murder had been thrown into prison; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

### **Levitical Offerings**

It is on to Calvary for the sins of the world, your sin and my sin more specifically. Colossians 2 tells us all the sacrifices were a shadow of Jesus Christ. In Hebrews 10:12 it says that Jesus offered one sacrifice for sins forever. That means that Jesus one sacrifice on the cross is the only sacrifice that is ever needed for the covering of sin, past – present and future. And, ..... Leviticus chapters 1-7 give all the rules on how sacrifices were to be offered unto the Lord, and they were to be followed exactly. There were 5 types of sacrifices to be offered, and what Hebrews 10:12 is also telling us is that Jesus is the fulfillment of all those sacrifices with His one sacrifice upon the cross, not to mention the Passover sacrifice and the Day of Atonement sacrifice. My point isn't to give a study to you right now about all the types of feasts/festivals and Levitical sacrifices, but rather to make a point that in all these sacrifices "hands" were involved. The Meal/Grain offering they were to make with their hands and bring it to the altar, but the others that involved animals the person was to lay their hand upon the head of the sacrifice. The purpose of laying on hands was first it was symbolic of trading places, you will take my place, I transfer my guilt unto this innocent sacrifice. Second to identify personally with the sacrifice, death is the only way of appeasement, for without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin (Hebrews 9:22). But here is the point that I want to make and that was that the person put their hand upon the animal (Passover sacrifice they actually killed the animal with their hands) and the purpose was that the person as their hand was upon the sacrifice would feel the life go out of the

animal, they would feel the animal struggle, they would feel the animal squirm, and then they would feel the animal go limp, and the person would know that sin costs, sin is serious, sin has consequences. They didn't just come and talk about their sin, say here is my sacrifice I messed up, I will be on my way now. No they had to fully engage in their atonement (covering) they had to be a participant in the covering, so they could understand the gravity of sin.

### **Levitical Sacrifices (Leviticus 1-7)**

- **Burnt-Offering**: A voluntary sacrifice that is totally for the glory of God. Jesus brought God total glory and the wrath of God was totally consumed and fulfilled through His sacrifice. The offeror was to lay their hands upon the head of the sacrifice.
- **Meal/Grain** – a voluntary offering: a gift unto the Lord, a voluntary offering to God just because He is God and He is Good. The meal offering was to be made by the person and then brought to be sacrificed.
- **Peace-Offering**: a voluntary offering that was meant just to fellowship (have friendship) with God and give Him thanks. The offeror was to lay their hands upon the head of the sacrifice.
- **Sin-Offering**: Speaks of what we are (Sin Nature), not just what we have done (acts of sin). The offeror was to lay their hands upon the head of the sacrifice.
- **Trespass-Offering**: Sins committed against God and other men. The offeror was to lay their hands upon the head of the sacrifice (performed exactly as the Sin Offering Lev 7:7), and then confess their sin (Lev 5:5).

*Hebrews 10:11–14 (NKJV) <sup>11</sup> And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. <sup>12</sup> But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, <sup>13</sup> from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. <sup>14</sup> For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.*

*Colossians 2:16–17 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, <sup>17</sup> which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.*

*Leviticus 1:4 (NKJV) <sup>4</sup> Then he shall put his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him.*

*Hebrews 9:22 (ESV) <sup>22</sup> Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.*

### **Main Point – Lean On Jesus**

But here is the point of points that I want to make to you today, and that is that the Rabbi taught the people (as I read in rabbinical teachings) to not just touch the sacrifice, but to lean into the sacrifice, to place their full weight upon the animal, so they could get the full-effect of the transfer, they could feel the death so they could know their sin was covered, so they could fully relate to the sacrifice. Beloved, I want you today, and for all of our studies to come as we close out this book, to fully lean into your sacrifice Jesus Christ, I want you to fully feel that you sin has not only covered but totally wiped away, clean and forgiven forever as the one sacrifice is enough and forever. And, when you can feel that, when you are convinced of that, then you will know that in every situation of your life you can fully lean-into Jesus, you can put your full-weight into Him, and He can hold you up, He can absorb whatever the blow is that is against you, that you can full trust Him and you will need not try to hold it up, carry it on, get through it on your own, but you can lean totally on Him. Why, because just as the life was taken out of Him for sin, His life (as ours will too) will resurrect in power, and nothing can defeat us or keep us in bondage.

*Ephesians 1:19–21 (NKJV) <sup>19</sup> and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power <sup>20</sup> which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup> far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.*

### **Read & Lean**

Let's read and lean.....

**Luke 23:27** And a great multitude of the people followed Him, and women who also mourned and lamented Him.

**Luke 23:28** But Jesus, turning to them, said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.

**Luke 23:29** For indeed the days are coming in which they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren, wombs that never bore, and breasts which never nursed!’

**Luke 23:30** Then they will begin ‘to say to the mountains, “Fall on us!” and to the hills, “Cover us!”’

**Luke 23:31 For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?"**

### **Barren Considered a Curse / Heavy Words – Bad days Coming**

For a woman to be barren in that day was considered a curse, they were looked down upon. The words Jesus is speaking are heavy; He is saying you have no idea how horrible your future is going to be. You are going to wish you were childless, even though it is currently considered a curse, your future is going to be so bad that you are going to wish you were dead. Extremely heavy words spoken by Jesus in what is His final hours of life.

### **I Don't think these Woman are Disciples / Looking for a King**

I personally do not think these woman who are wailing here are disciples of Jesus. I do not think they are the woman who will be at the cross later in the account either. I think these are probably woman who were at the roadside on His triumphal entry, just five days prior, shouting Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord. They were praising Him as the King that has come to set them free from the tyranny of the ruthless Roman Empire, but now these woman are weeping because their hope of a better Israel/Jerusalem was on His way to death, another opponent conquered by Rome, another disappointment, tomorrow would be the same as today and yesterday. Jesus is telling them that their wailing is misguided, they should be wailing for themselves because if you think today is bad, waiting until tomorrow (which will come in about 38 years).

**Luke 23:47–49 (NKJV)** <sup>47</sup> So when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, "Certainly this was a righteous Man!" <sup>48</sup> And the whole crowd who came together to that sight, seeing what had been done, beat their breasts and returned. <sup>49</sup> But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

**Luke 19:37–38 (NKJV)** <sup>37</sup> Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, <sup>38</sup> saying: "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

### **Jesus Wept over Jerusalem – Luke 19**

In Luke 19, right before the "Triumphal Entry" we had read the account of Jesus weeping over Jerusalem, and the word there for wept meant to weep convulsively.

**Luke 19:41–44 (NKJV)** <sup>41</sup> Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, <sup>42</sup> saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. <sup>43</sup> For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, <sup>44</sup> and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

### **Day of Visitation / Didn't Know because Nobody was Teaching /**

They missed the day of visitation, they didn't understand it. They did not know because nobody was teaching, nobody was digging out the truths of the scriptures and teaching them to the people. Surely once they did teach long-long ago, but those types of sermons were turning the people off, thus they started to lighten it up, to keep the people coming, to keep the coffers full and the egos stroked. Maybe it took one generation, maybe two or three, but now they were more into the commercialization than the word and prayer, and now there is a generation who no longer knows the truths of the scriptures.

### **Jesus weeps – What lies Ahead / 70 AD / Lasted 143 Days / Not 1 Stone Left Standing**

In Luke 19, as Jesus looked ahead, He wept (which means weeping convulsively) as He saw the terrible judgment that was coming to the nation, the city, and the temple. He isn't filled with anger and hatred, He isn't mean, He is weeping convulsively.....where is this mean and angry God that people accuse Him of being. It is currently 32AD, and in less than 40 years, In A.D. 70 (history books tell us), the General Titus and Roman army would come and, after a siege of 143 days, kill 600,000 Jews, take thousands more captive as slaves (97,000), and then destroy the temple and the city. All the way to the point it was written that not one stone was left standing. It was written that in the siege the temple caught on fire, and the heat was so intense that the gold-overlay melted, and the gold bonded to the stones of the temple. The only way to break the gold from the stones was to throw the stones over the ridge so that when they hit the gold would break loose from the stones. Thus not one stone was left upon another, exactly as Jesus said it would be.

### **Titus came April 9 – During Passover / Cut off Supplies / Built Embankment /**

Verse 19:43 - your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side -

This is precisely the method used by Titus when he laid siege to Jerusalem in A.D. 70. He surrounded the city on Apr. 9, cutting off all supplies, and trapping thousands of people who had been in Jerusalem for the Passover and

Feast of Unleavened Bread (just completed). The Romans systematically built embankments around the city, gradually starving the city's inhabitants. The Romans held the city in this manner through the summer, defeating various sections of the city one by one. The final overthrow of the city occurred in early Sep.

### **Josephus describes Pure Horror / Starvation – Marauders - Anarchy**

Josephus describes this siege that took place under Titus, the Roman general. He describes the horror of the people within the city of Jerusalem who began to kill each other for food, and when the food was gone they turned to cannibalism. The horrible starvation. According to Josephus in his book, *The Wars of the Jews*, more Jews were killed by their fellow Jews than by the Roman soldiers. Marauding bands began to go through the city raiding houses and killing people and taking the goods and the food. Anarchy broke out within the city. And the horrors of it are described by Josephus.

### **Here Jesus Said – Blessed are the Barren / Green vs Dry**

And as Jesus turns to these woman, He said those who are barren will be blessed because they didn't have to watch their children endure that horrible day. "Don't feel sorry for Me," Jesus is saying. "My agony is about to end—even this day. But you in Jerusalem will go through incredibly difficult times. If they've done this in the time of spring to a green tree—wait until the Romans show their real vehemence toward this city in the season to come."

### **Why – They didn't know Day of Visitation / Rejected Jesus = Rejected his Word**

Why did all of this happen? Because the people did not know that God had visited them (19:43)! "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not" (John 1:11). "We will not have this man to reign over us!" (Luke 19:14)

*John 1:11 (NKJV) 11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.*

*Luke 19:14 (NKJV) 14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.'*

### **They missed His Visitation / Jesus not here to Fix our Economy / Not to make life Comfortable – but Secure**

They totally missed the day of their visitation by God Himself. And these woman here on the roadway to the cross, like the multitudes five days earlier on His entry into the city, they were looking for a king to make their life better, but missed the King of Kings had come to free them from sin and death, the ultimate enemy and tyrant. People today wonder where Jesus is, God is, because the world is in disarray and hardship, tyrants and injustice abounds. Listen those who have not committed their lives to Jesus, and even to Christians (who can easily forget) – Jesus did not come to fix the economy, or make a better earth. . . . . He came to deal with the sin that sentenced us to hell. Christian, Jesus did not come to make our lives comfortable, He came to make our lives secure! Look at it any other way and your life will not have peace, you will be troubled continually by the events of the world around you, and you will often find yourself questioning God on where He is and what He is doing.

### **You can Lean on Him**

Beloved, you can fully lean on Him, and He will deliver us from this present world and all its trappings, and all its ills, and the tyrants of it. Don't just touch Him, lean into Him. Don't just talk about Him and your sin in general, but lean fully into Him, acknowledging He is your all-in-all and without Him, you are nothing, apart from Him you can nothing. Whatever your situation you are suffering, facing, and enduring today, you can fully lean into Jesus and He will see you through it. We don't need to be a people who weep with no hope, for we know our God will see us through.

### **Simon the Cyrene hears this All**

By the way, regarding this scene, mind you Simon the Cyrene is following Jesus carrying the cross, and he is hearing every word. How did these words ring in his ears?

### **Fulfillment will Come**

And if these words that Jesus spoke to these woman sound familiar, they should, for they are near identical as those spoken in Revelation 6. The multitudes missed it on His first coming in 32 AD, they were looking for a king to make life better. And history will and is repeating itself as in a very near future, these words will be spoken exactly as Jesus has said here (rocks fall on us). People today miss why He came, to die for the sins for the world, not to make the world a place of comfort and ease. God is giving man their choice who will be king on earth, man has and continually rejects His Kingship, and all the ills of the world is because man has cast their vote on who will rule over them. But the day is coming where He will set up His Kingdom on earth, and we will reign with Him.

**Revelation 6:12–17 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup> I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. <sup>13</sup> And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. <sup>14</sup> Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. <sup>15</sup> And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, <sup>16</sup> and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!" <sup>17</sup> For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

**Luke 23:32** There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death.

**Luke 23:33** And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left.

### **Calvary – Golgotha – Place of Skull**

Mark says Golgotha (Aramic word for skull), the place of the skull. Calvary (Greek – kranion – where we get our word cranium). It was most likely referred to the skull because when you look at the hill it looks like a human skull. So, you can tell your friends and family that you go to "Cranium Chapel" then that should solidify that you have lost your mind.

**Mark 15:22 (NKJV)** <sup>22</sup> And they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull.

### **Golgotha – Peak of Moriah / Soloman Quarry**

Interestingly Golgotha is the peak of what is called Mount Moriah. It is under this mount where they quarried the stones (you can tour the quarry today if you visit Israel) to build the Temple. I love the picture, because the Temple was beautiful and magnificent, but even with stones as big as train box cars, they would topple, but a cross with the Christ upon it will stand forever. The Temple became a place of religion, made by the hands of man, it became empty and fruitless, and eventually laid in ruin. But those who come to the cross, kneel at the foot of it, look up to see the Christ, receive the Christ, **fully lean into the Christ**, shall never be moved or toppled, because they are not following a religion made by man, but are following a God who is alive, and lives for them!

**1 Kings 5:15–17 (NKJV)** <sup>15</sup> Solomon had seventy thousand who carried burdens, and eighty thousand who quarried stone in the mountains, <sup>16</sup> besides three thousand three hundred from the chiefs of Solomon's deputies, who supervised the people who labored in the work. <sup>17</sup> And the king commanded them to quarry large stones, costly stones, and hewn stones, to lay the foundation of the temple.

### **Genesis 22**

As we have studied before, this place Jesus is crucified is the exact location that Abraham would bring Isaac for sacrifice.....about 2000 years prior. In the same place where Abraham built his altar, God would sacrifice His Son and the prophecy of Abraham was fulfilled when he said, "God will provide Himself a sacrifice." In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen and it was, two thousand years later. The picture of Abraham sacrificing his son is a foreshadowing of that which God would do for love of the world in sacrificing His only begotten Son. I might note that the clearest reading in the original language is "God will provide himself as the lamb," Abraham told Isaac—not, "God will provide for Himself a lamb"—but, "God will provide Himself a lamb. He will be the Lamb."

**Genesis 22:1–14 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." <sup>2</sup> Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." <sup>3</sup> So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. <sup>4</sup> Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. <sup>5</sup> And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you." <sup>6</sup> So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together. <sup>7</sup> But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" <sup>8</sup> And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together. <sup>9</sup> Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. <sup>10</sup> And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. <sup>11</sup> But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" So he said, "Here I am." <sup>12</sup> And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me." <sup>13</sup> Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. <sup>14</sup> And Abraham called the name of the place, The-LORD-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, "In the Mount of the LORD it shall be provided."

### **James and John – Drink the Cup**

Verse 33 - there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. -It's

interesting, the mother of John and James had come to Jesus just a short time earlier and she said, Lord, I have a request to make of you. And He said, What is it? She said, I want when You come into Your kingdom that one of my sons be on Your right side and the other on Your left. And Jesus said, You don't know what You're asking. Are

they able to drink the cup that I shall drink? And here they piped up, no doubt they've put their mother up to this whole thing, they piped up, Oh yeah, we can. Sure, you bet. And Jesus said, You indeed shall drink of the same cup but to grant this privilege is not mine but Father's. But interesting, here He's coming into His kingdom but rather than James and John on either side, there are two malefactors, one on the right, and one on the left. (Matthew 20:20-23).

*Matthew 20:20-23 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him. <sup>21</sup> And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom." <sup>22</sup> But Jesus answered and said, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They said to Him, "We are able." <sup>23</sup> So He said to them, "You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father."

### **Not Getting what you ask For / Don't Pull Away – Lean Into**

Are you upset with God about something He has not given you that you have requested? Then remember this story. God knows what you need and when you need it.....he also knows what you don't need, and when it is not the right time to have. Don't let that thing you are not receiving (that job, girlfriend, possession, ministry) pull you away from God, but look to the cross and the sacrifice, see and know His wisdom, and rather pull away from Him, fully lean into Him, place all your trust and hope into Him. Your God knows what you need and will supply all your needs accordingly.

*Philippians 4:19 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

**Luke 23:34** Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." And they divided His garments and cast lots.

### **Jesus Practicing Matthew 5:44**

Here Jesus is in essence practicing what He preached. He said, "Bless those that curse you. Pray for those who despitefully use you" (Matthew 5:44). And here we find Him praying for these transgressors as they are nailing Him to the cross. "They know not what they do." They knew what they were doing but they didn't know the enormity of what they were doing.

*Matthew 5:44 (NKJV)* <sup>44</sup> But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,

### **Corrie TenBoom**

We watched the "Hiding Place" this weekend, and I must admit that as I watched the evil of the Nazi, as I watched the scene where the guard beats Betsy TenBoom and her sister must watch on.....I found myself filled with anger, I said there would be no way I wouldn't seek revenge, that I would not repay evil for evil. I can see how far away I am from this heart and perfection. Betsy would say to her sister, "don't hate". Betsy would say when you leave here tell the whole world there is not a pit so deep, that God is not deeper. It is impossible for us to ever reach this level of forgiveness, of love, of compassion, without us fully leaning-into Jesus. We can't just talk about Him, we can't just touch Him lightly, we have to fully lean ourselves into Him, placing all of our support on Him, having no one or nothing else to support us, except Him.

*Romans 12:17 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men.

### **Playing Games**

Verse 34 - And they divided His garments and cast lots – Here they are playing games while the Savior, the one who could be their savior, was being crucified. Such a picture of so many people today, playing games in the world, and not even looking up to see the Savior being lifted up on the cross, being poured out for them, offering them salvation.....but they just keep going on playing silly games that have no future or value in them. May that not be a picture of the church and His people today, playing games while the world perishes.

### **Verb Tense – Jesus is Continually saying "Forgive Them"**

Verse 34 – Father Forgive them.....The verb tense (imperfect) and grammar structure here indicates that Jesus is continually saying forgive them they know not what they do, and it points backwards too, which means as the Roman soldiers are nailing Him to the cross, He is saying Father forgive them they know not what they do. As he hung on the cross he is saying forgive them they know not what they do. His eyes are beaten and swollen to the point He can't see out of them, His lips are swollen, teeth knocked loose, to the point He can't speak clearly.....yet He keeps saying forgive them they know not what they do. The effectual verb tense is still going

forth today and Jesus still says that to us, forgive them they know no what they do. I had no idea in my sin that He was saying the same of me and you as we lived in sin and ignorance, knowing the day would come where we would get it and understand his sacrifice and offer of forgiveness and salvation.

### **Leaning on Jesus**

How can't I fully lean into Jesus, I can never fall or fail if I do. What great love He had for you and for me.

**Luke 23:35 And the people stood looking on. But even the rulers with them sneered, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God."**

### **Then Couldn't Save Us**

The problem, of course, is if Jesus saved Himself, He couldn't save us.

**Luke 23:36 The soldiers also mocked Him, coming and offering Him sour wine, Luke 23:37 and saying, "If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself."**

### **Prophecy Fulfilled**

Look at all the prophecies fulfilled concerning Jesus:

- He said nothing unto Herod

**Isaiah 53:7 (NKJV)** <sup>7</sup> He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.

- Pilate said, I will chastise Him and release Him

**Isaiah 53:5 (NKJV)** <sup>5</sup> But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

- The two malefactors, one on the right and one on the left;

**Isaiah 53:12 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup> Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

- His prayer, Father, forgive them; they know not what they do; "And He made intercession for the transgressors,

**Isaiah 53:12 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup> Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

- They parted His raiment, and cast lots for His vesture

**Psalms 22:18 (NKJV)** <sup>18</sup> They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.

- The mocking and the derision; verse 35, and the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Messiah, the chosen of God (23:35).

**Psalms 22:7-8 (NKJV)** <sup>7</sup> All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying*, <sup>8</sup> "He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!"

- And then we read, And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar (23:36),

**Psalms 69:21 (NKJV)** <sup>21</sup> They also gave me gall for my food, And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

### **Peter Declares**

And so all of these prophecies which led Peter to declare when he was addressing the crowd that had gathered on the day of Pentecost, "You according to the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God, with your wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23). The death of Jesus Christ was something that God had planned and even had written out the plan in advance. All of these scriptures, as Peter had said concerning the scriptures, these scriptures must needs be fulfilled. What God has said is certain, it is sure. And what has said shall surely come to pass. And the fact that God wrote of it in advance only indicates and affirms the fact that this was God's plan.

**Acts 2:23 (NKJV)** <sup>23</sup> Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;

### **Jesus doesn't want Sympathy**

Jesus is King, and the King went to the cross, but what the King shows us in this passage today is that He does not want sympathy. He says to the woman mourning, don't weep for Me. Jesus doesn't want our sympathy, because He wanted to do this for us, for you, for me. He wasn't forced into it, He chose to do it (conclusive in the Garden of Gethsemane), it was planned and orchestrated from the foundations of the world. God the King want to do this for you, that is how much He loves you! So based on that how much can you "lean-into" Him, how much trust can you put into Him that He is for you?

*Hebrews 12:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup> looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

### **Offered Him Vinegar /Gall to deaden the Pain / Jesus took Full Wrath**

*Verse 36 - coming and offering Him sour wine* - They parted His raiment and cast lots and the people stood beholding and the rulers also with them, deriding Him saying, He saved others, let Him save himself if He is the Messiah, the chosen of God. And the soldiers also mocked Him, coming to him and offering him vinegar. Matthews account gives an important piece of information in that the vinegar was mixed with gall and as such was more or less an anesthesia. It was to ease somewhat the pain. Jesus would not drink it. There's probably nothing more painful than crucifixion. It was one of the most torturous methods ever devised by man in executing another man. Your body hanging there on the cross. As time goes on, the muscles begin to give way and as the muscles give way, your body begins to actually fall out of joint and there's an excruciating pain when the body begins to fall out of joint. And then finally, death comes by suffocation. You have to sort of lift yourself on the spike that is holding your feet, you have to sort of lift yourself to get a breath. But of course as you do, your ripping the feet and it's extremely painful. And so you would hold on and only breathe when you had to and then you'd lift yourself, take a breath and then, but the excruciating pain. It was just extremely torturous thing. So the gall was more or less to help ease the pain. However, Jesus refused it. Precious Christian Jesus took the full wrath of God, and took the full dose of pain, he would not deaden the pain, He absorbed every throb, every shock, every pierce of the pain that was due us. You can fully lean into Him, for He knows pain.....and He knows your pain, He understands pain. And may I note....later on, when He cried, I thirst; they at this point gave Him the vinegar (sour wine) and He took it just before He died, but make note this sour wine was not mixed with gall (no pain easement).

*Matthew 27:33-34 (NKJV)* <sup>33</sup> And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull, <sup>34</sup> they gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted it, He would not drink.

*John 19:29-30 (NKJV)* <sup>29</sup> Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth. <sup>30</sup> So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

### **Spirit of Lord is Hovering**

Again what a picture I see here at the cross, as I read Genesis 1:2, the Spirit of the Lord is hovering over the earth, and all the world even still today, and the world only offers him is sour vinegar, the throw off, the off-scouring of the world. May we be a people today that offer Him our best, our all, our very hearts and say Lord I give you my greatest possession, my heart, take it as a love offering.

*Genesis 1:1-2 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

### **Luke 23:38 And an inscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

#### **3 Languages**

Greek was the language of intellect; Latin, the language of government; and Hebrew the language of religion. Philosophically, politically, and religiously, Jesus is indeed King of the Jews. None of those things are greater or more intelligent, or wiser than Him.....regardless if they think they are.

**Luke 23:39 Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us."**

**Luke 23:40 But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation?"**

**Luke 23:41 And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong."**

**Luke 23:42 Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom."**

**Luke 23:43 And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."**

### **God Planned – Two Thieves / 2 Choices / A God who Forgives**

God orchestrates that there is a thief on the left and a thief on the right. Not just for prophetic fulfillment, but a clear illustration and demonstration that salvation is a choice that each man/woman makes. One man asks to be saved in his sin, another man asks to be saved in spite of his sin. The one man says save me, but won't say save me from my sin. The other says save me, even though I am a sinner deserving of my punishment. Every person today must

decide, is my sin offensive enough that I need a Savior? Another gospel account says that both men had railed on Jesus, but somewhere along the way this one man changed. What happened, what made him change his view of Jesus, and when did it happen? It happened somewhere in those 6 hours. But this man saw no miracle, no healing, heard no sermons, but somewhere along the way his heart changed and he said “remember me”, save me. All that I see in this passage is Jesus saying Father Forgive them.....maybe as a convicted criminal, those are the words that he thought he would never hear, maybe all he thought life was would be judgment, condemnation, and punishment. Then at moment he is changed because it hits him, God is a forgiving God, even to a sinner like me. *Matthew 27:44 (NKJV)* <sup>44</sup> *Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing.*

### **Not Works or Sacraments / A Man Owns his Sin / Not Everyone goes to Heaven – Only those Lean Into**

Beloved, see this picture and glean a few nuggets here, and first see how simple the salvation message is; it is not good works, it is not rituals, or sacraments, it is not purgatory, it is not last rites, it is seeing that Jesus Christ took the punishment for our sin personally. This man owns his sin, he sees he is a sinner and Jesus is perfect and pure. Every person must come to the place where they own their sin, and that their sin deserves just punishment (due reward). But let it clearly be seen, not everyone goes to heaven, but only those who fully lean into Jesus.

*Luke 23:41* *And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.”*

### **Don't give Up**

And listen gang, don't ever give up, don't ever stop believing that Jesus can save that person in their most wretched, most rebellious, in their final last breath of life.....don't give up on them, Jesus can save them at their last breath, so you preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified until your last breath.

### **When it comes time to Die**

This man takes his last breath, and is in Paradise with Jesus. When it comes time to die, makes sure that is all you have to do.

### **Where is Barabbas**

I wonder where Barabbas is at this point. The corrupt system might have saved him from his woes for that moment, as it should be him on the cross, but whether it was a year or 50 years, Barabbas will face death either through age, accident, or circumstances.....and he too will need a savior.

### **Lean Into Jesus**

Christian, do you see .....you must, and we can, fully lean into Jesus. He is amazing love! Let us celebrate communion together in remembrance of what He has done.

### **Communion Celebration**

When I was in Bible College I was told of one of the students before me who was a total goof-off, never took anything serious. Well we each took turns leading the Sunday evening service, it was kind of pastor preparation and church service all rolled into one. When it was his turn to teach and lead that Sunday Service everyone was saying I can only imagine how bad he is going to bomb this. So when time came, and all were assembled in the sanctuary, and he arose and took the pulpit, he then simply read the account of the crucifixion starting with the prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, all the way through the death of Christ, he simply read it without any commentary, just read the account. Friends tell me you could have heard a pin drop, the Spirit of God moved thorough that place, and they said it was one of the most moving nights in the whole semester. So for us, let's just read these final verses, and then break bread together in communion and celebration.

*Luke 23:44–49 (NKJV)* <sup>44</sup> *Now it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.* <sup>45</sup> *Then the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was torn in two.* <sup>46</sup> *And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, “Father, ‘into Your hands I commit My spirit.’”* Having said this, He breathed His last. <sup>47</sup> *So when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, “Certainly this was a righteous Man!”* <sup>48</sup> *And the whole crowd who came together to that sight, seeing what had been done, beat their breasts and returned.* <sup>49</sup> *But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.*



# It is Done!

## Luke 23:44-56

### Outline of the Book of Luke:

#### The Life of Christ – The God Man (Luke 1-24)

##### **The Prelude to Christ's Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- His Birth & Boyhood
- His Baptism & Temptation

##### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- His Mission Statement
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- His March to the Cross
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

##### **The Consummation of Christ's Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

### Recap

It is the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan in the Jewish calendar, it is the day that the Passover lamb was to be sacrificed at twilight (around 3pm at that time of the year which was spring). Jesus has had the Last Supper with His disciples, He has prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, Judas has betrayed Him and Jesus has been delivered into the hands of evil, He has been through the mock/illegal trial with the High Priests (Annas and Caiphas), He has been before king Herod and Pilate, He has been beaten mercilessly by the guards, He has been scourged with 40 lashes, He has been paraded through the streets of Jerusalem with the cross, He has been nailed to the cross between two thieves, and at this point in our study Jesus has been on the cross for 3 hours – the time is about 12 noon.

*Exodus 12:5–6 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. <sup>6</sup> Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.

### Sign

Above His head is the sign that Pilate wrote a sign saying “Jesus of Nazareth, The King of the Jews”. The Jews said don't write that but that He said He was the King, not that He is the King. In the Greek, Pilate answered them in the perfect tense, “What I have written will always remain written.” When you look at that writing on the sign in the Hebrew, each letter of the first word (mind you Hebrew reads from right to left), the beginning letters of each word spells (YHWH), and it is the acronym the Jews used to write “GOD/LORD” in the scriptures. They took the vowels out of the name of God because they took His name so holy that they didn't want someone to mispronounce His Holy name and thus when they came to His Name (as we today we would say Jehovah or Yahweh), they would come to YHWH and reverently say “the Name”, and then continue on. So it is 12 Noon, God, your God, is on the cross, Jesus (the Name), for your sin and my sin.

*Luke 23:36–38 (NKJV)* <sup>36</sup> The soldiers also mocked Him, coming and offering Him sour wine, <sup>37</sup> and saying, “If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself.” <sup>38</sup> And an inscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

*John 19:19–22 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. <sup>20</sup> Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.

<sup>21</sup> Therefore the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'He said, "I am the King of the Jews.'" " <sup>22</sup> Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

**Luke 23:44** Now it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.

### 3pm

The Jewish day begins at sunset and goes to the next sunset. I like that as it starts in darkness and moves into light. The time keeping begins at sunrise, and tracks from there. So 6am sunrise, the third hour would be 9am, and now the sixth hour would be noon, and darkness until the ninth hour which would be 3pm, which is the twilight hour, exactly when the Passover lamb was to be slain.

### Roman Record on 3hr Darkness / Can't be Eclipse in Spring

There are many Roman historical records that record there was a day where there was total darkness over the whole earth for 3 hours about this period of time. The 3rd-century Christian historian Sextus Julius Africanus, references Phlegon of Tralles who was a Greek writer and freedman of the emperor Hadrian, who lived in the 2nd century AD, saying:

*"Phlegon records that during the reign of Tiberius Caesar there was a complete solar eclipse at full moon from the sixth to the ninth hour". -*

However, it could not have been an eclipse because it was spring time and the sun and the moon are opposite each other in the solar pattern, and we know that is true because at spring time there is always a full moon. The historian wasn't an expert on planetary alignment, all he knew was the whole earth went dark.

### 9<sup>th</sup> Plague of Exodus

How reminiscent of the first Passover back in Egypt. In Exodus we read of the 9<sup>th</sup> plague where there was total darkness over the land. It says that Egypt had absolutely no light (which would mean no light period – as in sunlight, moonlight, or lamplight). However the children of Israel it says had light. Thus we have a supernatural event going on at that time. It says that the darkness in Egypt was so dark that it could be felt. Now I personally do not believe that is poetic writing, but a literal sensation. Darkness is absence of light. Not wanting to turn this into a physics study, the most common source of light is the sun. You can actually feel the absence of light, because light has a wavelength, and those wavelengths contain watts (energy) and energy pulsates, and take away that pulse, and you can feel it. We may not realize it because the pulses are small, but take them away and you will notice the difference. I have been places that it is so dark, I have felt it, it feels like a put a coat on – it is a strange feeling.

**Exodus 10:21–24 (NKJV)** <sup>21</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, darkness which may even be felt." <sup>22</sup> So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days. <sup>23</sup> They did not see one another; nor did anyone rise from his place for three days. But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.

### Only 1 Thing Going On – Jesus

I am going to give you my personal thought, and that was that this darkness was exactly like the darkness of Egypt, and just like in Egypt, as verse 23 of Exodus 10 says...they did not see one another and they did not rise from their place. All movement stopped, all action stopped. But this time, Israel was included in the darkness. They knew the story of Exodus, but they would know this time something was different. Everything stopped; imagine everything stopped and people stood or sat in place for 3 hours. For 3 hours in this universe, everything stopped, and the only thing that was going on, was God being crucified for the sins of man. Many a people may have missed sacrificing their Passover lamb that day because by the time they got back home (after this 3 hour standstill) they didn't have time to make it back to the Temple to make sacrifice, or maybe they lost the lamb in the darkness if it was with them. This was no ordinary day. Imagine those that didn't make it in time to sacrifice the lamb, as they had the Passover meal that night, they would be talking about why there was no lamb, and about what a day it was with the darkness, and as we will see in the next verse, an earthquake. But for many, they made it in time to make their sacrifice, and they went on their way, had their Easter meal, exchanged gifts, watched the game, and life just went on as usual and they never considered what really had happened that day.

**Luke 23:45** Then the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was torn in two.

### The Earthquake - Cross

Matthew's account tells us that there was a great earthquake at this time. So here the people are sitting in total darkness not being able to move, the city is at a standstill, and then an earthquake comes.

*Matthew 27:51 (NKJV)* <sup>51</sup> Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split,

### **Josephus Records Passover Event – The Temple Doors Opened**

Josephus the Jewish historian records something at one of the Passover's that would resemble an earthquake (as many think), but it may just very well have been God opening the doors Himself, and not necessarily an earthquake. At the same festival (Passover)... the Eastern gate of the inner court of the Temple, which was of brass, and vastly heavy, , and had been with difficulty shut by twenty men, and rested upon a base armed with iron, and had bolts fastened very deep into the firm floor, which was there made of one entire stone, was seen to be opened of it's own accord about the sixth our of the night. -Josephus; The Wars of the Jews 6.5.3

### **Talmud Records Doors Open – Light Extinguished**

The Talmud says that about 40 years before the destruction of the Temple (which was in 70AD – so somewhere close to the time of the cross which was 32AD) there was a great earthquake in Jerusalem (or again it could have been supernatural event of God just opening the doors). They record that the very massive doors of the Temple opened on their own accord. The Talmud concurs that the doors opened on their own, and very interestingly as we speak of darkness, it records that the Menorah, the Golden Lamp stand, flamed out. The Rabbi's said the westernmost of the lights in the menorah burned perpetually (Talmud Shabbat 22b). (The menorah stood against the south wall of the tabernacle, so the westernmost light was the one on the right end.) The Talmud says that the westernmost light burned perpetually to demonstrate that the Divine Presence dwelt in the Tabernacle. The Menorah extinguished as they crucified the Light of the World, but the Light of the World would rise again on the 3rd day, and there would never be the need again for the Menorah in the Holy Place of the Temple, for the Light of the World would now dwell in the hearts of all man.

"Forty years before the destruction of the Temple (ie. 30 C.E.) the lot did not come up in the right hand, nor did the crimson stripe become white, nor did the westernmost light burn; and the doors of the heikhal (the Holy Place of the Temple) opened of their own accord, until Rabbi Yochanon ben Zakkai rebuked them. He said to it [the Temple]: 'O heikhal, heikhal, why do you alarm yourself? I know full well that you are destined to be destroyed, for Zechariah ben Iddo has already prophesied concerning you 'Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour the cedars' (Zech. 11:1).' --Talmud Bavli, Yoma 39b

### **No More Scarlet Thread**

Ever since the destruction, Judaism hasn't been able to carry out some of the ceremonies associated with Yom Kippur that required the use of the Temple., But here is what is amazing, the sin-atonement ceremony - the one involving the scarlet thread or red cloth – it is written in the Talmud that it actually stopped working about 40 years before the destruction of the Temple. On the Day of Atonement when the High Priest would enter into the Holy of Holies that one time a year to seek forgiveness of sin on behalf of the people, the thread would turn white if God accepted their sin offering, but the Talmud said that it never turned white again from that year (which was the same year Jesus was crucified).

.....and it has further been taught: 'For forty years before the destruction of the Temple the thread of scarlet never turned white but it remained red'. - Rosh HaShanah 31b, Babylonian Talmud, Soncino Press Edition."

*Isaiah 1:18 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.

### **Because the Veil was Torn**

The thread never turned white again because the veil was torn. The veil was what separated the Holy of Holies from the Outer Court. Only once a year did the High Priest go into the Holy of Holies, and it was where God dwelt in the Temple, and once a year the High Priest would go in on the Day of Atonement and make a sacrifice on behalf of the Nation and the people that God would forgive and cover their sins. Then the people would wait outside for the news that the sacrifice was done and that they were forgiven and covered for another year, and then great celebration would be had by all. I like as Mark states it, and the veil was torn from top to bottom, as if God reached down from heaven and tore it Himself. The Holy of Holies was now accessible for the first time in centuries. In this, God declared, "Open House! No more ceremonial sacrifices or religious rituals. The Work is done. As believers, come into My presence any time you want." By the way it is recorded that the veil in the Temple was about 60 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 20 inches thick, and took 300 priests to handle when they moved in the wilderness with the Tabernacle (which later would become permanent place when the Temple was built). That veil easily weighed several hundred pounds. No happen chance here, God has ripped it from top to bottom saying open house, come on in. As the Lord tells us in Hebrews, boldly come to the throne of grace .....

*Mark 15:38 (NKJV)* <sup>38</sup> Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

*Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

**Luke 23:46 And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, “Father, ‘into Your hands I commit My spirit.’” Having said this, He breathed His last.**

### **Done!**

John’s account Jesus says it is finished.

*John 19:30 (NKJV)*<sup>30</sup> So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

### **Transaction is Complete**

This completed an eternal transaction between Him and the Father (Isa 53:4-6, 10-12). This was actually a Jewish bedtime prayer, and tells us how Jesus died: confidently, willingly, and victoriously (Jn 10:17-18). Those who know Jesus as their Savior may die with the same confidence and assurance (Phil 1:20-23; 2 Cor 5:1-8). Jesus says a bedtime prayer to the Father, for His sleep is but a moment, as He will arise to a new day in three days.

### **Christ is Buried**

**Luke 23:47 So when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, “Certainly this was a righteous Man!”**

**Luke 23:48 And the whole crowd who came together to that sight, seeing what had been done, beat their breasts and returned.**

**Luke 23:49 But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.**

**Luke 23:50 Now behold, there was a man named Joseph, a council member, a good and just man.**

**Luke 23:51 He had not consented to their decision and deed. He was from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God.**

### **Part of Sanhedrin Council**

We know from John’s account that with Joseph of Arimathea was also Nicodemus who we met back in John 3. Joseph is mentioned in all four gospels and Nicodemus is recorded in only John’s. We know that both of these men were high ranking men in the Jewish religious system. We can tell that because they “had not consented to the deed and decision” that they probably were part of the Sanhedrin Council (the group of 70 – kind of the Supreme Court of Jewish Religion) because they had a vote in the matter on whether to kill Jesus and we see they did not agree.

*John 19:38-42 (NKJV)*<sup>38</sup> After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus.<sup>39</sup> And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds.<sup>40</sup> Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury.<sup>41</sup> Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid.<sup>42</sup> So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews’ Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby.

### **Josephus was Rich – Hewed Tomb / Buried where the Kingdom of God would Be**

We know that Joseph was wealthy, as he will give his tomb for Jesus to be laid in. That tomb was not a cave but it was hewn (carved) out of the rock. Imagine the cost it would be to have a tomb chiseled out by hand. No power tools or explosives, but all manual labor. The cost would be tremendous. But there is more to this point in that he is Joseph of Arimathea, and Arimathea was a city in Judea. We don’t know for sure where this city was in Judea, but Judea is about 20 miles from Jerusalem. In that day families were buried in the land/region of their family. Joseph dad would have been buried in Arimathea, his grandfather would have been buried in Arimathea, and so on and so on, and so too would the expectation that Josephus would be buried among his fathers. But.....Joseph has a tomb carved out for himself in Jerusalem.....and I see that is because He is “waiting for the Kingdom of God”, and when God sets up His Kingdom, Joseph wanted to be right in the middle of it. Christian what is it, where is it, that you want to be when the Kingdom of God is established? The Kingdom of God has come, He is amongst us, He is in us. Are we living right “in the middle of it” like Joseph of Arimathea desired to do?

*Luke 17:20-21 (NKJV)*<sup>20</sup> Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, “The kingdom of God does not come with observation;<sup>21</sup> nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.”

**Luke 23:52 This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.**

### **Joseph - a Disciple of Jesus**

John tells us He was a Disciple of Jesus.

**John 19:38 (NKJV)** <sup>38</sup> After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave *him* permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus.

### **Mark – Boldly asks for the Body**

In Mark's account it records that he boldly asked for the body of Jesus from Pilate. Although he was a secret disciple, now as he sees his Lord slain, he is moved with passion for Jesus, and Joseph boldly goes to Pilate and asks for the body. It is very likely Joseph knows Pilate, because money talks, just like it does today so too back then.

**Mark 15:42–43 (NKJV)** <sup>42</sup> Now when evening had come, because it was the Preparation Day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, <sup>43</sup> Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming *and taking courage*, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

**Luke 23:53** Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb that was hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before.

### **The Linen - tachrichin**

Still today as practiced by Orthodox Jews, the deceased is dressed in “tachrichin”, also called a shroud, the traditional burial shroud, handmade of white linen or cotton. All Jews, rich or poor, are buried in tachrichin as a statement of the equality in death. Gamaliel established this practice so identify that there is no class separation, and that we come into this world with nothing and we leave this world with nothing. This shroud is 4 foot wide by 18 feet long.

### **Taking the Body Down**

Joseph and Nicodemus take down the body of Jesus. Here are the rich men, the respected men, men who once were secret disciples, now in their lives are saying “enough” as they step out of the shadows at all cost and come for the Lord's body. Imagine going to Golgotha, carrying a pry bar, carrying a stool? Imagine as they arrive and they see the sight, Jesus dead, lifeless, slumped and hanging. Naked. Imagine what it is like for these men. How you could lovingly and delicately separate Jesus' hands from that cross with that nail is beyond me, and I have a mechanical background. They probably separate the crossbeam from the vertical beam, then from the ground they pry His hands and feet from the nails, gently wrap His naked body with cloth, then carry Him to the tomb. Imagine holding in your arms the lifeless body of our Lord. These men are older men we know because they were part of the Sanhedrin Council, the lifeless body of Jesus is dead weight, but they press on. Although rich they did not pass this task on to a servant, but lovingly take Him into their own arms and make the trek probably close to a quarter mile to the tomb.

**John 19:38–42 (NKJV)** <sup>38</sup> After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus. <sup>39</sup> And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. <sup>40</sup> Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. <sup>41</sup> Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. <sup>42</sup> So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby.

### **Washing the Body**

Before the body was wrapped in the shroud, it was to be washed as Jewish Custom today still details out. The washing is called the “taharah”. It is still done today. The Jewish practice is to wash the body and have it in the grave by sunset. A Jewish recently told the story of her father dying in Israel, and he dies and 9am and within an hour the “Holy Society” (chevra kaddisha) was there to prepare and take the body. She sat in a separate room because she was a female, as men wash the body of men, and they have woman wash the body of woman. She said she sat in the other room but listen to the whole process. She heard the water pouring, and she said that they talked to the deceased as if they could hear. She said she heard them saying, Mr. Stien, we are now going to turn you over and wash your back. The whole process done very lovingly, caring, respectful, and gentle. She said he died at 9am and was in the tomb by noon.

### **Washing Practiced in Acts**

We know this washing practice was done in the times of Jesus because we read about it in Acts 9 after Dorcas dies. **Acts 9:36–38 (NKJV)** <sup>36</sup> At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did. <sup>37</sup> But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. <sup>38</sup> And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them.

## **Mitzvah**

This process is called “mitzvah” (which means commandment) and it is the highest commandment in that you are doing something for someone that they can’t do for themselves, they can’t repay.

## **Consider Washing Jesus**

Imagine these two (Nicodemus and Joseph) washing the body of Jesus. By now in the hot sun of the arid Middle-East, the blood was dried. Imagine taking a wash cloth and washing the hands of Jesus, imagine as you would clean off all the blood and you would come to the hole. Imagine washing His chest and stomach, and coming to the wound where the spear had pierced His side. Imagine as you would loving and gently roll His body over on to His stomach, saying Jesus I am going to roll you over now so I can wash your back. Imagine what you would see as you would clean the blood off His back and then see the damage that the cat-of-nine-tails had done to Him. Then saying Jesus we are going to roll you back over now, we are going to wash Your face. Imagine washing His face, that was beaten beyond human recognition Isaiah foretells, His face that they plucked His beard out. Imagine as you wash away the blood you come down to clean skin, you come down to those eyes that you once looked into, imagine just beholding His face. After that they comb the hair, and imagine looking at His face and holding His head, as you pulled the comb through His hair. And then lastly after the body was washed, the hand was placed over the eyes and the eyelids closed shut. I wonder if they kissed Him.....how I would if I could right now lay my chest upon His and hold Him, saying thank you Lord. How I would if I could right now kiss His lips and say I love You My Lord.

*Isaiah 52:14 (NKJV) <sup>14</sup> Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men;*

*Isaiah 50:6 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.*

## **Loving Hands / Soldier / Thanks**

Here Jesus is in loving hands. After the crucifixion He is only in loving hands. It is when we hear of one of our warriors being killed in the battlefield, our hearts grieve not only at their death, but that they are in angry and hateful hands, but then we have a sense of closure when we receive word the body has been recovered and is back in loving and respectful hands. I wonder what it was like after the resurrection when Jesus saw them, did He lay His hand on their shoulder and look into their eyes and say thanks men, thanks for all you did. As I always say, I don’t think Jesus ever missed an opportunity to look into the eyes of people and make a heart connection with them.

## **The Final Wrapping of Linen / Tachrichin**

Lastly the body would be placed on a clean piece of linen (the Tachrichin). The linen would wrap from head-to-toe, not wound around like a mummy, but wrapped from head-to-toe. Then a strip of linen was wrapped at the ankles to keep them together, then wrapped at the knees, then a strip at the waist that held the hands to the side of the body. Then there was a last strip that went around the forehead to the chin to hold the mouth shut. Before the final tying they would place myrrh and aloe and spices to bring a sweet fragrance to the body.

## **Then Leaving the Tomb / No Passover for Them**

After it is all done, it is time for Joseph and Nicodemus to leave the body and close the tomb. I can only imagine how hard it was to leave that tomb. Where would you go, how could you leave Him, but the Sabbath Law required the body be in the tomb before the Sabbath began, but they wouldn’t be able to participate in the Passover meal or the Sabbath celebration for they were now ceremonially unclean for touching a dead body, and thus they couldn’t make the sacrifice of the Passover Lamb that was required of them. But the fact is, and they knew it, they had just prepared the Final Passover Lamb, who would be and was, their Passover Lamb that year and for all years to come.

*1 Corinthians 5:7–8 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. <sup>8</sup> Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*

**Luke 23:54 That day was the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near.**

**Luke 23:55 And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid.**

### **Woman didn't go to wrong Grave**

Key word is "observed" meaning they knew which tomb He was laid in, and on Sunday morning they didn't go to the wrong tomb and send everyone else to the wrong tomb. That is one of the weak arguments naysayers have saying the resurrection really didn't happen.

### *In the Grave*

**Luke 23:56 Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.**

### **They will Return**

The woman had planned to return to the tomb after the Sabbath to anoint Jesus' body with spices and oils, another act of love and devotion. But as it has been said, "it is Friday, but Sunday is coming!"

### **Conclusion**

#### **Communion**

Would you please stand with your communion elements in your hand, and let's take communion together as we reflect on this great day.

#### **The Gift**

In Mark's account it reads that Pilate "granted" the body to Joseph. The word there for "gave" is "to gift". To give as a favor. He is Jesus, God's gift to you, His favor unto you, for He favors you, He loves you. He is Jesus, God's gift to you.

*Mark 15:45 (NKJV) <sup>45</sup> So when he found out from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph.*

#### **In Christ Alone**

In Christ alone my hope is found  
He is my light, my strength, my song  
This Cornerstone, this solid ground  
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm  
What heights of love, what depths of peace  
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease  
My Comforter, my All in All  
Here in the love of Christ I stand

In Christ alone, who took on flesh  
Fullness of God in helpless babe  
This gift of love and righteousness  
Scorned by the ones He came to save  
'Til on that cross as Jesus died  
The wrath of God was satisfied  
For every sin on Him was laid  
Here in the death of Christ I live

There in the ground His body lay  
Light of the world by darkness slain  
Then bursting forth in glorious Day  
Up from the grave He rose again  
And as He stands in victory  
Sins curse has lost its grip on me  
For I am His and He is mine  
Bought with the precious blood of Christ  
No guilt in life, no fear in death

This is the power of Christ in me  
From life's first cry to final breath  
Jesus commands my destiny  
No power of hell, no scheme of man  
Can ever pluck me from His hand  
Til He returns or calls me home  
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand

# Luke 24

## *He is Alive and Walking Among Us!*

*(Luke 24:1-12)*

### Outline of the Book of Luke:

The Life of Christ – The God Man (Luke 1-24)

#### **The Prelude to Christ's Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- His Birth & Boyhood
- His Baptism & Temptation

#### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- His Mission Statement
- His Calling of Disciples

#### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- His March to the Cross
- His Calling of Disciples

#### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

#### **The Consummation of Christ's Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–45)
- The Ascension (24:46–53)

### Recap

We pick up our study here in chapter 24. It is the 17<sup>th</sup> of Nissan in the Jewish calendar, it is three days after the crucifixion as the Passover sacrifice must be slain at twilight on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan in accordance with the word and command of God. There in the ground His body lay, Light of the world by darkness slain.....

*Exodus 12:5–6 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. <sup>6</sup> Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.

### *The Resurrection*

**Luke 24:1** Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.

**Luke 24:2** But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.

**Luke 24:3** Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

**Luke 24:4** And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments.

**Luke 24:5** Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead?”

**Luke 24:6** He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee,

**Luke 24:7** saying, ‘The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.’ ”

**Luke 24:8** And they remembered His words.

**Luke 24:9** Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest.

**Luke 24:10** It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles.

**Luke 24:11** And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them.

**Luke 24:12 But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.**

Then bursting forth in glorious Day  
Up from the grave He rose again  
And as He stands in victory  
Sins curse has lost its grip on me  
For I am His and He is mine  
Bought with the precious blood of Christ  
No guilt in life, no fear in death  
This is the power of Christ in me

### **Great Earthquake**

In John's gospel we are told there was a "great earthquake" when the stone was rolled away. No one moved for those three hours when the Light of the World was being slain, and no one slept when the Light broke forth! Wake up, I am Alive, no one is going to sleep though this. That earthquake we talked about last week recorded in historical writings could have been this one. The Temple doors were swung up the Talmud says, and it may have been this earthquake that shook them open so everyone could see the veil was torn and it was open house, God says boldly and confidently come into my presence based on my death and resurrection, as I have overcome sin and death for you. The earth quaked, and now we read of the greatest day in history! God still shakes the foundations of the world to show Himself and reveal Himself to you; He will shake the whole earth just for you.....because He did this all just for you! That is how precious and priceless you are to Him.

*Matthew 28:1-2 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. <sup>2</sup> And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it.*

**Luke 24:1 Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.**

### **Why Spices? / Who roll the Stone Away / They didn't Expect a Resurrection**

Why did they come to the tomb on the third day with these spices? In Mark's gospel it records that they discussed who was going to roll the stone away so they could get into the tomb and anoint Jesus' body, the dead body, with spices (which was a burial custom). Maybe they were going with these spices because they thought Joseph and Nicodemus being men surely did a poor job, or maybe it was just an act of love and devotion they wanted to do on top of what Joseph and Nicodemus because their hearts are broken, they miss their friend and Lord. They couldn't go on Friday and Saturday because they were Sabbath days. Friday was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (a Jewish Feast/Festival) and that was a Sabbath day, and then Saturday was the weekly Sabbath so they couldn't go that day, because you were not permitted to do any work on the Sabbath. So they had to wait three days until Sunday, daybreak, and now here they are on their way with all these spices to the tomb.....but why? The why is because they thought they was going to be a dead body in the tomb! They didn't expect the resurrection.

*Mark 16:1-3 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. <sup>2</sup> Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. <sup>3</sup> And they said among themselves, "Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?"*

### **I Appreciate they are Going / Step 2 when Get There / Maybe God will send an Angel or Two**

Now I do appreciate and see a life lesson for us all in that although they may have missed the resurrection part, I see their hearts are beautiful, and I appreciate their love and compassion for the Lord put them into motion. They started to head towards the tomb with the spices, but no pry bar, they had no idea how they were going to get into the tomb. As they walked we read they began to plan step two, the stone needed to be rolled away (probably a ton or two of rock). They didn't know how it was going to get moved, but first thing was to get moving in the direction of the cross, I love this kind of heart, a heart that says I don't know how it is all going to work out, but all I know is that I got to get moving into the direction where the Lord is, and I will figure the next step out once I get there. The scriptures tell us to let all things be done decently and in order (and we should), but we can become so decently and in order, so detailed of every step, that we remove faith and the moving of the Spirit, so orderly that we become paralyzed. We won't take step two until step one is detailed planned out to the last minute details. Sometimes we just need to get moving, getting heading in that direction, and saying Lord I know my heart is being drawn to the

place, the thing to do, and I don't understand how it is all going to play out and work out, but I'm on my way.....and you never know, God might just send an angel or two to come help you out.

**1 Corinthians 14:40 (NKJV)** <sup>40</sup> *Let all things be done decently and in order.*

**Luke 24:2 But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.**

### **Stone Rolled Away - So we can See In**

The stone was rolled away not so Jesus could get out, but so that man could see in. Jesus could have just walked through the walls if He so wanted to, He will do that shortly (John 20:26). The stone was rolled away so man could look in and see "nothing", an empty cross and now an empty tomb.

**John 20:26 (NKJV)** <sup>26</sup> *And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"*

### **God Rolling Stones for You / They are Real / Walk away and Live**

May I add, You know God is continually rolling away stones in your life so you can see in, and that is seeing into things, so you can see them for what they are, so you can be set free from them, so you can walk out of them into an abundant life. He will give you a revelation, show you something about that person you are in a relationship with, that person you are dating, that partnership in business, that job, thing that is occupying you, so you can see them for what they really are. God rolled the stone so they could see what was real and what was true. He does that to you so you can see what is real and what is true, and listen Christian, they are real and true, don't try to talk yourself out of what He is showing you, don't try to reason it away, look at them as truth and realize God is saying to you.....walk away, leave here and go live, and live abundantly, I got better for you. God wants you to roll way the stone and live.

*Jesus is alive and is walking amongst, He shook the world that morning to let all know He is alive and is walking among His people, and so it is still today.....If He was only alive that would be great for our eternity sake, but walking amongst means we can live an awesome life today because He is with us! The stone has been rolled away so we can live!*

**Luke 24:3 Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.**

### **Resurrection Proves Sacrifice Accepted**

The resurrection proves that God accepted the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, and that God accepted the trading of places with you. Had Jesus not been an acceptable sacrifice then He would have remained in the grave. Had Jesus not been acceptable and allowable to trade places with you and me, then Jesus would have remained in the grave. But the empty tomb proves that Jesus' sacrifice was acceptable to the Holy God, and that means that sin and death have lose their grip on us.

**1 John 2:2 (NKJV)** <sup>2</sup> *And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.*

**1 Corinthians 15:54-57 (NKJV)** <sup>54</sup> *So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."* <sup>55</sup> *"O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"* <sup>56</sup> *The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.* <sup>57</sup> *But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

### **Also Proves – Nothing / Cleansed / Roll away the Stone and Live – Don't Live among the Dead**

You know what else it proves, it proves "nothing", yes nothing! God wants you to look into that empty tomb and see nothing, absolutely nothing, there are no pictures of you, there is no file cabinet in there with a drawer that has your name on it, and files upon files of all your sins and failings. There is no gavel nor court benches waiting for you to stand trial and be found guilty and sentenced. And.....there is not Jesus for He is out walking about and living among His people. Jesus doesn't want you looking for Him in the tomb, for He is not there, for He is out living and He wants you to go out and live too (your sins are cleansed, forgiven, and forgotten). Beloved of God, roll away the stone and live! Don't live any more among the dead, the things that take the life out of you no matter how painful and hurtful that were to you, walk away from them and their memory (regardless how people try to remind you of them), but walk away and go live. Say I am alive, I have new life, and those things are all buried and vaporized into nothing in the tomb, and the stone has been rolled away and I am going out to live among the living.....where Jesus is!

### **Live beyond the Cross / Where Life begins – Not Ends / Sorrow – Repentance – Forgiveness - Life**

And, as beautiful as the cross is, don't live continually at the cross, the cross is where life begins, not ends. God does not want us to continually live in the sorrow of our sin. Godly sorrow produces repentance, and forgiveness produces life. Now go beyond living on what Christ has done (as mighty and awesome as the cross is), but now go on and live on what He is actively doing. Jesus is out of the tomb and is walking and talking among His people, He is reaching and teaching, he is touching and caressing, He is seeking and saving.....and He says come follow me out of the grave and come live the life that is abundant.

*John 10:10 (NKJV) 10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

*Jesus is alive and is walking amongst, He shook the world that morning to let all know He is alive and is walking among His people, and so it is still today.....If He was only alive that would be great for our eternity sake, but walking amongst means we can live an awesome life today because He is with us! The stone has been rolled away so we can live!*

**Luke 24:4 And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments.**

**Luke 24:5 Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead?”**

### **Jesus Among His People / Seen by 500 / Jesus wants to be with You**

Jesus is out among the living, He is out among His people. We will see Him appearing to the woman, the men on the road to Emmaus, then later to the apostles, He will appear to some 500 people after His resurrection. Jesus wants to be with people who want to be with Him. He goes to those who love Him and are desiring Him. He wants to be with you.

*1 Corinthians 15:3–6 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup> For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup> and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. <sup>6</sup> After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.*

### **Jesus is among Us right Now**

Jesus is not dead, He is alive, He is walking among us, He is in our midst right now. Grab that and live like it, and it will change your life. It will change what you think about church (as two or more are gathered), it will change how you pray (as He kneels next you as you pray), it will change how you read your Bible (as He is our teacher), it will change how you treat your treat others as He is there in that room, among that conversation. Jesus is alive and is walking amongst us right now because we are in agreement that He is God, that His word is true, and we gather because of that.....therefore He is walking among you right now, He is HERE!

*Matthew 18:19–20 (NKJV) <sup>19</sup> “Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup> For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”*

### **He is Alive – So is His Word**

Jesus is alive and so is His word then, and His word is moving among us today. I heard a story of an missionary in India who would go into the town square and lay his bible on the ground and start to dance around it “saying it is alive, it is alive” and then he would pick it up and read it to the people just it he said it was.....alive

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

### **Notice Where He didn't Go / Father Forgive Them / Not waiting to Pounce**

But think about this, think about where Jesus didn't go, and who He didn't appear to. When you think about where He didn't go and didn't appear to then you see the depth of His love and gentle nature.

- He didn't go to the guards that beat Him and mock Him....hi boys, ready for round 2?
- He didn't go to the false witnesses and witnesses and say....what were those things you said again?
- He didn't go to Pilate, Herod, Annas, Caiaphas.....and simply point a finger (which would have said it all).

He lets His last words be His last words, “Father forgive them they know not what they do”. Many of the same people (these priests) will become followers now His resurrection. Jesus didn’t go seeking revenge, or to put people in their place. The people who try to shape Him and mold Him that He is an angry God ready to pounce on all wrong doers need to consider where Jesus didn’t go after the resurrection. His heart was still for all those that hurt Him, for He wishes that none should perish but all seek repentance (2 Peter 3:9)

*Luke 23:34 (NKJV)* <sup>34</sup> Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.” And they divided His garments and cast lots.

*Acts 6:7 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.

*2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

### **Jesus starts collecting His Treasures / Gathering His Bride**

Jesus is out from the grave, He is out among the living to start to collecting His treasures, He is gathering men and woman to Himself. Gathering His Bride who is adorned in beautiful white, preparing for the wedding celebration.

### **Just a Word – Won’t find Living Among Dead**

By the way, if you are spending your life hanging out and living among the people who are unsaved, and you are not doing it as a ministry to reach them.....then you are living among the dead, and you won’t find any life among them--- come out from among them.

*2 Corinthians 6:14–15 (NKJV)* <sup>14</sup> Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? <sup>15</sup> And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?

*Jesus is alive and is walking amongst, He shook the world that morning to let all know He is alive and is walking among His people, and so it is still today.....If He was only alive that would be great for our eternity sake, but walking amongst means we can live an awesome life today because He is with us! The stone has been rolled away so we can live!*

**Luke 24:6 He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, Luke 24:7 saying, ‘The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.’ ”**

### **Gospel Summation / Evangelism Training / Good News – Because He rose from Dead**

This is the gospel summarized in one verse.....Paul summarizes it in two verses (1 Cor 15:3-4). When I was in evangelism training two of the passages that were required scripture memorization, were out of 1 Corinthians and out of Luke 24 (verses 46-47), as they are perfect summations of the gospel. And as a reminder, every time you share the gospel, you must include the resurrection. The good news is because He rose from the dead, and thus proves He has power over sin and death.

*Luke 24:46–47 (NKJV)* <sup>46</sup> Then He said to them, “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, <sup>47</sup> and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

*1 Corinthians 15:3–4 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,

### **Only 2 Ways to Die**

And I will summarize it even further, there are only two ways to die...with Jesus or without Him. Have you considered Jesus today, have you determined what lies ahead for you after you go into the grave? Follow Jesus, and follow Him into new life.

### **3 Days**

Why the third day? Because that is what the scriptures declared and thus they have to be fulfilled perfectly. Jesus said the third day many of times, he used the story of Jonah being three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so it had to be so.

*Luke 9:22 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> saying, “The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.”

**Luke 18:31–34 (NKJV)** <sup>31</sup> Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. <sup>32</sup> For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. <sup>33</sup> They will scourge Him and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.” <sup>34</sup> But they understood none of these things; this saying was hidden from them, and they did not know the things which were spoken.

**Matthew 12:40 (NKJV)** <sup>40</sup> For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

## **The Amazing Scriptures**

But just a couple quick points about the Jewish Feasts. We have seen the Passover lamb must be sacrificed on the 14<sup>th</sup> on Nissan (Exodus 12:5-6). The next Feast began on the next day, the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nissan called the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and that all the people celebrated it by cleaning all the leaven out of their homes (as leaven was a symbol of sin and corruption). Psalm 16 is a Messianic prophecy proclaiming that the Messiah would not be left in the grave, as it says you will not leave Me in sheol (hell) and allow My body to rot. And then on top of Passover, Feast of Unleavened Bread, three days after begins the Feast of First fruit. And Jesus fulfills that Feast perfectly as He becomes the first fruit (1 Cor 15:20) of raising from the dead. Mind you, in Leviticus It does not say the 16<sup>th</sup> is when the Feast begins, but the day after the Sabbath. Saturday is the Sabbath and would vary according to when the 14 and 15<sup>th</sup> fall. In the case of Jesus He rose again on the first day of the week (Sunday), therefore the Sabbath was the day before. Again we see perfect fulfillment of the Scriptures in and by Jesus. It says regarding the Feast of First fruit that the priest at the Temple was to wave a sheaf (bundle) of grain (wheat or barely, etc) before the Lord. It was a sign, like waving a flag, the first fruits of the Spring harvest have been harvested, thank you Lord! I wonder if at the same time Jesus walks out of the tomb the priest at the Temple is waving the bundle.....thank You God, the first fruit has been harvested of the great harvest to come. And just for good measure, the ark of Noah rested on the 17<sup>th</sup> day of this same month (because the Jewish calendar was adjusted after they came out of Egypt, so the 7<sup>th</sup> month became the 1<sup>st</sup> month which is the month of Nissan). So Jesus rose from the dead the same day the ark rested from God’s wrath upon the sinful earth, and Noah and family walked out of the ark and began new life upon the earth. These scriptures are simply amazing, and amazingly perfect.

**Leviticus 23:6–8 (NKJV)** <sup>6</sup> And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread. <sup>7</sup> On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it. <sup>8</sup> But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD for seven days. The seventh day shall be a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it.’ ”

**Leviticus 23:6–8 (NKJV)** <sup>6</sup> And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread. <sup>7</sup> On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it. <sup>8</sup> But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD for seven days. The seventh day shall be a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it.’ ”

**Psalms 16:10–11 (NKJV)** <sup>10</sup> For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. <sup>11</sup> You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

**Leviticus 23:9–14 (NKJV)** <sup>9</sup> And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>10</sup> “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. <sup>11</sup> He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. <sup>12</sup> And you shall offer on that day, when you wave the sheaf, a male lamb of the first year, without blemish, as a burnt offering to the LORD. <sup>13</sup> Its grain offering shall be two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire to the LORD, for a sweet aroma; and its drink offering shall be of wine, one-fourth of a hin. <sup>14</sup> You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your God; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

**1 Corinthians 15:20 (NKJV)** <sup>20</sup> But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

**Genesis 8:4–5 (NKJV)** <sup>4</sup> Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat. <sup>5</sup> And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month. In the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen.

## **Luke 24:8 And they remembered His words.**

### **Spoke in Galilee / 3years / How Often I Forget**

The angel reminds them how Jesus had spoken to them when they listened to His teaching back in Galilee. That teaching in my estimation was at least 9 months from this current moment (just in the time it took Jesus to go from Galilee to Jerusalem), but it the scriptures read that these same woman (verse 10) were following Jesus at the very beginning of His ministry, so some 3 years they have been with Him. The angels said don’t you remember His words, and then after he said that they remembered. How often I forget what God had said to me several months

ago, sometime several minutes ago. Here is why the Lord wants us to continually be in the word so we can continually be reminded. So here we come week after week to be reminded.

**Luke 8:1-3 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him, <sup>2</sup> and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities—Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, <sup>3</sup> and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance.

*Jesus is alive and is walking amongst, He shook the world that morning to let all know He is alive and is walking among His people, and so it is still today.....If He was only alive that would be great for our eternity sake, but walking amongst means we can live an awesome life today because He is with us! The stone has been rolled away so we can live!*

**Luke 24:9 Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest.**

### **Depressing – the 11**

That is such a depressing statement to me as it should be the twelve but Judas chose to leave. It breaks my heart when I hear about people leaving the faith, our numbers reducing because people think there is something better at the moment, but if only they would just hang in there (just 3 more days) they would be blown away and fully see the glory of God. Oh please pray for those that once fellowshiped amongst us, who now are living apart from the faith.

**Luke 24:10 It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles.**

### **Mary will Carry Him / When was last Time you Struggled for Jesus / Love doesn't see the Weight**

In John's account it tells us about Mary Magdalene weeping at the tomb after everyone leaves and returns home in bewilderment, and Jesus appearing to her but she doesn't know that it is Jesus at that moment, she thinks it is the gardener. I love what she says, if you know where his body is tell me and "I will take Him away". Here is this woman, all 100 pounds about, saying tell me where His body is (all 160 pounds about) and I will carry him away. She meant it! I don't think she meant I will go get help, I think she means I will carry Him myself. That is love, she will be something to meet in heaven, she is a real person just like me and you, and this is her story. Can I just throw it out there for you Christian, when was the last time you struggled and did something hard for Jesus. We are so Christian Americanized that we think if it is hard, then it is not God's will or He isn't in it. Love doesn't see the weight. Jesus didn't say it would be easy, He only said it would be worth it.

**John 20:11-18 (NKJV)** <sup>11</sup> But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb. <sup>12</sup> And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. <sup>13</sup> Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." <sup>14</sup> Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>15</sup> Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away." <sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher). <sup>17</sup> Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.'" <sup>18</sup> Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her.

**Luke 24:11 And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them.**

### **Starting Something New**

Jesus is starting something new. Woman couldn't and were not allowed to testify in a court case because their testimony was not respected. Here the first account of the first evangelists, were woman. God is making a clear statement here, the field is level, there are no rankings of who is considered more spiritual than another.

### **Some say Quickest way to spread News**

Now some say the quickest way to get the news to spread is tell a woman, but that is just what some say (haha).

### **Because they were There**

I will tell you real simply why God told them, and that was because they were there. Want to be used by the Lord, want to be entrusted with great news and great opportunity, put yourself out in places where He can use you. He

will, and the reason the “a” postles were not used, and the “b” postles were, was because the apostles were behind closed doors, they didn’t put themselves out there to hear and then get to retell.

**Luke 24:12 But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.**

**Even Peter didn’t expect Resurrection**

So here we see it is clear that even Peter didn’t expect the resurrection. Peter goes away wondering what had happened, not remembering what the Lord had told him about the resurrection in three days. But God is working, God is patient (with Peter and with us), and He will keep working it out until we get it.....because He wants us to get it.

*Jesus is alive and is walking amongst, He shook the world that morning to let all know He is alive and is walking among His people, and so it is still today.....If He was only alive that would be great for our eternity sake, but walking amongst means we can live an awesome life today because He is with us! The stone has been rolled away so we can live!*

## *Idle Tales* (Luke 24:10-12)

**Luke 24:1** Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.

**Luke 24:2** But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.

**Luke 24:3** Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

**Luke 24:4** And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments.

**Luke 24:5** Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead?”

**Luke 24:6** He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee,

**Luke 24:7** saying, ‘The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.’”

**Luke 24:8** And they remembered His words.

**Luke 24:9** Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest.

**Luke 24:10** It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles.

**Luke 24:11** And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them.

**Luke 24:12** But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.

### **Growing Up in Pennsylvania**

When I was growing up in Western Pennsylvania you would have a hard time finding us in the house once we got home from school or on the weekends. We loved the outdoors, we loved playing ball, and we loved hiking the woods. Now we would shutter at kids and teenagers running around the woods without their parents today, but that was normal life when I was growing up. One of the things that were plentiful in the woods where I grew up were caves, and I loved checking out caves. A few caves you could walk into, but most all the caves you had to get on your belly and crawl into. Now think about that, how many parents today would say go ahead son go out and crawl into caves, have fun, but don't stay out too long, remember you have to be home for dinner at 6pm. But that is what we did, and we loved it. Belly down, head first, sometimes flashlight in hand, in we went. Pretty dumb, well we weren't that dumb to tell you the truth, even as kids (probably a lost art today) but we knew how to read a cave. You see we didn't just go oh cool a cave and drop to our belly and start crawling in head first, to come face-to-face with a possum or raccoon, fox or badger, no we knew how to read the cave before we ever dropped to our belly and started to crawl in. See, we always looked for the traffic pattern of the cave. We looked for paw prints, or slither prints. No prints, no worries, on the belly and in we went (hoping it was an old cave from the Indian days – lost treasures). Now, prints on the way in, no way, possible a holed up raccoon, or more times than not, a maggot and rat filled holed because whatever went in never came out (most likely died in there – as wounded and diseased animals often find holes to die in). But you know what our greatest caution was, when we saw prints going in, and prints going out. Why would that concern us more than just prints in? Because that meant that what was in there could very well be out of there, and could very well be behind us at this point (and if mommy cub was behind us and baby cubs before us, it was going to be a really bad day for us), we knew our prints (this one is a raccoon, this one a possum, this one a fox, this one a rabbit, and we knew which paw print to get worried about. It is a lost art amongst our kids today, but we were trackers..... that reminds me of the story of the Indian tracker who was found lying down with his ear pressed against the ground. The man said what is it, and the Indian responded it is a herd of buffalo, at least 20 of them, and 6 men on horses chasing them, they said to the Indian wow you can tell all that by pressing your ear to the ground and listening, and the Indian said no...they just ran me over about 10 minutes ago when I was crossing the trail. Anyways, we learned to read the tracks, to reads the signs for life, we were able to easily tell if there was activity, if there was life, if that cave was active.

### **The Tomb was Active**

The tomb of Jesus was an active tomb, there was life in this tomb, for all the signs were there (aka – the stone was rolled away), the One who was within, is now active on the outside, is now walking among the outside world and not bound to the one-way traffic of only going in, but never going out. That One, is still active and walking among

man today, in fact He is here right now today walking among us, His Spirit is moving in and through this place, for He is Alive and walking among the living!

### **The Followers of Christ / Put ourselves in their Sandals**

But the followers of Christ this Sunday morning 2,000 years ago are still trying to make sense of what these signs mean and how they are to read them, and so today lets go back and put ourselves in their sandals and consider what it had been like for them that morning on “Resurrection Sunday”.

**Luke 24:10 It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles.**

**Luke 24:11 And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them.**

**Luke 24:12 But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.**

### **Imagine 3 Years / Imagine 3 days of Silence**

Imagine for all of them, three years of following Jesus. Waking up every day for three years to see what exciting thing will happen that day, what amazing thing Jesus would do on that day. What will He teach, will He heal a leper, touch the blind, raise the dead? Who will He touch and speak words of compassion to, who will He say you are forgive, who will He say follow Me to, and who will follow. Imagine the end of each day sitting around a fire with Jesus talking about the days events, everyday getting to look into His eyes and say, “goodnight Jesus”, and Him saying goodnight back, .....and “Peter, I love you”, and Peter would say I love you too. How exciting every day would be, and now for three days they sat in silence.

### **3 Days of Darkness**

The parallel strikes me when I consider, that before the Passover lamb was sacrificed on the first Passover when the children of Israel were in bondage in Egypt, the 10<sup>th</sup> plague when death would take the life of every person who did not have the blood of the lamb applied to the door of their home, before the 10<sup>th</sup> plague was the 9<sup>th</sup> plague in which for three days the whole earth sat in darkness. On the day Jesus was being offered as the final Passover Lamb, we read that for 3 hours darkness was upon the land. I believe a darkness so dark no one moved upon the land as man wasn't going to go about business as usual while God's Son was stretched out upon the cross. But after the darkness lifted the world would go back to life as usual, and what would be an interesting parallel to me is that the close followers of Jesus would sit in darkness (darkness of heart) for three days, probably not moving, numb to the world around them.

*Exodus 10:21–23 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, darkness which may even be felt.” <sup>22</sup> So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days. <sup>23</sup> They did not see one another; nor did anyone rise from his place for three days. But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.*

*Matthew 27:45–46 (NKJV) <sup>45</sup> Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. <sup>46</sup> And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”*

### **Awake to – Now What / Immanuel – God with Us / Never expected the Resurrection**

What would it be like for them to awake every day on those three days and say “now what”. They left their jobs, ended their careers, left their homes and comfort, and now for three days they must have sat in depression and darkness saying “now what”. They spent three years living Emmanuel, God with Us (them personally), and now they awake with no Emmanuel. I wonder what it was like for them to awake into nothingness every day, how empty their lives must have been for those three days, especially since we can see they never expected the resurrection.

*Matthew 1:22–23 (NKJV) <sup>22</sup> So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: <sup>23</sup> “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.”*

**Luke 24:10 It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles.**

**Luke 24:11 And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them.**

### **Hard 3 Days / Romans Coming for Them / Peter dimmed out from Fire /**

It has been a hard three days for Peter and the apostles, no doubt fear and anxiety filling their hearts wondering if the Romans were coming for them next. Someone at the fire at the mock trial telling the Romans and the religious

leaders where to find another. Wondering what was next for them. Imagine that anxiety, your leader was taken before your very eyes, brutally murdered, and you wonder if you are next. Wondering if door-to-door searches are going on, convinced that most-wanted posters are all over town, continually peeking through the window to see who is walking the streets, everyone you see is suspicious to you (why has that fig cart been parked outside this place for 3 days now).

### **Can't Sleep / Then Earthquake**

I can't sleep when my mind is racing. If I am troubled by something my mind just keeps churning it over and over. I find it coming into my dreams, but never do they become pleasant dreams but nightmares, a repeating over and over that I don't know if I am awake or asleep. Ever get that? The next day is exhaustion, then if it carries into the next night, I am in complete deliriousness on day two. Peter is on day 3, and if he just happened to finally be nodding off as I usually do right before day break, he will be rocked out of his sleep as the whole earth quakes. Imagine being delirious, your mind is in a fog, and then an earthquake. I have been through a couple earthquakes and they totally confuse your body because your body doesn't expect them. You wonder first if it is your head, are you dreaming, then as it intensifies so does your mind. Imagine Peter, in a fog from lack of sleep, now the earth begins to tremble, and then rumble, and now shakes violently. I remember the earthquake a few years back, I was at a traffic light when it started and I thought someone had drifted into me, and then I see the street light start to swing two three feet I soon figured out I was in an earthquake. Peter, I bet he thought the initial rumblings were the Romans busting the door down to come drag him away, same mock trial, same beating, same cross, and no Jesus there to walk on water to save him. What a day this is for Peter.

*Matthew 28:1-2 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. <sup>2</sup> And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it.

### **Nerves Pegged / Woman Amped Up**

So Peter's nerves are fried, he no doubt on pins and needles, and these woman are not going to help lower the anxiety needle that is pegged into the redline. These woman come and are all amped up. No doubt the anxiety is on full tilt this morning.

### **Idle Tales**

Maybe your translation says "wives tales", or an old English translation "twaddle", or "silly talk". One of the definitions of this word is to "ramble like a madman". I doubt these woman were able to keep themselves composed and calm as they retold the story. I imagine they were pretty amped up, talking a million miles an hour. Saying, "oh my God, yes actually He is God, I think – I don't know, the tomb is empty these shining angels were there.....Jesus isn't there. Of course being woman they probably didn't start the conversation by saying the tomb is empty, they made the apostles sit through the "movie version, the unabridged version, the no cliff notes version" and you have to listen for a while to determine what that plot really is ☺. When my mom tells a story she includes the price of gas at the gas station they stopped in on the way to the event, and what shirt dad had on and why, and then finally you get to the plot that there is a new restaurant that opened and serves really good Italian food. These woman no doubt were on high pitch, fast talk, and that is on top of the fact that nobody expected the resurrection, nobody has slept, nerves are fried, the moment is high anxiety. There are times when I have had a full day of tension, then I come home and Renee says I had bad news, today I was driving (I'm like oh no she got in an accident – how much is this going to cost us), and then she says Camden was drinking a cherry Slurpee (I'm like the last thing I feel like doing now is scrubbing red dye out of the seats – why do they put red dye in them anyways the dye doesn't taste like cherry), and then she say we were heading over to the park.....and at this point my nerves are already shot and I jump in and interrupt her and say please what is the bad news, could you just tell me the bad news first, and then the details, so I can determine how bad the bad news really is and I can start thinking through what I have to do. I will act like I am listening to the details but in reality I am really thinking through what I am going to do. My dad always cracked me up because my mom would come home and tell him all the details, every last detail (if patience is a fruit of the spirit then my dad must eat a bushel a day), and he would be all engaging, mom would come home from the hospital (she is a nurse) and would be like so we gave the patient 20ml of drug xyz, not 10ml but 20, and dad would be like wow that is something, is that a new drug...and then mom would give all the details about who invented the drug, who manufactures it, whether it has a liquid form or pill form. My dad would sit there shaking his head, injecting a wow, or a really ever now and then. I'd be watching him going you aren't listening to a word she is saying, you are replaying the Steeler game in your mind, saying stupid coach, why would you try and onside kick in the first half.

### **So the Nerves are Peaking**

So the nerves are peaking on Peter, it has been a long-long three days, and now the woman are all amped up, and he gathers enough of what they are saying in that the stone has been rolled away but His body isn't there

**Luke 24:12 But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.**

### **Peter Sprints / Empty – except Linen / Strange Piece of Detail**

Peter runs to the tomb, and the word used here is the word used for a runner in a race, exerting one's self to win. Peter is in a full spring to get to the tomb, in sandals may I remind you. He finds it exactly as the woman said, empty. But it wasn't totally empty.....there was the linen there. How strange that such a little detail as this should be added to the story with absolutely no attempt at explaining. But how deeply significant this little unexplained detail is.

*John 20:6–10 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there, <sup>7</sup> and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. <sup>8</sup> Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed. <sup>9</sup> For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead. <sup>10</sup> Then the disciples went away again to their own homes.*

### **Tachrichin / Handkerchief - Sweat / Body wasn't Stolen – Jesus in Control / Life Breaths into the Tomb**

We studied this linen two weeks ago, called the tachrichin, and it was the linen that a dead body would be wrapped in. We looked at how a narrow strap of linen would be wrapped at the ankles to keep them together, the knees to keep them together, around the waist (as the arms were laid at the side of the body), and then a wider linen swath used in swathing the head of a corpse, to keep the jaw closed. Maybe your translations says "handkerchief" as this is same word and linen that was used as a handkerchief to wipe sweat from the face. This handkerchief was neatly folded, and thus there is a message being sent regarding it. God is letting it be known My body wasn't stolen, I am alive, for what thief would take the time to fold the cloth while they were stealing the body. The message was being sent by Jesus that He was in control, He wasn't panic, He arose and left on His own terms at His own pace. Jesus isn't surprised He has risen from the dead, He expected it. No one else did, but He did! Jesus is dead. For three days and three nights his body is lying cold and silent in the sepulchre, as truly dead as anybody was ever dead, but at last the appointed hour has come, the breath of God sweeps through the sleeping and silent clay, and in that supreme moment of His own earthly life, that supreme moment of human history, when Jesus rises triumphant over death and grave and Satan, there is no shock upon His part, but with that same majestic self-composure and serenity that marked His whole career, that same Divine calm that He displayed upon storm-tossed Galilee, when His affrighted disciples shook Him from His slumbers and said, "Lord, carest thou not that we perish?" and He arose serenely on the deck of the tossing vessel and said to the wild, tempestuous waves and winds, "Be still," and there was a great calm: so now again in this sublime, this awful moment, He does not excitedly tear the napkin from His face and fling it aside, but absolutely without human haste or flurry, or disorder, He unties it calmly from His head, folds it up and lays it away in an orderly manner in a place by itself.

### **For Thought**

And here is something for thought, and that is I use to be an aircraft mechanic, and you could always tell the job was done, because at the end of the job we always cleaned all our tools up, and threw away all our garbage, and then always cleaned the aircraft, wiped it down, shined it up – it was ready to fly. So for thought, a rather interesting claim in his book "The Carpenter's Cloth: Christ's Journey to the Cross and Beyond", author Sigmund Brouwer states that in his research when a carpenter in those days would finish a project he would leave a message for the person. After the project was finished the carpenter would take the handkerchief that he had used, fold it up neatly, and place it on top of the piece he had just finished, it was His way of saying to the person.....it is done, you can take it with you and use it and enjoy.

### **A Message for Peter – A Message for All**

No matter how we look at it, the folded cloth is a message for us.....it is done.

### **Finished and now Started**

The folded cloth says it is finished, while at the same time it was saying it is started. It is a new day and a new life for you Peter, it is a new life for each of us here today.

## **Treasure Hunting** (Luke 24:13-32)

**Luke 24:13–32 (NKJV)** <sup>13</sup> Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> And they talked together of all these things which had happened. <sup>15</sup> So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. <sup>16</sup> But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him. <sup>17</sup> And He said to them, “What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?” <sup>18</sup> Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, “Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?” <sup>19</sup> And He said to them, “What things?” So they said to Him, “The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, <sup>20</sup> and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. <sup>21</sup> But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. <sup>22</sup> Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. <sup>23</sup> When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. <sup>24</sup> And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see.” <sup>25</sup> Then He said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! <sup>26</sup> Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?” <sup>27</sup> And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. <sup>28</sup> Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. <sup>29</sup> But they constrained Him, saying, “Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.” And He went in to stay with them. <sup>30</sup> Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. <sup>31</sup> Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. <sup>32</sup> And they said to one another, “Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?”

### **Treasure Hunting**

Growing up with my parents, and now I with my kids, we loved the treasure hunt game. Easter time your Easter basket was always hid and you had to go find it. If you were way off you would get the “colder-colder, warmer-warmer” hints. Today I do that on whims with Camden where it is a candy bar, a new video game, I hid it and he goes looks for it. Every now and then I literally put it in a Tupperware container and bury outside in the ground. Camden never tires of it, nor did me and my brother and sister when we were growing up. Never, even when we were older, did we say no I don’t feel like treasure hunting, just give me my stuff. Never did I say I will just wait here, Richey or Karen go find my stuff and bring it back here to me, I’ll wait on the couch. Camden gets so excited, he is always what is it, what is it, and then a smile when he finds it. God’s Word is a treasure, it is a great treasure, it is a gift from Him to us. And what we find in our story today is that when we seek it out, dig deep for it, we will come away lifted up, refocused on what direction we should be heading, what is truth and what is confusion, what matters and what is temporal and passing away, and.....it is meeting with God Himself in an intimate and personal way, so much so that it burns in our heart.

### **Recap / 17<sup>th</sup> of Nissan / Wake-up Call**

So in our passage, it is Sunday, the 17<sup>th</sup> of Nissan in the Jewish calendar. The earth has quaked, all the world was given a wake-up call by God Himself that He is Alive! But it will take some time for people to get it, but God is so gracious and merciful, He is giving (and still gives) people time to get it. The angles had appeared to the woman at the tomb (before the sun had risen), the woman ran back to the apostles and told them the tomb was empty, they in turn ran to the tomb to confirm the tomb was empty, and everyone went back home “literally” wondering what in the world had just happened on this Sunday morning.

**Luke 24:10–12 (NKJV)** <sup>10</sup> It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles. <sup>11</sup> And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them. <sup>12</sup> But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.

### **Christ Appears on the Road to Emmaus**

**Luke 24:13** Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem.

### **Where were They Going? / They are Quitting**

Ever wonder where they were going? Why are they on the road to Emmaus, why didn't they stay with the other followers? Why would you leave Jerusalem after hearing such news that the tomb was empty, wouldn't you want to stay around to see how the story ended? Why distance yourself from being in the center of all that had and was happening? What do I think? I think they are quitting, I think they are giving up.

### **Travel – “to Depart from Life” / V21, Hopeless – Defeated in Heart – Sad / Giving Up**

One of the definitions of the word “travel” means “to depart from life”, another is “to transfer”, another “to continue on one's journey”. I believe that quite possible these two are going back to life as it was, before they started to follow Jesus. Verse 21 shows us that they have lost hope, because they say “we were hoping”. So these two are hopeless, defeated in heart, confused, extremely sad (verse 17 as Jesus sees it all over their face).

*Luke 24:21 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened.*

*Luke 24:17 (NKJV) <sup>17</sup> And He said to them, “What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?”*

### **But Jesus show Up / Jesus gives Greater than Physical – the Word**

They are sad, defeated, and hopeless.....but Jesus shows up. And how does Jesus minister to their sorrow?, through the Word! Jesus gives them something even greater than His physical appearance (as He supernaturally restrains them from seeing and knowing it is Him physically) to prove that He is alive, He gives them proof by taking them back through the scriptures, all the passages that spoke of Him.

*Luke 24:27 (NKJV) <sup>27</sup> And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.*

### **Grab This – Everything is Going to be Ok / Open the Word and you will See**

Grab this, in a summation of this study, Jesus is saying it is ok guys, everything is going to be ok.....get into the Scriptures and you will see that it is so, open up the word and you will see that everything is going to be ok.

### **No Hope Jesus is Alive – Hopeless Incomparable / Jesus responds with the Word / Learn of Me**

Cancer, joblessness, friendless, depression, anxiety, you add to the list.....but place no hope that Jesus lives (as it was for these men) and you will have hopelessness that is incomparable. How did Jesus respond and minister to this hopelessness, by revealing the scriptures to them. The result, hope and confidence! Jesus didn't say hey guys look at Me, look at Me, to lift them out of their despair.....He said learn of Me, learn of Me, He taught them the Word, He gave them the Word, He took them to the Word, and soon they were lifted out of their hopelessness into joy and peace, hope and confidence... and the same will be true to you when you learn of Him.

*Matthew 11:28–29 (NKJV) <sup>28</sup> Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*

### **That is what He still Does Today / Ultimate Treasure**

This is still what He does today, when we are downtrodden, depressed, feeling hopeless.....He ministers to us through His word, and through His Word we are lifted up. Through His Word He takes a cold and heart that feels empty, and He “fills” that heart with His Word and that heart (your heart) begins to burn, be warmed, and be filled. The ultimate treasure, placed within our hearts, and once there begins to burn in our hearts

*Luke 24:32 (NKJV) <sup>32</sup> And they said to one another, “Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?”*

### **Prayer – Lord burn in Our Hearts**

Oh Lord will you do it again today, right now, right here, take your word and put it in our heart, let it burn, let it come alive, let is warm us and feel us.

**Luke 24:14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.**

**Luke 24:15 So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them.**

### **Newspaper Competition / Walking in – When Everyone Else is Walking Out**

A newspaper held a competition to find out how people would describe friendship. The winning answer was, “**A friend is someone who's walking in when everyone else is walking out.**” You and I have a friend that will do that, a friend who will stick closer than a brother (Proverbs 18:24). Jesus said, “Surely I am with you always, to the very

end of the age" (Matthew 28:20) And when He said it He was only living up to his name, "Immanuel"--which means, "God with us." (Matthew 1:23)

*Proverbs 18:24 (NKJV)* <sup>24</sup> *A man who has friends must himself be friendly, But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.*

*Matthew 28:20 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> *teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.*

*Matthew 1:23 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> *"Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."*

## **Two or More**

*Verse 15 So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them.:* And as they conversed and reasoned together, Jesus shows up, joins their conversation and joins their walk together. Jesus said, "Any time two or more are gathered in my name, there I will be amongst them." Jesus will always gather where two or more people are talking about Jesus. He always show up, He'll always be there and He always join your conversation.

*Matthew 18:19–20 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> *"Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup> For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."*

## **Why don't we Talk More about Jesus outside of Church / When do He Shows Up**

Why don't we talk more about Jesus when we're outside these church walls? Really, when we're at home sitting with the spouse, just talking, bring up Jesus and guess what, Jesus shows up. Talk about Jesus, and Jesus shows up. Would you like more of Jesus in your marriage (that will be a great thing by the way)? Talk about Jesus with your husband. Talk about Jesus with your wife. He is going to show up; He's going to join in and draw in and you'll feel Him and you'll see Him eventually, you will realize He's there amongst you, just like these two disciples will. You want your kids to see more of Jesus, experience Jesus? Bring up Jesus. Yeah, it's great talking about sports and school and your favorite game, colors ... but make a time where you talk about Jesus with your kids and Jesus is going to show up right there amongst you because Jesus is always going to be where two or more are gathered talking about Him because He's going to honor that time that you set aside for that.

## **He is going to Be there – Wants People to Understand Him / They Reasoned**

He's going to be there because He wants everyone to understand who He is, what His heart is, what the Word means and I love this, noticed it says when they reasoned. They're reasoning together about the things that just transpired. That takes us back to the first 12 verses that they're reasoning amongst what just happened. These women come with their crazy talk that the tomb's empty. Now they are going what in the world is going on? They're reasoning. I think they're reasoning back to some of the things Jesus said when they walked with Him; these are disciples who were reasoning. I think they're reasoning some of the Old Testament verses that would give those indications and give that point towards the Death and Resurrection.

*Luke 24:10–12 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> *It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles. <sup>11</sup> And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them. <sup>12</sup> But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.*

## **They don't Get It – Jesus shows up to Make sure they Do**

Here they are, they are talking, they don't understand it, and you know what Jesus does every time? He's going to show up; He's going to make sure that you get it. He's going to make sure that you understand it, and that's what the Holy Spirit is going to be doing in your life as you talk, the Holy Spirit's going to fall, the Holy Spirit's going to start teaching and instructing and you'll get it. You'll understand what these verses mean, what He's trying to say. Now please make personal application for your life and notice how Jesus is so patient with us, as He's going to walk with them for this seven-mile journey, He's going to sit, He's going to break bread with them and He's going to stay with them until they get it.

- As long as you want to stay, He'll stay.
- As long as you want to talk, He'll hear.
- As long as you want to listen, He'll speak.
- As long as you want to open your heart, He'll receive and enter your heart.
- As long and deeply you seek the treasure, He'll provide treasure to be found.

*John 14:25–26 (NKJV)* <sup>25</sup> *"These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. <sup>26</sup> But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.*

### **Jesus no Hurry to get to Next Place – You are His Destination**

Notice, Jesus is in no hurry to get to the next place. Because you're all that His destination is; each and every one of you, you're His ultimate destination. He wants to be with you. He wants to draw next to you. You're not some inconvenience, you're not some distraction to Him, you are the love of His life, you are His bride, and He wants to draw next to you and walk next to you until you get it, and understand all that He is and all that He thinks of you. Everything is about you, you and He stays until you get everything about Him too, until you're filled with all the things of Him because it is all about you. It's not in that self-centered way, it's Jesus, His Christ-like ways.

### **He made His Life all About You / Who Are We – His Treasure**

He makes His life all about you. Willing to go to the cross, die, and here He is risen on the third day to say, "I'm alive and I'm walking amongst my people. You walk not alone, You're going to walk with me. You walk in victory, you walk in understanding, you overcome the things in your life that are dark and bringing you down, all these things, I'll walk with you until you get it. Until you understand what an amazing God, what a loving God." Here we are, who are we? We could say a bunch of nobodies. Or we say "Who are we?" and the answer is we are His. His treasures; His chosen ones.

*1 Peter 2:9-10 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; <sup>10</sup> who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.*

### **Chris – OAC / Treasures in the Mirror**

I love it as I was talking to Chris and Amy and they were explaining and their ministry with open air campaigners and Chris does this thing where he calls somebody up from the crowd and says, "Come here, I want to show you one of God's treasures. This is His greatest treasure. Come on up. Who wants to come see it?" Then people raise their hands, the bold ones and then they come up and Chris turns his back from the crowd and it's just him and this person and cupped in his hand, he opens his hand, he said, "Look, here's God's treasure." And as they look he's holding a mirror in his hands and the person looks in and he see reflection. They see themselves and he says, "You're God's treasure." That's what you are; you're God's treasure precious thing. God loves you.

### **Luke 24:16 But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.**

#### **A Supernatural Act / Substance vs Spiritual / Deeds vs Words**

This is a supernatural act because Jesus wants them to get the word over seeing the physical. We live in a word of substance and we think it is supreme, but God says I want you to live in a world of the spiritual, for it is more sure than anything you will ever see, even if that is seeing Me (God Himself). One of the reasons they are where they are, is notice they got it reversed as the say we say His deed and heard His teaching, and they missed that His teaching is confirmed by His deeds, not the other way around.

*Luke 24:19 (NKJV) <sup>19</sup> And He said to them, "What things?" So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,*

#### **Nothing I miss More – Than when Word Burns in my Heart / 100mph**

"There's nothing that I miss more than when the Word of God burns in my heart." How many times I can get up and I can just go and I'm running, I skipped the morning devotions, skipped getting into the Word or whatever the case may be, and I can feel it. I can feel it as real and sure on my body as I miss that warm shower and that ice cold drink.

#### **How Long they Walked – Didn't Realize it was Jesus / It Takes Time to Sense Jesus**

So a seven mile trip going at the average walking speed of 3 miles per hour, this trip is going to take about 2 hours. So as they are walking, how long they had been walking we do not know, but as they had been walking at some point Jesus comes alongside of them and joins their conversation. Here is something that I have recognized in my life, and that is that it takes me some time to sense that God is with me when I sit down to seek Him in prayer and the study of the word.

#### **Break-Through Time**

There is what I call the "break-through" time, and that is the time it takes for me to break through from my flesh and into the spirit. I find I sit down in my prayer time and reading time and my mind is still processing some of

yesterday's thoughts, and immediately starts to process all that is on my to-do list for the day ahead. I can find that I have sat there for 20 or 30 minutes and still not yet entered into a time with the Lord. If you are like me, don't beat yourself up over that, it just how we are and God understands you and He is still waiting there for you to recognize (if you will) that He is there. So don't beat yourself up or get down on yourself. ....just recognize that is what happens and plan that into your devotion time.

### **Start with Word in your Devotion**

Start your devotions with the Word, a Psalm is a great place to kickoff your devotion because you will most always see in each Psalm God's holiness and His love. That always cuts down my wasted time if I read a passage of Scripture as a prelude to my prayer and devotion.

### **Emmaus – Hot Baths / I Love America and its Hot Water / Ukraine**

So they are on the road to Emmaus, and Emmaus means "hot baths"; little is known about Emmaus from the bible record or the history books. But I am going to make a great leap here and conjecture that city had something to do with "hot baths", and probably had some kind of hot springs running through it. That's just me as I like to take a leap every now and then on obscure meanings in the Bible. Now, there are two things that I simply love about America, and that is hot showers and cold water. When I travel on mission trips the two things I miss the most are always hot showers and cold drinks. Seems everywhere I have gone it was lukewarm drinks and cold showers. When I was in the Ukraine for a two week mission trip in 1995 they had hot water, as hot water is pumped from the water plant 5 miles away (America we got it so good). The left side of the street had it on Monday-Wednesday-Friday, and the right side had it on Tuesday-Thursday-Saturday, and no one had it on Sunday. Well I was staying at people's homes throughout the city and no kidding for two weeks I was always staying on the opposite side of the street with the hot water. The water was so cold, it felt like my hair was going to break when I washed it. When I landed back in the USA I probably took a 60 minute hot shower. When I was in Mexico, Nicaragua, and even Europe I continually struggled to find cold water, or a cold drink. I can totally tell the difference when I miss the Word of God burning in my heart too, when I didn't have time (reality – make the time) to sit long enough to soak in it, to let it warm me, to feel it's warmth. ....I know something is missing.

### **They will Say – Our heart Burned / Hot baths – now Burning Hearts / Word is Alive and Burns**

They will say did not our heart burn (warm) within us when He spoke His word. They might have gone to do business that day, just plain old was quitting, hoping to soak in a nice warm tub that night, but when the Word went forth them that day they were totally warmed, and now totally on-fire. The word of God is a fire, and it will burn life into your heart, for the Word of God is alive

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) 12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

**Luke 24:17 And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?"**

**Luke 24:18 Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?"**

### **Going to give Cleopas Hard Time / He will remind me of Martin Luther**

I'm going to give Cleopas a hard time when I see him in heaven, duh. ...are you the only stranger in Jerusalem. Then he will say back to me, ok Martin Luther King (referencing a sermon I did about the Protestant Reformation and for 50 minutes called Martin Luther, Martin Luther King).

### **Jesus asks What is Up / They are Like Dude! / It was a Global Event / 3 Hours Darkness – Gets it Done**

Jesus as He draws near says, "So what's up? Why are you guys so sad? What's the deal?" and they're like, "Dude, what are you, you're like the only stranger, visitor in the whole Jerusalem, that you haven't heard what happen?" That tells me inclusively, it was a global event. Everybody heard about it. These disciples, these followers, they're making that statement. You had to be out of town to miss this. I believe it's a global event because a) the sun was darkened for three hours when Jesus was on the cross from noon to 3:00 pm, as we see the ninth plague there in the Exodus of Egypt, the ninth plague, it says "The darkness was so dark, you could feel it." It says that the Egyptians stayed and couldn't move for three days of darkness. Here, these three hours as Jesus is on the cross, He's not

going to be on the cross for three days, He's got a plan, He's going to go, He's got his work to do, He's going to get it done. He is not dragging anything out; He's going to get it done.

### **Great Example – Jesus got Action from Father and “go-time” / Get er Done – Running out of Time**

By the way, take that as an example for life. The Father gave Jesus an action. And it was go time. With Jesus, it was go time, He got there and He got his action going. He didn't drag it out, He didn't drag it on. If God has spoken to you today, He's giving you a go, now go. Don't sit and wait three days, don't sit and wait three weeks if you know He's spoken to you, get out and go. Get up and go and get her done. Really. We're running out of time, folks. We're running out of time to be talking about going to do something when God's already says go and get it done.

### **Back to Global Event / God shuts Down Whole World**

Back to this global event, this global statement. Three hours of darkness, nobody moves. Then, it's Sunday morning, first day of the week, John's account Gospel tells us there was a great earthquake when the angel descended to roll away the stone. That stone wasn't rolled away so Jesus could get out; it was rolled away so Man could look in and say, “He is gone.” They can see. No one's here. Death has been beaten, sin has been conquered and when we look in, we empty cross, empty tomb; we know that's our life too. He's not going to let man go on with their holidays; this is the Passover, unleavened bread and feast the first fruit, He's not going to let Man have their holidays. Just keep going, business as usual, while the Father's Son is hanging on the cross.

### **Shuts Down whole World – Something big Going On / Imagine the Evening Dinner**

He shuts down the whole world so that the whole world will know something big, something different is going on here and they will be talking about that darkness, they'll be talking about that day, for weeks. If you and I fell into total darkness in the middle of the day for three hours, and we've had to sit in place not knowing how long these three hours were going to last while we were in it, because every minute as the clock ticked, more and more we would be going, “what in the world is going on?”. When it first happened, we'd be like, someone turn on the lights. But when it's high noon, middle of the day, it's pitch black and that's because the Light of the World is being crucified, they're going to sit there and as the clock ticks, they're going to get, “Oh, this isn't some minor interruption. This isn't some simple eclipse thing.” Of course it couldn't be because it's Passover, the moon's on the opposite side of the sun during the spring in that region, they're going to sit and go, “What is going on?” and when that sun lifts, excuse me, when that darkness lifts, and that sun appears, they will all go home and when they all got back in their house, they all sit down for their Passover feast, and they all go, “Was that crazy or what? I started getting fearful after 15 minutes. I didn't know when it was going to end.” I sat through that earthquake we had, what was it, 18 months ago now? Two years ago? I talked about that as soon as I got home. Me and Renee, “What were you doing? I was sitting at the traffic light. Man, the traffic light started swinging up and down. What were you doing?” “I was in the house,” she said. “I thought the pictures were going to fall off and the vase was going to fall of the mantle. It was crazy!” Now here it is on that Sunday morning, the earth quakes. It was great quake and it could be the whole ... It was a global quake, I'm sure of it, because God the Father isn't going to let anybody sleep in and sleep through His son rising from the dead. It was a wakeup call and the world is being woken up, saying “He is alive.” They were saying to Jesus, “Man, where were you?” We have us a global event and that's clear to me as we read this passage as we're looking at that.

### **Lost Dog**

This week Noreen is in Cambodia and we are puppy sitting (wanted to see how Camden would be of we got him a dog). Well if you know Noreen you know how much she loves that dog, and if you are a dog owner you know how much you love your dog. Well Friday “somebody” and we went name names, left the doors (3 of them) open. So we are sitting there eating and say where is the dog. It took a mere minute to realize she was gone. My gut sickens because everybody flies through our neighborhood, I said no way she could survive out there. She has never been off a leash and she has no idea what a cruel world it is out there. So we start the search, I am on foot and Renee is in the car, and I am stopping every person I pass, and all I see is a big huge world out there. My mind starts calculating, who is going to teach on Sunday I need to call them now, doesn't matter if it is the first Sunday in the new building, forget sleep as I will walk all night if need be, forget work, I am walking this neighborhood, posting signs, going door-to-door until I find this dog. This is Noreen's love, this was my responsibility as head of the home, and I could not bear to look Noreen in the face to say, I am sorry your love is lost. Thankfully some young boy found her, somebody in a car saw me asking questions and told me the boy found her, and eventually I was able

to find who now had her, and bring her back home. If I would go through all that for a dog, imagine the heart of the Father as He is searching for you. He will not rest, He will not stop pursuing you, until He has you home safe from this world, and safe in His arms. God went to the ends of the earth for you, He came and gave Himself on a brutal Roman cross for you as He took your sin and your guilt, and He is calling out to you today.....come home, come back to Me, there is nothing this world can give you except pain, come home, please come into My arms of love. Have you done that today? If not will you do that today? If not would you sit with someone in our counselor to discuss these things, and like Jesus did, so too will we, in that we will stay with you until you get it and fully understand what this gospel means. To hear the gospel online, please go to [www.ccaac.org](http://www.ccaac.org) and click the hyperlink that says "The Meaning of Life" or the hyperlink that says "The Meaning of Life". And, by-the-way, the dog never left my sight again, the dog is continually on my mind of where she is, doors and dangers are continually evaluated....that is me with someone else's dog, how much more so is that the Heavenly Father regarding you His precious treasure that He would be willing to die for.

**Luke 24:19 And He said to them, "What things?" So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,**

**Luke 24:20 and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him.**

**Luke 24:21 But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened.**

**Luke 24:22 Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us.**

**Luke 24:23 When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive.**

**Luke 24:24 And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see."**

#### **Cleopas name Recorded / Your name fills in the Blank**

Why was Cleopas called out by name, why was his name recorded for all time for all to read? Why wasn't the other one called out by name? I think God sends us a two-fold message here and one is He records every conversation we have regarding Him, and two that unnamed person is a us, just fill in the blanks. When we talk about Him, He shows up and joins in.

#### **What Things – and They Recap the Events**

Verse 19: Jesus says to them, "What things?" Then they said, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth." They identify him as a prophet, they clarify that Jesus is from Nazareth, not Jesus of Pasadena, Maryland, they make it clear, "Jesus of Nazareth who did mighty deeds and mighty words before God to all the people." Then in verse 20, they say how the priest and rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death and crucified Him and then in verse 21, interesting but "We were hoping that He was going to redeem Israel." That was their hope as they were looking at Him to be the king; king over Rome, not king over sin and death at that time. They hadn't got it, but they'll get as Jesus is working. Then they go to verse 22, we read, "And certain women who were with us, our company, they came and they said He was gone. And they said they didn't find His body. They saw angels, and then they said He was alive and certain of those who were with us, speaking as some of the apostles, they went to the tomb and they found it empty just as the women said."

#### **Notice what Jesus is Doing – Drawing out what was In Them**

Verse 24: Spend time with the Lord, talking with Him, reasoning with Him. Spend time together like these two men are, they're talking together, they're reasoning together, they're talking these things out and notice what Jesus is doing. He's drawing it out of them. He's drawing it out of them, the things that they knew, the things that they saw, the things that they had heard as they spoke about the Word that He taught, the mighty deeds that He'd done. Then they went through the whole Gospel. Good news; Jesus being condemned, Jesus being crucified, Jesus rising on the third day from the dead. Do you see what God is doing here, what Jesus is doing here with them? He's starting to draw it out of them, He's starting to have them think it through, not to just be sitting lectured to, but to think it through. And they're going to get it. He's going to add on to it, He's going to develop it for them, He's going to make the clarity for them, but He's letting them be a part of it, and understanding what happened. That's what God will do to you. He'll do it to you individually, as you study His Word, but all the power and the beauty of His Word,

when one, two, five or six get together and start discussing the things that they've experience. The things that they've read, the things that they have heard. All these type of things.

### **It is Beautiful when we Talk out the Scriptures / Me & Nate Thinking it Through**

It's a beautiful thing, I, we ... We talk about the scriptures, then someone goes, "Yeah, yeah," but don't forget, they mention this first and then somebody, "Yeah, yeah," but don't forget, it's Feast of Firstfruits so you got to calculate that in it and then you got this massive super computer going on because now you got multiple processors going on but making one super computer together and you'll get to places faster, many a time than when you're alone. Last week, me and Nate doing things that we love, we love tracing the scriptures. We love tracing, because everything has to be perfectly tied out, everything has to be perfectly logical and so we're sitting there because there's a debate, here is the common world calls in Good Friday, Jesus crucified on Friday, but if you study through the scriptures, there's definitely some questions that are left open there so then it leads you to what could be in Thursday, it could've been Wednesday, and then there you are, you're going back and forth and you're talking, you're discussing these things and when you get to Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, I like what Faye said, "All I know is He rose again on Sunday." I love that. That's the answer. God is like me, we love to talk about these things and they just fire you up.

### **Scriptures get you Excited – they are Amazing**

They get you excited because you're looking at the scriptures going, "They're amazing." As you let the scriptures start speaking, as you're digging deeper and you're digging amongst yourself, many scriptures just start blowing your mind! You know He's alive! You can't make this stuff up! The word will stir you. It'll wake you up and you'll be excited about the Lord. It's great to have some small groups that you can discuss these things, and you can just do it amongst your husband and wife, your kids, do it with a brother, do it with some sisters do it out in the café after service having a coffee, and it's glorious.

### **He didn't come to make Argument – but to get a Bride**

But hey, if it turns into an argument, you've missed the whole point. The whole point is He's alive. He didn't come to make arguments, He came to make a bride. To make saints; draw men and women to Himself, the treasure. Look into that mirror, "This is what I came for. I came for you, you're my treasure." Every time you start feeling it, it gets a little heated, a little hot under the collar, somebody's wrong, that's just to say "All I know, He rose again on Sunday." Amen? Amen.

**Luke 24:25 Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!**

**Luke 24:26 Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?"**

**Luke 24:27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.**

### **The Whole Bible Points to Jesus / The Volume of the Book**

How I would love to have been in that Bible Study, Jesus gives the Bible Study, starting in Moses, first five books of it, on the Bible; Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. He starts there then he goes through all the prophets and gives a Bible study on how the whole Bible points to Jesus Christ. The whole Bible points to Jesus Christ. Jesus said in the "volume of the book it is written of Me"

*Hebrews 10:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> Then I said, 'Behold, I have come— In the volume of the book it is written of Me— To do Your will, O God.' "*

### **The Honored Guest Story**

What a Bible study that would have been to sit through, but before I move on I would like to tell you about the story I read about a king who decided to set aside a special day to honor his greatest subject. When the big day arrived, there was a large gathering in the palace courtyard. Four finalists were brought forward, and from these four, the king would select the winner.

- The first person presented was a wealthy philanthropist. The king was told that this man was highly deserving of the honor because of his humanitarian efforts. He had given much of his wealth to the poor.
- The second person was a celebrated physician. The king was told that this doctor was highly deserving of the honor because he had rendered faithful and dedicated service to the sick for many years.

- The third person was a distinguished judge. The king was told that the judge was worthy because he was noted for his wisdom, his fairness, and his brilliant decisions.
- The fourth person presented was an elderly woman. Everyone was quite surprised to see her there, because her manner was quite humble, as was her dress. She hardly looked the part of someone who would be honored as the greatest subject in the kingdom. What chance could she possibly have, when compared to the other three, who had accomplished so much?

Even so, there was something about her; the look of love in her face, the understanding in her eyes, her quiet confidence. The king was intrigued, to say the least, and somewhat puzzled by her presence. He asked who she was. The answer came: “you see the philanthropist, the doctor, and the judge? Well she was their teacher!”

### **Want to be Great - Teach**

The woman had no wealth, no fortune, and no title, but she taught and lives were changed and greatness came from her service. We get to be like Jesus every day in our homes among our kids, and plenty of opportunities right here amongst our own children in our own church. Teach, your reward will be great.

### **Homework Assignment / 1<sup>st</sup> Coming – 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming**

So Jesus, from the beginning, all the way through the prophets, Jesus showed these two where the scriptures pointed to Him and His first coming.... I'll give you a homework assignment, those who would dare. Find this week, seven Bible verses in the Old Testament that point to Jesus Christ. Seven Bible verses that point to Jesus Christ through the Old Testament. There's a whole bunch more than seven, there's 300 of them but you find seven of them and you'll be blessed. Dig it up through the internet if you have to, just start flipping the pages and dwelling on them and you'll be totally blessed as you see how much the Old Testament points to Jesus Christ. That's what He's telling these guys. “Man, you guys should know these things.” You should know Him. You should have been looking for Him, you should have been waiting on Him. This hold true for us today. I'll give you another assignment. Look for seven things in the New Testament that point to a second coming. After you do your seven Old Testament of His first coming, go through and look for seven things of His second coming. You can use Old Testament or New Testament for that and you'll be blown away again because the words speaks so loudly, He is coming back and as I see these verses, He's coming back soon. We got some things to do, and you've got to get some things right, get them right today. We got to make some things right with some people, make them right today. Then let's get rocking and moving forward because time is short, He's given us a new season here as a Church, enter in to a new building that they were able to do ministry 24/7, and to be able to invite people in, to be able to grow together as a body and to grow the body, the Lord's body. Great, great opportunities here. Homework assignment: seven Old Testament, first coming. Seven old and/or New Testament of His second coming. You'll be blessed. Totally blessed.

**Luke 24:28 Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther.**

**Luke 24:29 But they constrained Him, saying, “Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.” And He went in to stay with them.**

**Luke 24:30 Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.**

**Luke 24:31 Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.**

### **Jesus has Nail Prints / Revealed after the Word / Treasure Hunting – the Treasure is Jesus**

We know Jesus has nail prints: Thomas saw his nail prints (Jn 20:27); Zechariah said, “They shall look upon me whom they have pierced” (Zech 12:10); John: “...a Lamb as it had been slain” (Rev 5:6). The only man-made things in Heaven are scars. Jesus had purposely restrained their eyes so they would see the scriptures first, and understand the treasures in the word first, and thus they would walk by sight, but by the word of God. That is how God wants us to walk today, by digging into this treasure, for in it we find Him on every page, for He came in the volume of this book. The treasure.....is Jesus, and we find Him in this Book.

**Hebrews 10:7 (NKJV)** *’ Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come— In the volume of the book it is written of Me— To do Your will, O God.’ ”*

**Luke 24:32 And they said to one another, “Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?”**

**Their Hearts Burned / Saints don't take it Lightly – Check List / Read until Gripped**

As they're walking and they're talking, they're like, "Yeah, I should've known from the beginning because as soon as He started speaking His word, our hearts started to burn we just something was moving, this was real. Precious Saints, get in the word, don't take it lightly, don't make it a shopping list, grocery list, the check list, something you got to do to say that you're a good Christian and you're good, faithful, get into it. Read it until something grips within your heart. Until it burns in your heart.

**Won't get it in 5 Minutes / Need to Make the Time – Take the Walk**

That takes me back to what I had said earlier, you're not going to get it in five minutes. Maybe every now and then, God will do that. But you're going to have to spend some time. You need to make that time; you need to adjust that time. We're all busy. Everybody's busy. Nobody in here is more busier than the other. No one here is a special case of busyness. You make the time to make the trip on that walk with Jesus, He'll be faithful to meet with you. Come alongside with you. Open His Word to you, open up your heart, open up His heart, pour His heart into yours and you will, every time, walk away with a burning in your heart, that you've just had time of intimacy, oneness and fellowship with God Himself.

**Mormon Error**

I don't mean this to be offensive to my Muslim or my Mormon friends, but the burning in the bosom, isn't the Book of Mormon; isn't talking about Joseph Smith. The burning in the heart clearly shown right here, it's God's Word from Genesis through Revelation. As Jesus reveals Himself, opens up His heart, that's what makes the heart begin to burn.

**Luke 24:33 So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together,**

**How fast would you have Run? / How far and fast did you Run this week with It**

Then verse 33: We see them double time back to Jerusalem. They're getting back to the core, to the group saying, "It's true. What the women said is true." So how fast, how far would you run once you knew the Good News? How far, how fast have you run with it this week? How far, how fast will you run with it this week? God bless you.

**End of Study**

# Beautiful Hands

## Luke 24:33-43

### Picking Up / Jesus is Alive and Walking Among His People

It is resurrection Sunday, the stone has been rolled away and the tomb is empty, Jesus is alive and walking among His people. We are picking up here with the two disciples who met Jesus on the road to Emmaus, let's start reading in verse 27.

**Luke 24:27** And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

**Luke 24:28** Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther.

**Luke 24:29** But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to stay with them.

**Luke 24:30** Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.

**Luke 24:31** Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.

**Luke 24:32** And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"

**Luke 24:33** So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together,

**Luke 24:34** saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!"

**Luke 24:35** And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.

**Luke 24:36** Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you."

**Luke 24:37** But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit.

**Luke 24:38** And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts?"

**Luke 24:39** Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."

**Luke 24:40** When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.

**Luke 24:41** But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?"

**Luke 24:42** So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb.

**Luke 24:43** And He took it and ate in their presence.

### Telemachus

In the 4th century lived a Christian named Telemachus, in a remote village, tending his garden, and spending much time in prayer. One day, he believed he heard the voice of God telling him to go to Rome, so he obeyed, setting out on foot. Some weeks later, weary from his journey, he arrived in Rome about the time of a great festival. The little man followed the crowd surging through the streets into the Colosseum. He saw the gladiators standing before the Emperor and proclaiming, "We who are about to die salute you."

Then Telemachus realized that these men were going to fight to the death for the entertainment of the cheering crowd. So he cried out in a loud voice, "In the name of Christ, Stop!" Yet the games began, so he pushed his way through the crowd, climbed over the wall and dropped onto the floor of the arena. The entire Colosseum watched this tiny figure rushing toward the gladiators, crying, "In the name of Christ, STOP !!!" The gladiators thought it was part of the show and began laughing. But in a few moments, they realized it was not part of the show, and then the crowd became angry. Telemachus stood his ground, insistently pleading with the gladiators to stop their bloody show, when one of them plunged a sword into the saint's body. He fell to the sand. As he was dying, his last words were, "In the name of Christ, STOP!!!"

Then a strange thing happened. The gladiators stood there looking at the tiny Christian lying there dead. A hush fell over the Colosseum. Way up in the upper rows, a man stood and made his way to the exit. Others followed. In dead silence, one by one, everyone left the Colosseum. The year was 404; and that day saw the last battle to the death between gladiators in the Roman Colosseum. Telemachus' martyrdom initiated an historic ban on gladiator fights by the Roman Emperor Honorius. Never again in the great stadium did men kill each other for the entertainment of the crowd. One tiny man's bold voice -- one voice -- reshaped Roman history, and saved thousands of lives, by fearlessly proclaiming the truth in God's name!

*\*Foxy's Book of Martyrs / Wikipedia*

### **What could cause such Action**

What could cause such an action, what could cause a person to be so bold? Only the resurrection! Not only the belief that Jesus is alive, but that He is alive in a person, He is moving and leading a person's life, and a person gladly and obediently follows Him in all His leading, and the Spirit of God is moving among people today.

### **Today we Take a Devotional Look**

Today we take a devotional look at this passage before us. The definition of devotion is, "a warmth of passion glowing hot as fire towards an object". The object (if you will) is Jesus Christ, our passion.....is Him. Last week we ended with the two men saying did not our hearts burn within us as He opened the Scriptures to us, and this week I pray the same happens to us here, as He opens His word to us, and starts a fire that burns within us.

*Luke 24:32 (NKJV) <sup>32</sup> And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"*

### **The Proof of His Resurrection**

**Luke 24:33 So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together,**

### **"The Eleven" is a Title.**

The eleven is a title, not a number per-se.

### **That Very Hour / Excite you will Move You / A Challenge**

Emmaus to Jerusalem was seven miles, and these guys made it in an hour. That is cooking, that is running 7mph ....in sandals. Things that excite you will move you? What has moved you this week? Can I challenge you in this, in this week coming up, to say Lord I want to spend more time with you this week than I did last week. I want to be excited about You this week, more than I was last week. We have people who have just come back from a mission trip and you may say wow that would be hard to beat.....God says try Me and see if it won't be so. For all of us we will have to make a conscious thought, decision, and effort to do so.....but God says to us, "try Me" and see if I won't put a fire in your heart more so this week than last week. God is waiting to burn something into your heart this week, that is what He does, He loves to start fires in the heart of His children.....but I say to you that you have to bring the kindling wood, we have to slow ourselves down, set ourselves apart, dedicate our minds to Him and say "Lord I'm here to meet with You, start a fire". These disciples had a two hour walk with Jesus, and Jesus did indeed start a fire in their heart as He opened the word to them, but as I said last week, you may have to walk awhile with Jesus before the fire burns, it may not happen in 5 minutes or 30, but you stay long enough I promise you based on the Word of God and personal experience, the fire, the burning, the warmth of passion glowing hot as fire will come. I pray a fire in your home this week!

**Luke 24:34 saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!"**

### **When was this Meeting**

When was this meeting? Well it was sometime after Peter left the tomb scratching his head, and sometime before the road to Emmaus. It is not to be confused with "Peter do you love Me, than feed My sheep" because that is not on this resurrection Sunday, in fact it is at least 8 days later (John 20:26). So when was it? We just don't know.

*Luke 24:12 But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.*

*John 21:1-3 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and in this way He showed Himself: <sup>2</sup> Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together. <sup>3</sup> Simon*

*Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We are going with you also." They went out and immediately got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing.*

### **Purposely Excluded / Specific Instruction to Angel / Peter I'm Thinking of You**

We just don't know, and God purposely excluded the encounter out of the Gospel account. When Jesus rose from the dead, He gave special instructions to the angel, "they tell them I am alive and I will meet up with them in Galilee, and make sure that you specifically call Peter out by name. Jesus is sending a message to Peter; Peter I know you are defeated and broken, you are wondering if I am going to reject you for denying Me, you are wondering if I will ever forgive you, ever love you, ever use you again. You are confused and scared, brokenhearted and defeated....but I send special message "I AM THINKING ABOUT YOU PERSONALLY AND SPECIFICALLY".

*Mark 16:5-7 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. <sup>6</sup> But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. <sup>7</sup> But go, tell His disciples—and Peter—that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you."

### **Private Meeting / Meeting Confirmed / Calling still Upon Peter – Make no Mistake**

And Jesus seeks Peter out personally and specifically, in a private place in a private way. God doesn't record what they talked about.....but He does make sure that it is confirmed that they met. Jesus tells these two on road to Emmaus that He personally met with Peter, so everyone would know on day number one, Peter is still My love, Peter is still precious to Me, and Peter has a special place in leadership to Me and My people. Jesus makes sure everyone knows His calling is still upon Peter.....even after Peter's failings.

### **Jesus is Coming to You**

And equally so, here is what Jesus is saying to you and me today, and that is that when you fail, when you bail, when you deny Me, when you think you have gone too far to ever be close to Jesus again.....Jesus is not only calling out to you, but He is coming to you. Jesus will seek you out personally and specifically, Jesus doesn't leave you out there in your defeat, but comes to you to reach His hand down and say "take My hand and let Me lift you up". Have you fallen, have you failed, do you feel that you may be saved "because that is what the Bible says", but because of what you have done you could never be close to Him again, intimate and personal like you once had (like Peter had).....we can miss this small short, often read as a side note is for you! Jesus will seek you out to.....not only personally, but privately, to lift you back up and to tell you "I love You – Forever", come follow Me again.

### **Not for Public Information**

And the importance of it being private, no record of when and where.....is for all us here today too as we see that is just between us and the Lord. Jesus simply says to the rest of the world.....restored, you need not know anything else about it, that is personal between Me and Peter. The Lord says to the world, restored! You need not know anything else about what I said to my love, and what my love said to Me. If that is you today.....enjoy resurrection Sunday, your God says restored, now come and follow Me again like you once did.

**Luke 24:35 And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.**

**Luke 24:36 Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you."**

### **Retelling the Story / Hanging on every Word / Retell Your Story – for Jesus Shows Up**

You can read the joy of these two as they tell the story of dinner with Jesus, of the 2 hour Bible study on the road to Emmaus. There is such a joy of retelling the stories of your personal experiences you have with Jesus. You know the group listening are hanging on every word. Don't we love to hear them today? Got a story, share your story.....because when you talk about Jesus, guess who shows up.

### **Talk More About Jesus**

Beloved, talk more about Jesus! Talk about Him in your home, among friends, out in café after church or getting together during the week, and you will be blessed, because Jesus shows up every time you speak of Him.

*Matthew 18:19-20 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup> For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."

## Homework?

By the way, how did you do on your homework assignment last week? Did you find 7 scriptures about His first coming, did you find 7 about His Second Coming? How blessed were you as you did your treasure hunting? If you didn't do or finish your homework you have another week to do it, there is always grace in God's University. Here is one of the emails I got from one of our brothers who went treasure hunting on His First Coming. I also found it interesting that every one of the verses he found, we have referenced it and applied it somewhere throughout our 18 months in this book.....so whether we realize it or not God is taking us all deeper and deeper into His Word. So if Jesus is the Word (John 1), and the Word is going into us.....then that tells me we are all being conformed into His image, and that is awesome. Keep treasure hunting my brothers and sisters.

**Genesis 3:15 (NKJV)** <sup>15</sup> *And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."*

**Genesis 49:9–10 (NKJV)** <sup>9</sup> *Judah is a lion's whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him?* <sup>10</sup> *The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.*

**Isaiah 7:14 (NKJV)** <sup>14</sup> *Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.*

**Isaiah 9:6 (NKJV)** <sup>6</sup> *For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

**Isaiah 53:5 (NKJV)** <sup>5</sup> *But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.*

**Daniel 9:25–27 (NKJV)** <sup>25</sup> *"Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times. <sup>26</sup> "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined. <sup>27</sup> Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."*

**Zechariah 6:12–13 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup> *Then speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, saying: "Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH! From His place He shall branch out, And He shall build the temple of the LORD; <sup>13</sup> Yes, He shall build the temple of the LORD. He shall bear the glory, And shall sit and rule on His throne; So He shall be a priest on His throne, And the counsel of peace shall be between them both.' "*

**Micah 5:2 (NKJV)** <sup>2</sup> *"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting."*

**Malachi 3:1 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> *"Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming," Says the LORD of hosts.*

**Malachi 4:5–6 (NKJV)** <sup>5</sup> *Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. <sup>6</sup> And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.*

**Luke 24:37** **But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit.**

**Luke 24:38** **And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts?"**

**Luke 24:39** **Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."**

**Luke 24:40** **When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.**

## Think He is Spirit / Time & Matter

Alright, now we do know the Scriptures, we do have the advantage of hindsight and foresight over these disciples....but even still if Jesus just appeared in this room right now (in physical form), I highly doubt I would have even made beyond the "Why" in the "why are you troubled" before I would have fainted. Jesus is in His resurrected body, and thus we see He has the ability to transcend time and matter. It is an amazing body, and we too will have bodies as such. What that means is that time cannot decay it and matter cannot corrupt. It will be a glorious new body for I am done with this one, as time and matter has taken its toll on it.

**1 Corinthians 15:42–45 (NKJV)** <sup>42</sup> *So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. <sup>43</sup> It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. <sup>44</sup> It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a*

natural body, and there is a spiritual body. <sup>45</sup> And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

### **Jesus still Give the Invitation Today**

Jesus said handle Me and see.....He still gives us that invitation today, to handle Him, because when we do we will see Him. He gives us this Bible and says handle it and you will be handling Me for I am the "Word that became Flesh"; he hands us the Communion elements and says handle them and you will be handling me, they are a picture of My body that was given to you, do this often and you will remember Me.

*John 1:14 (NKJV) <sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

*1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV) <sup>23</sup> For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; <sup>24</sup> and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." <sup>25</sup> In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." <sup>26</sup> For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.*

**Luke 24:41 But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?"**

**Luke 24:42 So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb.**

**Luke 24:43 And He took it and ate in their presence.**

### **Too Good to be True – But it is! / Resurrection is Real – Fears & Unbelief vanishing Away**

It says they do not believe for joy, and that means "it's too good to be true – but they know it is true". The resurrection is true, the resurrection is real, and all their fears and disbelief are vanishing away.

### **Broiled Fish – Honeycomb**

We can read this to mean Jesus eats and they stare at Him while He eats, but I think it would be true to His nature that Jesus eats with them because He came to fellowship among His people, to have intimacy with them, to share life with them. Not look at Me from a distance, but join Me at the table, handle Me, become One with Me. Good meal by the way, the word for broiled means "to steep" so it was like a slow cooked fish, meaning all the flavors are married together at their peak. Honeycomb is a sweet honey substance. So you have substance and sweetness, I see a beautiful picture of every time we join Jesus for a meal in His word, substance to sustain us, and sweetness to our soul.

*Psalms 34:8 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!*

*Psalms 119:103 (NKJV) <sup>103</sup> How sweet are Your words to my taste, Sweeter than honey to my mouth!*

### **Jesus eats with Them**

So Jesus eats with them, in that culture the place of intimacy. All the memories of all their past times that have eaten, all comes back to life and love. Three days in darkness and now the sun (SON) shines again into their lives. They eat and fellowship again, they laugh and they love again.....but one difference this time as they eat together, every move of Jesus' hand they will see those scars.

### **Little Girl 1<sup>st</sup> Grade**

I was told about a true story of a little first grade girl who came home crying one day. Her mother said what is wrong sweetheart and she was somewhat apprehensive about answering, but finally blurts it out, they kids at school are making fun of me because of you, they laugh and make jokes about your hands (as she points at them). The hands she points to are all deformed and scarred. The mother said honey I never told you how my hands got deformed like this, but I think now you should know. When you were only an infant, still in your crib, a great fire broke out in our home, and that fire was right in front of your room. There were ceiling beams and furniture on fire in front of your room, and the only way I could get to you was to grab them with my hands and push them out of the way. But I made it to you, and I count it worth it every day. And at that moment, the little girl pressed her face against her mother's hand and began to weep even more so, and then kiss them tenderly and loving hands, and then she raised up and looked at her mother in the eyes and said "mommy they are the most beautiful hands I have ever seen". And the hands of our Hero, our Savior, as He reached not only His hands but His whole body into the flames

of hell to rescue us from the fire that was upon us. And today as we handle this bread in our hands, we take it and do it in remembrance of what He has done for us. Let's take the cup together.

### **Isaiah 49 – Inscribed on Palms of His Hand**

Like Peter being sought out personally and privately by the Lord, so He does for you today, for He cannot move His hand without being reminded of you. He promises that he will never forget us, no matter how we are or are not doing.....He says it is impossible for Him to forget us. Remember that this week, enjoy that this week, that the Creator of the universe, you are continually on His mind. In Psalm 139 we are told as the grains of sand, so are His thoughts towards us.

*Isaiah 49:15–16 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup> *“Can a woman forget her nursing child, And not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you. <sup>16</sup> See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Your walls are continually before Me.*

*Psalm 139:17–18 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> *How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! <sup>18</sup> If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; When I awake, I am still with You.*

### **This Cup – Washes away Your Sin**

And this cup, the cup of His blood we are about to celebrate, and remember the price that was paid; one drop of it is enough to wash your sin away (past-present-future). You are clean and forgiven, you are made whole and new. But only His blood, through His cross, for there is no other way, and there is no other way for man to come before God except through Jesus Christ. The bible says there is only one Mediator between God and man, and that is the Man Christ Jesus who gave Himself a ransom for all. Good works, good intentions, a so-called holy man pronouncing blessings, none of them can reconcile a person to God for the offense of their sin before Him. Jesus Himself said, no one comes to the Father except through Him. I am reminded of the story of the woman who lived her whole life in a religious system, but in later years became very ill, too ill to attend her church. As the illness took more and more of a toll on her life, she became bedridden and could not even leave the house. But it was during this time that she began to read her bible; she read it all here waking hours there in bed, and she came to a deeper understanding of who Jesus was and all that he had done for her on the cross. And then in her final hours, the church she had attended sent a priest over to her house to administer last rites. The priest came and said all though you haven't been able to come to church over all these months, I have come here to give you last rites, to absolve you of your sins so you may go to heaven. The woman then said to the priest, show me your hands, and the priest not sure why she asked but still obliged by showing her his hands. She took his hands, looked at them, turned them over and looked again, and then she said.....you sir are an imposter, you have no authority to forgive and absolve my sins, for your hands have no marks! If you are here today and have never given your life to the One Way, the One Mediator, then today I beg that you do so, so that you may be absolved, forgiven, cleansed from your sin. And for those who have made that decision, we take this cup and we remember these beautiful hands, the hands that were pierced, the blood that poured from them, so that we may be forgiven. What beautiful hands, what precious blood.

*1 Timothy 2:3–6 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> *For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, <sup>4</sup> who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. <sup>5</sup> For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,*

*John 14:6 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> *Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*

### **End of Study**

# *The God who Hung on the Cross*

## **(Luke 24:44-48)**

### **Outline of the Book of Luke:**

#### The Life of Christ – The God Man (Luke 1-24)

##### **The Prelude to Christ's Ministry (1:1–4:13)**

- His Birth & Boyhood
- His Baptism & Temptation

##### **The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)**

- His Mission Statement
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)**

- His March to the Cross
- His Calling of Disciples

##### **The Passion Week (19:28–23:56)**

- Sunday (19:28–44)
- Monday (19:45–48)
- Tuesday (20:1–21:38)
- Wednesday (22:1–6)
- Thursday (22:7–53)
- Friday (22:54–23:55)
- The Sabbath (23:56)

##### **The Consummation of Christ's Ministry (24:1–53)**

- The Resurrection (24:1–12)
- The Road to Emmaus (24:13–43)
- The Great Commission (24:44-48)
- The Promise (24:49)
- The Ascension (24:50–53)

### *The Great Commission*

**Luke 24:44** Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me."

**Luke 24:45** And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

**Luke 24:46** Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day,

**Luke 24:47** and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

**Luke 24:48** And you are witnesses of these things.

### **WAITING 20 YEARS FOR THE END OF THE STORY**

In her book *The God Who Hung on the Cross*, journalist Ellen Vaughn retells a gripping story of how the Gospel came to a small village in Cambodia. In September 1999, Pastor Tuy Seng (not his real name) traveled to Kampong Thom Province in northern Cambodia. Throughout that isolated area, most villagers had cast their lot with Buddhism or spiritism. Christianity was virtually unheard of. But much to Seng's surprise, when he arrived in one small, rural village the people warmly embraced him and his message about Jesus. When he asked the villagers about their openness to the gospel, an old woman shuffled forward, bowed, and grasped Seng's hands as she said, "We have been waiting for you for twenty years." And then she told him the story of the mysterious God who had hung on the cross. In the 1970s the Khmer Rouge, the brutal, Communist-led regime, took over Cambodia, destroying everything in its path. When the soldiers finally descended on this rural, northern village in 1979, they immediately rounded up the villagers and forced them to start digging their own graves. After the villagers had finished digging, they prepared themselves to die. Some screamed to Buddha, others screamed to demon spirits or to their ancestors. One of the women started to cry for help based on a childhood memory — a story her mother told

her about a God who had hung on a cross. The woman prayed to that unknown God on a cross. Surely, if this God had known suffering, he would have compassion on their plight. Suddenly, her solitary cry became one great wail as the entire village started praying to the God who had suffered and hung on a cross. As they continued facing their own graves, the wailing slowly turned to a quiet crying. There was an eerie silence in the muggy jungle air. Slowly, as they dared to turn around and face their captors, they discovered that the soldiers were gone. As the old woman finished telling this story, she told Pastor Seng that ever since that humid day from 20 years ago the villagers had been waiting, waiting for someone to come and share the rest of the story about the God who had hung on a cross. (Citation: Doris I. Rosser & Ellen Vaughn, *The God Who Hung on the Cross* (Zondervan, 2003), pp. 35-37. From a sermon by Mark Haines, *Ruined Sinners to Reclaim*, 4/15/2011)

### **The God who Hung on Cross – that is the Story**

The God who hung on the cross, that is what we read.

- God, the God, the One and only God, hung on a cross..... for you and for me!
- God, Loving God, Compassionate God, came to be mocked, ridiculed, and spit upon.
- God, Holy God, Perfect God, left His throne in exchange for a brutal cross.
- God, sinless God, Pure and Blameless, went to a cross and hung there for 6 hours

This is who we read about, this is who we follow.....our God hung on a cross! What can we say to that, what can we say about that.....God hung on a cross for you and for me.

### **Proper Perspective**

We can take all that we are facing, and all that we are dealing with, and put it into the context that God hung on the cross.....for me and for you, and then things fall into their proper perspective. Let's start our service off with that perspective, let's start our week off with that perspective, and if need be go back and start your whole life off with that perspective.....God hung on a cross for you.

### **People are Waiting to Hear about Him**

And in our passage today, known as the "Great Commission", let me start with the ending first, and that is that people are waiting to hear about Him. Some have waited twenty years, some longer, some are waiting today. When you speak the word "evangelism" many people immediately get scared, others make the unbiblical statement "ahh that is not my calling", some just tune out because they don't want to hear the calling because it makes them uncomfortable. Let me start with, there are people out there and around us, who are waiting to hear about, they are just waiting for someone to come tell them. We live in a Country that seems to be getting more and more anti-Christian every day, more intolerant towards God and His people, more laws and policies written to silence Christians in the last 2 years than in the history of the Nation. Yes it seems we are becoming more and more a Nation that doesn't want to hear about God, and silence the Christian voice.

### **Same Degree Turning**

But I want to tell you that at the same degree people are turning away from God, I see the same degree people are turning to God. I have found that for every hardened person I met, I met someone equally open to hearing about God. I am blown away by how many people I meet that will listen and have conversation with me about God. As I speak to them I am saying to myself wow I can't believe I am having this conversation, I would never have thought they would engage in a conversation about God. And it is way beyond me, it is you here today, how many people just in the last few months are telling me stories about the opportunity to share Christ (the God who hung on the cross) with people they never would have thought it possible.

### **People are Waiting to Hear – You have to believe that First**

People are waiting to hear about Him, and we have to believe that up front, or we will never leave these seats.

### **Egypt This Week**

And it is worldwide. Let me give you an example. This week (August 2013) what a week in Egypt, unrest and violence. A military takeover has happened, they debate whether it was a coup. The military is battling the Muslim Brotherhood who had power (led by President Morsi), they also are battling other sects you can sure of that. Violence is everywhere in the streets. 175 people were killed just on Friday. The death toll in the past week is close to 1,000 people. And.....listen to this, for some reason many people in Egypt are turning their anger and hatred towards the Christians. This week Christian churches were burned, homes of Christians were looted and burned,

and some Christians were killed, simply for being Christians. Now listen to this, GMO (Global Media Outreach) the Evangelistic organization we partner with and support, who proclaim the gospel online, and then does online discipleship (which some of you do as online missionaries), well they can easily track where people are logging in from. Get this, they are seeing close to 10,000 people every 4 days, there in Egypt, make decisions for Christ.....10,000 (2,500 every day)! Get this, over a 4 day period prior to the protests close to 9,000 people said they made a decision for Christ, and then and then the 4 days after the protest it was 10,000. A ten percent increase in four days! Christians are being beaten, looted, homes and churches burned, some even killed.....and not only are people committing their life to Christ, as the violence increased, so too did those making commitments!

### **This World is Empty – People are Seeing It**

Why and how? Because people are seeing that this world is hopeless, man and dreams can't fix it, it never will be fixed, because the hearts of men are desperately wicked, and all the attempts for unity and peace are hopeless because the heart of man is sinful. People are looking for hope, they are looking for truth in the midst of the lies, and God is drawing men and woman to Himself.

### **People are Waiting to Hear**

Church, people in Egypt, people in America, people in Anne Arundel and the surrounding area are looking for hope, knowing there is more to this life and world than what they see, and many people are just waiting to hear about the God who hung on the cross for them. We don't offer them a philosophy, a method, or a dream.....we offer them what really happened, what really is true, the God who hung on the cross.....for them, the God who then surely cares for them and has compassion for them. People are waiting to hear, start with that today, believe it, stand on it! Do something about it.

**Luke 24:44 Then He said to them, “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.”**

### **Context of Passage**

The context we are picking up in our story is that it is Sunday, Resurrection Sunday, it is very late in the day and all the disciples are gathered in a room together, two of the disciples who had met Jesus on the road to Emmaus had come to tell of their meeting with Jesus, and as they talked Jesus shows up and is now amongst them.

*Luke 24:36–43 (NKJV) <sup>36</sup> Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, “Peace to you.” <sup>37</sup> But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. <sup>38</sup> And He said to them, “Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? <sup>39</sup> Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.” <sup>40</sup> When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. <sup>41</sup> But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, “Have you any food here?” <sup>42</sup> So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. <sup>43</sup> And He took it and ate in their presence.*

### **All Things Written**

Jesus said that all things must be fulfilled which were written about Him in the Old Testament. We have talked and reviewed scriptures that pertain to His First Coming, that there were some 300 of them, and Jesus fulfilled them perfectly. But I want to tell you that all things must be fulfilled that were written about Him (God) doesn't just stop at His coming to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, but also about all the promises He has made to you, on not only who He is, but what He will be to you. We see a glimpse, but oh the depth in just the glimpse when we look at the compound names of God used in the Old Testament. It compounds together God and His character, His nature, and He does all that He is.

Jehovah Jireh - (Genesis 22:14) - The Lord God our Provider / The Lord that Sees

Jehovah Raphah - (Exodus 15:26) - The Lord God our Healer

Jehovah Nissi - (Exodus 17:15) - The Lord God our Banner

Jehovah Shalom - (Judges 6:24) - The Lord God our Peace

Jehovah Ra - (Psalm 23:1) - The Lord God our Shepherd

Jehovah Tsidqenuw - (Jeremiah 23:6) - The Lord God our Righteousness

Jehovah Shammah - (Ezekiel 48:35) - The Lord God our Ever Present One

### **This is His Promise to You Today**

This is His promise to you today, what He promises to be, because He must fulfill all things that were written of Him.

- He will be the God who provides for you, to meet your needs, for He sees all that you are going through,
- He promises to be your healer, in your sickness at times, but for sure at death from the illness of sin. And He will heal your brokenhearted.
- He puts a banner of you, for He delights in you, and He proclaims without shame, this one is Mine!
- He promises to bring you peace even when you are smack dab in the middle of storm, it comes because He is the Prince-of-Peace (Isaiah 9:6) and thus His peace comes when He is present, so in your storm of life He is riding it out with you, holding you with His arms of love.
- He promises to be your shepherd, leading and guiding you every day.
- He promises to be your righteousness, for He who knew no sin because sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21), and He does that daily to remind you that you are right with and before the Holy God, not of your works, but His finished works (Ephesians 2:8-10).
- And He promises, for He must fulfill all things written about Him, to be your ever-present one, for He will never leave you nor forsake you (Hebrews 13:5), for He can't because He must fulfill all things that were written concerning Him.

### **The God who Hung on the Cross / World waits to hear about Such Great Love**

That God who hung on the cross, thinks all these things towards you. Of course there is a world waiting to hear about such great love.

### **Luke 24:45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.**

#### **He wants to Open our Understanding**

He wants to open our understanding so we might comprehend the Scriptures. He loves you, He wants you to know how much, so He left us this book to read so we might fully know and understand how much.....the God who hung on the tree, loves you. How much does He love you? Open it up and you will find out. Too busy to read this week? You ripped yourself off, for there He was waiting for you to open it up, so He could open your understanding about Him. He can only open the understanding to what you are will to open up first. He loves, make the time, have coffee with Jesus every morning. It doesn't have to be Starbucks, it could Food Lion instant, start with a cup, that is about 15 minutes, and hopefully in a few days you'll become addicted to coffee (haha because you just don't want to quit after one cup).

#### **Camden wanting to Play / Open Up – and He will Pour In**

My Camden is 7 now, and he is go-go-go, and he loves playing his Wii and 3DS. It is hard to get him to slow down and spend time with me. A couple weeks ago he was having some friends over so I went out at 7am to cleanup his water slide. He came out while I was cleaning it and came back 5 minutes later wearing his bathing suit, at 7am. He said daddy play with me. I said son let's play when I get home from work, he said daddy please..... and my heart moved and we played in the waterslide at 7am for an hour. I said so what if I am late for work, today I am playing with my son. It was a great morning, and I have a wonderful memory of it. This past Wednesday he came into my office at 7am and said daddy come down stairs and play with me. I was totally exhausted, was just kinda of numb in my chair, and I said ok I will be down after I have a cup of coffee (I wasn't reading my Bible by the way – just sitting there). After about 5 minutes I said to myself, Ray he wants to play with you, you are missing the opportunity, get down there, quit being lazy. So I get up and go downstairs and say let's play son, and with his Wii remote in his hands, he says no thanks I just want to play my game. I totally missed the opportunity. Now God is always waiting for us, but sometimes the opportunity gets overtaken by having to go to work, having to go to school, having to be somewhere, and that sweet time of intimacy and fellowship is lost, and we totally miss it. Make the time, open up the time and He will open you up, and pour Himself into you.

**Luke 24:46 Then He said to them, “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day,**

**Luke 24:47 and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.**

## Bible Markers / Gospel Summed Up

If you are Bible markers and memorizers, then verses 46-47 should be added to your quiver; if you are not Bible markers and memorizers, then start with this one and become one. This is the Gospel summed up and encapsulated. Jesus suffered (why – for the sins of man), but He rose again on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day (the sacrifice was accepted and sin and death have been defeated), and that man is required to repent and turn from sin. There is no salvation apart from repentance.

## Repentance – Change Direction

Repentance (metanoia), means to change one's mind, to change one's direction. Repentance means to change one's mind about sin, that it (sin) is not ok, it is not justified, that you aren't a special case, that God's word is true.....sin is an offense before the Holy God, who hung on a tree. Repentance is part of the Gospel, and all three pieces must be preached, because all three pieces make up the Gospel, Christ suffering and dying, Christ rising from the dead, and that man must repent (turn from His sin).

*Luke 5:31–32 (NKJV)* <sup>31</sup> Jesus answered and said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. <sup>32</sup> I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."

*Acts 3:19 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

## Sentence Structure

The sentence structure here (to suffer, to rise, to preach) are all laid out in the structure of "necessary" or "must":

- He must suffer
- He must rise
- Repentance of sin must be preached

The Gospel is not to be preached without including repentance. Woe to the churches that are preaching a Gospel that doesn't include repentance.

## Repentance is Invitation / Remission = Absolution / 5yrs-5weeks-5days-5hours

Why people are afraid to preach repentance is beyond me because look what is promised with it. ..."remission of sin". Remission means to be absolved, fully pardoned, gone and forgotten, a formal release from debt. Repentance is an invitation to a new life, a new start. Do you want a new start, God is giving you an invitation to a new start today, turn from your sin to Him and He will give you new life. Maybe you say but I asked Him to do that 5 years ago, 5 weeks ago, 5 days ago, 5 hours ago and here I am back in the same place surely by now He has given up on me! Wrong, never.....Lamentations 3, His mercies are new every morning. So claim your new morning.

*Lamentations 3:22–24 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. <sup>23</sup> They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. <sup>24</sup> "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!"

## What do you Get

What do you get in exchange?

Jehovah Jireh - (Genesis 22:14) - The Lord God our Provider / The Lord that Sees

Jehovah Raphah - (Exodus 15:26) - The Lord God our Healer

Jehovah Nissi - (Exodus 17:15 - The Lord God our Banner

Jehovah Shalom - (Judges 6:24) - The Lord God our Peace

Jehovah Ra - (Psalm 23:1) - The Lord God our Shepherd

Jehovah Tsidqenuw - (Jeremiah 23:6) - The Lord God our Righteousness

Jehovah Shammah - (Ezekiel 48:35) - The Lord God our Ever Present One

## Luke 24:48 And you are witnesses of these things.

## Starting in Jerusalem / Maybe you Think Anywhere Else / People waiting to Hear God Hung Cross

Verse 47 – all nations starting in Jerusalem – what a daunting task, of all places starting in Jerusalem. Hey guys, you know the place they just killed me at, yea I want you to go start there. Jerusalem would be the worse place to start so we would think, but as we read the Book of Acts, we see what we would think was the worse was actually the best. Maybe that is what you think of the places you would start, your home, your neighborhood, anywhere but

there. Start there, I think you will be surprised. People have been waiting, some for 20 years, to hear about the God who hung on the cross.

### **Notice – Just Witness**

And notice the freeing release, “and you are witnesses to these things”. Notice Jesus doesn’t call His disciples defense attorneys or judges, lawyers or juries. He calls them witnesses. We often think we have to argue with people, debate against people, present persuasive cases to people. But the Lord doesn’t call us to any of that. He simply says, “Share with people what you’ve seen. Share with people what you’ve found. Share with people what I have done in and for you.” Witnessing is a total joy when you simply share with people that which blesses you. If you have an answer to prayer or an insight into the Word, share it with those around you as if they’re already saved. That way there will be a lot less arguing and a lot more sharing. Share with those around you whatever you’re learning, whatever you’re experiencing. Be faithful in being a witness, and leave the rest to the Lord.

### **Build Up a Brother**

And let me throw out another thought for you, when you have opportunity to talk to someone else who you are trying to open up the gospel to, and you both have a common friend who you know is saved.....build that person up, and make reference to their faith. You may open the door for the other to share with them, but at the least you tie a theme and a thread together for that person to consider why the two of you are so different and have the peace and joy that you do. I was doing that at work this week, I met someone I had never met before and we both had a common colleague and started to talk about him, and I said “he is such an awesome brother, I am so blessed to be his coworker and friend”, and I see the guy was taken aback by someone talking like that in the workplace. But he immediately responded with a smile, he truly is the salt of the earth isn’t he (he identified to me his belief too). So now our thread is three deep, now I have one more person I can say, he is an awesome brother, to the next person we have as a common friend.

### **Training & Opportunities**

So people are waiting, are you ready to go? Do you want more training? Check out the Way of the Master Course presented by Ray Comfort.

Do you want more opportunity?

- Be a door greeter here at the church, who knows where that will go.
- Join Global Media Outreach
- Participate in Harvest America
- Join up on our weekly street ministry
- Be a follow-up person in the neighborhood after we send postcard invitations for people to come to church.
- Lots of opportunity to “just be a witness of the things you have seen”

### **Must come next Week**

But ya got to come back for next week’s study, because no matter what, we need the promise of power, the Holy Spirit in our lives:

*Luke 24:49 (NKJV)* <sup>49</sup> Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”

*End of Study*

# To Kiss His Feet

## (Luke 24:49-53)

*Luke 24:49 (NKJV) <sup>49</sup> Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."*

### Thomas Aquinas

Do you remember the story from Acts 3, when Peter and John healed the lame man, and they said silver and gold have I not, but what I do have I give you, in the name of Jesus Christ, arise and walk. The story is told of one of the first popes, and on a particular day he was counting all the silver and gold coins that the church had brought in, and in walked Thomas Aquinas and the pope said well Thomas I guess the church can no longer say silver and gold have I not (with laugh and a smile); Thomas Aquinas answers, true, and neither can the church no longer say, in the Name of Jesus Christ, arise and walk.

*Acts 3:1-8 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. <sup>2</sup> And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms from those who entered the temple; <sup>3</sup> who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms. <sup>4</sup> And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, "Look at us." <sup>5</sup> So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. <sup>6</sup> Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." <sup>7</sup> And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. <sup>8</sup> So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them—walking, leaping, and praising God.*

### We have been Blessed / There is a Promise – Legal Term

The churches of America been blessed tremendously financially, the Christians of America have been blessed unlike any other Country in the world with religious freedom and wealth, and thus it has been seen that once they reach a certain point materially and physically they forget Luke 24:49, you will be endued with power from on high. There is a promise of power, and thus for us that means there is a reason for that promise. We as disciples, followers of Christ, have been given a promise, the word as it was used in the time of this writing was a legal term, meaning it had to come to pass.....it was law.

*Luke 24:49 (NKJV) <sup>49</sup> Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."*

### Why the Promise

So why the "Promise", with a capital "P", what is the "Promise", in the weeks to come we will not only look into the "why and the what", but we will "watch" the Promise (capital P) in real lives and in real actions. The Promise is the Promise of the Holy Spirit in your life, moving in your life, changing your life, and changing the lives of others around you.

### Are You Content

Are you content? Are you satisfied with a 9-5 life? Or do you want more, do you want to experience God in a deeper and more personal way? I have walked with the Lord for over 20 years and have been in Senior Pastor ministry for over a decade, and I can tell you that I want more! Do you want more, are you ready for more? Then commit yourself to the next month or two as God teaches us more about what this Promise (with a capital P) means, as He does more than teach us, He takes the ink off these pages and turn them into spirit, moving through flesh and blood, into a personal and intimate experience with Him.

### The Promise is God

The Promise is the Holy Spirit, the Promise is God, therefore the Promise is God! God is sending Himself upon us, into us, in a "powerful and personal" way, and when God comes with, in, and upon you.....your life will never be the same.

### Not Strange

We are not talking about strange and bizarre things, for God is not strange and bizarre, we are talking all the nature and attributes that He is, love, compassion, freedom, and holiness just to name a few.

## 80 Studies / Not End but Only the Beginning

After 80 studies thorough Luke, we come to our last 5 verses, but it is not the end, but only the beginning. Put your finger in Acts chapter one and lets start into our study, journey, experience. For Acts was written by Luke, and thus you could call Acts, 2<sup>nd</sup> Luke ☺.

**Luke 24:49** Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”

**Luke 24:50** And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them.

**Luke 24:51** Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven.

**Luke 24:52** And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy,

**Luke 24:53** and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen.

**Acts 1:1** The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

**Acts 1:2** until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen,

**Acts 1:3** to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

**Acts 1:4** And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” He said, “you have heard from Me;

**Acts 1:5** for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

**Acts 1:6** Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”

**Acts 1:7** And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.

**Acts 1:8** But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

## Verse 49 – Verse 8 / Chapter 2

Verse 49 He says He will send the Promise (capital P), and verse 8 it is said to us again, and in chapter 2 we will read of the fulfillment. He promises to send God, for the Holy Spirit is God. All the promises of God are yes and amen; He must and He will fulfill His promises to all those willing to receive His promises:

*Acts 2:1–4 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. <sup>2</sup> And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. <sup>4</sup> And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

*2 Corinthians 1:20 (NKJV) <sup>20</sup> For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.*

**Luke 24:49** Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”

## Apostle – Sent out One

The word here for “send” in the Greek is “apostello” and it is where we get our English word “Apostle”. It simply means “to be sent out”. An Apostle is a “sent out one”. Now there are no apostles today as we see in the terms of the early church leadership (apostles had to have an eyewitness account of Jesus – Acts 1:22-23). But there are apostles today in the sense that God for 2,000 years has been sending people out with this message, with His heart, with His Good News. You are an apostle, for you are sent out by the Lord. His saying of Go, is His sending you out:

*Matthew 28:18–20 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.*

## **Disciples - Apostles**

So what we read and will continue to build on and glean upon is that when God sends us out, He sends us out with power. The Christian life is basically two-fold, being a disciple and being an apostle. Too much of either one and we can be out-of-balance. Disciple is a follower, a student. An apostle is sent out and is God's vessel. Too much sitting as a disciple we become bloated sheep, too much going-going-going, and we can become burned-out. God desires us to live in a sweet and sound balance. We sit at His feet and we study His word, we live a life of obedience and holiness, and we seek Him for direction in our lives. Then He says go, and we go. We have to be good disciples before we can ever be good apostles.

## **You are an Apostle**

Lots of people in what they "think" is humility (but is not) miss that they are apostles; not apostles like Peter and Paul, but still yet God considers each and every one of you worthy, qualified, and precious enough to send out. You are an apostle.....sent out by God, and you can grab hold of that and say, "then so shall I live as such". It will be an amazing life, because being sent, comes with the Promise (capital P), of power, of God himself.

## **Westminster Confession**

The Westminster Confession of Faith is a Reformed confession of faith. Drawn up by the 1646 Westminster Assembly as part of the Westminster Standards to be a confession of the Church of England, it became and remains the 'subordinate standard' of doctrine in the Church of Scotland, and has been influential within Presbyterian churches worldwide. It took them over 5 years to craft it. It has several dozen chapters to it, covering topics ranging from validity of the Scriptures, repentance, free-will, sanctification, marriage and divorce....it is pretty deep. Now my point is not to discuss the doctrine and theology of it, of what I agree and disagree with, but what I want to make mention of today is that after the several dozen chapters of theology it covers, the 5 years of debating and developing of it, they boiled it down to one central theme that I love.....

### **Q. 1. What is the chief end of man?**

**A. Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.**

## **Good Summation**

It is a great summation, "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever". We enjoy Him forever by being His disciple, following Him and learning of Him every day, of His great love and awesome power. We bring Him glory by living for Him, living a life set-apart to and for Him, obedient to Him, and by telling the world (apostle – sent out one) of all He is, and His invitation to the Gospel (Good News).

## **Simply Witnesses / Not 2 Months of Evangelism**

And as we had talked about in the last couple studies, not to go witnessing, but to be a witness. No pressure to be a witness, because we are merely a reflection of God in us and overflowing from us. By the way this is not going to be several weeks of saying go evangelism, it is going to be several weeks of getting more of God in our lives, in a fresh and powerful way. Good chance you will want to tell others, because you won't be able to contain the God who is in you!

*Acts 1:8 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

## **The Ascension**

**Luke 24:50 And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them.**

## **Lifted His Hands**

Why did Jesus lift His hands when He blessed Him? So they could see the holes is what I believe. That is the blessings, the nail scarred hands, the proof of the price that He was willing to pay for us. Next to the hole, is our name, permanently engraved, never to change, we are His....forever, and the price has been paid that our sin will never again separate us from Him.

*Isaiah 49:15–16 (NKJV) <sup>15</sup> "Can a woman forget her nursing child, And not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you. <sup>16</sup> See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Your walls are continually before Me.*

## **Communion Scripture**

*Isaiah 9:6–7 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

**Luke 24:51 Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven.**

## **Continual**

I love this because this word blessed is in the “present tense”, and it means that it is a continual verb, that is had and has no end to it. The word “blessed” in verse 50 is what is called “aorist verb tense” and it means “an event happened”. So Luke tells of an event that happened, Jesus was blessing these disciples, and as He was pronouncing blessings upon them, as He was speaking (while He was speaking), He started to raise off the ground, and rise higher and higher, up into heaven, to a point that you could no longer see Him.....and catch this, nor hear Him! He pronounced blessings upon them all the way until they could no longer see Him or hear Him. There was, there is, no ending to the blessings God pronounces upon you and for you. God can’t say enough great things about what He thinks of you, nor can He say enough about the great things he wants to do for you. Do you believe that?

## **Glad Not 10 Things**

Imagine if it was as so, that He did stop speaking and then rise? Then we would stop on those ten or twenty things that He said, and eventually Christian denominations would have dwelt there and divided there. But what we see is that it is endless of how He thinks of us, and it is all GOOD!

*Psalms 139:17–18 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! <sup>18</sup> If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; When I awake, I am still with You.

## **Blessing = Eulogy**

The word for blessing here in the Greek is “eulogeo”, it is where we get our word eulogy. We give eulogies at funerals after people die, we talk about how great a person they were. God gives His eulogies to the living, He talks about how great you are while you are still living.

**Luke 24:52 And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy,  
Luke 24:53 and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen.**

## **Response**

What other response could there be when we “get-it”, that this is what He thinks of us, and (seeing those nail scarred hands), this is what He has done for us.....we worship Him.

## **Night of Worship**

I invite you to come to our “Night of Worship” where we come to simply bring Him a song from our heart and praises from our lips. Come Tuesday nights as we have “Prayer and Praise”. We worship Him, we give Him thanks, and we ask Him to move in our lives, believing that He will, because His blessing have never ceased.

## **Continual**

This word continually means “all men, everyone, because of this reason”. They all came together, every one of them, because of this reason, to worship God and give Him praise, because what He has done, and simply because He is God and is worthy to be praised.

## **All Together**

I love this picture, they were all together, and they were all worshipping and praising. You see a beautiful picture of unity, oneness, togetherness. They didn’t care about the other stuff, they only cared about that He is alive, and He is their God. Life was simple, life was good. They were glad to be together, they were glad to have each other, they were one with God and one with each other.

## Beauty in Unity

You can just feel this love and warmth, celebration and joy, just lifting off the pages. There is beauty in unity, and may we always keep that unity, so we can always enjoy this beauty. Sadly, the church can quickly start to major in the minors, and minor in the major, and unity is gone, gone, gone. With it goes the love and compassion.

## The Bridge

I heard a man tell a story once (haha)..... I was walking across a bridge one day, and I saw a man standing on the edge, about to jump off. I immediately ran over and said "Stop! Don't do it!" "Why shouldn't I?" he said. I said, "Well, there's so much to live for!" "Like what?"

- "Well ... are you religious or atheist?" "Religious."
- "Me too! Are you Christian or Jewish?" "Christian."
- "Me too! Are you Catholic or Protestant?" "Protestant."
- "Me too! Are you Episcopalian or Baptist?" "Baptist."
- "Wow! Me too! Are you Baptist Church of God or Baptist Church of the Lord?" "Baptist Church of God."
- "Me too! Are you Original Baptist Church of God, or are you Reformed Baptist Church of God?" "Reformed Baptist Church of God."
- "Me too! Are you Reformed Baptist Church of God, reformation of 1879, or Reformed Baptist Church of God, reformation of 1915?" "Reformed Baptist Church of God, reformation of 1915!"
- "To which I said, "Die, heretic" and pushed him off.

## Beauty in Unity

Oh the things the church gets distracted by. Oh the beauty in unity!

## To Kiss His Feet

What does this word "worship" mean, it means "to kiss the feet". It was how it was used in the day of this writing as one would bow down to a king, a superior. And here we see the disciples gathering together in unity, and the same posture, they are all bowing down on their knees, face to the ground, kissing the feet of Jesus. Total humility, and total release of their heart unto God. Giving thanks with a grateful heart, not wanting or caring for anything else, except Him! May we do the same today in hearts, maybe for some of you, while on yours knees, for when you assume that position, humility opens a flood gate of "we lay our lives down, and God pours Himself in".

## Acts 1-2

It has been great to studying through Luke with you for these 18 months, but we are not done, as we have to see what happened when verse 49 came to pass, and what will happen when it comes to pass in our lives too. So we will continue on in the first two chapters of Acts, for the best commentary on the Bible is the Bible, and thus Acts chapters 1-2, are great commentary on Luke 24:49.

### Q. 1. What is the chief end of man?

A. Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.

## End of Study

# The Story Continues

## You shall Receive Power – Acts Introduction – (Acts 1:1-3)

### **We Ended Luke 24 – Receive Power**

After 24 glorious chapters of studying the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, after seeing His death, His resurrection, and then finishing last week with Him telling the apostles and disciples to tarry in Jerusalem for the Promise (capital P) which is the Holy Spirit, which is God, we saw Jesus ascend into heaven.

*Luke 24:49 (NKJV)* <sup>49</sup> Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."

### **Continuation of the Story**

The Book of Acts is written by Luke, and thus is a perfect commentary and follow on to the story we have been following for some 18 months now.

### **We will read of a Movement / Look around see Need (World, Country, State, County, Home)**

What we will be reading in these weeks and months to come, was a movement across the whole land. We will be reading the first recorded revival of Christianity. As we look around our world today, as we look at the spiritual state of not just our country, but our state, and not just our state but our county, and not just our county but our hometowns, and not just our hometowns, but our homes, as we all see the need for a fresh move of God's Spirit again over the land.

### **Books on Past Revivals / Will Read Blueprint of All / No End – Holy Spirit resides in Man**

There are many books out there on past revivals, and they are wonderful to read (the Azusa Revival, the Welsh Revival, the Great Awakening). Those revivals are great to read about and they do excite me, but what we will be reading in the months to come is the blueprints for all revivals. The revivals I mentioned all had starts and finishes, and pretty much all had their geographical boundaries. Now I don't want you to think that we will be having a 28 chapter study in evangelism for the revival we read of here in Acts had or has no end point, as the Book of Acts is often called the Acts of the Apostles, but the better title is the Acts of the Holy Spirit as God took up residence within man, and then moved and flowed in and through him, and wonderfully that revival happens everyday for each individual who invites Him into their heart. That is truly the heart and theme of this Book of Acts.

### **Look at Historically and Personally / Vessels – were Uneducated – Had been with Jesus**

We will look at this book historically, and personally. Historically for the history of the early church, and personally for the desire of God's Spirit to move through every man, woman, and child. Historically the revival in the Book of Acts had no geographical boundaries as we will read that they turned the world upside-down, and later the Apostle Paul will report that the gospel had reached the whole world, all through the vessels we will read were uneducated and ignorant (as describe by the religious leaders), the only training they had was, that they had been with Jesus. Can you qualify for that description?

*Acts 17:6 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup>But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, "These who have turned the world upside down have come here too.

*Colossians 1:4-6 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup>since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints; <sup>5</sup>because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, <sup>6</sup>which has come to you, as it has also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, as it is also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth;

*Acts 4:13 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup>Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.

### **Sadly 1<sup>st</sup> Church Revival ended 1<sup>st</sup> Century / Jude – Ephesus - 7 Churches**

Sadly, although God the Holy Spirit desires to keep the church ablaze in His Glory, we see through the Scriptures that the revival of the actual first Church didn't even make it out of the first century (although the Holy Spirit is still bringing personal revival everyday throughout the world). Jude will say to the early church he had to write to defend the faith that many were already departing from, Jesus saying to the church in

- Ephesus, that they had left their first love.
- Pergamos and Thyatira were all wrapped up in sexual immorality.

- Sardis had a name that they were alive, but Christ said they were dead.
- Laodicea had simply become Lukewarm.

We find at the end of the letters to the 7 churches, that Jesus is standing outside the door having to knock to get in. *Jude 1:3 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup>*Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.*

*Ephesus - Revelation 2:4 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup>*Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.*

*Pergamos - Revelation 2:14 (NKJV)* <sup>14</sup>*But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.*

*Thyatira - Revelation 2:20-21 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup>*Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow <sup>ε</sup>that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. <sup>21</sup>And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent.*

*Sardis - Revelation 3:1 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup>*“And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, ‘These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: “I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.*

*Laodicea - Revelation 3:15-17 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup>*“I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. <sup>16</sup>So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither <sup>ε</sup>cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. <sup>17</sup>Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—*

*Revelation 3:20 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup>*Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.*

### **They were Guilty of Forgetting the Pattern – Departed from the Power / Thomas Aquinas**

Those churches were guilty of forgetting the pattern that was shown in the Book of Acts, and they departed from the Power that set the world on-fire. I am reminded of the story of one of the first popes, and on a particular day he was counting all the silver and gold coins that the church had brought in, and in walked Thomas Aquinas and the pope said well Thomas I guess the church can no longer say silver and gold have I not (with laugh and a smile); Thomas Aquinas answers, true, and neither can the church no longer say, in the Name of Jesus Christ, arise and walk.

### **Church grown Materially – Dissipated Spiritually / A.W. Tozer**

Yes the church has grown materially to prosper, but has greatly dissipated in its power spiritually in many areas of the church (the same can be said for individuals also). AW Tozer wrote that if the Holy Spirit withdraw Himself from the Church, today, 95% of what was going on in the Church would continue uninterrupted (as they continue in their programs and formulas) and no one would know the difference; but if the Holy Spirit departed from the Church in the Book of Acts, 95% of what was going on would have stopped immediately, and everyone would have known the difference.

### **Holy Spirit mentioned 59 Times / We Read Sketches – not all Inclusive / Wrapped Up**

The Holy Spirit will be mentioned 59 times in this Book of Acts. What we will read are sketches, and are not all inclusive, and we should be thankful that we don't have every detail, because we would then be all worried and wrapped up in making sure we were accomplishing every detail (or else we wouldn't be successful), we would be more wrapped-up in that and totally missing the mark that we need to allow the Spirit to be able to move freely.

### **Whole Point! Of Book – People getting on their Knees / Here's Pattern – See me for Details**

The whole point of the Book of Acts we will see are people getting on their knees, burying their face in prayer, seeking the Living God, asking Him to move in their lives and do a mighty work in their lives first, and then the lives of others around them. In other words, God says to us today that I have given you in the Book of Acts, patterns, pictures, and principles of how the Church is to be, but see Me for the details pertaining to the details. This applies for the Church, and the family, and the individual personally; see Me for the details, walk with Me, speak with Me, let Me give you the details, for that is the New Covenant, God's Spirit writing His will on the table of your heart. You and the Lord walking together and talking things over, and then responding to His prompting.

*Hebrews 10:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup>*“This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,”*

### **Theme of the Book of Acts:**

*(Acts 1:8 NKJV) "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

### **Outline of the Book of Acts:**

- You Shall Receive Power: Acts 1-2
- Witnesses to Me in Jerusalem: Acts 3-7
- Witnesses to Me in Judea and Samaria: Acts 8-12
- Witnesses to Me to the End of the Earth: Acts 13-28

### **For You Personally – It begins Individually then Moves to Surrounding / Go Therefore**

I want you to see this, that the revival begins personally and individually (You – shall receive power) before it moves outward to surrounding areas. After the Holy Spirit came upon a man, that man went out and changed Jerusalem, then onward to Judea and Samaria, and then to the end of the earth. The Book of Acts is a very historical book, as we read the history of the early Church; however, personally and practically it is a picture and promise of what God will do in your life personally when you allow the Holy Spirit (God) to have free-reign within your being. When Jesus said to go therefore and make disciples, the word for go there is a participle which simply means, “as you are going”, ..... make disciples.

- So, as you are raising your kids, .....make disciples.
- as you as loving your spouse, .....make disciples.
- as you are going to the grocery store, .....make disciples.
- as you are walking on your school campus or workplace, .....make disciples.

What we will be reading over the weeks and months to come are men and woman who got filled with the Holy Spirit (God), and then went forth from there and then great and mighty things happened; big difference from going someplace, because God said to go, and then saying ok now that we are here Lord, make great and mighty things happen. Church, for me personally I don't want to read books and accounts of other people's revival, I want to live my own revival, and I want to live it here and now, what happened in the Book of Acts 2,000 years ago I so desperately want to happen in my heart right here today; I do not want a Christianity of anything less.

*Matthew 28:18-20 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup>And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup>Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.*

### **Introduction**

**(Acts 1:1 NKJV) The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,**

### **Former Account – Book of Luke / Luke Intelligent / Col 4 – a Doctor / Possibly a Slave**

*Acts 1:1 (a) - The former account I made, O Theophilus* - The Book of Acts was written by Luke. The “former account” referred to is the Gospel that bears his name. From his exacting use of the Greek language, we know Luke was an intelligent man. We also know from Colossians 4:14 that he was a doctor. Many Bible scholars and historians further believe that, since the slaves of wealthy men usually held the position of physician, Luke must likely was a slave. Considering how much I spend each year on doctors, I might be better just to employ one personally myself.

*Luke 1:1-4 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup>Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, <sup>2</sup>just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us, <sup>3</sup>it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, <sup>4</sup>that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.*

*Colossians 4:14-15 (NKJV) <sup>14</sup>Luke the beloved physician and Demas greet you. <sup>15</sup>Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea, and Nymphas and the church that is in his house.*

### **Theophilus / Set Luke Free / Amazing Energy into 1 Person / First Principle Jesus Ex.**

*Acts 1:1 (b) - ...O Theophilus* - Theophilus name means, “lover of God”, so for all you lovers of God, this book is written to you. Scholars and historians believe Theophilus was Luke's owner who, following his own conversion to Jesus Christ, freed Luke to travel with the apostle Paul. I am intrigued as I stop to consider the incredible energy and effort Luke expended to communicate the gospel to his former owner. After all, Luke didn't say, “Today I am writing the Bible. I had better keep my wits sharp because people will be studying these words for many centuries.” No, for all Luke knew, he was simply writing to one man, which is the same mentality our Lord had. How much

energy do we personally put into communicating the gospel to one person. So often we think we should put our energy into mass audiences, but Doctor Luke shows us a the first principle in the Book, which is powerful principle, a pattern, and that is put as much energy into sharing the gospel with one person as if you were sharing with 1000 people. Luke is only following the example that Jesus set:

- As we see Jesus was the Good Shepherd who left the ninety and nine to find one who was lost (Matthew 18:12).
- He was the Great Communicator who conversed with one woman at a well (John 4:7).
- He was the gifted Teacher who sought out one man in a tree, who was called Zachesus (Luke 19:5).

### **Jesus Began – Acts a Continuation / No End – Story of Holy Spirit filling a Man / Change**

Acts 1:1 (c) - ...of all that Jesus began - In his Gospel, Luke had written of the life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus, but that was only the beginning. The Book of Acts is the continuation of the gospel story. And the story goes on. The gospel of Luke was all Jesus had done, and now the second account is all that Jesus Christ went on to do. Acts could have easily been called “2 Luke”. Again, let it be said that the Book of Acts has no end, here is no period, it is a continual story of the Holy Spirit filling man, and then moving through a man or woman. How important that is for us today as possibly more than any other time in the last 25 years, our Country is crying out for change. People see and feel a need for change, the status quo is no longer good enough, there is a realization that things need to change. The past Presidential election “change” was the theme, but that didn’t play out very well now did it? Whoever gets elected won’t bring the changed people are looking for, and they will be left even more disillusioned and empty. The good news, the Book of Acts has no period to it, and it is a continual story of the Holy Spirit filling man, and then moving through a man or woman. What exciting times for us to live in this Country. That’s what makes being a Christian so exciting! Jesus is still working because He is Alive! The tomb is empty.

### **How will you Go Through Life / Will you make a Difference / God does it Through Man**

Christian, how will you go through this life, will you just pass through making no difference? Or will you change the immediate circle in which you live? Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever; the Holy Spirit moves the same today, as He did 2000 years ago in the upper room, where God turned the world upside-down starting with only 120. God changed the world through the vocal chords of human beings, through the hands of human beings, through the broken hearts and bent knees of people who desired to see their world changed in their generation. The Spirit of God is moving over the whole earth looking for men and woman’s whose heart are turned for God:

*Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup>Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*

*Ezekiel 22:30 (NKJV) <sup>30</sup>So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.*

### **Do and Teach – Divine Order / Want to Impact Children, Ministry / Live it Out Before Them**

Acts 1:1 (d) - ...both to do and teach - That’s always the divine order—doing first, then teaching. If you want to impact your children, if you want to have power in ministry, follow this simple principle: Do it before you teach it. If you try to teach it before you do it, it just won’t work. Our Lord moved with incredible authority, and those who heard Him were “astonished at his doctrine” (Matthew 7:28) because He didn’t only teach the Word theoretically, He lived it out before them, and He provided us the power to do it through His Holy Spirit living in us.

*Matthew 7:28-29 (NKJV) <sup>28</sup>And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, <sup>29</sup>for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.*

*Ezra 7:10 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup>For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel.*

**(Acts 1:2 NKJV) until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen,**

**(Acts 1:3 NKJV) to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.**

### **Science – Repetition of Same Experiment / Infallible Proofs / Historical Writings**

Verse 3 says many infallible proofs - Science says if there is any such thing as infallible proof, it is the repetition of the same experiment:

- Jesus rose from the dead, and Mary Magdalene encountered him—experiment one.

- The women encountered him—experiment two.
- The disciples encountered him—experiment three.
- The apostles encountered him—experiment four.
- Five hundred people saw him after the Resurrection—experiment five.

Each one of these is the repetition of the same experiment. They all encountered the same phenomenon. What was it? He was alive! That's what changed the history of the world. Jesus Christ is a historical figure, He is not some mystical spirit that people felt, Jesus Christ was a man (the God-man as we know) who walked this earth some 2,000 years ago. There are many historical writings that concur with that. We read of Him by the Historian Josephus, we read of Him in the Jewish History Book (called the Talmud).

### **Seen 40 days / Ophthalmologist - they Stared at Him / Our Jurisprudence System**

*Acts 1:3 (b) ...being seen of them forty days -* The Greek word for “seen” is optanomai, from which we get our word ophthalmologist, or eye doctor. It literally means Jesus was being “eyeballed” by them, “stared at,” or “scrutinized.” The disciples didn’t gaze at Jesus with wispy, dreamy looks. No, they stared at Him. Wouldn’t you? If your leader had been crucified, but came back on the scene from time to time, wouldn’t you eyeball him? Not only did His disciples see Him, but according to 1 Corinthians 15:6, there were five hundred eyewitnesses to whom Jesus appeared following His Resurrection. By our jurisprudence system today two witnesses can send someone to the electric chair; here Jesus is being witnessed by 100’s of people, confirming He is alive and the promise of the resurrection is true.

*1 Corinthians 15:3-8 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup>For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup>and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup>and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. <sup>6</sup>After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. <sup>7</sup>After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. <sup>8</sup>Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.

### **Jesus appears – then Disappears / Upper Room – Emmaus / Jesus Teaching to live in Presence / Not Leave nor Forsake / If we Lived in His Presence – Sermons on Holiness**

We read of Jesus appearing, and then disappearing before His disciples over this 40 days period. There they are behind closed doors and Jesus walks through the wall. There are the disciples on the road to Emmaus, they stop to eat, there Jesus is, then there Jesus wasn’t. Jesus was teaching His disciples to live continually in the presence of God, that Jesus was there, just as he said He would be, that He would never leave them nor forsake them. Christian, if we were truly conscious of His presence, how many sermons would we ever need to hear on holiness, on purity, on guarding our mind and thoughts? If we were truly conscious of His presence how many sermons would I need to preach on not entering into sexual sin, to not using our tongue as a sword to shred a loved one, a friend, a fellow believer. Over these 40 days Jesus taught them that He was always there, even when they didn’t see Him.

*John 20:26 (NKJV)* <sup>26</sup>And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, “Peace to you!”

*Luke 24:30-31 (NKJV)* <sup>30</sup>Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. <sup>31</sup>Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.

*John 21:1 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup>After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and in this way He showed Himself:

### **That Consciousness / Endured the Pain**

It was that consciousness of God being ever present in their lives coupled with the truth of the resurrection that would bring them to that place that they would be willing to endure the following:

- Matthew was burned alive (covered with pitch and tar), but never recanted his account.
- Mark was dragged behind horses and died of the wounds,
- Luke was hung on an olive tree until he died,
- Peter crucified upside down,
- James (the greater – Book of Acts) was beheaded,
- James the (lesser) was thrown off the temple and when his body landed they beat him with clubs,
- Bartholomew was skinned alive,
- Andrew was crucified but preached to his tormentors until he died,
- Thomas was impaled,
- Jude was shot through with 18 arrows,
- John was boiled and banished.

- Paul was beheaded in Rome.
- Many of them saw their families tortured and killed because they continued to preach the Resurrection.
- But not one ever recanted his story.

### **They had Ever Present Consciousness of God / Didn't Ask Definitions / Changed the World**

These men and woman had the ever present consciousness of Christ, and their eyes beheld the resurrection and they lived in the light of the resurrection. They didn't live a life that asked, what is the definition of drunkardness, or, but we are married in God's eyes because we really love each other, or, well what I'm doing isn't hurting anyone. These men and woman lived in the consciousness of the ever-present Lord, and they changed the world around them. As for me, if I can just change my family, I will consider it a life well spent. To do so it begins by living in the consciousness of the ever-present God. They were constantly conscious of another Kingdom in another world.

### **I Want it so Desperately / May this Book Change our Lives**

I want this so desperately, oh how I pray this study in Acts changes my life, that I will never be the same during and after this study.

### **How will you Go Through Life / Will you make a Difference / God does it Through Man**

How will you go through this life, will you just pass through making no difference? Or will you change the immediate circle in which you live? Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever; the Holy Spirit moves the same today, as He did 2000 years ago in the upper room, where God turned the world upside-down starting with only 120. God changed the world through the vocal chords of human beings, through the hands of human beings, through the broken hearts of people who desired to see their world changed in their generation. The Spirit of God is moving over the whole earth looking for men and woman's whose heart are turned for God:

*Ezekiel 22:30 ( NKJV ) <sup>30</sup>So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.*

## *You Shall Receive Power (Acts 1:4-8)*

**Acts 1:4–8 (NKJV)** <sup>4</sup> And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” He said, “you have heard from Me; <sup>5</sup> for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” <sup>6</sup> Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” <sup>7</sup> And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. <sup>8</sup> But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

### **We Ended Luke 24 – Receive Power**

After 24 glorious chapters of studying the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, after seeing His death, His resurrection, and then finishing our last study in Luke with Him telling the apostles and disciples to tarry in Jerusalem for the Promise (capital P) which is the Holy Spirit, which is God, we saw Jesus ascend into heaven.

**Luke 24:49 (NKJV)** <sup>49</sup> Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”

### **Continuation of the Story**

The Book of Acts is written by Luke, and thus is a perfect commentary and follow on to the story we have been following for some 18 months now.

### **Theme of the Book of Acts:**

*(Acts 1:8 NKJV)* "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

### **Title – You Shall Receive Power / Promises to Disciples – to Us Today**

The title of today's message is “You Shall Receive Power”, as Jesus will give the promise of the baptism (baptism – to immerse) of the Holy Spirit to His disciples, and that very same promise He promised them, He promises you and I today, to be immersed in the Holy Spirit, so much so that He (the Holy Spirit – the 3<sup>rd</sup> Person of the Trinity – God Himself) overflows from us.

### **I Spent Years Struggling / Drive Through Mentality / Thankfully I Continued**

I spent years of my life struggling for the Holy Spirit. Going forward at special altar calls (as a pastor would say if you want the Holy Spirit come up here) and so I would make the trip, everybody would stare at me, people would lay hands on me, and then I would walk back to my seat feeling so stupid because everyone was looking at me, and I knew nothing had changed. Oh don't get me wrong, we need the anointing of the Holy Spirit, but so much like the American mentality I wanted the pull-up, drive-through, One to go filling of the Holy Spirit. But thankfully, I continued on in my walk even without “The Moment”, and God revealed to me how to have continual baptism of the Holy Spirit, how to experience and enjoy that power (dunamis) from on high on a continual basis.

### **Let me State I Recognize / Not Daily – Need it Continually – Recognize there is MORE!**

Let me state I recognize in my life that I don't experience it on a daily basis – and I only have myself to blame for that (we will talk more about that in our study today), and yes I (we) do need to continually come back for the filling (and we will talk more about that in our study today), and I would also like to caveat this study with, that although I have experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit many a times in my life and have seen great and mighty things through that baptism, I still can't help but feel deep in my heart that there is still so much more to be experienced for me personally, and therefore I join you not only as a teacher today, but a fellow student, for I am nowhere near satisfied where I am with the Lord, and that is good thing, and I pray that is where you are at yourself today – and if so, let's open our hearts right now and ask God to do a mighty work again (just as He did in the upper room 2,000 years ago), may He do another one today!

## Let's Pray

### **First – What is It / Outline / 3 Workings**

The first things we need to make clarity about is exactly what is the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and to understand that we need to look at the 3 workings of the Holy Spirit, and here will be the outline for today's study on, "You Shall Receive Power".

#### The Baptism with the Holy Spirit:

- What It Is (The 3 Prepositions of the Holy Spirit)
- What It Does (The 3 Places Personally)
- How to Receive It (The 7 Steps to Receiving the Baptism of the Holy Spirit).

### **What it is (The 3 Prepositions of the Holy Spirit)**

#### **Holy Spirit Promised**

**(Acts 1:4 NKJV)** And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me;

**(Acts 1:5 NKJV)** "for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

### **Much Confusion – People then Miss Out / Need to Understand the 3 Relationships**

There is so much confusion today about the baptism in the Spirit. People get hung up and miss out because they don't understand there are three relationships Jesus talked about that a person can and should have with the Holy Spirit (also called Holy Ghost – which I don't care for that translation personally).

#### **1.) With Us "para" / John 14:17 / God will use Vessels like John Baptist /**

He is with us (the Greek preposition "para" which means alongside of). The Holy Spirit comes alongside of a person and God's Spirit moves across the earth witnessing to a person their need for a Savior for their sin separates them from the Holy God (John 14:17). God will often time use vessels such as a John the Baptist to proclaim His message. You never would have been born again unless the Holy Spirit had been with you, whispering, "God loves you. You're a sinner, but Jesus died in your place." Speaking the message of sin, separation, repentance, and restoration. Whether it was through a meeting at church, or at a Billy Graham crusade, whether it was over the radio, or through a friend, it was the Holy Spirit with you who began to tug on the strings of your heart, drawing you to salvation. If the Holy Spirit had not been with you, you could not have been born again. "There is none that seeketh after God," wrote Paul (Romans 3:11). "We are born again not of the will of man, but of God" (see John 1:13). A person can't, on his own, say, "Hmm. I think I'll be born again." The only way someone can be born again is for God to sovereignly choose to send His Holy Spirit to work with him. God the Holy Spirit comes alongside a person and says, "Hello, I love you, let Me open your eyes to see it".

**John 14:17 (NKJV)** <sup>17</sup>*the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with (para) you and will be in you.*

**Romans 3:11 (NKJV)** <sup>11</sup> *There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God.*

**John 1:12-13 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup>*But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

### **Warning – The Spirit will not always Strive with Man – Genesis 6:3**

Before moving on, let me clearly give warning, the Spirit of God will not always strive with man, so if you haven't received Him yet, be warned that there may come a day where He is no longer knocking on the door of your heart (Genesis 6:3).

**Genesis 6:3 (NKJV)** <sup>3</sup>*And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive<sup>ε</sup> with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."*

## **2.) In – En / Comes in and Dwells / We can Cry Out – Abba Father**

After coming alongside of us, The Holy Spirit then comes in us the moment we open our heart to the Savior (John 20:22), after hearing the message proclaimed through a vessel chosen by God, or just God speaking to us in His own way; The Greek preposition for in, is “en”. When you opened your heart to Jesus, the Holy Spirit came into you. He indwelt you. You were born again. You were regenerated. The baptism of John spoken of by Christ is the washing away and forgiveness of sin. It is then because the sin and separation has been dealt with, that God takes us residence, the indwelling, it is then we can cry out Abba Father!

*John 14:17 (NKJV) <sup>17</sup>the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with (para) you and will be in (en) you.*

*John 20:21-22 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup>So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” <sup>22</sup>And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.*

*Romans 8:15-17 (NKJV) <sup>15</sup>For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” <sup>16</sup>The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup>and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.*

*Ephesians 1:13–14 (NKJV) <sup>13</sup> In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, <sup>14</sup> who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.*

## **3.) Comes Upon – Heppi / Comes to Empower Us for Service**

Then there is the third, as Jesus said John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit when He comes upon you (the Greek preposition is “heppi”) when He empowers us for service (Acts 1:5). The Spirit of God is available not only to work with you to become a Christian, or to come into your life once you open your heart to Him, but He is now available to come upon your life and to empower you to see your own world turned upside down and made right-side up. In the Old Testament, when the Holy Ghost came upon men like Moses and David, Gideon and Ezekiel, Samson and Bezaleel, it was to empower them for service. So, too, Jesus said to His disciples, “The Spirit is in you, but when the Spirit comes upon you, you will be empowered for unique ministry and service, and then you will be My witnesses” (see Acts 1:4–8).

*(Acts 1:5 NKJV) <sup>5</sup>for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”*

*(Acts 1:8 NKJV) <sup>8</sup>But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon (heppi) you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”*

## **What it does (The 3 Places Personally)**

Where will He empower us, 3 places (Jerusalem, Judea, and the ends of the world), lets read verses 6-8:

**(Acts 1:6 NKJV) Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"**

**(Acts 1:7 NKJV) And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.**

### **Not for you to Know / Cancer – Hurrricanes / Not the Why's – but the Who / His Preseence**

“Are You finally going to establish Your kingdom?” the disciples asked Jesus. “It is not for you to know,” answered Jesus. I have this phrase underlined in my Bible. What makes me think I need to know everything? Certain things are just not for me to know. Rest in that, there are just things that God chooses we are not to know. I don't know why some get cancer, and some don't. Why some houses are destroyed by a hurricane while others are not. The answers that we don't have, and just that, and let us not get all wrapped up on the why, but just be settled on the Who. And the Who is the One who said He would never leave us nor forsake us, and let us be satisfied with His presence, and trust through His presence all other things will work together for good.

### **Camden – ICU / Not Why – but be Here Lord**

I know when Camden was in the ICU for those 2 weeks, days 1 and 2 were very critical; my heart still grips me when I think back of his little lungs gasping for every breath, his stomach sucking in, and his

chest expanding dozens of times a minute. I didn't dwell on the why, for my dwelling was God you are here right now, and into Thy hands I commit the love of my life. I needed His presence more than I needed the answers to the question why. Christian settle in on that, some things He won't tell us, but always He will be present.

**(Acts 1:8 NKJV) "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."**

### **Last Words of Christ**

Verse 8 is the last words of Christ that He spoke while on this earth; now how important are last words.

### **Not go Witness – but be Witness / Happen Supernaturally – Be My Reality**

Jesus didn't say, "You will witness." He said, "You'll be witnesses. Things will happen in a naturally supernatural way in and through you that will witness My reality." It will happen in 3 places. Jesus is speaking of 3 literal places, but they are also great illustrations of what God will do in each of our lives personally.

#### **What it does (The 3 Places Personally)**

- Jerusalem, (You Personally)
- and in all Judea and Samaria, (Your Family)
- and to the end of the earth." (Your World – work, community, missions)

#### **1.) Jerusalem, (You Personally)**

##### **Witness – Martyr / We get Reversed / What a person is – Not Does / Wash Dishes**

Jesus says you will be My witnesses, and that word for witness is "martyr", which we most always use in terms of someone dying for their witness. We get that reversed, we say a person was a martyr because they got killed for their witness. God says a person is a martyr because they witness, not because they die. Witness is something a person is, not what they do. A person who dies because of witnessing for Christ just proves that they were what they said they were. It takes more Holy Spirit to live for Christ than it does to die for Him. I need more of the Holy Spirit to wash dishes than I do to preach a sermon. I need more Holy Spirit to guard my tongue than I do to hand out a tract. If this everyday Christian walk was easy, we wouldn't need the Holy Spirit, and the Power He supplies us to walk the walk.

##### **Continual Debates – Help Overcome Personal Sin / Wasted Ink / Compromise - Weak**

I read a lot, have read a lot, and one of the continual debates I read about in reference to the Baptism of the Holy Spirit coming upon a person, is does the baptism of the Holy Spirit help a person overcome personal sin. Some say yes, some say no, and for those that say no they spend at least a chapter in the book explaining why it doesn't, explaining it is the Holy Spirit residing in a person that does that, and that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is purely for service unto the Lord. My take on the who discussion, the whole discussion is wasted ink and paper; for I say to you what you have already experienced personally, and that is if you are living in some kind of compromise in your life your witness for the Lord is weak at best. But, what we also know is true, is give me a powerful witness, and it will be very hard to lure me into sin, for I don't want to blow my witness. Keep me pure and holy, and my light just naturally emanates from me, and people recognize it, and I seem to walk with more spring in my step, and more praise on my lips, and sharing Christ just seems to happen naturally. My point of the discussion/debate, is that the two go together, and are inseparable, and really never should be discussed in separate realms but always with the same context.

#### **2.) and in all Judea and Samaria, (Your Family)**

##### **Baptism bring Reality / We are Living Epistles / Sermon on Mount – Exodus - Joshua**

The baptism of the Holy Spirit in us, brings the reality of Christ before all who see us, they see there is a difference between us and others. Thus starts the change in our families as they watch, they may never

pick the Bible up, but they are reading us page by page, line upon line. They are reading the Sermon on the Mount

- as they watch us be merciful,
- as they see our purity,
- as we are peacemakers rather than trouble makers.

They are reading the book of Exodus as they see a person freed from their bondages, they are reading the book of Joshua as they watch them live the victorious Christian life.

**2 Corinthians 3:2-3 (NKJV)** <sup>2</sup>You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; <sup>3</sup>clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.

**Matthew 5:7-9 (NKJV)** <sup>7</sup> Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy.

<sup>8</sup> Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God.

<sup>9</sup> Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.

### **Turn World Upside Down – Maybe your Family Wrong Side Up / Spirit will Change That**

These disciples will turn the up-side-down; maybe your world—your kids, your marriage, your business, or your school—is “wrong-side up.” How will it be impacted? How will it be turned upside down and therefore made right? The same way the world has been impacted globally: by the power of the Holy Spirit upon your life. What’s needed is not more programming, not more fleshly striving, not more clever organizing. It is the power of the Spirit that will make things start happening. The power of the Spirit will change you, your marriage, your family, your business, and your service for Jesus Christ. It will change every aspect of your life.

**Acts 17:6 (NKJV)** <sup>6</sup>But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, “These who have turned the world upside down have come here too.”

### **Jesus Knew / Woman Possessions, Multiple Wives, Prostitutes / Woman Need Power**

Jesus knew men would need power to love their wives, for before the gospel woman were considered possessions. A man could have multiple wives, and then if that wasn’t enough he was free to go down to one of the heathen temples and have a temple prostitute. Jesus knew woman were going to need power to submit to their husbands and to love them, for men can be such knuckle-heads. All these things required supernatural ability for they are just not in our natural make-up.

### **3.) and to the end of the earth." (Your World – work, community, missions)**

#### **Disciples don’t Quite Follow / Waiting for Kingdom / Need Gather Citizens 1st**

Jesus said wait for the promise of the Father, for John baptized you with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now. The disciples don’t quite follow what all that means (we can from our vantage point), but for them they thought the power coming was going to be God establishing His kingdom on earth. The Jews were always waiting for God to take back possession of Jerusalem and establish His kingdom, just as God had promised to David. But Jesus is saying we have to build the kingdom before we establish the kingdom, we have to gather the citizens of the kingdom first before I set it up. Now looking for God’s kingdom come is not wrong, looking for His soon appearing is not wrong, in fact it is a vital life principle for all Christians, and we will study more on that next week in verses 9-12. But for right now, Jesus says the Father has that specific time set apart, but until then, I got some things I want you to be doing.

#### **Strong Point to Consider – Telling Story not Enough / Storyteller Needs Power**

Now here is a strong point for consideration, and it is vital in our witness, just telling the story isn’t enough. These people have walked with Jesus for 3 years, they saw Him crucified and die, and then they saw Him raise from the dead; you would think just telling that story would be enough to change the world, but Jesus says it’s not, so much so that Jesus said “wait” before you go, wait until I give you power. You see, the story is good enough, the story by itself is enough to convince a person, but why the power needed with the story? It isn’t the story that needs power, it is the storyteller that does. The storyteller needs the power to stand, when the story is rejected, when the story is mocked, when the story is attacked, and.....the storyteller will need power to stand when they are personally rejected, mocked, or even attacked. Without the power, the storyteller would quit telling the story at some point, for they will

become beaten or discouraged at some point once the rejection of the story keeps coming back upon them. Just looking at the parable of the Sower and the Seed, and we can gather 3 out of 4 times we will be rejected (I'm not saying that is law, I'm just saying it is a pretty good example that sure does seem to ring true today).

### **Storyteller has to Compete – Evolution, Materialism, Rome, Jews, Slavery**

The storyteller has to compete against evolution, materialism, and all roads lead to God. These disciples will have to face the Roman government, the Jewish religious system, false religions (all things we will study over the weeks and months to come) many of them would have to lay their life down because of the story they will tell, Jesus said wait, you will need this power. These disciples are going to preach a message that all men are created equal and that God loved each person the same, imagine preaching that message in a world where 4 out of 5 people were slaves. The storyteller needs power for all that will come against them.

### **If Quit**

The storyteller needs the power, else he/she quits. If they quit everything works backwards. The power of the witness is lost in the world, then rejection and discouragement leads to the witness weakening in the home among the spouse and children, and as that witness gets silenced, it is a natural extinguishing and quenching within a person personally – and no power, means no heat, and no heat means lukewarm Christianity. The story is good enough, it is the storyteller that needs the power.

## **Receiving it (The 7 Steps to Receiving the Baptism of the Holy Spirit).**

### **How do we Receive**

So, just how do we receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit? Acts 2:38 gives us our starting point, and before we are done we will see 7 steps in receiving the Holy Spirit. For the background on Acts 2, the Day of Pentecost has arrived, Peter filled with the Holy Spirit preaches his first sermon, they people are convicted and ask Peter what shall we do with what you have said:

*Acts 2:37-39 (NKJV)* <sup>37</sup>Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" <sup>38</sup>Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup>For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**1.) Repentance unto Salvation** – Repent means to change your mind, and it all starts with changing your mind of who Jesus Christ is and what He has done for you. The first step toward the baptism of the Holy Spirit is to accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

*(Acts 2:38 NKJV)* Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

**2.) Repentance of Sin** – The second step towards the baptism of the Holy Spirit is to turn from our personal sin. We cannot have habitual unrepentant sin in our lives and expect God to baptize us with the Holy Spirit. We need to do some heart searching, ask God to search your heart (Psalm 139), and then confess those sins and ask God to take them away. We need to be serious about our sins (no matter how little). God's Word is clear (1 John 3:22) that we will not receive if we are not keeping His commandments (and I believe the context of this verse speaks of a habitual lifestyle of sin):

*(Acts 2:38 NKJV)* Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

*Psalms 139:23-24 (NKJV)* <sup>23</sup> Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties;

<sup>24</sup> And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.

*1 John 3:22-23 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup>And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. <sup>23</sup>And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.

**3.) Be Baptized** - The third step towards the baptism of the Holy Spirit is to be baptized. Although I am referring to water baptism, I am more specifically referring to the “public profession” of Christ. It is the separating from the old life, the sending of your death notification of the old life, and it is letting the world know, I am Christ’s and Christ is mine. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not for the secret Christian. *(Acts 2:38 NKJV) Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

**4.) Be Obedient** - The fourth step towards the baptism of the Holy Spirit is to be obedient to the point of surrender (Acts 5:32). It is the surrendering of your personal wants and desires, and being totally obedient to God’s will for your life. We will not receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit if we are afraid of what that may mean to us. If we are afraid that God’s will may upset our “plans” for life, we are afraid we may have to, go, or do something we are uncomfortable with, then we will not receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Now, consider two things while considering this point, and the first is that our logic is totally messed up, in that we are afraid, we are afraid because we have no power. Receive the power, and the fear disappears (1 Timothy 1:7). Secondly, believe by faith there is nothing to be feared in God’s will; God’s will, will always prove in the final outcome the best and the sweetest thing for us (Ecclesiastes 3:11). *(Acts 5:32 NKJV) “And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him.”*

*2 Timothy 1:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup>For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.*

*Ecclesiastes 3:11 (NKJV) <sup>11</sup>He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.*

**5.) Desire** - The fifth step towards the baptism of the Holy Spirit is to desire earnestly. The asking of this verse in Luke 11 is the asking that springs from real and intense desire. The asking is in the mind of not asking in the passing and halfhearted whim, but the intense asking. Isaiah 44 the Lord says I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, I will pour my spirit upon thy seed. When one is thirsty, drought thirsty, there is but one cry: water, water! water! Every pore of the body seems to have a voice that cries out, water!. So when our heart has one cry, “The Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit, then it is that desire that will bring the flood. It is when we realize that we are lacking, that we need more power, it is then we are truly craving for what we ask, rather than asking for what we as good Bible students know the Word says we should ask for:

*Luke 11:9-13 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup>“So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup>For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. <sup>11</sup>If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? <sup>12</sup>Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? <sup>13</sup>If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”*

*Isaiah 44:3 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup> For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring;*

**6.) Ask** - The sixth step towards the baptism of the Holy Spirit is to ask, simply asking, asking simply. Verse 13 of Luke is preceded by verse 9, where Jesus tells us to ask, to seek, to knock, and the verb tense is to keep asking until you get what you ask for. We simply ask in faith, Lord baptism me with the Holy Spirit, give me that power from on high. Then, step seven.....

*Luke 11:9-13 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup>“So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup>For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. <sup>11</sup>If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? <sup>12</sup>Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? <sup>13</sup>If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”*

**7.) Believe** - The seventh step towards the baptism of the Holy Spirit is to believe. We receive the Holy Spirit just as we received Jesus Christ, by asking Him to come into our lives, so once you have asked, believe that He has done it. Believe Luke 11:9-13, believe Mark 11:24, believe it because God’s Word says it. Believe it because God wants you to have it, He wants you to be filled to overflowing, endowed with Power from on high, so that you may change your Jerusalem, Judea, and outer parts of the world.

*Luke 11:9-13 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup>“So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup>For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. <sup>11</sup>If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? <sup>12</sup>Or if he asks*

for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? <sup>13</sup>If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

**Mark 11:24 ( NKJV )** <sup>24</sup>Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.

### **Spent Years Struggling / But God Revealed**

I spent years of my life struggling for the Holy Spirit. Going forward at special altar calls (as a pastor would say if you want the holy spirit come up here) and so I would make the trip, everybody would stare at me, people would lay hands on me, and then I would walk back to my seat feeling so stupid because everyone was looking at me, and I knew nothing had changed. But thankfully, I continued on in my walk even without "the moment", and God revealed to me how to have continual baptism of the Holy Spirit, how to experience and enjoy that power (dunamis) from on high on a continual basis. It are these seven steps (not that this is some magical formula); but I believe the Word is the Word, and it shows us what needs to be done in order for us to receive this baptism of the Holy Spirit. I pray that you will take these 7 steps, pray each one specifically, deal with anything that needs to be dealt with, and then pray (asking) to receive the Holy Spirit, and believe that you have received it, just as you believed you received Jesus Christ that day you asked Him into your life.

**John 3:16 ( NKJV )** <sup>16</sup>For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

### **Closing – Leaky Vessels – Need Refilling / Acts 4**

Let me close with this, we are leaky vessels, and we need to be re-filled. The Scriptures prove that out clearly. In Acts 2 the disciples are filled with the Holy Spirit, then only a few chapters later, which are only several days later, we read of them being filled again:

**Acts 4:31 ( NKJV )** <sup>31</sup>And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

### **When Recognize – Ask Again / Free Refills / Eph 5 – a Continual Filling**

And when you recognize that you need it again, you ask for it again, go back to step 1 and work your way through it again, why? Because we are leaky vessels and we need to continually be re-filled, and the Scriptures clearly support that. In chapter 4 of Acts we read of the same guys who had previously been filled with the Holy Spirit, being filled again (I love it, free re-fills). Be filled (it says in Ephesians 5) with the Holy Spirit, the verb tense is a "continual filling". We can leak out because we can quench the Spirit through disobedience (1 Thess 5:19-22) or power leaves us when power is poured out in ministry (Mark 5:29-30).

**Ephesians 5:18 ( NKJV )** <sup>18</sup>And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,

**1 Thessalonians 5:19–22 (NKJV)** <sup>19</sup>Do not quench the Spirit. <sup>20</sup>Do not despise prophecies. <sup>21</sup>Test all things; hold fast what is good. <sup>22</sup>Abstain from every form of evil.

**Mark 5:29–30 (NKJV)** <sup>29</sup>Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of the affliction. <sup>30</sup>And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that power had gone out of Him, turned around in the crowd and said, "Who touched My clothes?"

### **Be Filled – Never Complete**

In Ephesians 5:18, that word for "filled" means to never be complete. I see that to also mean that there is always more of God to know and experience, it is never ending, we will spend all of eternity getting to know Him more and more, and so too each day we live here on earth. We make a great mistake when we think we have "reach it", "arrived" at our understanding and experience of God.

**Ephesians 5:18 ( NKJV )** <sup>18</sup>And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,

### **Recognize don't Experience Daily / Do the Daily / When Don't – how Costly**

Let me state I recognize in my life that I don't experience it on a daily basis, and yes I do need to continually come back for the filling, but I have found that I experience the soaking of the Holy Spirit, that power in my walk to say no to sin, to share Christ, and just go through my day with the joy of fellowship, when I "Do the Daily" (see below), yes simply daily, for the daily, are literally the 7 things we have just studied. Not doing the daily, is costly, for we miss out on all that we have just studied, and my what we have just studied and will study.

- Jesus first, I'll get around to reading my emails later
- Taking every thought captive
- Reading the Word,
- Meditating \_ repeating a Biblical principle or promise
- Listening to Bible Studies.
- And, simply seeking 1<sup>st</sup> the Kingdom

### **Ephesians 5 – Getting Filled**

Ephesians 5 tells us how to “practically” be filled, do the following and you will be filled. Break away, spend time alone with your itunes, your Bible in front of you, worshipping and praising the Lord, reading His Word and then sharing it with your brethren, and you will experience the Lord and His Spirit upon you....i guarantee it, because the Word says so right here.

- Don't get wrapped up in the world (drunk)
- Speak to one another the word
- Sing praise unto the Lord
- Give thanks unto the Lord
- Be United with the Body of Christ

*Ephesians 5:15–21 (NKJV) <sup>15</sup> See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, <sup>16</sup> redeeming the time, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup> Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. <sup>18</sup> And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, <sup>20</sup> giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> submitting to one another in the fear of God.*

### **Spend Little Time on These Things / Not Satisfied – Glad to be Here Today**

I think I spend so little time seeking after these things. I am not satisfied presently, and I want more, and I am so thankful to be where we are at in our verse-by-verse. For like Paul said, I too fill, and maybe you do too:

*Philippians 3:12-14 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup>Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. <sup>13</sup>Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, <sup>14</sup>I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

*(Zechariah 4:6 NKJV) So he answered and said to me: "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts.*

# The Power of Looking for His Soon Return

(Acts 1:9-11)

## You Shall Receive Power

We are continuing our study of Luke, by digging deeper into the ending of the Book, as Jesus said “tarry in Jerusalem until you are endued with power on high”. Jesus said “wait for the Promise (capital P), and that promise we have studied is the Promise of the Holy Spirit, God Himself, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Person of the Trinity, taking up residence within a person and then overflowing out of a person unto the world around them. Wait for God Jesus said, wait for God to come and flow through you, and you will have power to change you life personally, power to change your family, and power to change your workplace, neighborhood, community, and world around you. Wait for God.

*Luke 24:49 (NKJV)* <sup>49</sup> Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”

## Bartholomew, 70AD (exert from Jesus Freaks pg 205)

Next week we will read of one such person that waited, plugged into this power, his name was Bartholomew. Here is his story (as described in the book Jesus Freaks, page 205).

*Acts 1:13 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas the son of James.

*"You are unsettling the worship of our gods. And not only that, you have perverted my own brother!" the king of Armenia shouted at Bartholomew. But Bartholomew did not back down. One of the original twelve disciples, he had boldly preached Jesus Christ for 37 years. Starting in the heathen cities throughout what is now Turkey, he then traveled to India. Here, after he learned the language, he translated the gospel of Matthew and taught the Indians in their native tongue. Later he preached in twelve different cities in the country of Armenia (located between the present-day countries of Turkey and Iran). Many people turned from idolatry to worship Jesus, including the king of Armenia's brother and his family. Bartholomew boldly answered the king, saying, "I have preached the true worship of God throughout your country. I have not perverted your brother and his family, but rather have converted them to the truth." King Astyages threatened Bartholomew, "Unless you stop preaching Christ and make sacrifices to the god Ashtaroth, you will be put to death." "You can be sure of this, King Astyages; I will never sacrifice to your idol. I would rather seal my testimony with my blood than do the smallest act against my faith or conscience." Upon hearing this, the king ordered, "I want this man to suffer severe torture. First beat him with rods. After that, suspend him upside down on a cross and skin him alive!" Following the king's command, Bartholomew was beaten, crucified and flayed. Despite all this, he was still conscious and continued to exhort the people to believe in Jesus and worship the true God. Finally, to prevent him from saying anything else, the king's men took an ax and cut off his head. Bartholomew was united with Jesus, his Lord.*

## Only “The Power”

What could produce such boldness, what could produce such belief, only the “power” of God in and upon a person’s life.

## Do you Want that Same Power

Do you want that same power, it is a rhetorical question, for I know that you do, that is why you come and we together seek God for all that He would have for us.

## We Continue in Acts – to See how Others Received Power

We are continuing in Acts right from Luke, because we wanted to study and observe how the early church, how the men and woman like Bartholomew received such power, and how they lived it out, so we too can receive the same power, and see real life examples of others who lived it out, and gain confidence and faith that God will do the same in our lives today.

## Theme of the Book of Acts:

*(Acts 1:8 NKJV)* "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

## Past Study on Power / 3 Powerful Principles / Remind You – Turned world Upside Down

We have seen three powerful principles so far in our two studies in Acts on how we can experience great power in our Christian Life, as we have seen what gave those early disciples power, and we will see a

fourth today. And remind you, it were these men and woman who turned the world upside down, and you too can turn your world upside down, or better said, right side up.

*Acts 17:6 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup>But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, "These who have turned the world upside down have come here too."*

#### **Four Keys to the early Disciples Power:**

- They Experienced the Resurrection Power (1:3)
- They Lived in the Consciousness of the Ever-Present of God (1:3)
- They were Filled with the Holy Spirit (1:8)
- They Were Looking for His Soon Return (1:11)

#### **Recap 3 Principles, Resurrection, Ever Present, Baptism of Spirit / 4<sup>th</sup> – His Coming**

First, the early church and disciples experienced the power of the Resurrection, they witnesses the resurrection, they saw it and they believed it, they didn't live with a dead Jesus upon the cross, but a living Jesus who overcame sin and death and walked among them. Precious person, your God is alive, and He is here right now, and He is walking amongst us ready to give us that same life-giving power over sin and death.....He is Alive. Secondly, the early church and disciples lived in the consciousness of the Ever-Present God, as Jesus would appear, then disappear on them, all the while teaching them to live as if they never knew when Jesus would "pop" in on them. As we studies last week, and will in weeks to come, the early church and disciples were filled to overflowing with the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives. And today (although we are far from done on this list) we will see how the early church and disciples experienced great power in their lives because they were always looking for the soon return of Jesus Christ.

#### **Majority of Seminaries / Doesn't Matter / Title today's Message / Purpose and Power**

Well, today, regarding this 4<sup>th</sup> example, the major majority of churches and seminaries no longer teach on the Return of Jesus Christ to this earth (even if these verses we will read today says that He will), but it doesn't matter if they don't teach that anymore, for it will not stop Him from coming. He is coming, and He is coming soon, just as today's text says that He will. The title of today's study is, "Looking for His Soon Return", and the person that lives in the expectancy of His return in their lifetime, will live with power, and will live with purpose, as compared to the person that is not looking for his soon return, and doesn't expect Him to return in their lifetime, and I am talking about "believers". To not teach on it and discuss it is to rob God's people of power!

#### **Start verse 6 - Context**

So let's start our study in verse 6 for context.

**(Acts 1:6 NKJV) Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"**

**(Acts 1:7 NKJV) And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.**

**(Acts 1:8 NKJV) "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."**

#### **Excited Kingdom on Earth / Putting Down World's Power / Seek First**

These men were expecting the establishment of God's kingdom on earth, they were excited about the possibility of God establishing His Kingdom now, putting down of the world's power (Rome), putting down of Satan's power, Lord will you establish your Kingdom in just a few days. Jesus had been talking to them about the things of the Kingdom over those three years, they were excited about the Kingdom to come, and Jesus had told them to seek first the kingdom of God all these things would be added unto them:

*(Matthew 6:33 NKJV) "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."*

### **Priority was Kingdom of God**

These men's priority was the kingdom of God. But Jesus said it is not for you to know the times or season, but wait for the power from on high. Verse 8 are the last words Jesus spoke to His disciples, how important they must be if those being the very last words that He would speak.

*(Acts 1:8 NKJV) "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

**(Acts 1:9 NKJV) Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.**

**(Acts 1:10 NKJV) And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel,**

**(Acts 1:11 NKJV) who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."**

### **Steadfastly – to Strain at / Watching Rocket Launches / Ascended gradually - Gone**

Steadfastly – to strain at, they could see Him ascending from near to far-far away. I remember watching rocket launches when I lived and worked at the Space Center. At lift off you see it right in front of you, big as life, and then in 60 seconds the rocket is already like 300 miles away, but it still clearly visible. I can remember one night launch being able to see the rocket engines 7 minutes later; that was probably like 2,100 miles away, but I could still see it. That is what these disciples are doing, there he is, I can still see Him, can you see Him, right there, look where I am pointing, oh yea I see Him now.

### **Disciples left Standing / Not Understanding / 2 Angels**

The disciples are standing there looking up not really understanding what just happened, and then two angels said why stand gazing up in the sky, this same Jesus who was taken up from you into heaven, will also come in the same like manner. Once they knew Jesus was gone, gone!, they know doubt said "oh boy – we are going to need that power He mentioned ☺"

### **From Point On – Looking for Return / Lived Lives Expecting**

And, from that point on they began to look for the return of Jesus Christ, they lived lives expectant of His return in their lifetime. Notice, the angels did not say in a couple thousand years, they said in such a way that these disciples thought it could be tomorrow.

### **Even Rumor of John**

There was even a rumor in the early church and that was that Jesus would return before John died. That was based off their misunderstanding of when Jesus told Peter not to worry about John's ministry (hey what about John) and just to focus on his own. Jesus said if I will, that John not die before I return, what does that matter to you:

*John 21:21-23 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup>Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, "But Lord, what about this man?" <sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him, "If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me." <sup>23</sup>Then this saying went out among the brethren that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, "If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you?"*

### **John Sick – People Excited / Dr. Luke can't see him**

The rumor went around that Jesus would return before John die. So every time John got a cold people got excited, hey did you hear John is ill. Doctor Luke probably said sorry John, I'm busy right now, can't come see ya.

### **Every Generation / God Gives Signs**

In every generation from the disciples to our day, God leaves us signs and indicators that His return is near. Here are some major signs for us today:

- Rebirth of Israel (May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1948) – Ezekiel 36, Isaiah 66, Luke 21
- The re-establishment of the Roman Empire (the European Union) – Revelation 13
- Coming together of One World Religion (All roads lead to God) – Revelation 17
- Coming together of the One World Currency (Mark of the Beast) – Revelation 13

And, how about life in general:

**Some would depart from the faith and go into devil worship**-1 Tim 4:1.

**People would mock about the last days and not believe**-2 Peter 3:3; Jude 18.

**People would become lovers of themselves**-2 Tim 3:1,2.

**People would be disobeying their parents**-2 Tim 3:1,2.

**People would be grateful for nothing**-2 Tim 3:1,2.

**Homosexuality would increase**-Lk 17:28,30; ref Gen 19:5; Ro 1:24,26,27.

**People would be without self-control in sex**-2 Tim 3:1,2,6; Rev 9:21, Lk 17:28,30; Jude 1

**People would love pleasures more than God**- 2 Tim 3:1,2,4.

**False Teachers/Religions will be many** – Matt 24:5

**Wars** – Matt 24:6 – not a single day of peace on earth since before WW1

**Rumors of War** – Matt 24:6 – Cold War most expensive war ever fought, and not one bullet fired

**Famines** – Matt 24:7 – the Oil prices have caused world-wide inflation, and countries like Africa can't feed their people

**Pestilence** – Matt 24:7 - Aids, SARS

**Earthquakes** – Matt 24:7 – Life Magazine says in last 15 yrs 500, 000 people died in earthquakes.

**Knowledge will Increase** – Daniel 12:4 – look at the Technology world around us.

### **This Weeks Headlines**

This week's headlines have been all about Syria, so what about that, anything significant there? Yes, Isaiah 17 says Damascus will be left in a heap of ruin, and that could have happened this week if the US had decided to push one little red button. But what aligns for me that is even greater than that possible event happening before our eyes is the prophetic alignment that is happening in the world before us, in the newspaper before us, and that is that In Ezekial 38-39 God says that in the Last Days Magog (Russia), Iran, Libya, Ethopia, and Turkey will invade Israel during a time they have peace (Ezk 38:11). But, God will preserve them – without any help from other nations. This will happen in a time of Peace in Israel. We see an alignment between Russia and Iran happening before our eyes. And, why is Syria so important to Russia, because that is where they park their naval vessels in the Mediterranean Sea (otherwise they have to come all the way from the Black Sea via the Turkish Straights). From Syria they can refuel and restock their fleet that is in the Mediterranean Sea. Russia is currently underway in building a Naval base to house their Nuclear Submarines right there in Syria, in fact they might already be there for all we know. Another, if not the biggest factor to me, is that Vladimir Putin is showing all the allies he is untied with them, that you can count on me he says, I will never leave you nor forsake you. The whole world may be coming against you Syria, but I won't turn from you. Iran, Libya, Turkey....if you want an ally you can count on, you will have it in me. Don't trust the USA, for they will turn on you in a moment, and abandon you, just like they continually abandon and leave Israel hanging out there all by themselves, even when hostile neighbors arm up saying they desire to destroy Israel. We watch our leaders today agree to something as foolish as letting Russia guard the chemical weapons, when we know that Russia will one day come and descend upon Israel to destroy it. Sad, sad, sad.

*Isaiah 17:1 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> The burden against Damascus. "Behold, Damascus will cease from being a city, And it will be a ruinous heap.

*Ezekiel 38:1–38:17 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying, <sup>2</sup> "Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him, <sup>3</sup> and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I am against you, O Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal. <sup>4</sup> I will turn you around, put hooks into your jaws, and lead you out, with all your army, horses, and horsemen, all splendidly clothed, a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords. <sup>5</sup> Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya are with them, all of them with shield and helmet; <sup>6</sup> Gomer and all its troops; the house of Togarmah from the far north and all its troops—many people are with you. <sup>7</sup> "Prepare yourself and be ready, you and all your companies that are gathered about you; and be a guard for them. <sup>8</sup> After many days you will be visited. In the latter years you will come into the land of those brought back from the sword and gathered from many people on the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate; they were brought out of the nations, and now all of them dwell safely. <sup>9</sup> You will ascend, coming like a storm, covering the land like a cloud, you and all your troops and many peoples with you." <sup>10</sup> "Thus says the Lord GOD: "On that day it shall come to pass that thoughts will arise in your mind, and you will make an evil plan: <sup>11</sup> You will say, 'I will go up against a land of unwallied villages; I will go to a peaceful people, who dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates'— <sup>12</sup> to take plunder and to take booty, to stretch out your hand against the waste places that are again inhabited, and against a people gathered from the nations, who have acquired livestock and goods, who dwell in the midst of the land. <sup>13</sup> Sheba, Dedan, the merchants of Tarshish, and all their young lions will say to you, 'Have you come to take plunder? Have you gathered your army to take booty, to carry away silver and gold, to take away livestock and goods, to take great plunder?' " <sup>14</sup> "Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say to Gog, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "On that day when My people Israel dwell safely, will you not know it?" <sup>15</sup> Then you will come from your place out of the far north, you and many peoples with

*you, all of them riding on horses, a great company and a mighty army. <sup>16</sup> You will come up against My people Israel like a cloud, to cover the land. It will be in the latter days that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me, when I am hallowed in you, O Gog, before their eyes.” <sup>17</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD: “Are you he of whom I have spoken in former days by My servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied for years in those days that I would bring you against them?*

### **Indicators in Full-Blown Mode / Listen to Prophecy Update**

Wow, all the indicators are in full-blown mode before us. I encourage you if you missed it to go listen to our Prophecy Update which is available on-line at the Media Page.

### **3 Reasons / 3 Sticks of Dynamite**

Why does God give us these signs that His return is so near? He does this for 3 reasons, 3 personal applications, all three which lead us to power! They are like 3 sticks of dynamite.

- To give us an Urgency for Spreading the Gospel.
- To Lighten our Touch on the Material Things of the World.
- For a Purifying Effect upon our Lives.

### **1.) To give us an Urgency for Spreading the Gospel**

#### **Before Heart Attacks & Car Wrecks / Now Planes – Schools – Bombers?**

Times have changed; we live in a period like none other. Before we viewed sudden deaths as heart attacks or car wrecks, but now it has become much more complicated than that, planes flying into buildings, school shootings, child abductions, how long until homicide bombers in our malls and restaurants.

#### **If All Happen at Once – Satan Desensitizes / Every Week – Share more Aggressively**

But you know, if all this happened at once (bombings and shootings) it would shock us, but Satan has a strategy where he gradually desensitizes us to the horrors of these things. If 9/11 happened every week or month we would have a whole greater urgency of sharing the gospel. If there was a shooting in our schools every week we would make sure our kids knew Jesus before they got on that bus wouldn't we.

#### **The Lord's Urgency – Coming Back Unannounced / Our Voices Removed / Live Forever**

But the Lord leaves us with this urgency, even when times are good, hey I'm coming back at any moment, and when the rapture happens (whether by seizing or death), your voice will be removed from telling those loved ones of yours the way to eternal life. Oh, let me correct that statement, everyone lives forever, again – everyone lives forever, but it is the quality of life that is at stake, eternal life in heaven, or eternal life in hell where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth:

*Matthew 25:23 ( NKJV ) <sup>23</sup>His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'*

*Matthew 25:30 ( NKJV ) <sup>30</sup>And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

#### **Read Book Revelation – Urgency to Share / Mercy – Grace - Peace**

Read the book of Revelation, and think of loved ones not saved, and you will have a great urgency to share the gospel. You won't find the word mercy in the book of Revelation, the word grace only in chapter 1 and then not again until the last verse of the book, nor will you find the word peace after chapter 1. The very thought should give us an urgency of spreading the gospel.

#### **Our Voice removed at Rapture / Tell how Have Peace with Him**

God leaves us with that sense of His soon return, so we may constantly live as we must tell the world about Him, His love and the way to have peace with Him.

#### **Prison Chaplain – Charlie Peace**

Leonard Ravenhill tells of Charlie Peace, a convicted criminal sentenced to die by hanging. On his death-walk to the gallows, the prison chaplain glibly read him some Bible verses from a book called, “The Consolation of Religion.” Charlie was shocked that a minister who professed to believe in the Bible could so coldly and professionally read about hell without so much as a tear in his eye or a quiver in his voice.

How can he believe that there is an eternal fire that never consumes its victims and yet be so unmoved? Charlie mused to himself. Finally, unable to hold his peace any longer, the convict snapped at the chaplain, "If I believed what you and the church of God say you believe, even if England were covered with broken glass from coast to coast, I would walk over it, if need be, on hands and knees, and think it worthwhile living, just to save one soul from an eternal hell.

### **3 Reasons**

Why does God give us these signs that His return is so near? He does this for 3 reasons, 3 personal applications, all three are like sticks of dynamite!

- To give us an Urgency for Spreading the Gospel.
- To Lighten our Touch on the Material Things of the World.
- For a Purifying Effect upon our Lives.

## **2.) To Lighten our Touch on the Material Things of the World.**

### **Caught up in Material things / Satisfy Material Things – Make Plans Around Them**

It is so easy for us to get caught up in the material things of the world, so much so we get caught in satisfying the material things in our lives, they become our priorities, we make our plans around them.

#### **Perspective**

The thought that the Lord is coming soon keeps us in the proper balance, keeps us in proper perspective. These early followers believed it so much that they shared all things, they thought hey we are going to be out here soon, so why hang on to it (Acts 4), the early Church truly had a light touch on the materially things, thus they were freed from the bondage material things (CAN bring if we allow it):

*Colossians 3:1-2 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup>If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup>Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.*

*Acts 4:34-35 (NKJV) <sup>34</sup>Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, <sup>35</sup>and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need.*

#### **How Easy to be Distracted / Whole Saturdays**

How easily we can become distracted with our stuff, and it doesn't even mean we worship it. How easy it is to spend whole Saturdays taking care of, cleaning, fixing, our stuff. The more stuff we have the more we have to take care of, and the more time we spend on it, and away from the things of the Lord.

#### **God always Interested in Eternal**

God is always looking at you from an eternal perspective. But we are always more interested in the temporal, the immediate, the here-and-now perspective. Sometimes he will withdraw or withhold temporal things from us today to accomplish eternal goals and purposes.

#### **When Opportunity Comes / Imminent Return – Set Priorities**

Will you have time to share the gospel, do ministry when the opportunity comes, or will you have to say I am too busy. The thought of Jesus' imminent return will help you set your priorities:

*(Matthew 6:33 NKJV) <sup>1</sup>But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

### **3 Reasons**

Why does God give us these signs that His return is so near? He does this for 3 reasons, 3 personal applications, all three are like sticks of dynamite!

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### **3.) For a Purifying Effect upon our Lives.**

#### **Purifying Effect / 1 John 3**

Thirdly, the realization that Jesus could come at any time produces a great purifying effect in our lives.

The apostle John said:

*(1 John 3:2 NKJV) Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.*

*(1 John 3:3 NKJV) And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.*

#### **Vital Church Teaches This / Sadly Most Don't**

It is a tremendous purifying hope that He could come at any time. It is vital that the church teaches continually on the rapture, sadly most don't.

#### **Find Doing when Lord Returns / Be the Wise Servant**

There are many things I don't want the Lord finding me doing when He returns. I want to be busy about the things of the Lord. Jesus calls such a one as a faithful and wise servant:

*(Matthew 24:45 NKJV) "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season?"*

*(Matthew 24:46 NKJV) "Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing."*

*(Matthew 24:47 NKJV) "Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods."*

#### **Tendencies of Those that Don't**

On the opposite side, look at the effect of the servant that says the Lord delays His coming. He began to live a careless life, abusing people, and drawn to drunkardness.

*(Matthew 24:48 NKJV) "But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,'"*

*(Matthew 24:49 NKJV) "and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards,"*

*(Matthew 24:50 NKJV) "the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of,"*

*(Matthew 24:51 NKJV) "and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

#### **Young drawn to Lust / Fights in Home**

How many people would not be drawn to the lust of the flesh if the rapture was a forefront of their minds.

How many fights and arguments in the home would not be if the rapture was in the forefront of a husband and wife minds. I surely don't want to be fighting with my wife when the rapture happens.

#### **Whole Point – Be Ready / Produces Purifying Effect**

Jesus whole point of the story (Matt 24) is to be ready, to watch. Looking for His soon return, looking and expecting the rapture produces a purifying effect in our lives.

#### **Important have Same Attitude / Gospel – Material – Purity / Lord creates that Belief**

How important that we have the same attitude of the Lord's return as did the early church. It gave them urgency in getting the gospel out, it gave them the proper perspective on the material things, and an emphasis on purity. As they believed that Jesus was coming at any moment to wind things up. The Lord created that belief in the early church that His return was soon, and I believe He does it in every generation, but I look at the signs before us today and have to have the expectation that we are the generation that will see His return.

#### **If not Today - Tomorrow**

If the rapture doesn't happen today, then it is tomorrow. Ask me tomorrow, and I'll tell you the same thing.

#### **3 Reasons**

Why does God give us these signs that His return is so near? He does this for 3 reasons, 3 personal applications, all three are like sticks of dynamite!

- To give us an Urgency for Spreading the Gospel.
- To Lighten our Touch on the Material Things of the World.
- For a Purifying Effect upon our Lives.

### **They Experienced Power**

These disciples and the early church lived and experienced the power of God in a great and mighty way, and they did so because:

#### **Four Keys to the early Disciples Power:**

- They Experienced the Resurrection Power (1:3)
- They Lived in the Consciousness of the Ever-Present of God (1:3)
- They were Filled with the Holy Spirit (1:8)
- They Were Looking for His Soon Return (1:11)

# ***The Power of the Upper Prayer Room***

## **Acts 1:12-14**

### **You Shall Receive Power**

We are continuing our study of Luke, by digging deeper into the ending of the Book, as Jesus said “tarry in Jerusalem until you are endued with power on high”. Jesus said “wait for the Promise (capital P), and that promise we have studied is the Promise of the Holy Spirit, God Himself, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Person of the Trinity, taking up residence within a person and then overflowing out of a person unto the world around them.

Wait for God Jesus said, wait for God to come and flow through you, and you will have power to change your life personally, power to change your family, and power to change your workplace, neighborhood, community, and world around you. Wait for God.

*Luke 24:49 (NKJV)* <sup>49</sup> Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”

### **Acts Continued**

So the best way to study this baptism of the Holy Spirit is to study real life people who were really baptized with the Holy Spirit, and thus we just continue into 2<sup>nd</sup> Luke (aka Acts) and watch the “Acts of the Holy Spirit”.

*(Acts 1:8 NKJV)* “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

### **Jesus Ascends – Leaves no Plans / Just Wait**

Last study we ended with the Lord ascending. Now He ascends and leaves the church no plans except to wait. They were just told to go change the world, all the way to the ends of the world, yet no instruction on how to structure the church, what is the church hierarchy, whether to go verse by verse through the Bible or to teach topically, pews or chairs, are electric guitars ok, how many miles away must it be you can call yourself the 1st first Baptist Church again, should we wear robes or are Hawaiian shirts alright nothing except wait for the Promise of the Holy Spirit.

*(Acts 1:9 NKJV)* Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

*(Acts 1:10 NKJV)* And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel,

*(Acts 1:11 NKJV)* who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”

### **Wait for the Power – Happen at Pentecost / 10 days from Now**

Jesus has told them to wait for the baptism of the Holy Spirit in which would endue them with power.

Now this will happen on Pentecost, which was 50 days after the Passover, Jesus has been with them for 40 days, therefore they are going to wait for about 10 days.

*(Acts 1:1 NKJV)* The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

*(Acts 1:2 NKJV)* until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen,

*(Acts 1:3 NKJV)* to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

### **Past Study on Power / 4 Powerful Principles / Remind You – Turned world Upside Down**

We have been speaking of power in our past studies and we have already seen 4 powerful principles on how we can experience great power in our Christian Life, as we have seen what gave those early disciples power. Remind you, it were these men and woman who turned the world upside down:

*Acts 17:6 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup>But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, “These who have turned the world upside down have come here too.”

### **Four Keys to the early Disciples Power:**

- They Experienced the Resurrection Power (1:3)
- They Lived in the Consciousness of the Ever-Present of God (1:3)
- They were Filled with the Holy Spirit (1:8)
- They Were Looking for His Soon Return (1:11)

## **Recap 5 Principles, Resurrection, Ever Present, Baptism of Spirit, His Soon Return, Prayer**

The early Church saw and experienced the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, they saw Jesus Christ overcome the grip of sin and death, and knew same power that raised Christ from the dead, that had defeated sin, was available to them also (Ephesians 1:19). Christian do you believe that today, can I remind you of that today, there is no sin (habit, addiction) that has power over you today for the power that raised Christ from the dead and gave Him victory over sin is available (promised) to you today. IF that power can raise Christ from the dead, then you can sure it will raise you over your bad habit, your tongue, your lust, your addiction, your (and you fill in the blank). Let me also be very direct here, there is no caveat or disclaimer to that passage; The Lord doesn't say the resurrection power is available to you today (unless you are overworked, or unless it is your menstrual cycle, or unless your spouse or kids are laying it on you, or unless you have a physical or mental illness). There is no exceptions to the resurrection power raising you up and out of whatever that thing is that is keeping you down, keeping you from rising up for the glory of God. Secondly, the early Church lived in consciousness that God was always present in their lives, that at any moment He could appear right in the middle of what they were doing, whether that was eating, walking down the road to Emmaus, fishing, or fighting with their spouse, or clicking on the internet. Thirdly, the early Church was filled with the Holy Spirit to be witnesses to Jesus, and I believe this is the best and correct translation, not "be My witnesses", but "witnesses to Me", for as we live lives trying to "impress" if you will, then people watching will naturally be impressed. When we live to please and honor Jesus first and foremost, the witness unto the world will naturally follow because we will bring reality and certification to the work of Christ in a person's life.. Fourthly, the early Church were living as if Jesus was coming back at any moment to interrupt their lives, and thus they had a sense of urgency to share the gospel, they had a light touch on the things of the world, and they lived pure lives, not wanting to be found in sin at His appearing.

*Ephesians 1:19-20 ( NKJV ) <sup>19</sup>and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power <sup>20</sup>which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,*

*Luke 24:31-32 ( NKJV ) <sup>31</sup>Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. <sup>32</sup>And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"*

*(Acts 1:8 NKJV) "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

*(1 John 3:2 NKJV) Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.*

*(1 John 3:3 NKJV) And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.*

## **Pick-up Verse 12 – Disciples Huddled Together / There is Power in Upper Room**

Today we will pick up here in verse 12, as we find the disciples huddled together in the upper room, waiting for the promise of the Holy Spirit, as Jesus had promised. As we will see today, there is power in the Upper Room, and for every person here today, I pray that after this study you go prepare yourself an Upper Room if you don't already have one, and if you do, that after today's study you will have a new excitement about getting to your Upper Room on a daily basis.

### **5 Keys to the early Disciples Power:**

- They Experienced the Resurrection Power (1:3)
- They Lived in the Consciousness of the Ever-Present of God (1:3)
- They were Filled with the Holy Spirit (1:8)
- They Were Looking for His Soon Return (1:11)
- They found Power in the Upper Room of Prayer (1:13-14)

### **The Upper Room Prayer Meeting**

**(Acts 1:12 NKJV) Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey.**

**(Acts 1:13 NKJV) And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas the son of James.**

**(Acts 1:14 NKJV) These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.**

### **Chronological Events / Stay in Context**

Let's review the chronological events that have happened up to this point, it's good to have a clear and logical flow of events to keep us in the correct context of the Scriptures. We go verse by verse, but it is important to study them within the context that they happened (all the associated Bible passages can be found in the supplemental notes that are at the end of this study):

*1 Corinthians 15:1-8 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup>Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, <sup>2</sup>by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. <sup>3</sup>For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup>and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup>and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. <sup>6</sup>After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. <sup>7</sup>After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. <sup>8</sup>Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.*

### **Chronological Events of Jesus after the Crucifixion**

- Resurrection Sunday – Woman come to Garden Tomb / Met by Angel
- Resurrection Sunday – Woman tell Peter and John of Jesus' Resurrection
- Resurrection Sunday – Peter and John run to the Empty Tomb
- Resurrection Sunday – Jesus Appears before Mary Magdalene (and woman)
- Resurrection Sunday - Guards Bribe by Religious Leaders
- Resurrection Sunday – Mary Magdalene tells Disciples she saw Jesus
- Jesus appears to Peter
- Resurrection Sunday – Jesus appears to the 2 on Road to Emmaus
- Resurrection Sunday – The 2 Return from Emmaus to Jerusalem
- Resurrection Sunday – Jesus Appears before Disciples (no Thomas) in Jerusalem – Receive the Holy Spirit (1st appearance to the Disciples)
- 8 days after Resurrection Sunday – Jesus Appears before Disciples (and Thomas) in Jerusalem (2nd appearance to the Disciples)
- Jesus did Many Other Things
- (at least 8 days after Resurrection) – Jesus appears to Disciples at Sea of Tiberias (also called Sea of Galilee) (3rd appearance to Disciples)
- Jesus asks Peter “Do you Love Me – Feed My Sheep”
- Jesus Predicts Peter's Death / Rumor that John would not Die
- Jesus did Many Other Things – World couldn't Contain (appears to the 500)
- 40 days after Resurrection – Jesus Ascends into Heaven
- (for 10 days after the Ascension) the Disciples wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit
- 50 Days after the Resurrection – The day of Pentecost - The Disciples Baptized with the Holy Spirit

### **Wait 10 / Wow – Prayed whole Hour / Step 5 / Not Duration-but Desire / Not go Anywhere**

So they will wait 10 days. How many times I think I tarried hard after a whole hour; how many times I gave up on something after only a few days of praying. We had said, step 5 on the path to being baptized in the Holy Spirit is to “desire” to be touched by God with the same desire we would desire water after being stranded in the desert for 3 days. I believe what we see here isn't so much a demonstration of duration, but of desire. These disciples are hungering and thirsting for righteousness, they are desiring to be filled. These disciples were not going anywhere until they received of Jesus all that Jesus promised of them. How about you? Are there promises of God you haven't received yet, although you know they are yours? Maybe you haven't got them yet because you won't slow down long enough to receive them. I pray we all have a day (and days) that we tarry for the Lord, not leaving nor letting go, until we have that which we know He has promised us, yet we haven't taken possession of it. Let that day be today, get with the Lord in your Upper Room, say to Him, “Lord I know the know the thing you want for me Wait until you get, don't leave until you do, it will be worth the wait, just ask the disciples.

*Acts 1:1–3 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, <sup>2</sup> until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, <sup>3</sup> to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

*Matthew 5:6 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.

### **7 Steps to Receiving the Baptism of the Holy Spirit**

- 1.) Repentance unto Salvation
- 2.) Repentance of Sin
- 3.) Be Baptized
- 4.) Be Obedient
- 5.) Desire
- 6.) Ask
- 7.) Believe

### **Tarry in Your Upper Room / Uninterrupted / Great you Pray in Car**

The place to tarry is in your Upper Room, for there is power in the Upper Room, that place that we go quietly and have uninterrupted time with the Lord. I think it is great when we pray on the drive to work (keep doing that), or in the shower (keep singing), or on our walks, but how often do distractions and interruption come in those places (some guy cuts you off, your devotion goes from intercession to supplication, oh Lord please forgive me for what I just said or thought). Get in your Upper Room, just you and the Lord, let it be totally uninterrupted, set apart and dedicated, waiting for the Lord to show up, and this I can promise you, you won't have to wait long, you won't have to wait 10 days for He desires to meet with you, and lead you in the conversation of prayer. He loves being with us, and can't wait for the door to the Upper Room to open and we enter in:

*Romans 8:26-27 (NKJV)* <sup>26</sup>Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. <sup>27</sup>Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

### **Notice – No more Greatest / Thy Will be Done / Prayer Produces Unity – Unity Empowers**

Do you also notice something so different that what we had saw back in the Gospels, these disciples are gathered together in unity, no longer arguing over who will be the greatest in the kingdom, but only desiring that the Kingdom Come, not thy will but your will be done. Prayer produces unity, and unity empowers prayer. When you pray with people, you experience a glorious unity that allows a greater release of blessing. That is why Jesus said, "If two or three of you agree in prayer, there's a dynamic released, and things will happen" (see Matthew 18:20). As a result of this prayer meeting, the church would soon no longer consist of one hundred twenty believers hiding away in an upper room, but would, in a single day, explode to number over three thousand (Acts 2:41).

*Luke 22:42 (NKJV)* <sup>42</sup>saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done."

*Matthew 18:19-20 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup>"Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup>For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."

*Acts 2:41 (NKJV)* <sup>41</sup>Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

### **Hey Christian – If do that 120 / Do that in Your Life / Divorce - 1100**

Hey Christian, if God can do that with 120 people from different walks of life, different backgrounds, different social status, religious backgrounds, and many other differences, how much more so can He do in your family, in your marriage. The statistics are in, husbands and wives who pray together, read the word, and attend church together have a divorce rate of 1 in 1100. There is power in the Upper Room, make one for you and your spouse, invite the kids in daily.

*Prayer produces unity, and unity empowers prayer!*

### **Important note – Who is There / Last time Mary Mentioned in NT – She is Waiting**

Verse 14 - These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers - I think it important to note who all is here,

...and Mary the mother of Jesus... This is the last time Mary is mentioned in the New Testament, and what do we find her doing, waiting to be endowed with power from on high, as she is praying with one accord with the other disciples, notice the disciples praying with her, not to her. This is the first and last time Mary is seen in the Book of Acts.

### **Some Catholic Quarters – Co-Redeemer / Church of Mary – Assumption / Pope Pius XII**

In some quarters of the Catholic Church, there is a skewed theology concerning Mary. They do not see her as simply an especially blessed woman, but as a co-redemptress, and one with special access to the throne of God. In Jerusalem today, there is a Catholic Church called the Church of Mary, for many centuries it was thought to be the spot where Mary was buried. However, when the Catholics changed their theology and decided that Mary never died, but instead ascended into heaven, they permanently shut the doors of the Church of Mary (This doctrine was dogmatically and infallibly defined by Pope Pius XII on 1 November 1950 in his *Apostolic Constitution Munificentissimus Deus*).

### **Dear Friend / No Assumption, No Redeemer, No Favors / John 2:5 – Last Recorded Words**

Dear friend, Mary did not supernaturally ascend into heaven, she is not a co-redeemer, she cannot gain favors for those who pray to her. In John 2:5, we find the last recorded words of Mary when she said to the servants at the marriage feast, "Whatever He [Jesus] saith unto you, do it." She didn't say, "Tell me your problem, and I'll take care of it." She said, "Whatever He saith unto you, that's what you need to do."

*John 2:4-5 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup>Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come." <sup>5</sup>His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."

### **Mary in Midst of Disciples – Not Prominence / Most Blessed Woman - Honored**

Mary is seen here in the midst of the disciples, but not in a place of prominence. She is the most blessed of all women—uniquely and singularly chosen by God to bring forth His Son. She is honored, indeed, but she does not have special pull or power with God, she does not have the place as mediator, or co-redemption with Jesus for the forgiveness of sin.

*Luke 1:28 (NKJV)* <sup>28</sup>And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"

### **We are Talking Power / Principles and Pattern / Deviate – Lose Power / Change Taxes**

We are talking power, the context of this chapter is power, and the principles and pattern for power are laid out before us, and to deviate in any way from these principles and patterns will greatly diminish seizing and using the power available. Praying the rosary, I believe it is 10 to 2, ten repetitions to Mary, for every 2 repetitions to the Father (Jesus even taught against the vain repetitions) Am I saying a person who prays to Mary is not a Christian, not at all, but what I am saying is that person will miss out on the power available because they are outside the principles and the pattern; quite simply I am saying that a person who prays to Mary is not in accordance with the Scriptures, and essentially are wasting time and words, because the prayer request is to person who has not the ability to change anything. It would be the same of asking me to lower your taxes, when I have to pay taxes just like you, and have no representation power in the State Office to make such a change. It would just be words and time that had no hope of making a change.

*Matthew 6:6-7 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup>But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. <sup>7</sup>And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.

### **Let's Not go to War / 100% Agreement Mary is Blessed / Fundamentalist / 1 Mediator**

Now, let us not go to war over this with our Catholic friends, for it is a fact that Mary is favored amongst all woman, that is scripturally true; and when our Catholic friends say that we should agree with them, let them know we are in 100% agreement with them on the subject. I think for us Fundamentalist, we can go to such an extreme because we don't want to elevate Mary over Jesus that we can come off as sounding that we don't acknowledge or recognize Mary for how she is favored amongst all woman. We need to let

our Catholic friends know we are in agreement with them over that matter; and as we talk about Mary we continually reiterate how blessed she is, but we say, most blessed yes, but not a co-redeemer, nor a co-mediator, and then we share the scriptures with them and prayerfully the Holy Spirit will give them eyes to see the difference. But we will never gain an audience with them if they think we are not in agreement with them that Mary was most blessed amongst woman. We must stay in perfect consistency with the Scriptures, and we take them to Luke and say absolutely she is most blessed; but then when need be, we take them to Matthew 6, we take them to 1 Timothy 2, and we stay consistent with the Scriptures.

*1 Timothy 2:3-6 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup>For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, <sup>4</sup>who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. <sup>5</sup>For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,*

### **And Brothers / Brothers Skeptics / Until Resurrection**

*Acts 1:14 ...and with his brothers* - James and Jude—sons of Joseph and Mary and half brothers of Jesus—were in the Upper Room. This is interesting, because the Gospels make it clear that they had previously been cynical, skeptical unbelievers (John 7:5). What changed their minds about their Brother? His Resurrection. When James and Jude saw Jesus resurrected from the dead, they became believers in Him. James went on to write the Epistle of James; Jude, the Epistle of Jude. If anyone could have questioned the deity of Jesus Christ, it would have been His own brothers, yet here are James and Jude, numbered among the believers. The same power that raised Christ from the dead is the same power that is available to us today, and that power will change our lives just as it changed the life of Jesus' half-brothers.

*Ephesians 1:19-20 (NKJV) <sup>19</sup>and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power <sup>20</sup>which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,*

### **Power things going On / Nothing Else Mattered / The Principle of Upper Room**

There are powerful things going on here in this Upper Room. Why was the Upper Room so powerful, because it was there that for these 120, nothing else mattered except Jesus. Jesus was the central theme, the only theme, and getting to Him, and Him getting to them is all that mattered to these 120. Thus is the powerful principle of the Power of the Upper Room, it isn't so much the duration, but the desire, that I am going to this place where there is only one thing that matters, and that is me getting to Jesus, and Jesus getting to me.

### **Why don't we make it to Upper Room?**

Why don't we make it to the upper room? Is it because we are tired, hardly. Busy, let's be honest we have an abundance of time, just look at your tv and internet cum time per week. We don't make it to the upper room because we really don't believe that prayer matters. Because if we did, nothing would stop us from making our way there.

I am reminded of this story, a story of someone who believes God hears, and also how God is answering prayers before we pray them:

*A LITTLE GIRL'S PRAYER – by missionary in the Congo*

*One night I had worked hard to help a mother in the labor ward; but in spite of all we could do she died, leaving us with a tiny premature baby and a crying two-year-old daughter. We would have difficulty keeping the baby alive, as we had no incubator (we had no electricity to run an incubator) and no special feeding facilities.*

*Although we lived on the equator, nights were often chilly with treacherous drafts. One student midwife went for the box we had for such babies and the cotton wool the baby would be wrapped in. Another went to stoke up the fire and fill a hot water bottle. She came back shortly in distress to tell me that in filling the bottle, it had burst. Rubber perishes easily in tropical climates. "And it is our last hot water bottle!" she exclaimed.*

*As in the West it is no good crying over spilled milk, so in Central Africa it might be considered no good crying over burst water bottles. They do not grow on trees, and there are no drugstores down forest pathways.*

*"All right," I said, "Put the baby as near the fire as you safely can; sleep between the baby and the door to keep it free from drafts. Your job is to keep the baby warm."*

*The following noon, as I did most days, I went to have prayers with any of the orphanage children who chose to gather with me. I gave the*

youngsters various suggestions of things to pray about and told them about the tiny baby. I explained our problem about keeping the baby warm enough, mentioning the hot water bottle. The baby could so easily die if it got chills. I also told them of the two-year-old sister, crying because her mother had died.

During the prayer time, one ten-year-old girl, Ruth, prayed with the usual blunt conciseness of our African children. "Please, God," she prayed, "send us a water bottle. It'll be no good tomorrow, God, as the baby'll be dead, so please send it this afternoon."

While I gasped inwardly at the audacity of the prayer, she added by way of corollary, "And while You are about it, would You please send a dolly for the little girl so she'll know You really love her?"

As often with children's prayers, I was put on the spot. Could I honestly say, "Amen"? I just did not believe that God could do this. Oh, yes, I know that He can do everything. The Bible says so. But there are limits, aren't there? The only way God could answer this particular prayer would be by sending me a parcel from the homeland. I had been in Africa for almost four years at that time, and I had never, ever, received a parcel from home; anyway, if anyone did send me a parcel, who would put in a hot water bottle? I lived on the equator!

Halfway through the afternoon, while I was teaching in the nurses' training school, a message was sent that there was a car at my front door. By the time I reached home, the car had gone, but there, on the veranda, was a large twenty-two pound parcel. I felt tears pricking my eyes. I could not open the parcel alone, so I sent for the orphanage children. Together we pulled off the string, carefully undoing each knot. We folded the paper, taking care not to tear it unduly. Excitement was mounting. Some thirty or forty pairs of eyes were focused on the large cardboard box.

From the top, I lifted out brightly colored, knitted jerseys; eyes sparkled as I pulled them out. Then there were the knitted bandages for the leprosy patients, and the children looked a little bored. Then came a box of mixed raisins and sultanas --- that would make a nice batch of buns for the weekend. Then, as I put my hand in again, I felt the ..... could it really be? I grasped it and pulled it out --- yes, a brand-new, rubber hot water bottle! I cried. I had not asked God to send it; I had not truly believed that He could.

Ruth was in the front row of the children. She rushed forward, crying out, "If God has sent the bottle, He must have sent the dolly, too!" Rummaging down to the bottom of the box, she pulled out the small, beautifully dressed dolly. Her eyes shone! She had never doubted.

Looking up at me, she asked: "Can I go over with you, Mummy, and give this dolly to that little girl, so she'll know that Jesus really loves her?"

That parcel had been on the way for five whole months. Packed up by my former Sunday school class, whose leader had heard and obeyed God's prompting to send a hot water bottle, even to the equator. And one of the girls had put in a dolly for an African child --- five months before --- in answer to the believing prayer of a ten-year old to bring it "that afternoon."

~By Helen Roseveare~

Helen Roseveare is a medical missionary and author from England who served for years in the former Belgian Congo.

## **I Pray you Make your Way / Protocol – Set the Mindset**

I pray you make your way to the Upper Room today, and tomorrow, and the days thereafter. God wants to hear from you, He wants to spend time with you. He wants you to sit on His lap and say "Daddy this is what is going on." Ephesians 2:18 will revolutionize your prayer time if you can comprehend this (PS - First Notice the trinity (v.18) here at work in our salvation, and coming before the Lord.)

***(Ephesians 2:18 NKJV) For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.***

## **Access - Protocol**

*Access is from the Greek word, prosagoge – it is where we get our word "Protocol".* Today when the government announces a dignitary entering a room, they ring bell, or in Britain they stomp the staff on the floor, and announce, now entering .....Mr. so and so. The honorary looks forward to with great anticipation and excitement of the person coming. The door is opened to them 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This is the word God is using here, "Protocol". This verse, this word "Protocol", has revolutionized my prayer time. The thought that God is anxiously waiting for me to come to Him, like I am some dignitary, makes me look forward to our prayer time together. I have access right into His presence. The Creator of the Universe has been waiting, and is ready to hear.....the bell rings, the angel stomps his staff, now entering.....and God says I've been looking forward to our time together. Andrew Murray said, "this is the glory of the inner chamber, to converse with God the Holy One."

***(1 John 5:14 - 15 NKJV) Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.***

## Theme of Ephesians / Power at Your Disposal

Remember the theme of Ephesians is spiritual blessings, Paul is saying don't live like paupers when you are millionaires. What is at my disposal?

*(Isaiah 9:6 NKJV) For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

I have fellowship with someone who is Wonderful, a great Counselor, Mighty in Power, a Loving Father, and brings Peace. Prayer focuses all of our attention on God, lifting its burden off of us. Prayer is a specific divine appointment with God. – Don't Miss It.....Stomp, stomp, here ye, here ye, now entering the throne room, God's beloved son,,,,,,,,,,,,,Come my son He will say, I've been waiting for you.

## Model Prayer

ACTS – the prayer. I collect tracts, and several years ago I came across this one somewhere and kept it. It was called seven minutes with God, and it spoke of Bible reading and prayer. The prayer part became my prayer model of life. I always say, share with people what works for you, and let them see if it works for them, so today I want to share with you this model prayer that has helped me finally have a solid prayer life after all these years of meandering and wandering prayer time. Of course the first thing I have heard as I mentioned “a model prayer” was a Pastor saying you can't formalize prayer, prayer has to come from the heart, you will just be repeating vain repetitions. Vain repetitions will always be vain repetitions, Jesus Himself warns against that.

*(Matthew 6:7 NKJV) "And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.*

*(Matthew 6:8 NKJV) "Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.*

But, as for the model prayer, when the disciples came to Him and said teach us to pray, what did Jesus do? Jesus gave a model prayer – Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Jesus didn't say, repeat this prayer, verse 9 of Matt 6, Jesus said “*In this manner, therefore, pray*”

*(Matthew 6:9 NKJV) "In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.*

*(Matthew 6:10 NKJV) Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.*

*(Matthew 6:11 NKJV) Give us this day our daily bread.*

*(Matthew 6:12 NKJV) And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors.*

*(Matthew 6:13 NKJV) And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

Jesus gave them a model to frame their prayer, so we are in safe company should we do the same.

## ACTS – the Prayer

- A – Acknowledgment
- C – Confession
- T – Thanksgiving
- S - Supplication

## Why we Pray

Now before we pray, I think it necessary for our minds to understand why we as Christians pray. If God is sovereign, then why do we need to ask Him for anything. If God is caring, then why does He need us to intercede for anyone? Let's answer those points first, and then we will be more likely to pray and continue to pray.

Lets look at 3 areas.

- Devotion
- Free-will
- Warfare

## Devotion

Devotion means, the warmth of passion glowing hot as fire for our Lord Jesus Christ (I might add that “apathy” means without passion) and we saw that the morning devotion was our opportunity/privilege to

fellowship with Our Creator.. We also established that sometimes we will pray in Poverty, and /or, in Power – which ever the case, Pray.

### **Free-Will**

We have to understand that freewill applies in prayer, just as it does in salvation. God will not force Himself on anyone to come and fellowship with Him for eternity. He would not force someone into becoming His bride if they truly do not love Him. So just as God does not force us into salvation, nor does He force Himself into our lives as Believers. He wants to work in your life, He wants to do great things for you, in you, and through you

*(1 Corinthians 2:9 NKJV) But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."*

*(1 Corinthians 2:10 NKJV) But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.*

Now if you don't give Him the OK to do those things, then He would be violating your free will. God says I want to root this sin out of your life, but you have to say take it, I want to you use you in this area, but you have to say use me, I want to take you to this mountain top, but you have to say show me. Simply, Prayer gives God the OK to Bless You.....amazing that we don't pray more isn't it?

### **Warfare**

Warfare is part of Free Will, if everything came so easy to us then we would never be appreciative, be even more so, we would never truly know our motives for what we were asking. When we have to sweat, labor and get dirty for something then our motives will prove themselves out. How bad did we want to topple the Taliban? If we sent 5000 soldiers and 50 airplanes I'd say not much, but 200,000 soldiers with Naval Fleets and whole Air Wings, the desire and motive was obvious.

*(Ephesians 6:12 NKJV) For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

### **Satan Judged – But doesn't seem like It**

We have to ask, Wasn't Satan judged at the Cross? Of course he was. Christ did the work at the cross. Why, then, does Satan seem to be winning? The homes of our nations are rapidly deteriorating, our national morality is on the decline, the church is weak. Visit the classrooms where our young people are being educated and wonder how God has any influence. Our inner cities are crawling with vice, If Satan is judged, who's doing all his work?

### **Robinson Crusoe**

I read about Robinson Crusoe, trying to teach his man Friday the doctrines of the Christian faith. When he came to explaining the devil, he told Friday that the devil was the enemy of God and that he was trying to defeat the purposes of God in the world. Friday asked, "Is God not strong as devil?" "Of course, God is stronger," Crusoe answered. "Christians pray to God for victory over the devil." Friday puzzled about that one. "But why God no kill devil so make him no more do wicked?" Just as we do when our kids ask us questions we don't know quite how to answer, Crusoe pretended he didn't hear, hoping Friday would forget the question. Friday persisted and finally Crusoe gave up and answered, "Well, God will punish the devil in the end." "But why God not kill devil now?". We may not use fractured English, but our question is the same. "If Satan was judged at the cross, why isn't there more victory over him here and now?" Legally, Calvary was Satan's undoing. All his hopes were canceled when the Lord Jesus died and rose again. However, like any other legal action, the decision must be enforced. The concept of enforcement is illustrated in our own government. We know the federal government has three branches: the legislative branch, or Congress, passes the laws; the judicial branch, the Supreme Court, interprets the laws; the executive branch, centered in the president, enforces the laws. History gives us a good example of this principle. The eighteenth amendment said that the manufacture, sale, or transportation of liquor was illegal. It was the law of the land, having been passed by Congress. But its enforcement was left in the hands of a man named Andrew Mellon, who was secretary of the treasury. He was also the head of one of the largest brewery syndicates in the world. Interesting predicament. The law became useless, because it was not enforced. Satan was judged at the cross and the enforcement of that judgment is now

“in part” in the hands of the church of Jesus Christ. The tool that enforces Satan’s defeat is the tool of prayer.

### **Daniel Prayed for 21 days**

Remember our friend Daniel from the Book of Daniel? He prayed for twenty-one days and finally the angel of Satan was defeated. It is prayer in the name of Jesus that is the effective weapon for changing men and nations in the world. Earthly victories depend upon heavenly victories. The ultimate victory over Satan is in the future, but the most powerful weapon Christians have – prayer.

*Daniel 10:13–14 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. <sup>14</sup> Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come.”

### **Now It’s Prayer Time – Some Practical Tips**

#### **Settle In**

We see in the Scriptures that when Jesus prayed, He went to the mountain, in the quiet of the morning, good place. I think we can picture it, a quiet peace, a relaxing place. Where is your place to pray, it is vital to your prayer time. Find a place that is not distracting, comfortable but not too comfortable, a place where you and God meet.

#### **Journal**

Get yourself a prayer journal/notebook because it will force you to write something in it everyday.

I’ll write the Structure of A\_C\_T\_S, down in my journal so I will fill something in, for every point.

This was the key for me, the blank pages for the days missed spoke out to me of what I was missing out on, the protocol, the power missed for the day. When I started to use a notebook, jot prayers and thoughts down, I looked back and said I haven’t missed a day in 6 months, I’m not going to start today. See what I find is this, once I start to pray I’m fine, I’m glad I did, in fact most of the time I’m wishing for more time, bummed on all the things I didn’t get to pray for. The same is true for exercise, it takes so much to get started, but once I start I don’t want to quit, and when I do quit, I’m so glad I did. So your Notebook/Journal, vital to your prayer life. (Note: Always have a back-up prayer journal/notebook. One day missed is all it takes to turn it into 2 or 3 weeks.)

#### **Scrap paper**

Also, I keep a notepad/scrap paper next to where I am praying so I can jot distractions down. We are so easily distracted by thoughts of things that need to be done for the day, this way you can write them down and move on.

#### **Read a Chapter or Two**

So now I’m settled in my comfortable place, I have my notebook, scrap paper, and Bible. I start my prayer time with reading a chapter or two, not to study it, but just to enjoy reading it. While I do it, I am looking for a verse that speaks of how awesome God, His Glory, mercy, love for me, how mighty He is, and His power. I use it to start to focus my mind on who I am going to talk to, the King of the universe. For the first part of ACTS the model prayer is to Acknowledge who I am talking to.

#### ACTS – the Prayer

- A – Acknowledgment
- C – Confession
- T – Thanksgiving
- S - Supplication

## **A - Acknowledgement:**

Prayer is a mindset. When you set it in your mind, WOW, I get to talk to the Lord of All Creation tomorrow, He is going to not only listen to me, but talk to me, then you/we/I will look forward to our waking hours.

Every letter we write has an address put on it, no address the letter goes into the return to sender bin at the Post Office. We Acknowledge who we are addressing. It calibrates our mind to I am not talking to the air, but to the very King of the Universe.

Jesus started the model prayer He taught the disciples with, "Father in Heaven"  
*(Matthew 6:9 NKJV) "In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.*

For me this turns into worship. So often words will jump off the pages of the chapter I just read, verses declaring His glory, His awesome. Many times I find praise songs coming to my mind and I write them down. Lord of All Creation, of water, earth, and sky. Heavens are your tabernacle, glory to the Lord on high. God of wonder beyond our galaxy, you are Holy, Holy.....

My mind has just be calibrated into whom I get to talk to.  
*(Exodus 15:2 NKJV) The LORD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; He is my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God, and I will exalt Him.*

*(Psalms 69:34 NKJV) Let heaven and earth praise Him, The seas and everything that moves in them.*

*(Psalms 135:1 NKJV) Praise the LORD! Praise the name of the LORD; Praise Him, O you servants of the LORD!*

*(Psalms 135:2 NKJV) You who stand in the house of the LORD, In the courts of the house of our God,*

*(Psalms 150:1 NKJV) Praise the LORD! Praise God in His sanctuary; Praise Him in His mighty firmament!*

*(Psalms 150:2 NKJV) Praise Him for His mighty acts; Praise Him according to His excellent greatness!*

*(Psalms 135:3 NKJV) Praise the LORD, for the LORD is good; Sing praises to His name, for it is pleasant.*

## **Two-Way Conversation**

Prayer is conversation with God, thus it is a two-way conversation and God will speak to us (and they may be through the Word, or a Word he lays on our heart while we pray). But in your Acknowledgement, listen carefully and you will hear God speaking to you also, telling you that He acknowledges you as His precious son or daughter, He delights in you, he loves you with great love. But you have to be still to hear His voice, you have to quiet down and settle down from the rush and noise of the world.

*Before refrigerators, people used icehouses to preserve their food. Icehouses had thick walls, no windows, and a tightly fitted door. In winter, when streams and lakes were frozen, large blocks of ice were cut, hauled to the icehouses, and covered with sawdust. Often the ice would last well into the summer.*

*One man lost a valuable watch while working in an icehouse. He searched diligently for it, carefully raking through the sawdust, but didn't find it. His fellow workers also looked, but their efforts, too, proved futile.*

*A small boy who heard about the fruitless search slipped into the icehouse during the noon hour and soon emerged with the watch.*

*Amazed, the men asked him how he found it.*

*"I closed the door," the boy replied, "lay down in the sawdust, and kept very still. Soon I heard the watch ticking."*

*Often the question is not whether God is speaking, but whether we are being still enough, and quiet enough, to hear.*

*SOURCE: Phillip Gunter in Fresh Illustrations for Preaching & Teaching (Baker), from the editors of Leadership.*

## **C - Confession:**

Now when I see His holiness, I also see my sinfulness, and I know I have to confess my sins to get them out of the way so I can fellowship and have clear communication with Him. It is no different in a marriage relationship here on earth. If me and Renee have wronged each other in some way, it has to be dealt with before we will come into that sweet fellowship again.

Also, if you are confessing your sins daily, you will eventually cut that sin off because you will be too shameful to continual bring it before the Lord.

*(1 John 1:9 NKJV) If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

*(Psalms 66:18 NKJV) If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear.*

*(Mark 11:25 NKJV) "And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.*

Little note, I have the C – in my notebook, but I don't populate it, just incase someone would find it and tell the world of my sins and failures.

### **Two-Way Conversation**

Listen carefully and you will hear the Lord confirm to you, "forgiven", cleansed from all unrighteousness, therefore enter into the joy of the Lord, walk in freedom that you are right with Him, and you need not hide from Him.

## **T -Thanksgiving / Believing**

### **In the Midst of the Trials and Depression**

Thank Him for all that He has done for you. In the midst of our trials and depressions, we so easily forget what He has done for us in the past. We forget the He is a good God, a Loving God, a God who has provided so abundantly for us. What will this do for us, it will recalibrate our minds again of how awesome our God is, and how much He has done for us. What He has done in the past is proof of what He will do in the future. Thanksgiving brings us into belief that what we will ask for in our time of supplication, He will give to us if it is according to His will and He determines it is best for us..

*(Psalms 100:4 NKJV) Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.*

*(Psalms 100:5 NKJV) For the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting, And His truth endures to all generations.*

*(Matthew 9:28 NKJV) And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord."*

*(Matthew 9:29 NKJV) Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you."*

*(Matthew 21:22 NKJV) "And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."*

*(1 John 5:14 NKJV) Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.*

*(1 John 5:15 NKJV) And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.*

### **Don't Skip**

Don't skip over this part, dwell on His past goodness. We all have something to be thankful for. The warmth of our home, bed, spouse. The job that provides all these things, health, the breathe of life. No matter you are going through, you always have something to be thankful for. At the very least, and it is everything, we are thankful for the Cross, and that He is here right now to talk with us, even if we feel the rest of the world has abandoned us.

### **Two-Way Conversation**

Again, listen carefully in this two-way conversation and you will hear the Lord speak of how blessed and joyous He is over you, that He literally dances over you that you are His and He is yours.

*Luke 15:10 (NKJV)<sup>10</sup> Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."*

## **S -Supplication / Intercessor:**

Now, I have calibrated my mind and taken myself into the heavenly, I have confessed my sins, remembered how good my God is, now I am ready to bring my needs before the Lord. Supplication as we find it associated with prayer in the Bible simply means a request.

In supplication, we lift up our needs and the needs of others to the Lord. God wants to hear you say I need you, it gives Him the OK to do something about it. I know your needs he says, I want to do something about them.

*(1 Corinthians 2:9 NKJV) But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."*

*(1 Corinthians 2:10 NKJV) But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.*

But we have to pray to Him first!

### **Can't do more than pray first**

*You can do more than pray after you have prayed, but you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed.*

Pastor Joe of the largest church in the world, somewhere in Korea, has a church reportedly over 100,000. They meet on a hillside. He said I have so much to do everyday, that if I don't pray 3 hours a day I'll never get anything done.

### **Prayer Cards**

Use prayer Cards to help trigger your mind on the things to pray for, it will keep you focused so your mind doesn't start to wander. I have a card for loved ones that need salvation, friends, church members, one for my wife, my son, the ministry needs of the Church, Ministries I am involved in, things going on in the World, and one for myself. I use them to stay focused.

### **Be Specific**

Let your prayers be specific, this is war. We don't drop artillery, we calculate and direct them. I really believe that if I pray for something to bind, at that very moment it will be, I also know that the binding is temporary so I have to pray again and again for it.

*(Matthew 16:19 NKJV) "And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."*

When I pray for salvation, I don't just say ohh Lord save so-and-so, I ask the Lord to put a hedge around so-and-so, let not the enemy mess with his mind, and Lord I ask that at this very moment so-and-so will sense his emptiness, see his sin and his need for a savior.

### **Equal Time to Speak and Listen**

There is a time to listen when you pray, it is equally as important to listen as it is to speak, for it is a two-way conversation. I will lift a petition up and wait to hear from the Lord, I'll just sit in silence and God will speak to me on what I am to do, or He is going to do. We've said that prayer changes things. No! Prayer doesn't change things. Prayer changes people and they change things. We all want Gabriel to do the job. God says do it yourself - with My sufficiency and My strength

### **Prayers Hitting the Ceiling**

If your prayers about you are hitting the ceiling, then begin to pray for others and watch what happens. When I pray for someone, often I use prayers of the Bible to pray specifically for someone. I use them also for myself, such as the Beatitudes.

*Some Prayers of the Bible:*

#### **Prayer of Paul - Ephesians 1:15-23**

That they will know God More. (v.17)

That they will know the Hope of His Calling (v.18)

That they will know they are His Inheritance (v.18)

That they will know the Power Available to them (v.19-23)

#### **Prayer of Paul - Ephesians 3:14-21**

That God would Strengthen the Inner man:

That Christ May Dwell in your hearts:

That you might Comprehend the Love of God:

That you would be Filled with the Fullness of God:

### **Prayer of Paul - Philippians 1:9-11**

That your love may abound still more and more in knowledge:

That your love may abound still more and more in discernment:

That you may approve the things that are excellent:

That you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ:

That you may be filled with the fruits of righteousness:

### **Pray the Beatitudes:**

(Matthew 5:3 NKJV) "Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

(Matthew 5:4 NKJV) Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted.

(Matthew 5:5 NKJV) Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth.

(Matthew 5:6 NKJV) Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.

(Matthew 5:7 NKJV) Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy.

(Matthew 5:8 NKJV) Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God.

(Matthew 5:9 NKJV) Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.

(Matthew 5:10 NKJV) Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

(Matthew 5:11 NKJV) "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.

### **Prayer of Jabez (1 Chronicles 4:10) - And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying**

That You would bless me indeed.

Enlarge my territory.

That Your hand would be with me.

That You would keep me from evil.

That I may not cause pain.

### **Jesus is Interceding**

Remember that Jesus is Interceding for us, even when our prayers seem so weak.

*(Romans 8:26 NKJV) Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*

*(Romans 8:27 NKJV) Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.*

*(Romans 8:34 NKJV) Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.*

### ACTS – the Model Prayer

A – Acknowledgment

C – Confession

T – Thanksgiving

S - Supplication

# **The Power of the Word of God**

## **Acts 1:15-26**

### **You Shall Receive Power**

We are continuing our study of Luke, by digging deeper into the ending of the Book, as Jesus said “tarry in Jerusalem until you are endued with power on high”. Jesus said “wait for the Promise (capital P), and that promise we have studied is the Promise of the Holy Spirit, God Himself, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Person of the Trinity, taking up residence within a person and then overflowing out of a person unto the world around them.

Wait for God Jesus said, wait for God to come and flow through you, and you will have power to change your life personally, power to change your family, and power to change your workplace, neighborhood, community, and world around you. Wait for God.

*Luke 24:49 (NKJV) <sup>49</sup> Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”*

### **Google – 1 Billion Searches**

Google reports that more than 1 billion times has the following phrase been entered into google, “Is it possible to change your life?”. One billion times! And I want to tell you that it is possible to change your life, and it is all done by, and only by, the power of God in your life. Any other means will fail, but through the power of God you can change your life.

### **Acts Continued**

So the best way to study this baptism of the Holy Spirit is to study real life people who were really baptized with the Holy Spirit, and thus we just continue into 2<sup>nd</sup> Luke (aka Acts) and watch the “Acts of the Holy Spirit”.

*(Acts 1:8 NKJV) <sup>8</sup> But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”*

### **Jesus Ascends – Leaves no Plans / Just Wait**

Last study we ended with the Lord ascending. Now He ascends and leaves the church no plans except to wait. They were just told to go change the world, all the way to the ends of the world, yet no instruction on how to structure the church, what is the church hierarchy, whether to go verse by verse through the Bible or to teach topically, pews or chairs, are electric guitars ok, how many miles away must it be you can call yourself the 1st first Baptist Church again, should we wear robes or are Hawaiian shirts alright nothing except wait for the Promise of the Holy Spirit.

*Acts 1:9–11 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. <sup>10</sup> And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, <sup>11</sup> who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”*

### **Wait for the Power – Happen at Pentecost / 10 days from Now**

Jesus has told them to wait for the baptism of the Holy Spirit in which would endue them with power.

Now this will happen on Pentecost, which was 50 days after the Passover, Jesus has been with them for 40 days, therefore they are going to wait for about 10 days.

*Acts 1:1–3 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, <sup>2</sup> until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, <sup>3</sup> to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.*

### **Past Study on Power / 6 Powerful Principles / Remind You – Turned world Upside Down**

We have been speaking of power in our past studies and we have already seen 4 powerful principles on how we can experience great power in our Christian Life, as we have seen what gave those early disciples power. Remind you, it were these men and woman who turned the world upside down:

*Acts 17:6 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, “These who have turned the world upside down have come here too.”*

## **6 Keys to the early Disciples Power:**

- They Experienced the Resurrection Power (1:3)
- They Lived in the Consciousness of the Ever-Present of God (1:3)
- They were Filled with the Holy Spirit (1:8)
- They found Power in Looking for His Soon Return (1:11)
- They found Power in the Upper Room of Prayer (1:13-14)
- They found Power in the Word of God (1:15-26)

## **Recap 5 Principles, Resurrection, Ever Present, Baptism of Spirit, His Soon Return, Prayer**

The early Church saw and experienced the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, they saw Jesus Christ overcome the grip of sin and death, and knew same power that raised Christ from the dead, that had defeated sin, was available to them also (Ephesians 1:19). Christian do you believe that today, can I remind you of that today, there is no sin (habit, addiction) that has power over you today for the power that raised Christ from the dead and gave Him victory over sin is available (promised) to you today. IF that power can raise Christ from the dead, then you can sure it will raise you over your bad habit, your tongue, your lust, your addiction, your (and you fill in the blank). Let me also be very direct here, there is no caveat or disclaimer to that passage; The Lord doesn't say the resurrection power is available to you today (unless you are overworked, or unless it is your menstrual cycle, or unless your spouse or kids are laying it on you, or unless you have a physical or mental illness). There is no exceptions to the resurrection power raising you up and out of whatever that thing is that is keeping you down, keeping you from rising up for the glory of God. Secondly, the early Church lived in consciousness that God was always present in their lives, that at any moment He could appear right in the middle of what they were doing, whether that was eating, walking down the road to Emmaus, fishing, or fighting with their spouse, or clicking on the internet. Thirdly, the early Church was filled with the Holy Spirit to be witnesses to Jesus, and I believe this is the best and correct translation, not "be My witnesses", but "witnesses to Me", for as we live lives trying to "impress" if you will, then people watching will naturally be impressed. When we live to please and honor Jesus first and foremost, the witness unto the world will naturally follow because we will bring reality and certification to the work of Christ in a person's life.. Fourthly, the early Church were living as if Jesus was coming back at any moment to interrupt their lives, and thus they had a sense of urgency to share the gospel, they had a light touch on the things of the world, and they lived pure lives, not wanting to be found in sin at His appearing. Fifth, they found power and unity in the prayer room. No more arguing over who would be the greatest, but one heart, one mind, seeking one thing.....got all of God they could.

*Ephesians 1:19-20 ( NKJV ) <sup>19</sup>and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power <sup>20</sup>which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,*

*Luke 24:31-32 ( NKJV ) <sup>31</sup>Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. <sup>32</sup>And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"*

*(Acts 1:8 NKJV) "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

*(1 John 3:2 NKJV) Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.*

*(1 John 3:3 NKJV) And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.*

*Matthew 6:33 (NKJV) <sup>33</sup> But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

## **Verse-by-Verse**

Let's go verse-by-verse and see and grab hold of this sixth point of power, the power of the Word of God.

**(Acts 1:15 NKJV) And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (altogether the number of names was about a hundred and twenty), and said,**

**(Acts 1:16 NKJV) "Men and brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus;**

## Judas a Guide

Judas was a guide that led the henchmen to Jesus. Woe to any man who leads others into sin and error.

## Peter student of Prophecy / Absolutely certain Prophecy come to Pass

Notice that Peter was a student of prophecy. He said, "This Scripture must be fulfilled (referring to the OT Scriptures)." He was absolutely certain that prophecy would come to pass.

*Psalms 41:9 (NKJV)*<sup>9</sup> *Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted,  
Who ate my bread,  
Has lifted up his heel against me.*

*Psalms 55:12-14 (NKJV)*<sup>12</sup> *For it is not an enemy who reproaches me;  
Then I could bear it.  
Nor is it one who hates me who has exalted himself against me;  
Then I could hide from him.*

<sup>13</sup> *But it was you, a man my equal,  
My companion and my acquaintance.*

<sup>14</sup> *We took sweet counsel together,  
And walked to the house of God in the throng.*

*Psalms 109:7-8 (NKJV)*<sup>7</sup> *When he is judged, let him be found guilty,  
And let his prayer become sin.*

<sup>8</sup> *Let his days be few,  
And let another take his office.*

*Psalms 69:24-25 (NKJV)*<sup>24</sup> *Pour out Your indignation upon them,  
And let Your wrathful anger take hold of them.*

<sup>25</sup> *Let their dwelling place be desolate;  
Let no one live in their tents.*

## Peter Certain – So Am I

Peter was a student of prophecy. He said, "This Scripture must be fulfilled." He was absolutely certain that prophecy would come to pass. So am I with every prophecy that is yet future. I am positive the following will occur, just as we studied a few weeks back, we are blessed because we get to live in a time of actually witnessing visible evidence to things that seemed absolutely impossible 100 years ago.

- Rebirth of Israel (May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1948) – Ezekiel 36, Isaiah 66, Luke 21
- The re-establishment of the Roman Empire (the European Union) – Revelation 13
- Coming together of One World Religion (All roads lead to God) – Revelation 17
- Coming together of the One World Currency (Mark of the Beast) – Revelation 13

## Ezk 36-37 / Ezk 38-39 / Absolutely Certain to Pass – Wish I believed that Personally

Ezekiel 36-37 is the rebirth of the Nation Israel, fulfilled May 14, 1948. Chapters 38-39 speak of a still yet future event where the nations of Russia, Iran, Turkey, Libya, and Ethiopia will come from the North with the intent to wipe Israel off the face of the map (and if that sound familiar to you it should because the President of Iran has repeatedly made those remarks). They will come, but with no help from the outside world (including the USA, Britain, or any others) Israel will withstand the attack as God will supernaturally protect them. Today it is 6 million Jews verse 300 million Muslims, but the nation Israel continues to stand against all odds. What we see before our eyes is supernatural, it is Divine intervention, and there is no other way to explain it, even with the help the USA gives to Israel. I can read all the impossible odds every day in the paper, Nations with Nuclear capabilities, mass terrorist cells, but still say "it won't matter, Israel will stand, nothing will crush them because the Bible says so, and they must enter into the 7 year period described in Revelation – for they are the center of the whole 7 year period. I believe it, have no worries about it because the Bible says so; then one day the Lord spoke to me so clearly, He said Ray, "I wish you would believe all My promises to you the same way you believe My promises to Israel. Somehow, I differentiate the two, I for some reason doubt all the promises to me, while totally assured of the one to Israel. Same Word, same God, same assurance. How about you Christian, do you do the same, yea I hear the Word, but that's not how it is going to work for me, God does mighty works, but not in my life, I just seem to get enough to get by. Peter stands up and says the Scripture has to be fulfilled, so let it be. We need to claim the same, the resurrection power that raised Christ from the dead, will rise

me over that thing that is keeping me down, for the Scripture has to be fulfilled (there is power in the Word).

- My God shall supply all my needs (not wants but needs), for the Scripture has to be fulfilled.
- Husbands love your wife, for the Scripture has to be fulfilled.
- And you shall receive power to be My witness, for the Scripture has to be fulfilled.

Beloved, the Scripture has to be fulfilled, believe it, and you will receive it. Not receive it, and then you'll believe it, for we walk by faith not by sight:

*2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup>For we walk by faith, not by sight.*

### **Peter student of Prophecy – But Believed Word Inspired / Run when Judge Bible**

*Acts 1:16 (b) - ... which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus;* - Not only was Peter a student of prophecy, but he believed in the divine inspiration of Scripture, saying it was the Holy Spirit who spoke through David. All Scripture is inspired (2 Timothy 3:16). It's God-breathed, gang. And if you ever get involved in a church or become part of a Bible study group where the teacher says, "Well now, we can't be sure if this verse or this section is inspired," I would encourage you to immediately stand up, walk out, and never go back. Why? Because once you start to say, "I'll decide which part of the Bible is inspired and which part isn't," you suddenly become the judge of the Bible rather than allowing the Bible to judge you. And it's amazing what verses we will cross out given the opportunity! I've often encouraged people to go through their Bibles and meditate on all the verses they don't have underlined. We have all the promises starred and all the blessings highlighted, while verses like, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12) are strangely unmarked!

*2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup>All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, <sup>17</sup>that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

### **Peter attest Word Inspired & Infallible / When Person Believes that – Power will Follow**

So based on that the Scripture were God breathed, and they must come to pass, Peter is attesting that the Scriptures are inspired and infallible, and when a person comes to the belief, then the Scriptures have life to them, will have meaning to them, and they will experience the power of the Word. But, not until they believe the Scriptures are God breathed, infallible, and that every last one of them must be fulfilled:

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup>For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

### **Library of Congress**

The Library of Congress is the largest library in the world, with more than 155.3 million items on approximately 838 miles of bookshelves. The collections include more than 35 million books and other print materials, 3.4 million recordings, 13.6 million photographs, 5.4 million maps, 6.5 million pieces of sheet music and 68 million manuscripts. Pretty impressive, but only one book of the 35 million items is living.....and it is the Bible. Of the 838 miles of shelves, only the book that is 2 inches thick can change your life and give you power.

### **THE GRADUATION GIFT**

A young man was getting ready to graduate from college. For many months he had admired a beautiful sports car in a dealers showroom, and knowing that his father could well afford it, he told him that was all he wanted. As Graduation Day approached, the young man awaited signs that his father had purchased the car. Finally, on the morning of his graduation, his father called him into his private study. His father told him how proud he was to have such a fine son, and told him how much he loved him. He handed his son a beautiful wrapped gift box. Curious, but somewhat disappointed, the young man opened the box and found a lovely, leather bound Bible, with the young man's name embossed in gold. Angrily, he raised his voice to his father and said, "With all your money you give me a Bible?" and stormed out of the house, leaving the Bible. Many years passed and the young man was very successful in business. He had a beautiful home and wonderful family, but realized his father was very old and thought perhaps he should go to him. He had not seen him since that graduation day. But before he could make arrangements, he received a telegram telling him his father had passed away, and willed all of his possessions to his son. He needed to come home immediately and take care of things. When he arrived at his father's house, sudden sadness and regret filled his heart. He began to search through his father's important papers and

saw the still new Bible, just as he had left it years ago. With tears, he opened the Bible and began to turn the pages. His father has carefully underlined a verse, Matthew 7:11, "And if ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father which is in heaven, give to those who ask Him?" As he read those words, a car key dropped from the back of the Bible. It had a tag with the dealers name, the same dealer who had the sports car he had desired. On the tag was the date of his graduation, and the words...PAID IN FULL. How many times have we missed God's blessings because they are not packaged as we expected, that we miss the power of this word in our hands, to change our lives and to lead our lives. So much to be had in this word, but we must not only read it, we must remind ourselves that it is inspired. Not a book like any other book, but a book that is alive.

### **A Dangerous Place**

A most dangerous place to be beloved, is that this book becomes a memory to you. What do I mean by that is that all the scriptures you hear you remember, you can even finish them when someone begins to speak them. But I want you to recognize something, and that is that you no longer initiate them, you only finish them. They are only a memory for you, they are something past, they are not something present, nor will they be something future. You miss a Sunday teaching, and you don't miss it at all. You miss reading the Word each day, and you don't miss it at all. You feel you know it, and you do, but the problem being is that it is just a memory, it is no longer living to you, and thus it is no longer sharp to you, therefore it will no longer divide, nor will it discern for you.....for only a living Word can do those things. The Key to the power of the Word is believing that it is living, it is inspired, and it will inspire you daily. Come back to it today, and watch your life change today!

**(Acts 1:16 NKJV) "Men and brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus;**

**(Acts 1:17 NKJV) "for he was numbered with us and obtained a part in this ministry."**

**(Acts 1:18 NKJV) (Now this man purchased a field with the wages of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his entrails gushed out.**

**(Acts 1:19 NKJV) And it became known to all those dwelling in Jerusalem; so that field is called in their own language, Akel Dama, that is, Field of Blood.)**

### **Judas the Guide / woe to those who Lead / Broken Pottery is their Destiny**

Again, woe to the man or woman that leads another into sin. Word of caution to those who are dating and who lead another into sexual sin; or take a hit of this, or check this out, or we don't need to go there – but here. Broken pottery is their destiny if they refuse to repent.

### **Originally a Potter's Field / Useless Broken Pottery / Field used to bury Strangers**

We know from Matthew 27:10 and Zechariah 11:13 that this field was originally a potter's field—the field outside the house of every potter wherein he would throw any of his marred creations that, because they had become hardened, could not be reshaped. Over the years, due to the accumulation of broken pottery, the potter's field would thus be useless for anything but a burial ground.

*Zechariah 11:13 (NKJV) <sup>13</sup>And the LORD said to me, "Throw it to the potter"—that princely price they set on me. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the LORD for the potter.*

### **Betrayal Money used to Purchase Field / Powerful Picture – Blood \$ Redeems Useless**

Interestingly what happened to the money for which Jesus was betrayed? It was used to purchase a potter's field—a useless field full of broken pots and dead bodies. The picture to me is powerful: The blood money of Jesus—His work on the Cross—was spent to redeem useless vessels and lifeless bodies—us.

### **Falling Headlong – Contradiction? / Earthquake – Broken Rope / Weak Argument**

*Acts 1:18 (b) ...and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out -*

"Contradiction!" cry the skeptics. "Doesn't Matthew 27:5 say Judas hanged himself?" Judas did hang himself, then the rope broke, and he was disemboweled as he fell to the ground. Thus, rather than contradicting Matthew's account, Luke confirms it. Mind you, was going on a little while after Judas was

hanging from that rope? Jesus was on the cross, and what happened when Jesus was on the cross, a great earthquake, so much so it shook the doors of the Temple open, so much so it shook the covers off the tombs in the cemetery, so much so I believe that it caused a tree branch (that was maybe partially rotted or dead) to break and cause Judas to fall, or the knot of the rope (that was maybe not tied tightly – mind you no mention Judas being a fisherman) and the vibrating of the earth and the tree cause the knot to shift and the rope to untie, and Judas' body came tumbling down. I am ever so amazed that a person would risk eternal life on an argument as weak as this one.

*Matthew 27:5 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup>Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself.*

*Matthew 27:51 (NKJV) <sup>51</sup>Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split,*

### **Next time feel Useless, Broken, Hopeless – Remember Akel Dama / Washing of Word**

The next time you feel like a cracked pot, the next time you feel useless, the next time you feel there's no hope for you, remember Acel-dama—the field of blood—for even the place where the traitor died was purchased with the blood of Jesus Christ. And may I remind you, if for some reason clay was hard to come by, a potter would take the old clay, place it in a vat of water, and over time the water would soften the hard clay and make it pliable and useable again. Christian, been feeling a little hard and brittle lately, get back to the vat, get soaking in the Word, and let it (watch it) soften your heart, for there is power in the Word:

*Ephesians 5:26 (NKJV) <sup>26</sup>that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,*

**(Acts 1:20 NKJV) "For it is written in the book of Psalms: 'Let his dwelling place be desolate, And let no one live in it'; and, 'Let another take his office.'**

### **Peter Quotes OT / Peter not Ignorant – Spent time with Living Word**

Making application to Judas, Peter quoted from Psalm 69:25 and Psalm 109:8. This tells me Peter was no ignorant fisherman. He knew the Scriptures. And I strongly suspect Peter's knowledge of the written Word came from hanging out with the Living Word, Jesus Christ.

### **If Want to be Used – Know the Word**

If you want to be used by the Lord, you have to know the Word. I'm not talking just about a pulpit ministry, I am talking about being used by God to minister to your spouse, your kids, your parents, your brothers and sisters. Peter was well-versed in the Scriptures, and he was greatly used by the Lord.

### **World being Led Somewhere**

The world wants to be led, the world is being led, someone will lead them, why not us (with this Word). This week back in my beloved childhood home of Pittsburgh there is a rubber ducky parade on the river. A 45 foot high rubber ducky is being floated down the river, and thousands of people and hundreds of boats are following along. Really! You would spend your weekend following a duck! People want to be led somewhere, why not by God and His Word that is alive.

**(Acts 1:21 NKJV) "Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,**

**(Acts 1:22 NKJV) "beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection."**

### **Debate who the 12<sup>th</sup> / Peter Jumped Gun? / (1.) Disciples filled with Holy Spirit**

Now there are as many debates as there are stars in the sky of who should have been the 12<sup>th</sup> Apostle, and many a camps say that Peter jumped the gun on replacing Judas, and he was suppose to be waiting for the Holy Spirit, not replacing Judas, and that the disciples couldn't make a wise choice because they had yet to be baptized with the Holy Spirit. I think it important to point out, these disciples have been filled with the Holy Spirit, that happened on Resurrection Sunday

*John 20:21-22 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup>So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." <sup>22</sup>And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.*

### **Filled and (2.) - Been Praying / In 1 Accord / Jesus in their Midst**

Not only are the disciples filled with the Holy Spirit, but they have been praying. They aren't having a business meeting, they are all in one accord (in unity) and as we studied last week, prayer produces unity, and unity empowers prayer, and thus Jesus is in this prayer meeting just as He said He would be (for where two or three are gathered):

*Matthew 18:19-20 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup>Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup>For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."

### **Filled – Prayer – (3.) - the Word**

Not only are they filled with the Holy Spirit, in the unity of prayer, they knew the Word, and what the Word said.

**(Acts 1:23 NKJV) And they proposed two: Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.**

**(Acts 1:24 NKJV) And they prayed and said, "You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen**

**(Acts 1:25 NKJV) "to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place."**

### **Knower of Hearts**

*Verse 24 - "You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all* – I like the original Greek as it would read, "the knower of hearts" – God knows our hearts and wants to touch them all, for His love for you is fervent and passionate.

### **God is a Consuming Fire**

Our God is a consuming fire. For some people that is freighting, for me it is freeing. For I have been purchased with a great price, I am sealed assured, and the only thing God will consumed regarding those whose are His, is the burning away of our sin.

*Ephesians 1:13 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,

*Hebrews 12:29 (NKJV)* <sup>29</sup> For our God is a consuming fire.

### **Smoked by John**

The preacher stood on the street corner preaching to anyone who would listen. A man approached him who looked like he had lived on the street forever. "Can I help you" asked the preacher. "I think you can" said the bum. "Would you like me to tell you about Jesus?" "No." "Would you like me to pray for you?" "No." "If you don't want me to tell you about Jesus, and you don't want me to pray with you, how can I help you?" "You can give me your Bible." "Why would you want my Bible if you have no interest in knowing more about Jesus?" "I noticed that the pages of your Bible are very thin; I can use the pages to wrap a cigarette (or a joint)." Wisdom came suddenly to the preacher, who said, "I'll give you the Bible, if you will agree to read a page (of the Bible) before you smoke it." The bum agreed, took his new Bible, and left. The preacher thought he had seen the last of the bum, but he could get another Bible. Several months passed, and the preacher was on the street corner once again. A man came up to him dressed in a three piece suit. "You don't know me, do you?" said the man. "No. I've never seen you in my life." "Yes you have. I'm the man you gave a Bible to (about four months ago)." The preacher couldn't believe his eyes and ears. "What happened? Tell me what happened." "Well, I smoked Matthew, and then I smoked Mark, and then I smoked Luke--and then John smoked me."

*John 3:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

**(Acts 1:26 NKJV) And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.**

### **Casting Lots common in OT / Proverbs 16 / Jonah Illustration**

So they cast lots, and the casting of lots was a common practice in Old Testament times (Proverbs 16:33). A specific example of an Old Testament character involved in the casting of lots is found in the

Book of Jonah. Sailors on the boat cast lots to determine whose fault the storm was before they tossed him overboard (Jonah 1:7).

*Proverbs 16:33 (NKJV)* <sup>33</sup> *The lot is cast into the lap, But its every decision is from the LORD.*

### **Urim and Thummim in Breastplate**

Also, as we saw in our study in Exodus that if a person wanted to know God's will, he would go to the high priest who had the Urim and the Thummim in his breastplate. The Urim and the Thummim were possibly two stones, one black and one white. When asked a question, the high priest would offer a prayer and then pull out a stone, perhaps black meaning "No" and white meaning "Go."

*Exodus 28:30 (NKJV)* <sup>30</sup>*And you shall put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be over Aaron's heart when he goes in before the LORD. So Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel over his heart before the LORD continually.*

### **People still cast Lots – Put out Fleeces / Last Lot in NT – Acts 13**

People today still think that casting lots is a nifty idea. Borrowing an idiom from the account of Gideon in Judges 6, they call it "setting out a fleece" (see Judges 6:36–40). But that's not the way of the New Testament. When Paul and Barnabas were commissioned for ministry in Acts 13, it was not through the casting of lots, but through the voice of the Spirit. This is the last time (here Acts 1) we will read of the casting of lots in the NT. Next time you have a decision to make, or a struggle within, I would highly encourage you to pray through and align yourself with these 7 points:

*Acts 13:2-3 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup>*As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."* <sup>3</sup>*Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.*

### **Hebrews 1 – God speaks to Us through Jesus / No need for Fleeces**

Hebrews 1, God now speaks to us through His Son Jesus Christ, the Word that became flesh. Christian we have the Holy Spirit living in us, we have God speaking to us, we need not put out fleeces, nor give multiple choices, we need to wait on the Lord, open a dialogue with Him, where we are both speaking and listening. Hey, why talk to a fleece when you can talk to the Lord.

*Hebrews 1:1-2 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup>*God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,* <sup>2</sup>*has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;*

### **Acts 13 – Spirit will Separate / No Multiple Choices – No more Fleeces / Only Ear to Hear**

In Chapter 13, the Spirit will say separate Paul and Barnabas for the ministry I have for them. No more multiple choices, they are listening to the Spirit, they have ears to hear, and they no longer need fleeces or lots, but only the ear to hear what He is saying to them to lead and to guide them.

### **This NT Theology – God will Honor / Write will in our Heart /**

God will indeed honor such prayer and seeking and will fulfill His promise to "write His will upon the table of your heart" (see Hebrews 8:10). Hebrews 8:10 is NT theology, and you will be sure that you are in the will of God.

*Hebrews 8:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup>*For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.*

### **Need not Struggle / 7 Points to Consider**

You need not struggle and strive with the leading of the Lord, for He desires to lead you. So in your decisions, large or small, ask yourself these 7 questions:

- **Major Point 1** when considering your decision ask yourself, "how will this affect my relationship and service to the Lord?"
- **Major Point 2** when considering your decision ask yourself, "has this desire stood the Test of Time?"
- **Major Point 3** when considering your decision ask yourself, "am I striving, trying to force or make something happen?"
- **Major Point 4** when considering your decision ask yourself, "who am I really doing this for?"
- **Major Point 5** when considering your decision ask yourself, "does it align with the Word?"
- **Major Point 6** when considering your decision ask yourself, "what does godly counsel say?"
- **Major Point 7** when considering your decision ask the Lord, "please give me a Word to stand on?"

### **This NT Theology – God will Honor / Write will in our Heart / Afraid of Answer**

God will indeed honor such prayer and seeking and will fulfill His promise to “write His will upon the table of your heart” (see Hebrews 8:10). Hebrews 8:10 is NT theology, and you will be sure that you are in the will of God. It amazes me how reluctant we are to do these things, and so often find ourselves in places and positions we shouldn’t be. I think one of the main reasons we don’t want to pray through these 7 points is because we really don’t want to know the answer, because we have already determined that is what we want, and are fearful that God may not concur, So we jump in, and say now bless it Lord; and sadly we often find out, God doesn’t bless it, and now we are in quite a mess.

### **Notice – Narrow it down for God / Pick One Lord**

Notice also what they did, and we so often do, alrighty Lord here are the 2 choices, which one do you think. We did the heavy work for ya, we narrowed it down to 2 choices, so all you have to do is pick 1. How often we can do this, we give God a multiple choice question, because pretty much we are alright with either option, so we aren’t too worried about which one He would pick. When Joshua comes to Gilgea, and he finds the Captain of the Lord Host (who is none other than Jesus Himself) and Joshua says are you for us or against us, and Jesus answers, No, neither! We want to give God a multiple choice question, when truly His answer may be neither.

*Joshua 5:13-15 ( NKJV )* <sup>13</sup>And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, “Are You for us or for our adversaries?” <sup>14</sup>So He said, “No, but as Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come.” And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, “What does my Lord say to His servant?” <sup>15</sup>Then the Commander of the LORD’S army said to Joshua, “Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy.” And Joshua did so.

### **Maybe made Decision – Didn’t do the 7 / Go back to Upper Room**

Ray, I made a huge decision in my life, I didn’t do any of those things, so what do I do now? You go back to the Upper Room, and pray those 7 points through and seek the Lord, and do what He says to do.

### **Lots of Debate – Didn’t Change History / Didn’t Stop Pentecost**

There has been lots of debate on who should have been the 12th Apostle (Matthias, or is it Paul – for Paul would call himself an Apostle); and to that debate I have absolutely no idea, never really cared for the debate because it doesn’t change the written Word, it didn’t change church history. If they were wrong it doesn’t appear that it effect the Day of Pentecost where 3,000 people were saved.

### **Gospel to Jews First / 12 Tribes / Paul to Gentiles**

The gospel went first to the Jews and then thereafter to the Gentiles. Twelve is the number of Government of the Jewish people, there were 12 tribes of Israel, and the Apostles were to rule over those 12 tribes, thus the necessity of the filling of the 12<sup>th</sup> spot that Judas vacated. The Apostle Paul will be known as the Apostle to the Gentiles.

*Revelation 21:14 ( NKJV )* <sup>14</sup>Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

*Matthew 19:28 ( NKJV )* <sup>28</sup>So Jesus said to them, “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

*Ephesians 3:1 ( NKJV )* <sup>1</sup>For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—

### **What we Know of Matthias / 3 yrs with Jesus, saw Resurrection, saw Ascension**

Here is what we do know of Matthias, he was with Jesus as long as the disciples were (Acts 1:22 - beginning from the baptism of John), so Matthias had been following Jesus for the last 3 years. That would most likely also mean that Matthias would have been one of the seventy that had been sent out by Jesus to minister in the name of Jesus. He witnessed the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (Acts 1:22) as the other apostles had. And, Matthias saw the Lord ascend into heaven (Acts 1:22 – to that day He was taken up from us). My main point, Matthias was a man of God, of the 10’s of thousands that Jesus would have come in contact with, Matthias was only one of 120 at the most to leave all, and to follow Jesus. This is no “slim pickings” gona have to settle on Matthais, this is a man who was devoted to Christ.

*(Acts 1:21 NKJV)* “Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,

*(Acts 1:22 NKJV) "beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection."*

### **Preached with Disciples Acts 6 / Missionary Ethiopia / Died a Violent Death**

We know that after the Descent of the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Matthias preached the Gospel at Jerusalem and in Judea together with the other Apostles (Acts 6:2). Now after that it is what all Matthias did after his appointment to be an Apostle is hard to track down in the early church writings (because of the various alternate names assigned to him), but some writing have him being a missionary to Ethiopia, and dying a violent death for his witness (whether that be true is a matter of speculation).

*(Acts 6:2 NKJV) Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables."*

### **What if Wrong / Power Illustration / No Man, Gov't, Program Stop God**

Now what if they were wrong, then we see a powerful demonstration of a Biblical Truth, if mere men were wrong, it didn't stop what God wanted to do with the Apostle Paul. Paul was going to be used by God, period! And here is a powerful Biblical truth for you Christian, no man, government, or program can stop the work of God in your life, only you can by your refusal to yield to Him. But if you yield your life to Him, doesn't matter what wrong man will do you, God will raise you up over them to fulfill His purpose and plan in your life.

### **Invest in 7 Points – Be a Matthias – Go for IT / Think Matthias heard the Challenge**

Christian, when it is decision time, invest in those 7 and if you feel the Lord has spoken to you, confirmed it, then be a Matthias and go for it. Tell if you don't think Matthias continually lived in the shadows of doubt by others (as he does today); well Matthias we aren't sure if you really should be the 12<sup>th</sup> Apostle, Peter may have jumped the gun. Acts 6 he will not be living in doubt, he will be preaching with the eleven. Church history says he went on to preach in Ethiopia too. You can't go on living in doubt, if you have prayed and believe God has spoken, then step out and go for it and don't look back. War will come, either from outside or within (your own doubts) but you go back to that day when God spoke, and said I am standing on that word, I am confident it was He that spoke and I will not waver or fail in this time and season.

### **Baby Esa**

Could I ever give this church a better example of this than baby Esa. For those reading this baby Esa is at St. Jude's hospital right now receiving treatment for cancer that is in her eyes. Her mom and dad were worship leaders here a few years ago. Blair here daddy felt the call of the Lord to go to the worship college there in Memphis, he felt sure that is what the Lord wanted for them. As we would talk about the decisions for the months (actually years), I would continually ask him, 6 of the 7 are sure, but how about that word from the Lord (what has He said), and I would never ask more except that one. I said seek Him, for the war will come, it is a guarantee when a person steps out in faith, and when the war comes grab that word and stand on it, never wavering, for the word has power and that power will give you strength in the times of war. When it was down to the final time to make it for the semester start or not, Blair said they were going, I asked what word did the Lord give you, and He said "The Lord will Provide", I said then go and never forget that word. Amazingly we thought the primary reason for going was Bible College, but only a few short month later, Esa would be diagnosed with eye cancer, and the number 1 treatment center in the whole world would only be miles from their home (St. Judes Hospital). The cost to this young couple with little money in their pocket? Free. The Lord will provide!

### **This Word will be a Lamp**

This word will be a lamp unto your feet, it will guide you, it will protect you, it will provide for you.....and that is pure power. The disciples found power, and they found it in the Word of God that sits on your lap right now, ready to explode into your life!

*Psalms 119:105 (NKJV) <sup>105</sup> Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.*

### **Scripture must be Fulfilled – Certain of It / I Like the Debate / Who will fill the Vacancy**

Peter said the Scripture must be fulfilled, he was absolutely certain of it, and Peter and these disciples knew there is power in the Word. I like the debate in that there is a question of who will take his place,

and I like the fact that question is still at debate 2000 years later, for I believe the question is still for today, and it is before you today, Who will take his place, who will represent the Lord. That is the question that the Lord will ask everyone here present today, there is a spot, and opening, for someone to fill, to take the place of representing Me, who will fill it? Will it be you? Believe the Word, and then you will receive its power, just as these disciples did. Step forward, and never look back.

# ***The Day of Pentecost – Worth the Wait***

## ***Acts 2:1-13***

### **You Shall Receive Power**

We are continuing our study of Luke, by digging deeper into the ending of the Book, as Jesus said “tarry in Jerusalem until you are endued with power on high”. Jesus said “wait for the Promise (capital P), and that promise we have studied is the Promise of the Holy Spirit, God Himself, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Person of the Trinity, taking up residence within a person and then overflowing out of a person unto the world around them.

Wait for God Jesus said, wait for God to come and flow through you, and you will have power to change your life personally, power to change your family, and power to change your workplace, neighborhood, community, and world around you. Wait for God.

*Luke 24:49 (NKJV)* <sup>49</sup> Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”

### **Google – 1 Billion Searches**

Google reports that more than 1 billion times has the following phrase been entered into Google, “Is it possible to change your life?”. One billion times! And I want to tell you that it is possible to change your life, and it is all done by, and only by, the power of God in your life. Any other means will fail, but through the power of God you can change your life, but God and only God can give you the abundant life that you so desire:

*John 10:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

### **Acts Continued**

So the best way to study this baptism of the Holy Spirit is to study real life people who were really baptized with the Holy Spirit, and thus we just continue into 2<sup>nd</sup> Luke (aka Acts) and watch the “Acts of the Holy Spirit”.

*(Acts 1:8 NKJV)* “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

### **Jesus Ascends – Leaves no Plans / Just Wait**

Jesus has ascended and leaves the church no plans except to wait. They were just told to go change the world, all the way to the ends of the world,

- yet no instruction on how to structure the church, what is the church hierarchy,
- whether to go verse by verse through the Bible or to teach topically,
- pews or chairs,
- are electric guitars ok, how many miles away must it be you can call yourself the 1st first Baptist Church again,
- should we wear robes or are Hawaiian shirts alright

nothing except wait for the Promise of the Holy Spirit.

*Acts 1:9–11 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. <sup>10</sup> And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, <sup>11</sup> who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”

### **Wait for the Power – Happen at Pentecost / 10 days from Now**

Jesus has told them to wait for the baptism of the Holy Spirit in which would endue them with power.

Now this will happen on Pentecost, which was 50 days after the Passover, Jesus has been with them for 40 days, therefore they are going to wait for about 10 days.

*Acts 1:1–3 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, <sup>2</sup> until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, <sup>3</sup> to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

## **Past Study on Power / 6 Powerful Principles / Remind You – Turned world Upside Down**

We have been speaking of power in our past studies and we have already seen 6 powerful principles on how we can experience great power in our Christian Life, as we have seen what gave those early disciples power. Remind you, it were these men and woman who turned the world upside down:

*Acts 17:6 ( NKJV )<sup>6</sup>But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, "These who have turned the world upside down have come here too.*

### **6 Keys to the early Disciples Power:**

- They Experienced the Resurrection Power (1:3)
- They Lived in the Consciousness of the Ever-Present of God (1:3)
- They were Filled with the Holy Spirit (1:8)
- They found Power in Looking for His Soon Return (1:11)
- They found Power in the Upper Room of Prayer (1:13-14)
- They found Power in the Word of God (1:15-26)

### **Recap 6 Principles, Resurrection, Ever Present, Baptism of Spirit, His Soon Return, Prayer**

The early Church saw and experienced the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, they saw Jesus Christ overcome the grip of sin and death, and knew same power that raised Christ from the dead, that had defeated sin, was available to them also (Ephesians 1:19). Christian do you believe that today, can I remind you of that today, there is no sin (habit, addiction) that has power over you today for the power that raised Christ from the dead and gave Him victory over sin is available (promised) to you today. IF that power can raise Christ from the dead, then you can sure it will raise you over your bad habit, your tongue, your lust, your addiction, your (and you fill in the blank). Let me also be very direct here, there is no caveat or disclaimer to that passage; The Lord doesn't say the resurrection power is available to you today (unless you are overworked, or unless it is your menstrual cycle, or unless your spouse or kids are laying it on you, or you are a poor reader, or unless you have a physical or mental illness). There is no exceptions to the resurrection power raising you up and out of whatever that thing is that is keeping you down, keeping you from rising up for the glory of God. Secondly, the early Church lived in consciousness that God was always present in their lives, that at any moment He could appear right in the middle of what they were doing, whether that was eating, walking down the road to Emmaus, fishing, or fighting with their spouse, or clicking on the internet. Thirdly, the early Church was filled with the Holy Spirit to be witnesses to Jesus, and I believe this is the best and correct translation, not "be My witnesses", but "witnesses to Me", for as we live lives trying to "impress" if you will, then people watching will naturally be impressed. When we live to please and honor Jesus first and foremost, the witness unto the world will naturally follow because we will bring reality and certification to the work of Christ in a person's life.. Fourthly, the early Church were living as if Jesus was coming back at any moment to interrupt their lives, and thus they had a sense of urgency to share the gospel, they had a light touch on the things of the world, and they lived pure lives, not wanting to be found in sin at His appearing. Fifth, they found power and unity in the prayer room. No more arguing over who would be the greatest, but one heart, one mind, seeking one thing.....got all of God they could. And sixth, they found power in the Word of God, as they believed every word of the Scriptures was God-inspired (2 Timothy 3:16), and the word of God was actually living (Hebrews 4:12), and thus has the power to change a person's life if they will invest themselves in the study and meditation of it.

*Ephesians 1:19-20 ( NKJV )<sup>19</sup>and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power<sup>20</sup>which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,*

*Luke 24:31-32 ( NKJV )<sup>31</sup>Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. <sup>32</sup>And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"*

*(Acts 1:8 NKJV) "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

*(1 John 3:2 NKJV) Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.*

*(1 John 3:3 NKJV) And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.*

*Matthew 6:33 (NKJV) <sup>33</sup>But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) 12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

### **Verse-by-Verse**

Let's go verse-by-verse and see now the actual day (called Pentecost) where the Holy Spirit came upon them, and my what a day it was, and we too can enjoy and seize the same for ourselves, as God still desires to pour Himself out upon His people today.

### **Many Christians say – Yeah but not for Me**

But before I begin, for many a Christians when you talk about spiritual gifts, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, they say sounds great and great stories to read and hear about, but I don't see them happening in my life, and the majority of days I feel totally powerless, I feel anything but endowed with God's power. I beseech you today, to stay tuned-in, for my hope before this sermon ends is that you will know and believe the power is available for you, and that the power is easier to receive than we have allowed ourselves to believe that it is, and that we will see that every good gift and perfect gift comes from above.....and our heavenly Father gives us gifts as He see best to give:

*James 1:16-17 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup>Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. <sup>17</sup>Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.*

### **Bill Bright / Sheep Ranch**

Dr. Bill Bright of Campus Crusade for Christ tells this story of a famous oil field called Yates Pool:

*During the depression this field was a sheep ranch owned by a man named Yates. Mr. Yates wasn't able to make enough on his ranching operation to pay the principal and interest on the mortgage, so he was in danger of losing his ranch. With little money for clothes or food, his family (like many others) had to live on government subsidy. Day after day, as he grazed his sheep over those rolling West Texas hills, he was no doubt greatly troubled about how he would pay his bills. Then a seismographic crew from an oil company came into the area and told him there might be oil on his land. They asked permission to drill a wildcat well, and he signed a lease contract. At 1,115 feet they struck a huge oil reserve. The first well came in at 80,000 barrels a day. Many subsequent wells were more than twice as large. In fact, 30 years after the discovery, a government test of one of the wells showed it still had the potential flow of 125,000 barrels of oil a day. And Mr. Yates owned it all. The day he purchased the land he had received the oil and mineral rights. Yet, he'd been living on relief. A multimillionaire living in poverty. The problem? He didn't know the oil was there even though he owned it.*

### **Many Christians – Spiritual Poverty**

Many Christians live in spiritual poverty. They are entitled to the gifts of the Holy Spirit and his energizing power, but they are not aware of their birthright.

### **Civil war gun 23,000**

I recently read a news article about a very desperate man, so desperate that he held up a convenience store and getting away with a mere 125 dollars. He used a handgun in the robbery which added to his sentence. He used a gun that had been in the family for generations, it wasn't loaded when committing the crime because they don't make bullets for the gun anymore; it was a gun from the Civil War, a collector's item, it's value? 23,000. He was carrying 23K and never knew it. Could that be the picture of us?

### **The Coming of the Holy Spirit**

**(Acts 2:1 NKJV) When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.**

1 - What did these disciples do to obtain this power - They scheduled their life around Jesus' schedule, not Jesus around their schedule (2:1)

### **120 in the Upper Room – Where the 1,000's / Fit Jesus In – Or Fit into Jesus'**

There were 120 in this room we are told in verse 15 of chapter 1. I wonder where the thousands upon thousands were that Christ had healed, had fed, had comforted, I wonder where they are and why they aren't in this upper room. We think super-saints and magical moments back then, but the fact that there are only 120 out of the 500 that had seen His resurrection, and that fact that there are only 120 out of the 1,000's that He had touched during His earthly ministry tells me that things were not that different back

then, as they are now. The majority of people fit Jesus into their schedule, not fit themselves into Jesus' schedule. But, Christian, for us today, we see another amazing thing, and that is that for those that did fit themselves into Jesus' schedule, God meets them in mighty ways.....and, what He can do with such small percentages, He need not wait for 80% turnout or participation before He can move mightily, here we see only a 25% turnout (120 out of the 500 eyewitness) and God will start a move of the Spirit that will burn across the whole world.

*(Acts 1:15 NKJV) And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (altogether the number of names was about a hundred and twenty), and said,*

*1 Corinthians 15:6-7 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup>After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. <sup>7</sup>After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostle*

### **120 have seen Lots (Healings, Touchings, Teachings) / But told to Wait**

These 120 have seen a lot. They have seen the healings, the touching, some no doubt recipients of healing personally. They have touched Him, they have heard Him, they have walked with them, they have seen Him raise from the dead, they watched Him ascend into heaven, and the Lord would still say wait – not yet.

### **Going to Need Power – Not Easy / What Teach – Against all Human Reasoning**

You are going to need this power, because things won't be easy. What you are going to do will go against all human-reasoning.

- You are going to tell people about someone rising from the dead.
- You are going to tell people there is life after death.
- You are going to tell people they need to deny their immediate fleshly wants, and to seek after the things of the Lord.

You will need power to do such things, for what you are going to tell people is revolutionary, and for some, it will be as if you are starting a revolution.

### **Some Churches Today – Gifts then, Not Now / Where do they Live? / Pasadena Needs It**

There are churches today who say the things of the Spirit spoken of here in Acts 2, and 1 Corinthians 12-14, were for then, not now. It was a period (a dispensation is the theological term) that was just to get the Church going, but are no longer needed or available today. I disagree with the later (still available) because the prior (the need) is still needed. I'm not exactly sure where those people live, or where they work, but I sure wouldn't mind moving there, for I tell you the place I live and the place I work, sure is still in need, in need of the Risen Savior, in need of a change in their life, in their marriage, and I need all the help I can get (all the Power available) to reach them with the life-changing message of the Gospel.

### **Love to go Live There / 3 months they'll Need the Power**

I would love to find out where they live, I want to find those Pastors and churches, and I want to move there. I should do that, because after I lived there for 3 months and went to their church for 3 months, after having to fellowship with me for 3 months they would quickly see the need for the power spoken of here in Acts 2.

*2 & 3 - What did these disciples do to obtain this power, they were in Prayer (2:1) and they were in Unity one with another (2:1)*

### **Prayer and Unity**

And, notice what else they were doing when they received this power, they were in prayer and they were in unity. Prayer is our declaration of dependence upon God. When we lack or forego prayer, it is simply us saying we got this God, we will call you if we get into any trouble we can't handle. And, they were in unity, they were no longer arguing over who was the greatest, who was in charge, who was to be recognized, they were all seeking one thing, God and all of Him. A church divided will never experience God's power in their life, nor a person seeking to be recognized by others will ever receive His power because God will not share His glory with anyone.

*Acts 1:14 (NKJV) <sup>14</sup> These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.*

*Isaiah 48:11 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> For My own sake, for My own sake, I will do it; For how should My name be profaned? And I will not give My glory to another.

### **Pentecost 1 of 7 / Mandatory – so Same People as Passover / Heard of Jesus Crucifixion**

*Verse 1 - When the Day of Pentecost had fully come* – The Feast of Pentecost was one of the 7 Jewish Feasts (read of them in Leviticus 23). Pentecost was a celebration. Taking place in the early spring, fifty days after Passover, it celebrated the completion of the winter harvest. It was one of the three mandatory Feasts that every able Jewish male was to attend. Many, who were here at this Feast, would have been here for the Passover Feast because it was a mandatory Feast also (the Feast of Tabernacle in the Fall was the 3rd mandatory Feast). We know from the Road to Emmaus that the crucifixion of Jesus was known to all (as they said are you the only one in Jerusalem who didn't here this), it wasn't some obscure event, everyone knew about it, Paul even said that these things were done openly and everyone knew about them, including King Agrippa (Acts 26:26), so the crucifixion of Jesus was no obscure event, all the region and visitors knew the story – that means millions!

*Luke 24:17-18 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?" <sup>18</sup> Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?"

*Acts 26:26 (NKJV)* <sup>26</sup> For the king, before whom I also speak freely, knows these things; for I am convinced that none of these things escapes his attention, since this thing was not done in a corner.

### **Pente = 50 / 7 Sabbaths plus 1 / All just a Shadow**

Pentecost was 50 days after Feast of Firstfruits (pente means 50), Leviticus 23 says 7 Sabbaths plus 1 day after the Feast of Firstfruits (which was the day after a Sabbath itself), so 49 plus 1 equals 50. Now Hebrews tells us that these Feasts were all just shadows of things to come, they were all pictures of Jesus' ministry of redemption.

*Leviticus 23:15-16 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup> And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. <sup>16</sup> Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.

*Hebrews 8:4-6 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; <sup>5</sup> who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain." <sup>6</sup> But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.

*Hebrews 10:1 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.

### **Recap the 7 Feasts**

Let's do a recap on these 7 Feasts so we can fully glean the prophetic picture we are see here in Acts 2.

#### **THE 7 FEASTS OF ISRAEL**

##### THE SPRING FEASTS

1. THE PASSOVER –
2. THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD
3. THE FEAST OF FIRSTFRUITS

##### THE SUMMER FEAST

4. THE FEAST OF PENTECOST

##### THE FALL FEASTS OF ISRAEL

5. THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS
6. THE DAY OF ATONEMENT
7. THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

### **1. THE PASSOVER (Spring Feast)**

The Passover was instituted to celebrate the angel of death passing over all whose house was covered with the blood of the lamb. It was the final blow to Pharaoh to let the children of Israel leave the bondage of slavery. We have studied in-depth of Jesus fulfilling the Passover Feast as He became the Lamb of

God who would take away the sins of the world (John 1:29). In the Jewish calendar Passover was to be on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan (Nissan was the 1<sup>st</sup> month in the Jewish calendar).

*John 1:29 (NKJV)* <sup>29</sup>The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

*Exodus 12:5-6 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup>Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. <sup>6</sup>Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.

## **2. THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD (Spring Feast)**

The Feast of Unleavened Bread began the day after the Passover (the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nissan) and it lasted 7 days and it was the celebration of the Children of Israel exiting Egypt in such a hurry their bread didn't have time to rise (leaven is used to rise bread as leaven literal decays it releases a gas that raises the dough). Jesus would not decay in the tomb, for God would not leave Him in the grave (as prophesied in Psalm 16:10):

*Acts 2:27 (NKJV)* <sup>27</sup> For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

*Psalms 16:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

## **3. THE FEAST OF FIRSTFRUITS (Spring Feast)**

The Feast of Firstfruits was celebrated the day after the Sabbath following the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Leviticus does not say the 16<sup>th</sup> of Nissan as some teach say in error, Leviticus 23 says the day after the Sabbath). It was the celebration of the Firstfruits of the winter crop that was planted (barley), where the priest would take a sheaf of the barley and wave it before the Lord, and it was a celebration because it represented God's pledge to fulfill the harvest. The seed that was placed in the earth has broken through the earth, has risen from beneath, and now is ready to produce fruit. The week that Jesus was crucified, the Feast of Firstfruits was the 17<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, which would thus make it 3 days after the Passover. Jesus fulfilled this Feast prophetically by being the first to overcome death forever, and be the first of the many to follow who would overcome death forever. The very day the Jewish people were celebrating this Feast of Firstfruits down at the Temple, Jesus was rising from the dead. By the way, the 17<sup>th</sup> was the very same day that the ark rested on dry ground after the flood (God changed the calendar in Exodus and the 7<sup>th</sup> month became the 1<sup>st</sup> month).

*(1 Corinthians 15:20 KJV)* But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

*(Genesis 8:4 NKJV)* Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.

The 3 Spring Feasts have all been fulfilled by Jesus Christ. Today's study is the middle Feast, the Feast of Pentecost.

### **Jesus fulfilled Prophetically & Individually**

In all these Feasts we can see how Jesus fulfilled them prophetically (as the Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world), they are for individuals (all who would receive Him as Lord and Savior). And, as we see He fulfilled them perfectly to the Day as prescribed by the Scriptures.

## **4. THE FEAST OF PENTECOST (Summer Feast) / Also called Feast of Ingathering**

The Feast of Pentecost was the Feast celebrating the fruit of the Summer harvest (wheat), also called the Feast of Ingathering – that was planted in the springtime, and here in Acts 2 we will see the first fruits of a Harvest that is still gathering some 2000 years later, as on this day we will see 3,000 people give their life to Christ.

*(Acts 2:1 NKJV)* When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

### **Fulfilled Prophetically & Individually & Church**

This Feast was fulfilled to the Day as prescribed by the Scriptures, the Promise was to individuals who would seek it, and it is a Promise to the Church.

### **Fall Feast – High Priest / Yet to be Fulfilled on Earth /**

Now the Fall Feast we will see Jesus fulfilled them as the High Priest, but from the actual prophetic fulfillment (to the Day) here on earth, they are still yet to be fulfilled. They have prophetic implications to

the Church, but I believe they are most specific to the Last Days (7 Year Tribulation Period) when God deals specifically with the Nation Israel (again after 2,000 years).

## 5. THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS (FALL FEAST)

The Feast of Trumpets was the celebration of the “Civil New Year”. It happened in the 7<sup>th</sup> month of the Jewish calendar (Tishri). The 1<sup>st</sup> month (Nissan) was the first month of the spiritual calendar, and (Tishri) was the first month of the civil calendar. The celebration is likened to our New Year’s celebration, where we feel it’s a new year, and there is hope of a new beginning. (Hard not see this one and think the rapture of the Church to start all things off). Once the Church is raptured, God starts dealing with Israel again as a Nation..... it is a New Year for them in terms of returning to the Lord.

*Leviticus 23:23-24 ( NKJV )* <sup>23</sup>Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>24</sup>“Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a sabbath-rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation.

*1 Corinthians 15:51-52 ( NKJV )* <sup>51</sup>Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— <sup>52</sup>in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

*1 Thessalonians 4:15-18 ( NKJV )* <sup>15</sup>For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. <sup>16</sup>For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup>Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup>Therefore comfort one another with these words.

*Revelation 4:1 ( NKJV )* <sup>1</sup>After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, “Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.”

## 6. THE DAY OF ATONEMENT (FALL FEAST)

The Day of Atonement was 9 days after the Feast of Trumpets (the 10<sup>th</sup> of Tishri) ( this Feast is also called Yom Kipper, and/or the Day of Reckoning) where the High Priest of Israel would go into the Holy of Holies in the Temple (that once a year) to ask God for forgiveness of sins for the Nation. We can see prophetically that this points to the Day of Reckoning that will come during the 7 year Tribulation Period (as God deals with the Nations, Israel most specifically), or it could be the very end when God judges the Nations; I am not totally sure, but we have a front row seat whatever Day that is.

*Revelation 6:15-17 ( NKJV )* <sup>15</sup>And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, <sup>16</sup>and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! <sup>17</sup>For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”

*Matthew 25:31-33 ( NKJV )* <sup>31</sup>“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. <sup>32</sup>All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. <sup>33</sup>And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

## 7. THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES (FALL FEAST)

The Feast of Tabernacles (also called Feast of Booths, and/or the Feast of Ingathering) occurred on the (15<sup>th</sup> of Tishri) and was the Jewish celebration of God’s deliverance from Egypt and their survival in the 40 year wandering of the wilderness. To celebrate they would for 7 days build temporary houses outside their home, and live in them to remember the wilderness wandering and God’s great provision and protection upon them, and then bringing them into the Promised Land. The Feast of Tabernacles is a prophetic picture of the bringing us out of these temporary dwellings in this temporary land, and taking us into our new bodies in our permanent home – heaven, and establishing of His Kingdom (scholars debate if this is the Millennial Kingdom or the Heavenly Kingdom – and to that I answer again, don’t know but have front row seats when it happens, but more importantly, the good news as I had said, it is a mandatory Feast, so we will be there). As for Israel God will take them out of Israel and secure them in a safe place during the last half of the Tribulation Period (3.5 years).

*Revelation 20:4 ( NKJV )* <sup>4</sup>And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

*Revelation 21:1-4 ( NKJV )* <sup>1</sup>Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. <sup>2</sup>Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He

*will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. <sup>4</sup>And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”*

### **Why do I make a Big Deal**

Why do I make a big deal about every jot and tittle of things like this, of all the prophetic fulfillment of the scriptures? Well first, it shows me how God is into every minute detail, and just as He tended to every detail regarding the scriptures, so too will He tend to every minute detail of your life. Secondly, God commands (Matthew 5) for teachers to teach, and thus I am just being obedient to His word. But thirdly, because there are times when my faith is tested, when I see things that make me think, wonder how it can be so. Last week I stood on the rim of the Grand Canyon, I looked out and saw an amazing expanse, then my mind said, this logical somewhat engineering type mind, said and God created it by saying it – wow that is faith to believe that. But immediately my thoughts went towards the perfection of this Bible, how every jot and every tittle came to pass, how I can look at still yet unfulfilled prophecies and see them shaping and coming to pass before my very eye..... and then I say for myself, the more I study this Bible, the faith I need, for I am walking by sight because I see the perfection of the Bible.

*Matthew 5:18–19 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. <sup>19</sup> Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*

*Isaiah 42:8–9 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> I am the LORD, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images. <sup>9</sup> Behold, the former things have come to pass, And new things I declare; Before they spring forth I tell you of them.”*

*Isaiah 48:3–5 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup> “I have declared the former things from the beginning; They went forth from My mouth, and I caused them to hear it. Suddenly I did them, and they came to pass. <sup>4</sup> Because I knew that you were obstinate, And your neck was an iron sinew, And your brow bronze, <sup>5</sup> Even from the beginning I have declared it to you; Before it came to pass I proclaimed it to you, Lest you should say, ‘My idol has done them, And my carved image and my molded image Have commanded them.’*

### **Absorb Yourself in this Word – Change Schedule / Chuck Smith Man of the Word**

Beloved, absorb yourself in this word, don't fit it into your convenient schedule, schedule your life around it.....for as this word goes through you, you will grow deeper and deeper in your faith. I was out on the West Coast when Pastor Chuck passed into glory. I knew there was no coincidence that I was there at that time, that God wanted to speak something to me, and He did. As I reflected on Chuck's life, as I was continually around the conversations about him, there was a continual theme about him, and that was that he was a man of the word. He lived a life that was pleasing to the Lord, and he was used greatly by the Lord, and the reason was because he was a man of the Word. Do you want a life that is pleasing to God, and do you want a life that brings God glory, then be a man/woman of the Word. Make it your habit, make it your hobby, make it your passion, make it your breath, and God will do great things in and through your life. Purpose that today in your heart, purpose that right now that you are make yourself even more a person of the Word of God, and I guarantee you that your life will be filled with the Spirit of God, and that you will have power! But, it won't come without a fight from your flesh, satan, and the world – so remember that when it the fight comes.

*Romans 10:17 (NKJV) <sup>17</sup> So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

### **Back to Pentecost / On a Sunday / Take note 7day Adventist / Interesting Note on Sunday**

So back to the Feast of Pentecost, it is on Sunday. Take note the 7 Day Adventist who say worship must be on Saturday, for the Church is birthed on a Sunday. For the Jewish people, they have to sit back and say, why is this Feast on Sunday (and not Saturday), just like the Feast of Firstfruit was. What we clearly see here is that God is making a point of the importance of Sunday, and we will see that it is the day of the week the early Church met. Many teachers errantly say that Pentecost was 50 from Passover, not so, it was 50 days after the Feast of Firstfruits (aka – Resurrection Sunday), and we see God's New Covenant counts from the Resurrection, not the death of Christ.

### **Interesting Note on Leaven Bread / Sin in the Church**

Another interesting note, the Feast of Pentecost say to eat “leavened” bread, while all the other Feast say “unleavened” bread. Leaven throughout the Scriptures is a picture of sin, and yet here during Pentecost they partake of leaven. The answer is, Pentecost is the birth of the Church, and the Church will be anything but perfect and sinless. I guess the only thing that surprises me about that is that sinners come

to a church, and are totally amazed that there are sinners there; there is this expectation that everyone in the church is to be perfect. Pentecost gives the picture, there are sinners (leaven) within the Church. *Leviticus 23:17 ( NKJV )* <sup>17</sup>You shall bring from your dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. They are the firstfruits to the LORD.

**(Acts 2:2 NKJV) And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.**

**(Acts 2:3 NKJV) Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.**

**(Acts 2:4 NKJV) And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.**

### **Sound – no Wind / Audio before the Visual**

*Verse 2 - And suddenly there came a sound from heaven* - Notice there was no wind, just the sound. Notice the audio came before the visual, the sound of the wind before the sight of the fire because the Word of the Lord always precedes the work of the Lord. The Word always came before the miracles (see Mark 16). The Word confirms the miracles. Churches that seek signs before the Word are out-of-order (literally).

*Mark 16:19-20 ( NKJV )* <sup>19</sup>So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. <sup>20</sup>And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.

### **No Formula for Prayer / Not Position body – but Heart / Are you Hungering?**

*Verse 2 and it filled the whole house where they were sitting* - No formula for prayer, you can sit, you can stand, you can kneel, or you can walk. It is not the position of your body, but the position of your heart – When you pray Believer are you waiting on the Lord? Are you hungering and thirsting for Him? You don't have to do something weird to get His attention, just be open to Him.

### **Cloven Divided / What Means? – Not sure / James says it is Powerful**

*Verse 3 - Then there appeared to them divided tongues* – maybe your OKJV say “cloven” which means to divide; so the fire came and divided upon every person. What exactly does this fire mean? I am not sure, but I know that the tongue is a powerful thing as James says.

*James 3:5 ( NKJV )* <sup>5</sup>Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles!

### **Upon / Spirit is In a Person as a Guarantee - Firstfruits**

*Verse 3 - and one sat upon each of them* –The Spirit is upon them, and thus different from being in them. Remember our study in Acts 1:3, the three prepositions (works) of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit comes into a person once they believe in Christ, and God the Spirit will never leave us once He has taken up residence in us. He promises never to leave us nor forsake us, and here is the guarantee, His Spirit within us. As with the Feast of Firstfruit (the 3<sup>rd</sup> Feast), the Holy Spirit is a Guarantee that God will finish what He started in us. So this move of the Spirit is a different move in that God is upon them, so much so that everyone around them will recognize it so as we read on.

*Ephesians 1:13-14 ( NKJV )* <sup>13</sup>In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, <sup>14</sup>who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

### **3 Prepositions (Works) of the Holy Spirit:**

- With Us “para”
- In – En
- Comes Upon – Heppi

### **You Must be Born Again**

But, for the Spirit of God to take up residence within you, you must invite Him into your heart to live there. You do that asking Jesus to forgive your sin that separates you from God, you agree with God you will turn from sin and follow Him, and then you will be saved. That is what it means to be born-again, you the old person dies, and a new man/woman is birthed.

*John 3:16 (NKJV) 16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

*John 3:3 (NKJV) 3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."*

**(Acts 2:5 NKJV) And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven.**

**(Acts 2:6 NKJV) And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language.**

**(Acts 2:7 NKJV) Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?"**

### **Devout**

*Verse 5 - And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men* – Just a note, you can be devout (religious) and still not saved, born-again, know God personally. A person must be born-again, not religious to have a personal relationship with God.

### **Jerusalem Packed / Some Estimate bigger than Passover / Millions There**

*Verse 5 – from every nation* - Jerusalem is packed for the Feast of Pentecost; some historian estimate had more people there than Passover because it was 50 days after Passover and the shipping lanes would have been fully open and many more foreigners would be coming from abroad. So like Passover there could have been millions of people in Jerusalem.

### **Pentecost has Fully Come / 1500 Years Waiting for Fullness / Today – Fully Come**

Leviticus 23 was the establishment of the Feast of Pentecost, it was established some 1,500 years before this day in Acts 2. So some 1500 times Pentecost had come, and Pentecost had gone, and they never saw the full fulfillment as it was intended, but this day we read about – Pentecost had fully come!

### **Where is this Upper Room? / Where 1,000's can Hear / Jesus walked – Soon / Gal 6**

Where exactly is this upper room nobody knows, but obviously they are somewhere where thousands of people could hear. Most likely they were somewhere close to the Temple precinct for that many people to hear (and gather!).

### **Jesus waited for this Day**

I wonder how many times Jesus may have walked past this very spot during His earthly ministry, and thought I can't wait for that day to happen, oh what a day it will be. Oh He must have thought, the Day of Pentecost, when My Spirit falls on them, what a day that will be. Christian, I tell you, God still has that anticipation for you. He knows there are days still yet future for you that are going to blow you away, and how He is so looking forward to them for you, and they will come, in due season. Christian don't grow weary of doing good, for in due time fruit will come.

*Galatians 6:9 (NKJV) 9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.*

**(Acts 2:8 NKJV) "And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born?"**

**(Acts 2:9 NKJV) "Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,**

**(Acts 2:10 NKJV) "Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,**

**(Acts 2:11 NKJV) "Cretans and Arabs; we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God."**

### **16 Regions**

There are 16 regions represented here:

- Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, - Modern day Iran.
- and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, - Modern day Iraq.
- and in Judaea – Modern day Israel (outer parts of Jerusalem).

- and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, - Modern day Turkey.
- in Egypt – obviously Modern day Egypt.
- and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene – maybe Libya, but maybe N. Africa.
- and strangers of Rome - Rome
- Jews and proselytes - Israel
- Cretes - Modern day Greece
- and Arabians, -Probably not Saudi Arabia, but Modern day Damascus (Syria)

### **This Gospel is for World**

This Gospel, this Good News, is for the whole world, not just the Western Hemisphere. It isn't just for Europe and the Americas, it is for the people in Asia, in Russia, in the Middle East.....God loves the people of Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, North Korea, China.....may we open our hearts to expand the borders of our hearts to pray and reach these nations.

*John 3:16 (NKJV) 16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

### **2 Languages / Earthly & Heavenly / This is Earthly in Acts 2**

There are two tongues we see in the Bible. One is a heavenly language tongue; the other tongue is an earthly language (such as English, Hebrew, and Greek). The tongue we see in this passage is an earthly language (though manifested supernaturally by the Spirit). Everyone who heard the disciples could hear and understand them because they were speaking in their native language.

*(Acts 2:5 NKJV) And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven.*

*(Acts 2:6 NKJV) And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language.*

*(Acts 2:7 NKJV) Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?"*

### **Charismatic Groups / Think Spiritual**

Now, there are many charismatic groups who will say that the true and only proof that a person has been filled with the Holy Spirit is that they speak in tongues, and they mean the heavenly language. They use this passage as their proof-text. Here is their error, the tongues spoken of here in this passage is a language that other people could understand. So they are clearly and totally in error, they are not within the confines or context of the scriptures, but they say evidence of being filled is speaking in tongues. So they teach this to the people, in fact the hyper-charismatic groups will even lay the trip on the people that they are not saved if they don't speak in tongues. So what happens they coach people on how to speak in tongues, and the people follow because they want to be saved of course and be spiritual like the rest, but the fact is all that is happening is happening in the flesh, man-made, thus a carnal and fleshly exercise, and a total waste of time. Best part is, they are so wrong, so outside the bounds of the scriptures, yet they think themselves more spiritual than all the others because they "so-call" speak in tongues. God's basis is the Word, not emotional experiences (although there are plenty of times the word of God will produce an emotional experience), but still yet the Word is the basis of all that we are to do, and thus we won't get caught up in these carnal and foolish things that man devises.

### **Unique Experience / Need to be Continually Re-Filled**

This is a unique event that happens again. We will not read of fire coming upon a people like this again. If every time someone was filled with the Spirit and we read that there was fire and rushing wind, then we would say that is proof that a person is filled with the Holy Spirit. But this is a unique event, God is establishing "His fulfillment of Pentecost", but from that day on the Holy Spirit will be freely given as deemed and purposed by God. Peter will be filled and preach (Acts 4:8), they believers will be gathered again and filled again (thus we will continually see this is not a one-time event) and when they do the house will shake, but no fire (Acts 4:31). Paul will be filled and preach boldly, but no fire (Acts 13:9). So we see there is a need to be continually refilled with the Holy Spirit.

### **Filled Means to be Supplied**

Why do we need to be refilled, because "Filled" means "to be supplied". God is supplying us for what we need at that time for that work. At work they supply me with a computer, not only that the computer has software on it to help me work, and on top of that they supply me with electricity; they supply me with

everything I need to do a good job. When we send our soldiers into combat, we supply them, we don't give them sticks we give them the most advanced weaponry in the world. We give them the right clothes, the boots, the gear, and the we supply them with the right weapon. We give them everything they need to go to battle and have the ability to win. That is what God is doing when He fills us with the Holy Spirit, He is supplying us with all that we need to accomplish and succeed in whatever He puts before us, whether that is witnessing on the street, counseling to a person, or ministering to our spouses or children.....God is supplying our needs for that time and event.

*Philippians 4:19 (NKJV) 19 And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

**(Acts 2:11 NKJV) "Cretans and Arabs; we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God."**

**(Acts 2:12 NKJV) So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "Whatever could this mean?"**

**(Acts 2:13 NKJV) Others mocking said, "They are full of new wine."**

### **Peter Answer Next Week**

Pick here next week with Peter's answer to their question. We will see a common fisherman preach one of the most powerful sermons ever preached, and 3,000 people get saved. That is what the power of the Holy Spirit can do in a person's life.

### **Wondrous Works**

Want the Holy Spirit to fall on you, here is a jump-start, start to verbally proclaim out loud all the wondrous works of God. Not only will you be filled, but others will start to listen and ponder too. Imagine some of the disciples praises:

- Peter (open mouth insert foot) – God of restoration and love
- James & John (sons of Thunder, can we sit on right and left hand) – God of Wisdom and kindness
- Thomas (doubting Thomas) – God of patience and never giving up.

We all have wondrous works to declare, so let them out, and watch the Holy Spirit fall upon and overflow from you.

### **Leading & Supplying / Ask / Start every day**

This baptism of the Holy Spirit is simply God leading and supplying us for the day before us. We need not wrestle for it, beg for it (as it is a gift and we simply receive gifts), and we don't need a formula, we don't need an emotional experience, we need only to ask for it says the Lord. So today, tomorrow, get alone with God (wait upon) and say Lord I don't know where you will lead me today, but I ask that you do, and Lord supply me (fill me) to be equipped for everything that you do put before me. Ask, and He will give!

*Luke 11:9-13 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup>"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup>For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. <sup>11</sup>If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? <sup>12</sup>Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? <sup>13</sup>If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"*

*Isaiah 44:3 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup> For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring;*

### **Worth the Wait**

So these 120 waited, and they were supplied, and they changed the world. It was worth the wait, and I pray every day this week that you will dedicate a time to wait upon the Lord, ask to be led, and to be supplied, and He will do that for you because He loves you and the people around you, and you will have power for the day to change the day, and you will find each day that it was worth the wait.

# Peter's Sermon on the Day of Pentecost (2:14-41)

## Part 1 – Acts 2:14-21

### Continue from Luke

Although we are in Acts, we are continuing our study through Luke as we ended there with Jesus promising the Holy Spirit to His disciples. What better commentary and study on the Holy Spirit (God Himself) than Acts, which is not the acts of the apostles, but the acts of the Holy Spirit (God) in His people.

*Luke 24:49 (NKJV) 49 Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."*

*(Acts 1:8 NKJV) "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

### 6 Keys to the early Disciples Power:

- They Experienced the Resurrection Power (1:3)
- They Lived in the Consciousness of the Ever-Present of God (1:3)
- They were Filled with the Holy Spirit (1:8)
- They found Power in Looking for His Soon Return (1:11)
- They found Power in the Upper Room of Prayer (1:13-14)
- They found Power in the Word of God (1:15-26)

We have studied how these early believers experienced, were filled, and found power.

### Last Study / Today / The Person God Uses

In our last study we read through and studied the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came upon the 120 in the upper room, and our theme of that study was that it is worth the wait, it is worth us adjusting our life to be on God's schedule, rather than expecting God to adjust to our schedule. We pick up in our study today as Peter stands up and explains to the people who ran over to see what was going on, a masterful sermon we will read, and as always so much to glean for our lives personally as we allow the Word of God to work in and through our lives. And one of the main points we can see from our study today is, "the person God uses", and we will see the attributes of the man/woman God uses. Want to be used by God? Let's read on.

### Content

Let's read verses 1-13 again to refresh ourselves on the context.

*Acts 2:1–13 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. <sup>2</sup> And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. <sup>4</sup> And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. <sup>5</sup> And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. <sup>6</sup> And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. <sup>7</sup> Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? <sup>8</sup> And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? <sup>9</sup> Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, <sup>10</sup> Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, <sup>11</sup> Cretans and Arabs—we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God." <sup>12</sup> So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "Whatever could this mean?" <sup>13</sup> Others mocking said, "They are full of new wine."*

### 120 Gathered – Spirit Falls / Worship / Tongues – Dialect / What does this Mean?

The 120 disciples are gathered in the Upper Room, proclaiming the wonderful works of God (v.11), the Spirit of God falls upon them, and their prayer and worship gathering turns into a divine appointment as they begin to speak in the tongues (dialect/language) of other nations, and the multitudes of thousands passing by hearing in their own language, and says, what could this possibly mean?

## **Wondrous Works**

Want the Holy Spirit to fall on you, here is a jump-start, start to verbally proclaim out loud all the wondrous works of God. Not only will you be filled, but others will start to listen and ponder too. Imagine some of the disciples praises:

- Peter (open mouth insert foot, although all may leave You, I never will.....days later “I do not know the man”) – I think Peter would be proclaim the God of restoration and love. Christians, others will ponder as you speak of His wondrous work that He has done unto you personally....., you mean God will restore me? You mean God actually loves me? Even after all that I have done, all the wrongs, all the times I denied and disobeyed Him? Yes he will!
- James & John (sons of Thunder, can we sit on right and left hand) – God of Wisdom and kindness. You mean God is actually for me? God will actually lead me?
- Thomas (doubting Thomas) – God of patience and never giving up. But you don’t know I once walked so close to Him, but then began to doubt He even existed, I went AWOL, you mean He will and is seeking me out to tell me He loves me and says come home.
- These we know were there, others we don’t, but can make some assumptions. I wonder if the “woman at the well” was there, Zachaeus, the harlot that washed His feet with her tears, the lame man, the blind man, the leper..... imagine the wondrous works they would be proclaiming. And then there is wondrous work of a God who can speak a universe into existence, who left heaven, came to earth, and gave His life for sin.

We all have wondrous works to declare, so let them out, and watch the Holy Spirit fall upon and overflow from you.

## **Come Home**

If you are here today and any of those questions are on your mind, will He restore you, will He forgive you, will He lead you, is He for you, will He restore you.....the answer is “He will”, it is what He does, it is His wondrous works, and He says to you today.....”Come Home”, I love you and I miss you, and I want you!

## **First Sermon of New Church / Prayer – not Cleaver / About Jesus – not Spirit**

And so we begin our study today with the first sermon of the new Church. May I point out, the Christian church was born not out of a clever sermon but in a humble prayer meeting. May I also point out as we study, the sermon is not about the Holy Spirit (as many make it out to be), it is about the Son of God, Jesus Christ. What we read and see today is exactly what Jesus said it would be, the Holy Spirit does not draw attention to Himself, but draws attention to Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit knocks on the heart of men and woman and says, here He is, here is what you been longing for, here is what you are in need, a Savior and a Lover, - Jesus Christ. And He is knocking on every man and woman’s heart here today.

*John 14:26 ( NKJV )<sup>26</sup>But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.*

*John 16:7-11 ( NKJV )<sup>7</sup>Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. <sup>8</sup>And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: <sup>9</sup>of sin, because they do not believe in Me; <sup>10</sup>of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; <sup>11</sup>of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.*

## **Peter’s 1st Sermon**

**(Acts 2:14 NKJV) But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words.**

## **The 11 – Includes Matthias**

Note he stands with the 11, so this includes Mathias. As we have studied before, there has been 2,000 years of debate whether Mathias should have been the apostle to replace Judas or if the apostles jumped the gun and God really intended that Paul was to be the 12<sup>th</sup>. Well here is a point for you today, and that is, that Mathias stands, Mathias didn’t doubt, Mathias didn’t question, Mathias stands up with the eleven and does what He believes God called him to do. Application for you, don’t listen to the challenges and doubts of man, questioning if you are really a Christian, challenging if you have the right to speak and proclaim God’s Word..... listen Christian, be like Mathias, stand and live it out, don’t listen to the

words of man, but the voice of God speaking to you.....you are Mine, and I have called you by name.

### **Peter – Cowered – now Towers / We must Pray to Stand in Wicked World / 1,000's**

Peter stands - Peter, the giant of a fisherman who had cowered before a servant girl, now towers above the crowd. Why? One reason: He was empowered (supplied) with the Spirit. Christian, we too must pray for the baptism of the Holy Spirit so we too can stand in this wicked and twisted generation. The baptism gives us power to withstand the mocking, to stand before the skeptics, to not cower in fear. Peter cowered before a servant girl only 50 days ago, and here he stands before who knows how many, 5,000, 10,000, who knows because we know that 3,000 get saved, who knows how many others rejected the message. You don't think some of these people recognized Peter (James and John), hey we remember you, we heard about you (cock-a-doodle-do, hahaha the crowd would laugh), but Peter will not cower this time, but he will tower!

### **He can Stand – because first Sat / Have you Sat?**

Peter can stand, because Peter had sat (and waited for the baptism). When you find it difficult to stand, maybe it's because you haven't taken the time to sit lately. We see, the man/woman God uses, is a man/woman who has first sat at His feet.

### **The whole Reason to Wait – To be Supplied**

Why do we need to be filled and refilled, because "Filled" means "to be supplied". God is supplying and resupplying us for what we need at that time for that work. At work they supply me with a computer, not only that the computer has software on it to help me work, and on top of that they supply me with electricity; they supply me with everything I need to do a good job. When we send our soldiers into combat, we supply them, we don't give them sticks we give them the most advanced weaponry in the world. We give them the right clothes, the boots, the gear, and we supply them with the right weapon. We give them everything they need to go to battle and have the ability to win. That is what God is doing when He fills us with the Holy Spirit, He is supplying us with all that we need to accomplish and succeed in whatever He puts before us, whether that is witnessing on the street, counseling to a person, or ministering to our spouses or children.....God is supplying our needs for that time and event.

*Philippians 4:19 (NKJV) 19 And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

### **Peter Stands – Herald / Proclaiming Something – Listen Up / Say it as Sure**

So Peter stands, yet if you remember Jesus sat. In those times a teacher would sit and teach; but as a herald would stand to proclaim something. So Peter is proclaiming something, by his standing he is saying "listen up" (Peter said "heed these words"). Christian, when you proclaim any word of Christ, proclaim it as truth, proclaim as sure; if we proclaim it in our voice as a "maybe", or a "well at least that is what I think", the hearer will hear the doubt. I am not saying in-your-face, I am saying, "God's Word is truth, and therefore it is sure". There has been a saying that has become popular in the Christian circle, and that is, "God said, I believe it, and that settles it". Not true, "God said it, that settles it", doesn't matter what you believe – for what you believe what change what God said.

**(Acts 2:15 NKJV) "For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.**

### **Not Drunk – Take Note Bible Teachers**

So Peter says hey these people aren't drunk, it is only the third hour which is 9am. So, what exactly do you mean here Peter, are you saying come back at 3pm and we will all be snookered then, but not know we don't get drunk until the afternoon. Now this is one of the greatest sermons ever given in the Bible, and I take some comfort in that even Peter says some things that make you say "what". I have had plenty of sermons where I am like, did you really just say that? Of course can I ever forget the whole sermon I taught on the Protestant Reformation, and the whole sermon I called Martin Luther, martin Luther King. Afterwards people asked, did you really mean to say Martin Luther King led the Protestant Reformation?

## **Not Drunk as Think – or – Drunk in Different Way / Ephesians 5 – Disciples were Doing**

Verse 15 - *“These are not drunk as you suppose,”* can have a couple of implications. It can mean, “These men are not drunk, as you’re suggesting.” Or it can mean, “These men are not drunk in the way that you think. They’re drunk with a different wine, the new wine of the Holy Ghost, not distilled spirits, but the dynamic Spirit, just as it says in Ephesians 5. By the way if you notice, everything we read in Ephesians 5, is exactly what was going on in the Upper Room, and thus is confirmation to us that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not some unreachable dream, something for the super-Christian, but available every day to us every day common Believers. As Ephesians 5 says, so were these disciples doing, and so can we, for we see the disciples were talking about the wonderful works of God (Acts 2:11), and that would include speaking psalms, singing hymns, spiritual songs, and giving thanks, and as we began the chapter, they were all in one accord, they were in unity, and they were laying down their differences (who is the greatest), submitting to one another according to the Word.

*Acts 2:11 (NKJV) <sup>11</sup>Cretans and Arabs—we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God.”*

*Acts 2:1 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup>When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.*

*Ephesians 5:17-21 (NKJV) <sup>17</sup>Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. <sup>18</sup>And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup>speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, <sup>20</sup>giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup>submitting to one another in the fear of God.*

## **Drunk – To be Under the Influence**

Just a note, to be drunk as we know is to be under the influence. Peter is under the influence of the Holy Spirit, as God is leading and guiding him, and influencing him of what to say and do. Hence why we want to be “filled”, “supplied” by God Himself, so we can accomplish all He puts before us each day.

## **Chaplain**

That reminds me of the time when I was riding with the police and we pulled over a car swerving all over the road. We approached the car and found a priest in fully priestly garb with a flask in his hand. The officer asked “sir have you been drinking” which the priest replied only this water. The officer took the flask and took a whiff and said wow, this wine! The priest let me see, and he took it back and took a swig, and then smiled and said.....“He did it again”. Haha, referring to Jesus turning water into wine. Anyhoo.

## **3<sup>rd</sup> Hr – 9am / Jesus can’t be Silenced / I bet Wave Offering going on at Temple**

The third hour is 9am. How interesting that is the same hour that Jesus was nailed to the cross 50+ days ago; the Word of Life will never be silenced! My first guess is that at that very same moment, there in the Temple, there was something going on to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost (mind you it is very likely that this Upper Room was in the immediate vicinity of the Temple precinct because so many people were passing by it for there to be thousands that would hear this sermon by Peter). I wonder if when Peter begins to preach, it is the exact moment that the High Priest begins to wave the sheaf offering of Pentecost at the Temple. I believe every moment and every moved was divinely designed by the Lord, there is nothing by happen chance. When we start to believe that personally, life gets real fun too!

*Mark 15:25 (KJV) <sup>25</sup>And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.*

*Leviticus 23:20 (NKJV) <sup>20</sup>The priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits as a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs. They shall be holy to the LORD for the priest.*

## **Pastor Chuck**

I am reminded of one of the teachings Pasto Chuck gave on the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the leading of the Holy Spirit. Quoting Chuck Smith..... *Now I think that many times we are seeking some particular sign to verify that God has filled us with His Holy Spirit. And if we do get that kind of supernatural sign that we are longing for or desiring, that many times God says to us, “Well, you have had the holy tingles and you believed, but blessed are they who believe without the holy tingles”-referring to those who just take God at His word and do not require a sign.*

*Now we read testimonies like Dr. Finney’s and we read of about waves of liquid love flowing over him until he finally cries out, “God, I do not think I can take any more. Please stop!” And I am certain it was absolutely a glorious experience for him. And we then look for some kind of similar experience. We hear others testify of their experiences and we want to have an experience that sort of correlates with theirs. And so often we are looking for signs rather than simply receiving by faith the gift of God because He has promised it-not requiring a sign.*

*And this would also be true for the sign of speaking in tongues. Now as you walk in the Spirit, and you develop in your relationship with the Holy Spirit, He takes over more and more of your life. It is very likely (and quite possible) that you will begin to have all kinds of glorious supernatural experiences as God's Spirit is working in your life and you are responding to that work of the Spirit.*

*Sometimes there is a response of weeping; and sometimes there is a response of tremendous joy and overwhelming love. And there are many different kinds of responses that we can have as we are walking in the Spirit and as we are being led by the Spirit. It is always a glorious thing to realize that God's hand was upon you (God was guiding you) and God was working His perfect plan. And when you see it, you say, "Oh the Lord was leading me." Now at the time you may not realize it, but then as the event begins to come together, suddenly you realize-"God's hand was directing me!"*

*Several years ago I was called to visit one of the ladies from the church here who had been in a serious car accident and had broken her back. And so, I went over to Saint Joseph's Hospital to pray for her. And there in the six-bed ward were two other ladies from my church. And so, I was able to minister to all three of them. I did not know the other two were there, but when I came in they got all excited and thought I had come to visit each of them. And so I prayed for all three ladies.*

*As I was leaving the room and walking back to the elevator, I was excited. I said, "Lord, I love Your efficiency." I do not know how many rooms are in Saint Joseph's Hospital-an awful lot! But here, Lord, You are so efficient. You put the three ladies from my church in the same room so that I could see three with one visit. This is great efficiency, Lord. I love it!" And I was just loving the Lord and saying, "Lord that is so wonderful."*

*And I got in the elevator and pushed the button for the ground floor. When the elevator opened, suddenly I looked around and I was lost! There was a nurses' station-not the lobby! And I stepped back in thinking, "Oh, somebody else probably stopped the elevator on this floor." But it said, "G"-ground floor. So I was really confused and a nurse there saw my confusion.*

- *She said, "Are you looking for the lobby?"*
- *I said, "Yes, what did they do with it?"*
- *She said, "Well, you took the service elevator."*
- *And I looked up at the service elevator, "Employees Only" sign. I said, "Oh, I am sorry." I said, "I was not paying any attention upstairs."*
- *She said, "That is all right."*
- *I said, "Well, how do I get to the lobby."*
- *She said, "Very simple-just go down there to the first hallway, turn right and then you will turn right again and you will be in the lobby."*
- *I said, "Thank you."*

*And I was going on my way thinking what a stupid mistake, but as I turned down this little corridor, there was a girl standing and weeping. And she looked up and she screamed, "Chuck!" And she came running up and just began to sob almost hysterically. And I finally got her calmed enough and I said, "What is wrong? What can I do? Tell me. Let us pray. But tell me what can we do? What can we pray for?" And she said, "Chuck, my dearest friend in the whole world (the man who led me to Jesus Christ) is this very moment having brain surgery." She said, "This man is such a wonderful Christian. He has been a missionary over in Africa and they sent him home to have this surgery. And the doctors give him very little hope for being able to walk again. The brain tumor has already affected his walking ability and they feel that..." And she said, "I cannot bear the thought of such a beautiful man of God being crippled." She said, "I am just devastated!"*

*And so, we prayed together and I gave her some Scriptures, pointing her to Jesus. And she said, "I was so desperate. I was just here praying, 'God I cannot handle this. Please send someone along to help me-to pray with me.'" And she said, "I looked up and here you came walking down the corridor!"*

*And, you know, the light went on! It was not a stupid mistake. I suddenly had that rush-"God's hand is on me." He is leading me by His Spirit. It was that exciting feeling of God directing me. God's hand was on me and talk about a rush! Talk about an exciting thing-the realization that God used me! It got me so excited upstairs about His efficiency that I was not paying any attention to signs on elevators. If I had gotten in the main elevator, I would have been out the lobby and gone. But He had to get me in this other corridor, in order to meet the need of this young girl who was crying out of desperation to God for help.*

*So, as you walk in the Spirit and as you continue in the things of the Spirit, you will have exciting experiences that will thrill you to the core of your being. You will have blessed experiences and you will see the power of God and you will see the various manifestations of the Spirit. It is always thrilling to be a part of what God is doing.*

*But that is not the proof that you have the Holy Spirit. And that is not what we are to look for- these ecstatic kind of experiences. We just want more of God and we want Him to have more of us. "Lord, fill me with Your Holy Spirit." And as you ask, then you receive by faith.*

**(Acts 2:16 NKJV) "But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:**

### **People Question – Answer with the Word**

When people have questions about things they see happening in ministry, in the Spirit, or in worship, like Peter, we should be able to answer, "This is that which is spoken of scripturally.

## **Phenomenon**

And he began to give them a scriptural basis for the phenomenon they had just observed. And let me say that I think this is vitally important. I think that you are on dangerous ground when you are seeking spiritual phenomenon for which you can give no scriptural basis. Because whenever you get into the area of spiritual phenomenon, people are going to ask questions. "What is this?" And if you are practicing some kind of spiritual phenomenon for which you cannot give a solid scriptural basis, you're in big trouble as far as I'm concerned. I am not interested in any kind of phenomenon for which I cannot give solid scriptural basis. And I think that it is very irresponsible for evangelists, or whoever, to promote spiritual phenomenon without scriptural foundation.

## **The Person God Uses – Man/Woman of Prayer & Word**

So Peter leads them right to the Word of God. "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." And now notice how Peter quotes from the prophet Joel. You see he had a good working knowledge of the Word of God. And I point that out in order that I might point out to you the characteristics of the men that God used. And we'll be following this as we go through the Acts. But one of the first characteristics that we find of the men that God uses is that they are men of prayer. Peter and the others were waiting daily in prayer and in supplication, you remember. The men that God uses are men of the Word; a second quality that God is looking for. Peter had a good working knowledge of the Word of God. He's able to quote from the Psalms, remote little Psalms. Psalms that are not apt to catch your attention, and yet he is quoting from them, putting them together, making sense out of them.

## **Challenge Comes – Peter Answers / No Bible for Peter – became Scholar with Jesus**

The challenge has come, Peter answers the challenge with the Word. Mind you, all these passages of Scripture Peter is quoting, he is quoting from memory and/or inspiration. He doesn't have the OT scrolls in his hands, he didn't have a pre-assembled book, printed out, organized by topic, in dozens of different translations, there wasn't one next to his bed, in his study, in the 1<sup>st</sup> John, the 2<sup>nd</sup> John, or the 3<sup>rd</sup> John, he has spent time with the Living Word for 3 years (Jesus the Christ), and he has this baptism of the Holy Spirit. Peter was an incredible expositor, quoting from the Psalms in Acts 1 and from Joel in Acts 2. The fisherman became a scholar by hanging out with Jesus. If you want to be one whom the Lord uses, be like Peter. Hang out with Jesus, and inevitably, you will get a firm grasp of the Word.

## **Jesus said He will give us the words / Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy**

Jesus had said don't worry what you will say, for the Spirit will give you utterance. In Revelation it says that Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy; prophecy is the forth telling of the Word of God unto a people.

*Matthew 10:19-20 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup>But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; <sup>20</sup>for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

*Revelation 19:10 (KJV)* <sup>10</sup>And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

## **You've been There – Start to Share / Man I was Good / Baptism - Language they Understnd**

You've been there, you all have experienced this, you begin to share the Word with someone and all of a sudden these verses, these points, just start flowing out of your mouth, and you are like where did that come from? Afterwards we say, wow I was good, hahaha, but let's not get too puffed-up for God has done the same with a donkey, and still uses a donkey on Sunday. Beloved, that is the baptism of the Holy Spirit, as He gives you utterance to speak the Gospel in a language that people can understand, to speak it backed with power that is knocking on the door of their hearts. Not sure if you ever considered this, but God wants to have fun with you, and this is fun and exciting when we are used of God in such a way.

## **Peter Locked and Loaded – Living Word / We must Study Word**

Now, I personally believe that Peter was locked and loaded with these words because he spent so much time with the Living Word (Jesus), and Jesus had shared all these things with him, and now the Holy Spirit is bringing them to remembrance. I add that because it is important that we study this Word, as we do every week here, and you do daily in your lives, we study the Word so that it may come back to the

surface when the need is present, whether that be in witnessing, or counseling, or just for our strength for the day. Hence, why we are told, to study the Word so that we might be ready for good works:

**2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV)** <sup>15</sup>Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

**2 Timothy 3:16-17 (KJV)** <sup>16</sup>All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: <sup>17</sup>That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

### **FRM – Pastor George**

Oh the treasure of this Word, how blessed we are to have it, and we as Americans to have it so readily. Just the other week I received word from one of the foreign ministry's we support as a church, they are called "Far Reaching Ministries", (if you remember awhile back we as a church bought a camel for the missionary to go deeper and farther into remote areas with the gospel – I think every church should have their own camel). Well let me share a story of where and what our support is helping in a different area: *During the riots in Kenya, a member of Calvary Chapel Nairobi, went through a tremendous trial. His home is in Kibera, one of the largest slums in East Africa. George and his family belong to the Kikuyu tribe. Most of his neighbors were of the Luo tribe. Since the December 2007 elections, the Luo tribe has been persecuting the Kikuyu tribe. One morning George was forced from his home, pushed to his knees and a gun was put to his head. The gunman pulled the trigger, but the gun did not fire. Then George said, "Please don't shoot me, I am a pastor!" Another rioter said, "Let's cut him!" By God's grace another rioter intervened, saying, "No, I know him and he is a good man, so we will leave him, but let's burn down his house before we go." George pleaded with his captors, "Please let me take just one thing from my house." Reluctantly, they agreed. George ran inside and grabbed his most treasured possession – his Bible.*

### **Bible vs Cell phone**

So what would you grab? Christian, we know we can just go up the street to the mall and buy another, but do you grasp the value of this man's Bible to him. Though we can just go up and get another, may we ask ourselves; do we cherish this Word as this man does? I wonder what would happen if we treated our Bible like we treat our cell phones?

- What if we carried it around in our purses or pockets?
- What if we turned back to go get it if we forgot it?
- What if we flipped through it several times a day?
- What if we used it to receive messages?
- What if we treated it like we couldn't live without it?
- What if we gave it to kids as gifts?
- What if we used it as we traveled, made sure we packed it?
- What if we used it in case of an emergency, to call for help?
- What if we upgraded it to get the latest version?

### **Word is Living - Powerful**

The Word, it is Living and Power (Hebrews 4:12); what God did with Peter here, is what He will do with us.

**Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup>For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Let's read verses 17-21 together and then come back and break it down.

**(Acts 2:17 NKJV)** *'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams.*

**(Acts 2:18 NKJV)** *And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.*

**(Acts 2:19 NKJV)** *I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke.*

**(Acts 2:20 NKJV)** *The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.*

**(Acts 2:21 NKJV)** *And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.'*

### **Imagine Peter sharing this Word / 1000 yr Ago / Spurgeon / Peter saw More - so Will We**

I can only imagine how Peter was proclaiming this word; I can see it as if I was there, imagine, what they are experiencing was written over 1,000 years ago, and they are living it, they are the fulfillment of it. Peter would not have been reading it as, oh hum, it's as the prophet Joel said it would be. Peter would have been lifting off the ground as he spoke these words. His face would have been illuminated with joy, for he was experiencing the fullness of joy. Charles Spurgeon while teaching his seminary students said, "men when you talk about God and His wondrous works and heaven, put a smile on your face, when you talk about hell, your normal face will do". Peter must have been like, wow we got to walk with Jesus, see His resurrection, watch Him ascend into heaven, and then this (the baptism of the Holy Spirit), amazing. Guess what Peter, there is still more to come, in a few minutes 3000 people are going to get saved, in a few days or hours you are going to heal a crippled man, you'll be imprisoned but then miraculously freed from prison, you'll be a key in establishing the early church, and the list goes on (you'll even be the first Pope, but you won't know that). Christian, there is no life more exciting than the Christian life, and if what you have seen and experience is only the beginning of what God is still yet to do (regardless of your age), God is always ready and looking to do another mighty work. Christian when you share this word, with your kids, co-workers, in the mission field, share it with life in your voice, this Word is living, so share it with Life, let them see the life that it has brought you, and it will hunger them for the same life. Ho hum, this is what the prophet Joel said it will be. Ho hum Jesus came to give you life and that more abundant – no, Jesus Christ has come to give you Life my friend, and that more abundant! Do you want new life and to be set free from this fading and fleeting world?

*John 10:10 (NKJV) 10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

**(Acts 2:17 NKJV) 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams.**

### **All Flesh – Gentiles / Passage destroys all Jewish Prejudice / Not Limited to Prophets, Priest, Male, Levites**

*Spirit on ALL flesh*, not just Israel... meaning the Gentiles as well as Israel. Joel prophesied that in the Last Days the Spirit would be poured out upon the young men and the old men, the young men seeing visions, the old men dreaming dreams (Joel 2:28). This passage destroys every major Hebrew prejudice. No class distinction, between rich and poor, Jew or Gentile, male or female. Furthermore, the idea of prophesying is no longer limited to the office of the prophet. They were used to having a prophet, a priest but Joel says "Your sons and daughters shall prophesy." It doesn't denote just the Levites, or those ordained in the office of a prophet. Even servants and handmaidens. To the Jews this must have been very strange, but it wasn't heresy for Peter is quoting Sacred Text, one of their recognized prophets.

### **No Doubt – Who are You to Speak / Joel said Common People**

This inspired word totally crushes all Jewish prejudice. No doubt some of the listeners would have challenged and said, "hey who are you to speak these words!" These words if they are true should be coming from right over there at the Temple through the priests, not some fisherman. But the prophet Joel said it would be so, inspired by God, that God's Spirit would be poured out on common people, not the "supreme" people, people so common they would be people like fisherman, tax collectors, mechanics, schedulers, housewives, and high school students.

### **I'm sure you've been Challenged / IBS and Me / University Professor**

I'm sure you have been challenged somewhere along the line, hey who are you to speak these things of God, why should I hear you and not the priest or religious leader. I am reminded when I was in the Lord for about 2 years. I was teaching the Inductive Bible Study Method, had been to Russia teaching it, and various other personal instructions. So I called the church I attended before I got saved, offered to teach the IBS free of charge, even offered to supply the workbooks. The priest of the church said the IBS sounded very interesting and asked me to come in and talk with him about it, so I did. I think it was a set-up, but anyhow, as we talked and the conversation went here and there, he said, "I bet you believe in a literal 6 day creation". I said well actually I do; he said I knew it. He said we believe in theistic evolution,

in that God spoke it (Big Bang), and then let it evolve from there. I said well, to believe that is to disregard the rest of chapter 1 of Genesis, and the detailed account of God creating. I said, it is quite interesting that first word used for “create” in the Hebrew was the word “bara”, which means to create out of nothing, and then the remaining words used for “create” was the Hebrew word “asa” which means to create out of existing material. The priest got all fired-up and said, now just who do you think you are that you can study the Greek and Hebrew, those things are for the scholars not someone like yourself. Folks, Acts 2:17, the Spirit has been poured out on “People like Me, and You”, and we can not only understand these things, but we can bring others into understanding. The Spirit of God will illuminate the Scriptures to us, to understand and to share. I remember at that same period, I was at a wedding, and present was a friend's aunt who taught religion and theology at the local university, but it was really just a job, an intellectual understanding, she didn't profess Christ, but that all religions lead to God. Someone asked her a question that wasn't theological, but was about the heart of God, and what He thought about man; she said, you know I really can't answer that question, you should ask Ray he is better suited to answer your question than me. She differed her 20 years of teaching to a young man only 2 years in the Lord, but her directing was correct for God has poured His Spirit out upon all flesh, we if they will call upon Him they shall be saved, and will have His words of life to treasure and to share.

### **Note on Theistic Evolution / God got His hands Dirty for You!**

On a note about that theistic evolution, let me just say this; God didn't just speak it, He is much more intimate with you, you are much more precious to Him, then to just speak it into existence. God wasn't just going to speak it, nor was He just going to sit back and watch happen, God's love for you was so much that He was willing to get His hands dirty for you and me (man), and He came into the Garden and knelt in the dirt, and formed and fashioned man (you) with His own hands – God was willing to get dirty for you and for me. He was willing to get His hands wet as He formed us in our mother's womb (Psalm 139). And because of His great and endless love for you and for me, He was willing to get His hands bloody as He chose the nails. No, there was no theistic evolution, God wasn't going to just sit back and watch our lives evolve, and nor will He do that today, He is ever so interested in every detail of our lives. He knows every hair on our head, catches every tear, and if He was to number the thoughts of you today, they would outnumber the grains of sand in the sea. Hey catch that, when I look at the grains of sand on the shore, I see a sum total before me, I didn't see 100, and then next trip to the beach see another 100, now I've seen 200. God says today, today's thought about you, just today alone, would number all the grains of sand on the sea. No, there was no theistic evolution.

*Matthew 10:30-31 (NKJV)* <sup>30</sup>But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. <sup>31</sup>Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

*Psalms 56:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book?

*Psalms 139:17-18 (KJV)* <sup>17</sup> How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! <sup>18</sup> If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.

**(Acts 2:18 NKJV) And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.**

**(Acts 2:19 NKJV) I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke.**

**(Acts 2:20 NKJV) The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.**

**(Acts 2:21 NKJV) And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.'**

### **Joel 2 begins goes from Pentecost – Tribulation / Obvious because no Blood Moon**

Joel 2 speaking about the last days covers the period from Pentecost through the Tribulation period. Pentecost is not the full fulfillment of Joel 2, but only the beginning. This is obvious because on the Day of Pentecost, the sun wasn't darkened, nor the moon looked as blood, for these things will happen in the Tribulation Period (see Revelation 6 – the 6<sup>th</sup> Seal). The Last Days are from the first coming of Christ to the Second coming, and gift of salvation would be available to any who would call out for it.

## **6th Seal – Earth in Upheaval**

*(Revelation 6:12 NKJV) I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood.*

*(Revelation 6:13 NKJV) And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind.*

*(Revelation 6:14 NKJV) Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.*

## **Salvation that Simple / Have you Call upon the Name / Here are some Details**

But during this period, from the first coming to the second coming, anyone and everyone can be saved by calling on the name of the Lord. Salvation is that simple, that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved. Have you called upon the Name of the Lord yet? If not, Peter gives some details of what exactly that means in verses 22-36. We will pick up there next study.

## **Watch how Peter covers Feast of Israel / Great Flow to Use in Personal Evangelism**

Just as a foretaste of next week, as you read ahead and study this I want you to see how Peter essentially is using the Feast of Pentecost (and the 3 Spring Feasts) as his illustration points. We studied those last week, so go back and refresh yourself on them so you can see how Peter wonderfully works them in his sermon and 3,000 people will get saved, and it is a great flow for you to follow as you share the gospel with your loved ones and neighbors.

## **THE 7 FEASTS OF ISRAEL**

### THE SPRING FEASTS

1. THE PASSOVER
2. THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD
3. THE FEAST OF FIRSTFRUITS

### THE SUMMER FEAST

4. THE FEAST OF PENTECOST

### THE FALL FEASTS OF ISRAEL

5. THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS
6. THE DAY OF ATONEMENT
7. THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

## **Ho Hum**

This is what the prophet Joel had spoken, ho hum.....no, no, no:

*(Acts 2:14 NKJV) But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words.*

*(Acts 2:15 NKJV) "For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.*

*(Acts 2:16 NKJV) "But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:*

*(Acts 2:17 NKJV) 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh;*

# Peter's Sermon on the Day of Pentecost (2:14-41)

## Part 2 – Acts 2:22-41

### Continuing Study on Power of Holy Spirit

We are continuing our study on the Holy Spirit, God Himself, He who has been promised unto us to help us live as God desires us to live, and to serve as God desires us to serve. Jesus promised we would be filled with the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit would work through us to make Jesus known. The best commentary on the Bible is the Bible, so we are studying through the first two chapters of Acts, which the theme is given in one verse (Acts 1:8), you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you. The Book of Acts is not the Acts of the Apostles or the Acts of man, but the Acts of God through a man/woman.

*Luke 24:49 (NKJV) 49 Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."*

*Acts 1:8 (NKJV) 8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

### Theme has Emerged

A theme has emerged for the pouring out, the unleashing, the filling, the supplying, the moving of the Holy Spirit in a person's life – and that is the Word of God, and prayer unto God.

### Wycliffe Bible / Kenya Pastor

Did you know that Wycliffe Bibles were inscribed by hand on vellum (which is an animal skin) in the 1300s-1400s. Some copies took ten months to two years to produce (hand write) and cost a year's wage. Just this week two pastors in Kenya were murdered for their faith, one was found with his bible on his lap as he was preparing for his Sunday morning message. I can't help but think how precious this Bible is, how many make great sacrifices to have it and to share it. What will you choose today? How precious will this word be to you today? Will you hear a speech from a man, or a Word from God?

### 120 Gathered – Spirit Falls / Worship / Tongues – Dialect / What does this Mean?

To catch up to where we are, the 120 disciples are gathered in the Upper Room, proclaiming the wonderful works of God (v.11), the Spirit of God falls upon them, and their prayer and worship gathering turns into a divine appointment as they begin to speak in the tongues (dialect/language) of other nations, and the multitudes of thousands passing by hearing in their own language, and says, what could this possibly mean?

*(Acts 2:11 NKJV) "Cretans and Arabs; we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God."*

*(Acts 2:12 NKJV) So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "Whatever could this mean?"*

*(Acts 2:13 NKJV) Others mocking said, "They are full of new wine."*

### First Sermon of New Church / Prayer – not Cleaver / About Jesus – not Spirit

And so we continue with part 2 our study of the first sermon of the new Church. May I point out, the Christian church was born not out of a clever sermon but in a humble prayer meeting. May I also point out as we study, the sermon is not about the Holy Spirit (as many make it out to be), it is about the Son of God, Jesus Christ. What we read and see today is exactly what Jesus said it would be, the Holy Spirit does not draw attention to Himself, but draws attention to Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit knocks on the heart of men and woman and says, here He is, here is what you been longing for, here is what you are in need, a Savior and a Lover, - Jesus Christ.

*John 14:26 ( NKJV ) <sup>26</sup>But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.*

*John 16:7–15 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. <sup>8</sup> And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: <sup>9</sup> of sin, because they do not believe in Me; <sup>10</sup> of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; <sup>11</sup> of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. <sup>12</sup> "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. <sup>13</sup> However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. <sup>14</sup> He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. <sup>15</sup> All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.*

### **No Sermon – No Program / Spirit Flowing Through & To / Lorenzo de’Medici**

So back to our study, the Holy Spirit, does not draw attention to Himself, but draws attention to Jesus Christ. So here on the Day of Pentecost, no clever sermon, no man made program, just the Holy Spirit moving in common everyday people (any common everyday people here today?), calling out to the need that is within every man, a lover and a Savior. In his sermon, “A Dangerous Pentecost,” Halford Luccock tells of Lorenzo de’Medici, the great Florentine patron of the arts who was very proud of the spectacles he staged for the citizenry. Among his productions were several amazingly realistic religious pageants performed in church. But one Pentecost, Lorenzo went too far: he used actual fire to depict the descent of the tongues of flames on the apostles. The fragile stage set caught fire and, before horrified onlookers, the entire church burned to the ground (Marching Off the Map, Harper, 1952). The moral is clear: pray for Pentecostal power, but don’t try to manufacture it.

### **Every Person hear in Native Language / Gospel for Everyone**

So every person present could hear in their own language (now Peter’s sermon was probably in the common Jewish language of Hebrew or Aramaic), but as the Spirit moved in the Upper Room, everyone could hear in their native language. Here we see God giving a clue, a message, that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is for every man, regardless of what part of the world they are from, whether the USA, England, Australia, Israel, Iraq, Iran, or the outer parts of the world, the Gospel is for everyone. There is no Jew or Greek, slave or free just as the Apostle Paul would say through inspiration of the Holy Spirit:

*Galatians 3:27-28 (KJV)* <sup>27</sup>For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. <sup>28</sup>There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Sermon – Religious Speech / Miss – Gospel message of Freedom**

Too often this first sermon is reviewed as a religious speech, Peter recaps the life of Jesus Christ here on earth, and the heart of the point is missed, this message..... is about freedom! That is what the Gospel is about, men and woman being set free. Set free just as Jesus said they would be (Luke 4).

*Luke 4:17-19 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup>And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

<sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me,  
Because He has anointed Me  
To preach the gospel to the poor;  
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,  
To proclaim liberty to the captives  
And recovery of sight to the blind,  
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;  
<sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”

*John 8:36 (NKJV)* <sup>36</sup>Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

### **Says – Devout / Religion doesn’t bring Freedom / Temple Sacrifice - Presence**

It says the people present were “devout”, that means religious. Religion will bring no person freedom, in fact religion brings the opposite, it brings bondage and burden. These devout people would come to the Feast of Pentecost and been continually reminded of their failings, and their distance from the Holy God. They would have made their trip to the Temple to offer an innocent sacrifice, a peace offering, so that their conscience might be cleared from all their failings, so that they might be ceremonially clean to enter into the Temple precinct, the place where God dwelt, the place where sinful man could come into the presence of the Holy God.

*(Acts 2:5 NKJV)* And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven.

### **Do religious Obligation – Own Merit / Leave the Same / Face same Struggles / Different**

These people would come, do their religious obligation, but go home with what they had come with, the pressure and burden of trying to please a Holy God on their own merit. They would go home to their families, without the same power they left with. They would face the same struggles as we still do today, failing marriages, depression, addictions, bondage to their perverted thoughts, anger, discontentment; year after year they left with no more freedom from those things than when they came, just a religious check mark in a box. But this Feast of Pentecost would be different for all those who would have ears to hear, hearts that were soft enough to be pricked, minds desiring a change; this Pentecost would set the captive free, Peters words would be more than a religious speech, it would be the keys to set them free.

## Free

Do you want to be free?

**(Acts 2:14 NKJV)** But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words.

**(Acts 2:15 NKJV)** "For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.

**(Acts 2:16 NKJV)** "But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

**(Acts 2:17 NKJV)** 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams.

**(Acts 2:18 NKJV)** And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.

**(Acts 2:19 NKJV)** I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke.

**(Acts 2:20 NKJV)** The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.

**(Acts 2:21 NKJV)** And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.'

## **THE PASSOVER**

**(Acts 2:22 NKJV)** "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know;

**(Acts 2:23 NKJV)** "Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;

### **Everyone Knew / You get 2<sup>nd</sup> Chances**

Peter doesn't start by saying "if you haven't heard about Jesus"; Peter starts with that everyone has heard and knew about Jesus, and what happened to Him at the cross, all the way back at the Feast of Passover. Let me tell you this, everyone knows about Jesus in your circle that you live here in the USA.....what is to be known, is what do they think about the cross. Another message God clearly sends is, He is a God of second chances, that even though these people were part of the killing of Christ, no doubt part of the crowd that said "crucify Him", God still is offering them a personal relationship with Him. Beloved, no matter what you have done or failed to do, God is the same today (Hebrews 13:8) and is calling out to you, come back, come to Me, I love you and will receive you.

### **Peter Covers 1<sup>st</sup> 4 Feast in his Sermon / There is a Power in Speaking to Understanding**

Interestingly Peter message will follow the first four Feast of Israel in perfect order. These devout and religious people would see the flow, and recognize it clearly, for year after year they would celebrate it, or in the least honor it as a religious obligation. For you Bible teachers and evangelist, Peter shows us a great principle in preaching and teaching, and that is meet people where they are at, and relate to them with things that are relatable to them.

## THE 7 FEASTS OF ISRAEL

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## 7. THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

### Starts with Passover Lamb

Peter begin by taking about the Passover Lamb. The Passover was instituted to celebrate the angel of death passing over all whose house was covered with the blood of the lamb. It was the final blow to Pharaoh to let the children of Israel leave the bondage of slavery. Jesus would be the ultimate fulfillment of the Passover:

*John 1:29 ( NKJV )<sup>29</sup>The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*

### Perfect – Spotless / Approved – Miracles backed / I do Nothing of Myself / Nicodemus

Verse 22 - a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know; - Attested / Approved (demonstrated) of God as a perfect Man, for the Passover Lamb had to be perfect and without spot or blemish to be offered before God, and so Jesus was. But to prove that Jesus was sent by God, he did things only God could do, as Jesus said, "I do nothing of Myself..." God demonstrated as approved by God through miracles and wonders and signs to you. When Nicodemus came to Jesus at night he said, "no man can do these things except he be sent by God". Jesus said believe Me or else believe Me for My works' sake.

*John 8:28-29 ( KJV )<sup>28</sup>Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. <sup>29</sup>And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.*

*John 3:1-2 ( KJV )<sup>1</sup>There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: <sup>2</sup>The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.*

*John 14:10-11 ( NKJV )<sup>10</sup>Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. <sup>11</sup>Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.*

### Verse 23 – God's Sovereignty – Man's Responsibility / Argument wasted Words

Verse 23 - "Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; - In verse 23, we see the tension between the sovereignty of God and the choice of man when Peter said, "You crucified Him. But it was by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." "Wait a minute," you say. "If it was by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, it was God's will that it happened. How then could the Jews be indicted for the death of Jesus?" It beats me. It's an endless argument we pea brains cannot figure out. All I know is this: God is sovereign, yet man is responsible by the choices he makes. God's will is worked out, yet man is held accountable for his actions. The whole argument of man's sovereignty and God's sovereignty is wasted words. Give your life to Christ today, and enjoy His hand and presence in your life today.

### 2 Ropes on a Pulley

During his days as guest lecturer at Calvin Seminary, R. B. Kuiper once used the following illustration of God's sovereignty and human responsibility:

*"I liken them to two ropes going through two holes in the ceiling and over a pulley above. If I wish to support myself by them, I must cling to them both. If I cling only to one and not the other, I go down. I read the many teachings of the Bible regarding God's election, predestination, his chosen, and so on. I read also the many teachings regarding 'whosoever will may come' and urging people to exercise their responsibility as human beings. These seeming contradictions cannot be reconciled by the puny human mind. With childlike faith, I cling to both ropes, fully confident that in eternity I will see that both strands of truth are, after all, of one piece."*

### Peter doesn't Reconcile Them – Simply States It / That's Great Theology

This is the first sermon of the church, and Peter doesn't try to reconcile it, or explain it; he simply states it. He simply states God's sovereignty, and man's responsibility – now to me, that is great theology. Many people think they have great theology by "proving" they have the answer to one or the other, but I say great theology is saying "yes" to both, and the balance between them. The church today, and the church for 2,000 years should recognize this very illustration right here, Peter doesn't try to reconcile the two, he simply states the two, as should we, (because we are preaching to man, not to God).

## **JB Phillips**

In the words of J. B. Phillips: If God was small enough for us to figure out, He wouldn't be big enough for us to worship.

### **Main Point – God Loves You**

The main point here isn't the debate and endless arguments over theology (as more so happens), but this fact.....this statement.....God planned it, God willingly entered into it, the He the Holy One would take your sin, my sin, willingly and wantonly, to purchase us and free us. Your God loves you.

## **THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD**

**(Acts 2:24 NKJV)** "whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.

**(Acts 2:25 NKJV)** "For David says concerning Him: 'I foresaw the LORD always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken.

**(Acts 2:26 NKJV)** Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope.

**(Acts 2:27 NKJV)** For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

**(Acts 2:28 NKJV)** You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.'

### **Now talk Feast Unleavened Bread / Promise Jesus would not remain in Grave**

Now Peter will speak in regards to the Feast of Unleavened Bread (during exodus from Egypt didn't have time to put leaven in bread to let it rise – as yeast/leaven decays it sends off a gas and it cause the bread to rise). All these Feasts are shadows and symbols of the spiritual, of what God was going to do to redeem man from his sin. So the promise that Jesus would not decay in the tomb, it was a promise/illustration that He would raise from the dead.

### **Rom 6:23 – Jesus never Sinned – Grave couldn't Keep Him**

Romans 6:23 says the wages of sin is death. Since Jesus never sinned, death could not hold Him. He died in place of you and me, He died for us personally, but death could not hold Him permanently. He rose again.

**Romans 6:23 (KJV)** <sup>23</sup>For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

### **Peter now Quotes Psalm 16 / David in Grave – Talking of Jesus**

Here, Peter quotes yet another psalm, as he says (see Psalm 16:8–11). Since David's body did indeed see corruption when it became dust, he couldn't have been speaking about himself, but about the One who would succeed him—the Anointed One, the Messiah, the Christ.

**Psalms 16:8-11 (NKJV)** <sup>8</sup> I have set the LORD always before me;  
Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.

<sup>9</sup> Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices;  
My flesh also will rest in hope.

<sup>10</sup> For You will not leave my soul in Sheol,  
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

<sup>11</sup> You will show me the path of life;  
In Your presence is fullness of joy;  
At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

### **David breaks forth into Praise / All Cases – Fullness & Joy / Study of David / Temple**

**Verse 28 - You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.'** –

David after prophesying about the Lord overcoming death, that if the Christ should not be left in the grave, it is a picture, example, promise that His followers will not be left in the grave either, after prophesying about these things David breaks forth into spontaneous praise and worship by saying, “in Your presence is fullness of joy”. In all cases of Scripture where the word fullness and joy are used in the same passage, they all are in the context of being in the presence of the Lord. Man will never find fullness of joy apart from the presence of God; oh man may have joy, but never full joy – unfortunately many are

content to have joy, apart from full joy. David knows where full joy is found, and that is in the presence of the Lord. The study of the life of David is a must for every person, and you can do that simply by reading verse-by-verse through 1&2 Samuel, and 1&2 Chronicles. For me, one of the most defining examples of David's life, that speaks to my life, was his desire to build God a home, the Temple. His desire was to build the Temple, and that was after the Lord had taken his first child from his union with Bathsheba. Oh we can say, but it was David's sin, he brought that upon himself, but honestly do any of us truly apply that to our lives. Even when we know the mess, the pain, the heartbreak we are in is due to our own fault, do we really say, "I know I am in this situation because of my sin, so whatever it shall be, shall be". No, we all say please, Lord fix it, help me, I am your child please don't allow this happen, and then if He doesn't we say how could you and where were you. David would be no different than us, in fact we see him interceding during the illness of the child, hoping that the Lord might aid him, but the Lord didn't. Yet even after all that pain, disappointment, David would go on some time later to still want to build the Lord a Temple, to bring Him glory, and to glorify Him, to have a place for people to come worship Him, and a place that David may worship Him. Christian, you'll get your chance to do the same, for it is the world that we live in; if you can, if you will, be like David, and worship and glorify Him even after prayer request that were contrary to your desire, even after mountainous disappointment, even after you may feel He has let you down, but if you can be like David in those times, you will experience what David experienced, that in His presence is fullness of joy. Christian even in your lowest moment, build the Lord a Temple, and watch Him fill it. And may we remember, the Temple of God now is in our very hearts.

*1 Chronicles 28:2-3 (NKJV) <sup>2</sup>Then King David rose to his feet and said, "Hear me, my brethren and my people: I had it in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for the footstool of our God, and had made preparations to build it. <sup>3</sup>But God said to me, 'You shall not build a house for My name, because you have been a man of war and have shed blood.'*

*1 Corinthians 3:16 (NKJV) 16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?*

## **THE FEAST OF FIRSTFRUITS**

**(Acts 2:29 NKJV) "Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.**

**(Acts 2:30 NKJV) "Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne,**

**(Acts 2:31 NKJV) "he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.**

**(Acts 2:32 NKJV) "This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.**

### **Firstfruits – Harvest / Our Thanksgiving / Jesus Picture and Promise**

The Feast of Firstfruits was the offering unto God, the thanksgiving for the harvest. At the first part of June, they harvested the grain crops. Thus it was a celebration, much like our Thanksgiving Day, in giving thanks to God for the gathering in of the grain crops. The Fest of Firstfruits is the picture and promise that as Jesus rose from the dead, so too would all who follow Him.

### **Peter quotes Psalms 132 – Jesus right to the Throne**

In verse 30, Peter now goes on to quote Psalms 132:11, about God's promise to David that one of David's descendants will always sit upon the throne of Israel, and Peter is declaring that the ultimate fulfillment of that promise is Jesus the Christ (Messiah). Peter is making proof-context that Jesus is the promised Messiah because He is a descendant of David, and that Jesus had the right to the throne of David through His lineage through David.

*Psalms 132:11 (NKJV) <sup>11</sup> The LORD has sworn in truth to David;*

*He will not turn from it:*

*"I will set upon your throne the fruit of your body.*

*Matthew 1:1 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup>The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.....*

*Matthew 1:6 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup>and Jesse begot David the king.  
David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah.*

### **Peter makes Clear Not about David / Can see David's Tomb**

Peter makes it clear that David was not speaking of himself, but one that would come after him, and that One is Jesus the Christ (the Messiah). Peter said David's grave is with us today, obviously the prophecy wasn't about him, for David's body is with us today. Even to the present day you can go to Jerusalem and in the area where they call it the upper room, up on Mt. Zion, in the room down below the upper room, there is a large silver casket and the Jews believe that David's remains are there in that casket. You will see them in there burning candles and praying at the tomb of David, there on Mt. Zion. Peter said his tomb is with us to this day.

### **Peter says we Saw Resurrection**

Verse 32 - This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses - We're all witnesses. We saw it! We were witnesses of the resurrection. We saw Him after the resurrection.

### **1st Sermon – Steeped in Resurrection / Resurrection Power of Gospel / Your Witness**

The first sermon ever preached was steeped deep in the resurrection. Let your witness always include the resurrection, for the resurrection is the power of the gospel.

### **Death stung itself to Death / 1 Cor 15**

When death stung Jesus Christ, it stung itself to death.

*1 Corinthians 15:54-55 (NKJV)* <sup>54</sup>So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"

### **Daddy takes the Sting**

A little girl, allergic to bee stings, cringed in the back seat of the car. If the bee stung her, she could die within an hour. "Oh Daddy," she squealed in terror, "it's a bee and it's going to sting me!" The father pulled the car over to a stop and reached back to try to catch the bee. Buzzing around him, the bee bumped against the front windshield. The father trapped the bee in his fist. Holding the bee in his closed hand, the father waited for the sting. The bee stung his hand, and in pain, the father let it go. The bee was loosed into the car again, and the little girl panicked. "Daddy, it's going to sting me!" Gently, the father said to his daughter, "It can't sting you now. Look at my hand. I took the sting for you." It can try to scare you and annoy you, but it can no longer hurt you.

### **Like the Father – Someone took the Sting**

Like the father who lovingly saved his little girl from the bee sting with his hand, Someone lovingly took the sting of death for us in his hands so he could save us from the sting of death. Who did this for us? The Lord Jesus Christ did, when he died for our sins on the cross. Then he overcame (beat) death when he rose again the third day. Every person who repents (turns from sin, and turns to God) and believes on Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Savior will never receive the sting of death in hell. Jesus Christ took the sting for us.

*1 Corinthians 15:54-55 (NKJV)* <sup>54</sup>So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"

### **Have you Trusted Him Today?**

Have you trusted in Christ to take the sting of death away from you?

## **THE FEAST OF PENTECOST**

**(Acts 2:33 NKJV)** "Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.

**(Acts 2:34 NKJV)** "For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: 'The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand,

**(Acts 2:35 NKJV)** Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'"

**(Acts 2:36 NKJV)** "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

## Now Speaking what they Currently See

*Verse 33 - out this which you now see and hear* - speaking of what they are currently seeing and hearing. What is happening on this day, is the move of the Holy Spirit the Church should want to see move like every day. I like what AW Tozer said in reference to this passage, he said in the church today there is lots heard, but little seen. Christian have all kinds of stuff to say about the move of the Holy Spirit (they have their systematic theology), but all that they ever do is talk, they never go out and do. Some people with their theology are so right, they are dead right.

## Quotes Psalms 110 (Jesus had quoted in Matt 22) / Jesus is Son of God

Peter is now quoting from Psalms 110:1 (which Jesus Himself had given commentary on - see Matthew 22:41-46). David called his descendant his Lord. In Jewish culture, one would never call his offspring "Lord." "What is Peter implying?" his audience must have wondered. Peter's implication was simply this: Jesus, the Son of David, is more than merely a descendant of David. He is the Son of God. Beloved.....God died for your selfish sin, for your desire to do this and do that, your rebellion.....God loves you so much that He came and died a brutal and humiliating death so that you might be forgiven and set free.

*Psalms 110:1 ( NKJV )<sup>1</sup> The LORD said to my Lord,  
"Sit at My right hand,  
Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."*

*Matthew 22:41-46 ( NKJV )<sup>41</sup>While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, <sup>42</sup>saying, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?"*

*They said to Him, "The Son of David."*

*<sup>43</sup>He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying:*

*<sup>44</sup> 'The LORD said to my Lord,  
"Sit at My right hand,  
Till I make Your enemies Your footstool'?"<sup>45</sup>*

*<sup>45</sup>If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his Son?" <sup>46</sup>And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.*

## Pentecost – Proof of the Resurrection / Jesus had to Arise and Ascend – to Send

The Day of Pentecost, is more proof of the Resurrection of Christ. Yes there were eyewitness accounts of Jesus' resurrection, but on the Day of Pentecost the proof of the resurrection was given to several thousands (all who are present and heard the tongues coming from the Upper Room). It is proof because Jesus said He would send the Holy Spirit when He returned to the Father. If Jesus is dead, still in the grave, He isn't at the right hand of the Father, at the throne of God in heaven, if He was still dead and in the grave, then He couldn't send the Promised Holy Spirit.

*Luke 24:49 ( NKJV )<sup>49</sup>Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."*

*John 14:26 ( NKJV )<sup>26</sup>But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.*

*John 15:26 ( NKJV )<sup>26</sup>"But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.*

*Acts 1:4-5 ( NKJV )<sup>4</sup>And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; <sup>5</sup>for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."*

**(Acts 2:37 NKJV) Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"**

## Cut to Heart by Word & Spirit / The Word does what it Say in Hebrews 4

They were cut to the heart, by the Word of God and the Spirit of God. The Word did as it says it would, cut like a knife. Sometimes a person needs to be cut in order to get underneath the surface.

*Hebrews 4:12 ( NKJV )<sup>12</sup>For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

### **V36 – You Killed Him – not Innocent / How could we – Not There / 3000 Knew**

Verse 36 - whom you crucified – Peter is saying, you killed Him! Peter said you are by no means innocent. They could have said what do you mean we killed Him, we weren't there, we didn't vote at the trial, we didn't sentence Him to die, we didn't nail Him to the cross, how can you say we killed Him? But for 3,000 they knew they had condemned Him

### **Years Church Blamed the Jews / Pastor Chuck in Israel**

For years the Church has promoted the heresy that the Jews are to blame for Jesus' death, for the world is looking to blame someone, let them look no further, for I killed Him, it was me, it was my sin, it was my selfishness and selfish desires that nailed Him to the cross. The world has said it was the Jews, and this way of thinking lead to the Holocaust. Years ago in a conference in Jerusalem, there was this tension between many churches and groups who had come to the conference (called friends of Israel – even though this was stirring in people's hearts, but they (the Jews) killed Jesus) Chuck Smith was there, and when it came time for him to speak, Chuck said to the group of several thousand, "If you want to blame someone for the death of Jesus Christ, blame me, because it was my sins that put Him on the Cross." The room fell to eerie silence as men and woman were pricked and cut to their heart.

### **Heard & Pricked / Every move of Spirit comes with Repentance - Brokenness**

- The Jews had heard amazing things through the utterance of tongues.
- They had seen Peter stand up boldly to preach powerfully and persuasively.
- They heard him use Scripture accurately and irrefutably.

As a result, they were pricked in their hearts, just as the Word of God does to those who read it with open hearts (Hebrews 4:12). In every move of the Spirit, every true revival we see all had the elements of people's heart being broken, repentance, and tears. Anything else, was just a move of the flesh. These so-called revivals where there is no repentance, no brokenness, are not of the Lord, but whipped up by man. I would even say that regarding churches that have this amazing church growth, people say my what God is doing, but when you meet the people there is no repentance and no brokenness in them, just something they do for an hour a week.

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup>For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

### **Word Cuts / People don't want to Be Cut / My Surgery Tuesday**

Peter's words empower by the Holy Spirit cut deep into man's heart on this day. Christian, that is what the word is meant to do. It is the cutting that reveals what is beneath the surface. Many people don't want to be cut, the unrepentant, and even the Christian. The cutting hurts, it is uncomfortable, but it is vitally necessary, Many Christians get cut and ask Jesus for forgiveness and to receive salvation, but then as time passes don't want to be cut again. They don't want to hear they have a failing or shortcoming, and they become upset if anyone cuts them and reveals it. Tuesday I have to go to the dermatologist; after all the years in the sun the doctor says we need to check a few things out, we need to cut a few places and do a biopsy on the tissue. One place is right on my nose, the doctor said I could just freeze that spot, and it would fall off, be none evasive, no pain, no scar, but then we would never know what was beneath the skin, is it cancer, is it something eating away at you that will one day take your life. As much as I wanted to just blow over it, cover it up, I know that I need to be cut so we can get underneath the surface and find out if there is something more there. I have a wife, a teenager, and a baby; I need to make it at least another 20 years, they need me to lead them and to provide for them, so I need to know if there is anything that could hinder or stop me from making I another 20. The cutting spiritually is God's gift to you, His surgery on you, so that you may lead and provide for your family in all their spiritual needs, they need you, for at least another 20. Christian, don't despise the cutting, it is a necessary and vital work of God; He wants to get underneath the surface of things and reveal to you what is underneath so that you may deal with it and go on to life, and that more abundant (John 10:10). The life will be abundant because after the cutting, the Lord applies the blood, the blood of Jesus upon that which has been cut, and the blood will do what the blood does, bring life and healing.

### **What shall we Do – Is it too Late / Peter says by No means**

Verse 37 - What shall we do? - If this is true they are saying, is it too late? What can we do about it now, we remember the crucifixion of Jesus, but we didn't get it, we didn't know what His death meant; now we do, but is it too late? Peter's answer is by no means is it too late.

**(Acts 2:38 NKJV) Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**

### **Repentance not Curse Word / Change mind – Change thoughts of Jesus**

*Repentance is not a curse word, it is the word that delivers us from the curse.* To repent simply means to change direction. "You once thought Jesus was a blasphemer, a heretic, a dangerous individual," said Peter. "Change your mind about who He is." Gang, the gospel is not based upon people cleaning up their lives or getting their acts together. The gospel is simply based upon a change of mind concerning Jesus Christ. For many of you, Jesus was no more than a curse word. To others, He was a political revolutionary, a good teacher, or a wise man. But then you heard the Word, you saw the power, and you were pricked in your heart. You had no other recourse but to repent, no other choice but to admit He is the Christ, and you were saved.

### **No Altar Call – Public Profession / Baptism proof of Sincerity - Ostracized**

They were going to go down to the river and give a symbol of sin and the old life as they symbolized burying the old man with his sin, and a new man emerging from the waters (we will talk more of baptism in a future study), but know this, there were no Altar calls in that day, their public profession was to be baptized. Baptism was proof of their sincerity for once they made a public stance for Christ they would become ostracized from the Jewish community. Today there are too many professions of faith, with no proof of sincerity, as a person has absolutely no change in their life. God's sovereignty, man's free-will, once saved always saved, I don't know; all I do know is it is not a debate that I want my eternal salvation to be in.

### **Baptism not necessary of Salvation**

Just a note to those who say that based on this verse, that baptism is necessary for salvation, it should be noted that the thief on the cross was not baptized. All the saints in Hebrews 11 (Hall of Faith) were not baptized. Peter's next sermon doesn't say you need to be baptized. And, when the household of Cornelius (Gentiles) get saved, we read that the Holy Spirit filled them before they were baptized. So, it is errant to teach that if a person isn't baptized, they aren't saved, for to do such a thing then places man as doing some type of work, and removing that salvation is 100% based on the finished work of Christ on the cross. To add baptism to the salvation equation is to say that the blood of Jesus Christ alone isn't sufficient enough to save us, and that isn't just errant, to me that is heresy.

*Ephesians 2:8-9 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup>For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup>not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

*Titus 3:5-6 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup>not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup>whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior,*

**(Acts 2:39 NKJV) "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."**

### **2000 Years Later – Promise still for You Today**

Verse 39 - and to all who are afar off – That is you and me, as we are 2000 years since this word. There are those today who say the gift of the Holy Ghost is no longer available. I disagree. The promise of the Father is to you, your children, and to those who are afar off in coming generations and in other regions. Precious people, don't let anyone deny you the gift and empowering of the Holy Ghost. Don't let them say it's no longer applicable or no longer available. The promise of the Father experienced on the Day of Pentecost is available to you, to your children, and to those who are afar off, regardless of how far spiritually or geographically we might be.

**(Acts 2:40 NKJV)** And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."

**(Acts 2:41 NKJV)** Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

### **Souls**

Souls, 3000 souls – the eternal part of man, the part that lives on forever apart from when it leaves this body. You are an eternal being and you have an eternity to consider.

### **Perverse – Save self from Religious System / Temple right around the Corner**

Perverse generation (also translated – twisted generation). Save yourself from this religious system, just around the corner at the Temple they are going through a religious ritual, but right here is the way to eternal life.

### **3000 saved – 3000 Died**

Interestingly three thousand people died the day the law was given (Exodus 32:28). But on the day the Spirit was given, three thousand were saved (Acts 2:41).

**Exodus 32:28 ( NKJV )** <sup>28</sup>So the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And about three thousand men of the people fell that day.

**Acts 2:41 ( NKJV )** <sup>41</sup>Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

### **Be Free**

Do you want to be free, have you been set free?

**Luke 4:17-19 ( NKJV )** <sup>17</sup>And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

<sup>18</sup> *"The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me,  
Because He has anointed Me  
To preach the gospel to the poor;  
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,  
To proclaim liberty to the captives  
And recovery of sight to the blind,  
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;  
<sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."*

**John 8:36 ( NKJV )** <sup>36</sup>Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

# Remaining Steadfast (The 4 Pillars of the Church)

## 2:42-47

### Continuing Study on Power of Holy Spirit

We are continuing our study on the Holy Spirit, God Himself, He who has been promised unto us to help us live as God desires us to live, and to serve as God desires us to serve. Jesus promised we would be filled with the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit would work through us to make Jesus known. The best commentary on the Bible is the Bible, so we are studying through the first two chapters of Acts, which the theme is given in one verse (Acts 1:8), you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you. The Book of Acts is not the Acts of the Apostles or the Acts of man, but the Acts of God through a man/woman.

*Luke 24:49 (NKJV) 49 Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."*

*Acts 1:8 (NKJV) 8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

### Theme has Emerged

A theme has emerged for the pouring out, the unleashing, the filling, the supplying, the moving of the Holy Spirit in a person's life – and that is the Word of God, and prayer unto God.

### Ascended-Descended-Presented / 3000 Saved / Now What?

Jesus has ascended, the Holy Spirit has descended, and Peter has presented. The resultant as we saw in the last study was 3,000 people coming into the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Now what the disciples may have asked? The Church has just grown from 120 to 3,000 in just a few short minutes; many will stay in Jerusalem, and many will return home, so immediately the question would be, now what? Where do we meet, how many chairs will we need, should we have a choir, if so should they wear robes, what about childcare, how do we support the staff, where can we find enough scrolls of the Torah, what are those returning back to homes outside of Jerusalem to do? In a matter of 5 minutes they have all these issues to consider, pondering and asking, now what?

*(Acts 2:41 NKJV) Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them*

### Lord's Answer – Remain Steadfast / Steadfast in Doctrine – Fellowship – Bread - Prayer

The Lord's answer (via the Holy Spirit) as we see in our text today, "*Remain Steadfast*"; remain steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers, and all the other stuff will work itself out. Acts 2:42 is called the 4 pillars of the church,

*(Acts 2:42 NKJV) And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

### The 4 Pillars of the Church:

- Apostles' Doctrine (the Word)
- Fellowship
- Breaking of Bread (Communion)
- Prayers

### Recap 6 – Add the 7th

Acts 2:42 is called the 4 pillars of the church, but it is important to recap the 6 keys to power we have already studied in these first two chapters, and today we will add the seventh, "*Remaining Steadfast*".

### 6 Keys to the early Disciples Power:

- They Experienced the Resurrection Power (1:3)
- They Lived in the Consciousness of the Ever-Present of God (1:3)
- They were Filled with the Holy Spirit (1:8)
- They Were Looking for His Soon Return (1:11)
- They found Power in the Upper Room of Prayer (1:13-14)

- They found Power in the Word of God (1:15-26)
- They found Power by Remaining Steadfast (2:42)

### **Look Closely – 4 Pillars in the 6 Keys / 1-6 – Release of the Holy Spirit**

If you look closely, you will see that the four pillars (of remaining steadfast) are covered under the first 6. The resurrection power is remembered and refreshed when we break bread (communion). The consciousness of the ever-present God, found in the Word, fellowshiping one with another as we see Christ in other people, at the Lord's table, and in prayer as we talk with Him, and He to us, we experience His presence. Being filled with the Holy Spirit, will naturally happen when we are steadfastly continually doing these 4 things. Prayer is prayer, and the Word is the Word, and tremendous power is found in them, and they release the Holy Spirit within our lives.

### **Don't Tune Out – Ho Hum – Something New / Titanic – Unsinkable – Weak Rivets**

I hope you don't tune-out in this message, ho hum, know these things, tell me something new. Well here is something new, after almost 100 years. Some of the remains of the Titanic's hull were brought to the surface for analysis. You remember the Titanic, the Titanic left Southampton, England, on April 10, 1912 on its ill-fated maiden voyage. Deemed unsinkable, said that even God couldn't sink the Titanic; more than 1,500 people died (out of 2,224 passengers and crew) when the Titanic, advertised as an "unsinkable" luxury liner, struck an iceberg on its maiden voyage on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 1912 and went down in the North Atlantic less than three hours later. Her remains sit at 12,415 feet under the sea.

*The tragic sinking of the Titanic nearly a century ago can be blamed on low-grade rivets that the ship's builders used on some parts of the ill-fated liner, two experts on metals conclude in a new book. The two metallurgists tested 48 rivets from the ship and found that slag concentrations were at 9 percent, when they should have been 2 to 3 percent. The slag is a byproduct of the smelting process. "You need the slag but you need just a little to take up the load that's applied so the iron doesn't stretch," Foecke said. "The iron becomes weak the more slag there is because the brittleness of the slag takes over and it breaks easily." The Titanic was 1 of 3 ships the company was to build. Harland and Wolff of Belfast, Northern Ireland, needed to build the ship quickly and at reasonable cost, which may have compromised quality, said co-author Timothy Foecke. That the shipyard was building two other vessels at the same time added to the difficulty of getting the millions of rivets needed, he added. "Under the pressure to get these ships up, they ramped up the riveters, found materials from additional suppliers, and some was not of quality," said Foecke, a metallurgist at the U.S. government's National Institute of Standards and Technology who has been studying the Titanic for a decade. "The company knowingly purchased weaker rivets, but I think they did it not knowing they would be purchasing something substandard enough that when they hit an iceberg their ship would sink," said co-author Jennifer Hooper McCarty, who started researching the Titanic's rivets while working on her Ph.D. at Johns Hopkins University in 1999. The company disputes the idea that inferior rivets were at fault. The theory has been around for years, but McCarty and Foecke's book, "What Really Sank the Titanic," published last month, outlines their extensive research into the Harland and Wolff archives and surviving rivets from the Titanic. McCarty spent two years in Britain studying the company's archives and works on the training and working conditions of shipyard workers. She and Foecke also studied engineering textbooks from the 1890s and early 1900s to learn more about shipbuilding practices and materials. "I had the opportunity to study the metallurgy of several rivets," McCarty said. "It was a process of taking thousands of images of the inside of these rivets, finding out what the structure was like, doing chemical testing and computer modeling. "Seeing the kind of levels we saw in different areas, in different parts of the ship led us to believe they would have ordered from different people," she said, adding this may have led to the weaker rivets. Foecke said the main question was not whether the Titanic would sink after hitting the iceberg, but how fast the ship went down. He believes the answer is provided by the weak rivets. His analysis showed the builders used stronger steel rivets where they expected the greatest stress and weaker iron rivets for the stern and the bow, where they thought there would be less pressure, he said. But it was the ship's bow that struck the iceberg. "Typically you want a four bar for rivets," Foecke said, using the measurement for the strongest rivets. "Some of the orders were for three bar." Harland and Wolff spokesman Joris Minne disputed the findings. "We always say there was nothing wrong with the Titanic when it left here," he said. When the iceberg hit the Titanic, it scraped alongside the ship. Foecke said this affected a number of seams in the bow and the weak rivets let go, putting more pressure on the strong rivets. "Six compartments flooded. If the rivets were on average better quality, five compartments may have flooded and the ship would have stayed afloat longer and more people would have been saved," Foecke said. "If four compartments flooded, the ship may have limped to Halifax." The company does not have an archivist, but it refers scientific questions on the Titanic to retired Harland and Wolff naval engineer David Livingstone, who also has researched the ship's sinking. He said he largely agrees with the authors' findings on the metallic composition of the rivets, but added their conclusions that the rivets were to blame for the sinking are "misleading and incorrect" because they do not consider the ship's overall design and the historical context. "You can't just look at the material and say it was substandard," Livingstone said. "Of course material from 100 years ago would be inferior to material today." He said he had found no document to support the argument that Harland and Wolff knowingly used substandard material. He pointed out that the Olympic, a ship the company built at the same time using the same materials, had a long life with no troubles. The third vessel turned out in the early 1900s was attacked and sunk in World War I. Livingstone said he was not sure why iron rivets were used in the bow and the stern but believed it may have been because a crane-mounted hydraulic rivet machine could not reach those points. He said the iron rivets were wider to compensate for the difference in strength. Contrary to Foecke's theory, Livingstone said, the Titanic did not go down fast compared to other ships that have sunk. He said the Titanic did not capsize -- as do most sinking ships -- but maintained an even keel until the last moment, going down after about two and a half hours when the weight of the water it took on became too much. William Garzke, chairman of the forensics panel of the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers based in New Jersey, said wrought iron was commonly used at that time, but steel was the newer, stronger*

choice. Garzke, who also has studied the Titanic sinking, said the two scientists made a good point about the variability of the rivets, but "the problem is not the metallurgy of the rivets, it was the design of the riveted joints." He said that the company used only two rivets at the site of impact, when three would have provided more strength and durability.

### **Although Solid Steel – Held together by Rivets**

Although the Titanic was surrounded by thick solid steel, it still had to be held together by these rivets. In the end the Titanic was only as strong as the rivets, and when the rivets turned out to be of poor quality, excessive slag, of weak strength, the thick solid walls of steel were of no help from keeping the ship from sinking to the ocean floor, along with 1500 souls. I will suggest to you these 4 pillars of our study today, are the rivets of our faith. We have thick solid walls of steel in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit surrounding us, but the rivets of our faith (the Word, Fellowship, Communion, and Prayer) are what keeps and holds the solid steel of the Trinity around us.

### **How Strong**

How strong are your rivets?

### **Peter said – Be Saved from Perverse Generation / Plenty making Professions - Backslide**

Peter said be saved, be freed from this perverse generation, and 3,000 responded. People are free from this perverse generation, now how do they remain free. Plenty a people today making professions for Christ, detaching themselves from this perverse world, only to find themselves months or years later being drawn back into it. The Lord says to be saved from this perverse generation, and to remain separated from it.

*(Acts 2:40 NKJV) And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."*

### **Separate Self / Word used for warped Board – Only good for Fire / All going to Burn**

Peter said to separate yourself from this perverse (warped) generation. This word was used for a board that was not start, and the carpenter would throw it aside and later throw it into the fire, for the wood was useless for anything else. Peter is saying separate yourself from this world's system that is going to burn, it is useless.

### **Once Separated – Stay Separated**

And once you do, stay separated, how - the Lord tells us here in verse 42, these 4 pillars:

#### **The 4 Pillars of the Church:**

- Apostles' Doctrine (the Word)
- Fellowship
- Breaking of Bread (Communion)
- Prayers.

### **Decision for Steadfastness Today / Execute a Plan before Leave on these 4 Areas**

Today make a decision for more steadfastness, respond to the message today. Do not table the decision for later, but before this message is over, conclude in your mind what you are going to do, implement a plan, and how and when you are going to execute your plan. Have a plan in place before you leave today of how you are going to establish, sure-up, secure – steadfastness in your life in these 4 areas.

#### **The 4 Pillars of the Church**

**(Acts 2:42 NKJV) And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.**

**(Acts 2:43 NKJV) Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.**

**(Acts 2:44 NKJV) Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common,**

**(Acts 2:45 NKJV) and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.**

**(Acts 2:46 NKJV) So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart,**

**(Acts 2:47 NKJV) praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.**

They remained steadfast in these 4 areas:

**The 4 Pillars of the Church:**

- Apostles' Doctrine (the Word)
- Fellowship
- Breaking of Bread (Communion)
- Prayers.

**Steadfastly - Definition**

They continued steadfastly, here is the definition of steadfast:

Steadfastly - proskartereo, pros-kar-ter-eh'-o; from G4314 and G2594; to be earnest towards, i.e. (to a thing) to persevere, be constantly diligent, or (in a place) to attend assiduously all the exercises, or (to a person) to adhere closely to (as a servitor):--attend (give self) continually (upon), continue (in, instant in, with), wait on (continually).

Persevere – to persist in pursuing something in spite of obstacles, opposition, difficulties or discouragement.

**Steadfastly – Cargo Ship**

The word for steadfastly has been used in the context of “to continue/hold under pressure”. It has been likened to a cargo ship heading in to a storm, and crew tightens the cables in order that the containers do not topple over and fall into the sea. The cargo must be steadfast to make it through the storm.

**Imbedded in our Identities / Non-Negotiable**

One of the things we as Christians lose so fast in the storms, in the distractions, in the hurried and busyness of life are the very basics. These four pillars are the very qualities that need to be deeply imbedded in our identities. These are things we are going to hold on to no matter what. Whether the seas are choppy, smooth or a raging storm. These qualities are non-negotiable, and we fasten them down in our lives so that no storm or blue skies, can topple them over and allow them to fall into the sea. May I make note, blue skies are as dangerous to the believer as are stormy skies, because we can be lulled asleep in blue and sunny skies as all is well with my soul.

**Apostles' Doctrine**

**(Acts 2:42 NKJV) And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.**

**Doctrine – What you Believe**

Doctrine – what you believe and why. The doctrine spoken of here is the doctrine that was taught by the apostles.

- the doctrine of salvation,
- the doctrine of the Trinity,
- the doctrine of eternal life,
- the doctrine of eternal punishment,
- the doctrine of end time things,
- and the likes there of.

**The Inspiration of God / One message in perfect Unity**

And all this doctrine is formed by the inspiration of God. This one message in perfect unity that never contradicts itself. We studied on the inspiration of the word in a past study, we have spoken about in the uniqueness of the Bible and why we can trust in the inspiration of the Scriptures (notes available on-line). *2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

## **Teaching Through Bible / Bible Going Through Us**

How important it is that we continue to teach through the Bible verse-by-verse, chapter-by-chapter. For it was the Word that became flesh and dwelt among us, and now it is not that we are going through the Bible, but that the Bible (the Word) is going through us, as the Word dwells in us:

*(John 1:14 NKJV) And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

## **Psalm 1 / Happy & Prosperous**

God says the blessed (happy and prosperous) person is the one who delights and meditates on His Word day and night.

*Psalm 1:1–3 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; <sup>2</sup> But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. <sup>3</sup> He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.*

## **Early Church wanted Apostles Doctrine / Grabbed Heart / Sensed they been with Jesus**

Do you notice that in the early church, the people didn't just want any doctrine, for there was plenty of doctrine flying around in this time, plenty of philosophy, but the people wanted the apostle's doctrine. They saw a doctrine that grabbed their hearts and made them want it to be a part of their lives. They sensed and knew that these apostles had been with Jesus, experienced Jesus, and they wanted what they had

## **They saw Freedom – Life - Passion**

These people could see a freedom in the church, a passion, a life and living hope in the apostle's doctrine. Not just a story, not just a bunch of rules, or the latest Oprah book-of-the-month, but it was a life and a life that was more abundant. The Apostles had a freedom and they said do to us as you wish, but we can't stop talking about our Jesus, even if you beat and pound us we can't stop talking about Jesus.

*Acts 4:13–20 (NKJV) <sup>13</sup> Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus. <sup>14</sup> And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. <sup>15</sup> But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, <sup>16</sup> saying, "What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them is evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. <sup>17</sup> But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name." <sup>18</sup> So they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. <sup>19</sup> But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. <sup>20</sup> For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."*

## **There are People want to be Involved – Then they See**

There are people who want to be involved in a group, with some identity, some cause (just look at the world around you). They see something in someone and say I want what they have, because I know that what I have is missing and lacking something. I want to be a part of that.

## **Early Church Saw – You Know – Experienced / Tell me how I can Too**

The early church converts said we want your doctrine, we see the life that is in you, we can see you know Him, you have experienced Him, and they said tell me how you came to know Him, tell me how I can know Him the same way, teach me.

## **Doctrine had Reality to It / I want to go where you Go**

This doctrine had a reality to it, this doctrine would have people say I want to go where you have gone I want to go where you were going. Stand where you stand, hear what you hear, do what you are doing.

## **So too Today / We have Word's of Life / Our Passion - the Word in Us**

So too is it today, that people will look and say what is it about your doctrine that makes you so different. Why is it that you live so differently from others? Why do you have such peace, joy, passion, excitement, and love? What is it about your doctrine, tell me, and teach me, I want to go where you are going.

## **Precious People – we have the Words of Life**

Precious people, we have the words of life. We have the words of life, and when we become passionate about this word, the Word that became flesh and dwells in us, then people will say, "I want your doctrine, tell me what it is."

## **Fellowship**

**(Acts 2:42 NKJV)** And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

## **Koinonia – Communion – Partnership**

The Greek word - koinonia, koy-nohn-ee'-ah; from G2844; partnership, i.e. (lit.) participation, or (social) intercourse, or (pecuniary) benefaction:--(to) communicate (-ation), communion, (contri-), distribution, fellowship.

## **Social Intercourse – We are in this Together – Journey Together**

This Koinonia, this oneness, this communion, this partnership. We are adults, we can handle this, this social intercourse. Put aside the demented world view, and see this word art before us. This word likens fellowship to two people becoming one, they are so intimate, they become one. We are in this together, we are on this journey together.

## **To be in Business Together – Share same Interest / Business of the Lord**

*Koinonia* – also means to be in business with, to share the same interest, share the same goals with. We are to be in business with the Lord Jesus, about the Father's business, to share the same interest, to share the same goals.

*Luke 2:49 (NKJV)* <sup>49</sup>And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"

## **When sharing same Goals – find Joy / Theme found in these 4 – Joy / Release of Spirit**

It will be in the fellowship, the sharing of the same goals, being about our Father's business that we will find joy (1 Corinthians 1:1:9). We will find a theme in this study today, and that is that there is a theme of joy, and joy will be found when we are doing these 4 things. These 4 pillars release the Holy Spirit in our lives, because we stay connected to God, and the fruit of the spirit is, love, peace, and JOY!. If your life lacks joy, go back and check the rivets. Remember last study, the only place you find "fullness" and "joy" tagged together in the scriptures are all in the context of "in God's presence".

*1 Corinthians 1:9 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup>God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Galatians 5:22-23 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup>But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

*Psalms 16:11* You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

## **Robbed Joy – What Common Interest – Unbeliever / Warning – Stay Separated**

Important for me to note, especially if you want to be robbed of joy, what common interest could a believer have with someone of the world (unbeliever), what common business could they share, common interest, common goals could they have. There lies the warning to stay separated from this world, for what common Lord do they serve, if their lord is not your Lord. 2 Cor 6:14 – (warning to stay separate). Remember the warped (perverse generation) as it will be thrown into the fire.

*2 Corinthians 6:14-15 (NKJV)* <sup>14</sup>Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? <sup>15</sup>And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?

## **Sharing Life**

One of the sweetest definitions of fellowship that I've heard is that of "sharing life". That is truly what we are doing with one another as we are sharing life together. We are a family, we draw strength from one another, we help each other along this walk. Fellowship is a refreshing oil:

*Psalms 133:1-3 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brethren to dwell together in unity! <sup>2</sup> It is like the precious oil upon the head, Running down on the beard, The beard of Aaron, Running down on the edge of his garments. <sup>3</sup> It is like the dew of Hermon, Descending upon the mountains of Zion; For there the LORD commanded the blessing— Life forevermore.

*(Proverbs 27:17 NKJV) As iron sharpens iron, So a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.*

### **Verse 46 – these 4 pillars – They were Glad & Singleness of Heart**

With these 4 principles it says in verse 46, they were glad, and they had simplicity (which means singleness) of heart.

*(Acts 2:46 NKJV) So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart,*

### **Back to our Rivets – Singleness means “Unalloyed” / Alloy weakens Steel**

Back to our rivets, singleness means, “unalloyed” which is a pure metal, absent of alloy which weakens and cheapens steel, the kind of metal you want to build a building with. The alloy that was absent from them, was the alloy of the world, they were in unity with one another.

### **Why we Go to Church**

They shared all things. Sad to say that so much of the church today no longer shares all things. I am not referencing material things, but life. Somehow, the American mentality has embedded itself into the church, and people say about church.....”what is in it for me”. They totally turn church and attending church into that it is all about them. Oh I am not going to go to church because nobody talks to me when I go; well do you realize someone is saying that same about you, that you never talk to them. So go look for someone that no one talks to, and now you get to give, rather than always receive. I am not going to church some say, because I already know so much of the Bible, I don't learn anything new; how about then taking all that knowledge and pouring it into that new believer, and spend time sharing a word with them. How about prayer.....no need to go to prayer, everything is going really well, the job is good, my health is good, got extra cash in the pocket to eat out and then enough money for cable to stay home and watch the tele.....all the while the person two seats down from you is ready to call it quits, and for some, in more ways than just giving up on Jesus. Church is a body, that shares life together. Please consider this and think this through.....has your walk become all about you? When God says steadfast in fellowship, it means to look to fellowship with others for their sake, not your sake only.

### **Deeper than Church Fellowship**

This *koinonia* means more than just getting together at the church I might add, there are other fellowshiping we are called to as believers:

- The fellowship of the Gospel:  
*Philippians 1:3-6 ( NKJV )* <sup>3</sup>I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, <sup>4</sup>always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, <sup>5</sup>for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, <sup>6</sup>being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ;
- The fellowship with Spirit:  
*Philippians 2:1-2 ( NKJV )* <sup>1</sup>Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, <sup>2</sup>fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.
- The fellowship of His suffering:  
*Philippians 3:10 ( NKJV )* <sup>10</sup>that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,
- The fellowship of ministering to the Saints:  
*2 Corinthians 8:3-4 ( NKJV )* <sup>3</sup>For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing, <sup>4</sup>imploping us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

Now, the Communion table is fellowshiping with the Lord (next point).

### **Breaking of Bread**

**(Acts 2:42 NKJV) And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.**

## **Lord's Supper / Foundation – Cleansing – Start Over - Perspective**

The breaking of bread speaks the Lord's Supper. It speaks of coming back to the very foundation of the Christian faith, and that is the death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, it is the remembrance of Him being ever-present with us. It is a place of cleansing, a place they/we get to come back to start all over again, daily if necessary. We get to go back to the Cross and put life back into perspective.

*1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV) <sup>23</sup> For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; <sup>24</sup> and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." <sup>25</sup> In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." <sup>26</sup> For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.*

## **The Life is in the Blood**

The life is in the blood, it was a prophetic picture of the Lamb of God who would bring us into "atonement", at one-ment, through the blood of the Lamb. In communion we get to do that, and do it in remembrance of Him and His great love for us:

*(Leviticus 17:11 NKJV) 'For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.'*

*(John 6:53 NKJV) Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.*

*(John 6:54 NKJV) "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.*

*(John 6:55 NKJV) "For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.*

*(John 6:56 NKJV) "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.*

*(John 6:57 NKJV) "As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.*

*(John 6:58 NKJV) "This is the bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever."*

## **Prayers.**

**(Acts 2:42 NKJV) And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.**

## **Definition**

Prayer - proseuche, pros-yoo-khay'; from G4336; prayer (worship); by impl. an oratory (chapel):--X pray earnestly, prayer. Meaning to ask, offer, request. This word is as much about an action, as it is a location, as it was referred to a place to pray (like the temple or synagogue).

## **Oratory Chapel / Sharing Life**

I like that, an oratory chapel. The moment we pray, we are immediately brought into a sanctuary, a place of worship, and we can be ministered to by the Living God. The God who says let us commune together, let us fellowship together, and let us share life together. We will talk more of this in a future study.

## **Guy at Work Confuses who my Son Is**

I have to tell you this story, last week I was walking down the hall at work, and this guy passes me, acts like we have known each other for ever and says, hey how about those Atlanta Braves? I'm like ahh, yep they are something (saying to myself this guy must love the Braves to yell it out to a total stranger). Then a week later I'm rushing to another meeting, pass him in the hall, same look like we really know each other, and he says how does your boy like those Braves (I'm thinking Wayne and Camden) and I say well he likes the Orioles. The guy says that's alright, he'll love playing for the Braves. As I get out to my car it finally hits me, there is a man at work, whose son plays professional baseball, for the Braves (last year the Rangers), and this guy thinks I'm him. Now if my son makes it to the big leagues, I expect that he will see to it that I never have to go to work again; but as for this man he thinks we have a connection through the son, but we don't because he has the wrong son. Good example for anyone who thinks they can have a connection with and to God the Father, enter into a conversation with Him, apart from having the right son. Now, the good news for those who have the right son, the Father is so ready for conversation with you. I've been late for many a meetings at work when I pass someone in the hall and they say, Ray how is Wayne doing in football, lacrosse; how old is Camden now, and well, the meeting isn't that

interesting to me as it is to talk about my sons. You see, the Heavenly Father can't wait to talk to us about the Son, about us, about whatever is going on in our life. He wants to "Fellowship" with us, through our time of prayer, He wants to have the intimacy of "social intercourse", to unite with us.

*John 14:6 ( NKJV )* <sup>6</sup>Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

### **Chapel open 24x7**

The Oratory Chapel is open 24x7 I might add.

### **Fresh Manna**

The chapel is open 24x7 because yesterday's prayers were for yesterday. Now don't take what I am going to say next as Bible doctrine, but my personal experience in the fellowship of prayer, and that is that I look at prayer as the manna that the children of Israel ate in the wilderness, that manna was only good for that day, and then the next day they would go out and get fresh new manna to supply them for that day. Lamentations 3:23-26, the Lord says His mercies are new every morning, great is His faithfulness. We should be looking for fresh manna every morning, looking for what new thing the Lord has for us for that day, not yesterday (yesterday supplied yesterday, now let today supply today); Christian, look for something new from the Lord every day. He will give it to you; to the church in Smyrna, He said I will give you the hidden manna to eat, and the hidden manna is Jesus Himself as He ascribed in John 6. Daily, we need to come to Him, and seek a fresh new revelation of Him, not day old Jesus, but the Living God – Today! Fellowship, Koinonia – with the Living God through prayer, and the Spirit of God will be released in a mighty way in our life.

*Exodus 16:19-21 ( NKJV )* <sup>19</sup>And Moses said, "Let no one leave any of it till morning." <sup>20</sup>Notwithstanding they did not heed Moses. But some of them left part of it until morning, and it bred worms and stank. And Moses was angry with them. <sup>21</sup>So they gathered it every morning, every man according to his need. And when the sun became hot, it melted.

*Lamentations 3:22-26 ( NKJV )* <sup>22</sup> Through the LORD'S mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not.

<sup>23</sup> They are new every morning;

Great is Your faithfulness.

<sup>24</sup> "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!"

<sup>25</sup> The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, To the soul who seeks Him.

<sup>26</sup> It is good that one should hope and wait quietly For the salvation of the LORD.

*Revelation 2:17 ( NKJV )* <sup>17</sup>"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. ....

*John 6:49-51 ( NKJV )* <sup>49</sup>Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. <sup>50</sup>This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. <sup>51</sup>I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."

**(Acts 2:43 NKJV) Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.**

**(Acts 2:44 NKJV) Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common,**

**(Acts 2:45 NKJV) and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.**

**(Acts 2:46 NKJV) So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart,**

**(Acts 2:47 NKJV) praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.**

### **Filled with Joy / Should you be in Place of Lost Joy / Here is the Simple Return Checklist**

They were filled with joy and simplicity of heart. Should you, or if you are, in the place where you say to yourself, I have lost my joy, or I remember a time when I was filled with joy, I was glad to be saved and serving the Lord, but now I feel dry, I have no joy, I fill serving is work rather than worship; how did I get here, and how do I get back? Praise the Lord for He gives us a simple checklist on how to get back to that place, or get to the start of that place if you have never been there.

## **Recap**

### **4 Pillars / Deeply Imbedded – Must be Steadfast / Nothing can Topple Them**

These four pillars are the very qualities that need to be deeply imbedded in our identities. These are things we are going to hold on to no matter what. Whether the seas are choppy, smooth or a raging storm. These qualities are non-negotiable, and we fasten them down in our lives so that no storm or blue skies, can topple them over and allow them to fall into the sea, we must be steadfast in them.

### **4 Pillars – the Rivets of our Faith**

These 4 pillars of our study today, are the rivets of our faith. We have thick solid walls of steel in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit surrounding us, but the rivets of our faith (the Word, Fellowship, Communion, and Prayer) are what keeps and holds the solid steel of the Trinity around us.

### **The 4 Pillars of the Church:**

- Apostles' Doctrine (the Word)
- Fellowship
- Breaking of Bread (Communion)
- Prayers.

### **21 Days to Form a Habit / Make a Decision Today**

They say it takes 21 days to form a habit, how about we round that off to 30 so that we make sure this habit becomes part of our very spiritual DNA! Today make a decision for more steadfastness, respond to the message today. Do not table the decision for later, but before this message is over, conclude in your mind what you are going to do, implement a plan, and how and when you are going to execute your plan. Have a plan in place before you leave today of how you are going to establish, sure-up, secure – steadfastness in your life in these 4 areas

# Evangelism – He Who Wins Souls is Wise (2:1-41)

## Continuing Study on Power of Holy Spirit

We are continuing our study on the Holy Spirit, God Himself, He who has been promised unto us to help us live as God desires us to live, and to serve as God desires us to serve. Jesus promised we would be filled (supplied) with the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit would work through us to make Jesus known. The best commentary on the Bible is the Bible, so we are studying through the first two chapters of Acts, which the theme is given in one verse (Acts 1:8), you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you. The Book of Acts is not the Acts of the Apostles or the Acts of man, but the Acts of God through a man/woman.

*Luke 24:49 (NKJV) 49 Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."*

*Acts 1:8 (NKJV) 8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

## Last Study – 4 Pillars – Add 5<sup>th</sup> / Grows Church and Christian / Wins Souls Wise - Power

In our last study we covered the 4 Pillars (rivets) of the Church; but as I have often said, I add a 5<sup>th</sup>, and that is Evangelism, for evangelism is not only a pillar of the church, but our own personal growth in the Lord. Evangelism doesn't just grow the church, but it also grows us individually spiritually. Proverbs says that he who wins souls is wise, and there are many reasons we will be wise, but for time sake I will keep it in the context of our study here in Acts, and the wisdom of evangelizing, is that it will bring power into your life, and thus we add key number 8 to our list.

*(Proverbs 11:30 NKJV) The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who wins souls is wise.*

## 8 Keys to the early Disciples Power:

- They Experienced the Resurrection Power (1:3)
- They Lived in the Consciousness of the Ever-Present of God (1:3)
- They were Filled with the Holy Spirit (1:8)
- They Were Looking for His Soon Return (1:11)
- They found Power in the Upper Room of Prayer (1:13-14)
- They found Power in the Word of God (1:15-26)
- They found Power by Remaining Steadfast (2:42)
- They found Power in Evangelism (2:1-41)

## Wait a Minute / Power to Evangelize & Evangelism brings Power / Recap 7 Keys

Wait a minute you may say, we need power to evangelize, not evangelism brings power; actually it is both! We absolutely need the power of the Holy Spirit to take the Gospel of Jesus Christ and bring it into a spiritual language that a person can clearly hear and understand. But evangelism brings a power into a believer's life, for as we evangelize it brings into reality the 7 keys of power we have discussed. Jesus Christ, this Christian walk will continually be real for we will continually be calling on, relying on, those 7 keys to power we have studied.

- You can't help but experience the resurrection as you speak of the resurrection;
- You can't help but experience His presence as you speak about Him;
- God empowers His witness with His Holy Spirit;
- You will be looking for His soon return because evangelism detaches us from this world and puts in the forefront of our mind that hell is real, and time is short to get this word out;
- Prayer will become part of your life for we will never want to do this alone;
- We will be drawn into the word because we will continually get asked questions that we won't know the answers to (or have forgotten them) and will see our need to get in and stay in the word;
- Obviously, with all these things just spoken, we will be driven to "remain steadfast".

## **Do the Work of Evangelist / 2 Tim 4:5 / Call for us Today**

Paul gave Timothy the charge, do the work of an evangelist, and the charge is also for us today: *(2 Timothy 4:5 NKJV) But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*

## **Not just for Professional / Equipping of Saints**

Evangelism is not only for the "professional", it is the calling of every Believer, and thus God equips His saints for the work of the ministry. You see God gives to the Church gifted teachers, who teach the body of believers on how to do the work of the ministry. So the Lord doesn't give the church an evangelist per say, but someone who can teach the church how to evangelize, and the multiplication factor than takes effect.

*(Ephesians 4:11 NKJV) And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,*

*(Ephesians 4:12 NKJV) for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,*

## **Video –Linebacker Evangelism**

## **Way God made Us – His Marvelous Design / Evangelize or Fossilize / Feeling Dry?**

Christian, it is the way God has made us, His marvelous design, that we would be a people that share our faith. I have watched it in the life of Christians, and in my own life, and that is if we do not evangelize, then we fossilize. We either evangelize or fossilize, we either share or we start to dry-up. If you are getting dry in your Christian walk, and you say I pray, I read, I fellowship, but I still find myself become creaky and cranky, then maybe you are fossilizing because you are not evangelizing. Watch and see that when you do, you will find yourself revived and refreshed again in your walk with the Lord, and besides those that, the world needs this message, and we have the words of life! Give Life! (See the addendum of William Booth's vision at the bottom of study).

## **1<sup>st</sup> Sermon - New Church / Advance Technology - Needs still Same**

Peter's sermon, the first sermon of the new Church, is masterful, and we can glean a lot from it. For although man has advanced greatly technologically in the 2000 years, the needs of man have not changed at all. Peter's sermon is a classic prototype on Evangelism.

## **Peter's Message - Great Sermon / Pulpit or Adaptable to One-on-One / 3000 Saved**

Although Peter's message here was in the pulpit setting, and is an excellent model for those that serve in that type of setting, the model is very adaptable to one-on-one evangelism. This is truly one of the greatest sermons ever preached; in model, and in response, as 3,000 responded to this message of salvation.

## **Principles Used Here - So we are Effective / Maybe feel Ineffective**

Let's look at the principles used here in this message, and look for application into our own personal evangelism, so that our evangelism may be effective.

## **Challenge – Make a Plan – Who, When, Where / If Wait – Probably won't Come**

And may I challenge you with this, that before this message is over, you will have a plan on who you will share the gospel with (friend, family, the stranger on the street), where you will do it (call them for coffee, meet them at the park, send them a letter), and when you will do it. If you say when the opportunity arises, I will say to you, it is doubtful that it will. Jesus said "go therefore, not wait and see". Your challenge, should you decide to accept it, is to do it within the next 30 days. So for you today, who, where, and when.

*Matthew 28:18-20 ( NKJV ) <sup>18</sup>And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup>Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.*

## **Moving into our Study / Message Great for 7 Reasons / Ours will be Great Too**

Now moving into our study, we will see that Peter's message was great for 7 reasons (7 being the number of completion); Peter preached a complete message, and leaves us a great model for

evangelism, points to remember for ourselves when we proclaim the gospel. Peter's message was great, and yours will be too, if you remember these 7 points.

### **Peters Message was Great Because:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> - Peter Knew his Audience
- 2<sup>nd</sup> - It was Scriptural
- 3<sup>rd</sup> - It was Christ Centered
- 4<sup>th</sup> - It had a Logical Flow
- 5<sup>th</sup> - He had Boldness
- 6<sup>th</sup> - It was Repentance Based
- 7<sup>th</sup> - Peter Preached for a Decision

### **1<sup>st</sup> - Peter Knew his Audience**

**(Acts 2:1 NKJV)** When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

**(Acts 2:2 NKJV)** And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

**(Acts 2:3 NKJV)** Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.

**(Acts 2:4 NKJV)** And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

**(Acts 2:5 NKJV)** And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven.

**(Acts 2:6 NKJV)** And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language.

**(Acts 2:7 NKJV)** Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?"

**(Acts 2:8 NKJV)** "And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born?"

**(Acts 2:9 NKJV)** "Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,

**(Acts 2:10 NKJV)** "Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,

**(Acts 2:11 NKJV)** "Cretans and Arabs; we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God."

**(Acts 2:12 NKJV)** So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "Whatever could this mean?"

**(Acts 2:13 NKJV)** Others mocking said, "They are full of new wine."

**(Acts 2:14 NKJV)** But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words.

### **1<sup>st</sup> - Peter Knew his Audience / Familiar with Scriptures / Biblically Illiterate / 10 Commands**

Let's look at Peter's message, and why it was great. First it was great because Peter knew his audience. Peter knew who he was talking and made the message relevant to them and their knowledge of God. Peter knew these people and knew they were familiar with the Scriptures. He could reference Joel, Psalms, King David, and the people would have some understanding of what he was saying. Today we probably live in the most Biblically illiterate culture in the history of mankind. When I share the gospel I use the 10 commandments as a mirror to show the person they are sinners, but I had to change that several years ago when I would share the gospel, and ask the person, you remember the 10 commandments, and they would say - no. So I would have to define the 10 Commandments to them and for them.

### **Important to Define Terms as we Speak / Read there Face to see if Tracking**

So it is important for us when we share the gospel to define our terms as we go. As we share it is important to read their face to determine if they are tracking with us, or do they have that blank stare.

## **Age - Where at in Life / Build a Bridge - Cultural Relevance / Life Events – Turn Attention**

Obviously I need to know my audience for their age, I'll share differently from a child, to a teen, to an adult, and to the elderly. I look at where they are in life and try to build a bridge to them to make the gospel relevant to them. I'll use where they are at in life to initially engage them. To the student I'll say if you are researching all the academics you owe it yourself to research the claims of Jesus Christ - your eternity is at stake. To the elderly I'll be bold enough to say when it comes time to die make sure that is all you have to do, determine your eternity long before you die. To the middle age I know many are still empty even after they have a career, have kids, have the home, and I try to use those things to meet them where they are at. America struggled with questions after 9/11, where was God, how could He allow this, why are these people terrorizing the world, there are hurricane victims, those with cancer, those who have job losses, soldiers going to war, and the likes, for that very event in their life may be the event that turns someone's attention to the things of God. For these people the event was the day of Pentecost, they had questions. Peter knew his audience and so should we.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> - It was Scriptural**

**(Acts 2:15 NKJV) "For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.**

**(Acts 2:16 NKJV) "But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:**

**(Acts 2:17 NKJV) 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams.**

**(Acts 2:18 NKJV) And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.**

**(Acts 2:19 NKJV) I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke.**

**(Acts 2:20 NKJV) The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.**

**(Acts 2:21 NKJV) And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.'**

## **2<sup>nd</sup> - Great because Scriptural / Heb 4:12 / Ish 55 / Give them Word – Gave them Christ**

Secondly Peter's message was great because Peter message was Scriptural. The Word of God is living and powerful and sharper than a 2 edge sword, and it will not return void. Give them Scripture, leave them Scripture, and you left them God Himself (for the Word became Flesh and dwelt amongst us). Give them the Word, you give them Christ, give them Christ and you will hear those words "well done good and faithful servant", regardless of their response. God's word will not return void, so every time you give them a verse, that verse stands. Be careful not to give many of your words, and few of God's, keep them in the Scriptures.

*(Hebrews 4:12 NKJV) For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

*(Hebrews 4:13 NKJV) And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.*

*(Isaiah 55:10 NKJV) "For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater,*

*(Isaiah 55:11 NKJV) So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.*

## **John 3:16**

I am reminded of the woman who stood on the street corner every day after work and recited John 3:16. That is all she knew, and finally this one man who passed by many times on the way home stopped and said is that all you know is that all you can say. And she responded, yes, but that is all I need. The man called her a fool in front of all the crowd and the crowd laughed and enjoyed the show. A few days later the man came back and apologized, thanked her, and said all that I keep hearing running through my mind for days now has been God so loved the world, and I knew he loved me, gave His Son for me, and I gave my life to Him last night. I wanted you to be the first to know.

*John 3:16 (NKJV) 16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

### **Preach the Word - in Season - Out of Season / Prayer will Keep you in Season**

Good to know that one verse, a couple more would be good too hahaha. It is important to note here that Peter was ready, just as Paul would say to Timothy, preach the Word, be ready in season and out of season, Peter was ready. Peter is one of the greatest Biblical examples of being ready in season and out of season. No one told him that on Sunday, June xyz, you will be preaching. Peter was ready, in season and out of season. I might note, you'll always be in season if the word and prayer are part of your daily habit, for you'll be in the Spirit and not the flesh.

*(2 Timothy 4:2 NKJV) Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.*

*(2 Timothy 4:3 NKJV) For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;*

*(2 Timothy 4:4 NKJV) and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.*

*(2 Timothy 4:5 NKJV) But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*

### **3<sup>rd</sup> – It was Christ Centered**

**(Acts 2:22 NKJV) "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know;**

**(Acts 2:23 NKJV) "Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;**

**(Acts 2:24 NKJV) "whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.**

**(Acts 2:25 NKJV) "For David says concerning Him: 'I foresaw the LORD always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken.**

**(Acts 2:26 NKJV) Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope.**

**(Acts 2:27 NKJV) For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.**

**(Acts 2:28 NKJV) You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.'**

**(Acts 2:29 NKJV) "Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day**

**(Acts 2:30 NKJV) "Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne,**

**(Acts 2:31 NKJV) "he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.**

**(Acts 2:32 NKJV) "This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.**

**(Acts 2:33 NKJV) "Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.**

**(Acts 2:34 NKJV) "For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: 'The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand,**

**(Acts 2:35 NKJV) Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'"**

**(Acts 2:36 NKJV) "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."**

### **3<sup>rd</sup> - Christ Centered**

Thirdly, Peter's message was great because it was Christ centered:

*(Acts 2:22 NKJV) "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know;*

*(Acts 2:24 NKJV) "whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.*

*(Acts 2:31 NKJV) "he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.*

*(Acts 2:32 NKJV) "This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.*

*(Acts 2:36 NKJV) "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."*

### **Jesus Christ & Him Crucified / The Resurrection – Power of the Gospel / Krishna - Smith**

He spoke of the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Peter kept the focus on Jesus, he kept pointing everything back to Jesus. Peter didn't dwell on:

- the Roman occupation,
- the declining economy, but Jesus.
- Peter didn't try to reason out Judaism and Christianity,
- not Calvinism and Armenianism,
- nor Catholicism and Protestantism.

Nor did Peter spend time giving his personal testimony, he just kept pointing back to Christ. Now giving your testimony is great, for it is proof of the power of God working in a person's life, but all too often people give 30 minutes of their testimony, and 30 seconds of Jesus; back to point two, leave them the Word, for it will not return void. Peter's message was also steeped in the resurrection of Christ, rightly so the power of the gospel is the resurrection. Mohammed died, Krishna died, Joseph Smith died, but none of them rose again. When we present the gospel let us not just talk of the death of Jesus for man's sin, but we must speak of the resurrection for therein lies the power of the gospel, that sin and death could not hold Jesus in the grave, nor will it hold those who are in Him

*(1 Corinthians 2:2 NKJV) For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*

*(1 Corinthians 15:3 NKJV) For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,*

*(1 Corinthians 15:4 NKJV) and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,*

### **Billy Graham**

Billy Graham was asked if he could do it all over what would he change, and he said he would speak more about the blood of Jesus Christ. That is very interesting when you consider and watch his sermons and how steeped they already were in the blood of Jesus Christ.

## **4<sup>th</sup> – It had a Logical Flow**

### **Logical Flow / Feast of Israel**

Peter's message was great because it had a logical flow to it. Peter knowing his audience logically walked them through the first four Feast of Israel (please see our prior study notes). The flow took them through

- Jesus trading places with them as the Passover Lamb (Passover),
- then the grave couldn't hold Him (Feast of Unleavened Bread),
- that Jesus rose from the dead (Feast of Firstfruits);
- and that current day, the promise that all who believe will be saved and brought into the harvest (Feast of Pentecost).

These hearers could understand the message because it was logical, and it was presented in a logical flow.

### **THE 7 FEASTS OF ISRAEL**

#### **THE SPRING FEASTS**

1. THE PASSOVER
2. THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD
3. THE FEAST OF FIRSTFRUITS

#### **THE SUMMER FEAST**

4. THE FEAST OF PENTECOST

#### **THE FALL FEASTS OF ISRAEL**

5. THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS

6. THE DAY OF ATONEMENT  
7. THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

**Ready at Moments Notice - Scriptural Gospel / Logical Flow / 5 P's**

I believe every Christian should be ready at a moment's notice, to present a scripturally based gospel logically. I refer you to our teaching on the (5 P's - Personal - Problem - Penalty - Provision - Profession) (teaching notes on the website). Every P has a verse associated with it, and it helps keep you presenting the gospel clearly, logically, and scripturally. Every Christian should know his scripture associated with the gospel, and if I was to point to you right now you would be able to stand and give a logical scripturally based presentation of the gospel.

**Teaching in Nicaragua**

I was teaching this method to a church in Nicaragua some years ago. I made the point of having a logical flow, and the need to have the key versus memorized so when Satan came to attack we can stay on track and keep the message flowing logically with ease to follow and understand. I wasn't even half way through this night and the power went out, so dark you couldn't even see your hand. They immediately shut the doors and locked them so the gangs outside wouldn't come storming into to rob and to brutalize. So in the darkness I said to the pastor who was interpreting for me what are we going to do.....he without missing a beat said keep preaching. Didn't matter that I couldn't see my notes or my bible, you said to memorize it, now demonstrate that you have.

**The 5 P's**

**Personal - Problem - Penalty - Provision - Profession**

God loves you and has a plan for your life, He says in the scriptures I know the thoughts that I think towards you says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil (Jer 29:11).

*(Jeremiah 29:11) For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.*

*(Psalm 56:8) You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book?*

*(Matthew 10:30) "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.*

**Personal - Problem - Penalty - Provision - Profession**

But as much as God thinks of you and loves you there is a problem, and the problem is that you sin separates you from Him the Holy God, for the scriptures say all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). I'll use the 10 commandments here to bring them to the place to show them that they are guilty of breaking God's Holy law, and that they have offended the Holy God, and that there is a penalty to pay for such an offense.

*(Romans 3:23) for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

**Personal - Problem - Penalty - Provision - Profession**

With that problem comes a penalty for offending the Holy God, and the scriptures say for the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23).

*(Romans 6:23) For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**Personal - Problem - Penalty - Provision - Profession**

But God does not want you to be separated from Him and He has provide a way to punish your sin and forgiven you at the same time, and that is that He took the punishment due to, for the scriptures say that God demonstrated His love towards us that while we were still yet sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8), for God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whomsoever should believe Him shall not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16).

*(John 3:16) "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

*(Romans 5:8) But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

### Personal - Problem - Penalty - Provision - Profession

This is what God has done for you, and now to receive this free gift of forgiveness you must make a profession, for the scriptures say if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raises Him from the dead, then you shall be saved (Romans 10:9). Therein lies the power of this gospel for anyone can die, but only Jesus rose from the dead and is proof that God accepted this substitution because Jesus broke the power of death and rose again on the third day. The resurrection is proof that God accepted the substitution.

*(Romans 10:9) That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*

### Profession: Recognize – Repent - Receive

To profess you must be willing to recognize that you are a sinner and have offend the Holy God, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23),

*(Romans 3:23) for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

### Profession: Recognize – Repent - Receive

You must be willing to repent, which is to turn from your sin, your way, and follow the ways of the Lord, for the scriptures say repent therefore and be converted so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord (Acts 3:19).

*(Acts 3:19): "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,*

### Profession: Recognize – Repent - Receive

And lastly you must receive Him as your Lord and Savior, if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus Christ, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, then you too shall be saved (Romans 10:9).

*(Romans 10:9) That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*

### **30 Second Version**

The above can be delivered in 3 minutes or 30 minutes, depending how the person is listening and engaging you with questions; but I have a 30 second version too, for those situations that require it. Here it is - For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whomsoever shall believe in Him shall be saved (John 3:16). You my friend are perishing and will continue to perish because your sin separates you from the Holy God. You must repent of your sin and ask Him to save you from your sin.

*(John 3:16) "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

### **5<sup>th</sup> – He had Boldness**

**(Acts 2:36 NKJV) "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."**

### **5th - Boldness**

Peter's message was great because it was incredibly bold. Look at verse 36:

*(Acts 2:36 NKJV) "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."*

### **Lays it Out / No Feel Good Message - Afraid to Offend / Love & Compassion - Offended Holy God**

This boldness can only come through the empowering of the Holy Spirit. So in His boldness Peter lays it out to them, **you crucified Him**. We can't leave people with some feel good gospel, afraid to offend them, **for the gospel is painful – it is nails, thorns, whips, and spears**. Share it in love and compassion, but don't water it down. People need to know they have offended the Holy God and are in need of a Savior. And, when you share it, share it with passion, for Jesus was passionate enough about to pour out His blood for it. Today's Christian gospel approach is to bore people into the Kingdom, as people share it with no enthusiasm or passion, the church lacks boldness and passion for this gospel. Peter's message was great because it was bold (filled with passion).

## **Hell / Spurgeon**

So many are afraid to mention hell in their gospel, but it is the whole point of the Gospel, there are two choices heaven or hell. Spurgeon told his students when you speak about heaven smile, and when you speak about hell your normal face will do.

## **Relieve Pressure it up to You / It's their Decision / Gospel – Verb Tense**

Hey beloved, remember too it is all God, relieve yourself of the pressure that their decision has anything to do with us. Their decision is totally up to them. Evangelism means, "gospel", "the good news". We are just telling people good news. The verb tense means, "to bring good news". It has to do with proclaiming, nowhere in the verb tense does it have anything to do with reception or results.

- Noah is called a "preacher of righteousness" (2 Peter 2:5); he preached for 120 years, yet only 7 people received his message.
- Jeremiah preached for 40 years with no recorded converts.
- Then there is Jonah; he really didn't want to preach, but eventually did, and 120 thousand people repented.

The Lord will say to us, "Well done good and faithful servant.....enter into the joy of the Lord" (Matthew 25:21); the Lord DOES NOT say, "well done good and successful servant."

## **Every time present – God Glorified / No can Lay Charge Against Him**

Every time we present the Gospel, God is glorified because we are telling of His great love, and no man after hearing the Gospel will be able to stand before Him and say you never told me, you are an unfair, evil hearted God. They will have to acknowledge in the end, God tried to reach them, but they ignored His plea.

*(1 Corinthians 10:31 NKJV) Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

## **6<sup>th</sup> – It was Repentance Based**

**(Acts 2:37 NKJV) Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"**

**(Acts 2:38 NKJV) Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**

## **6<sup>th</sup> - Repentance based**

Peter's message was great because it was Repentance based:

*(Acts 2:38 NKJV) Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

## **Great Injustice - False Converts / Watered Down / Fire Insurance / Jesus Improves Flight**

I believe one of the greatest injustices we can do a person is present the gospel without the need for repentance. Too many people, especially in the pulpit, present a water-downed message because they do not tell the person they must repent, and turn from their sin. They create false converts who are merely getting themselves fire insurance, for they have no desire to turn from their sin, just to be forgiven of it. Jesus is not some pleasant additive to make their day brighter and their teeth whiter, but they must know they have offended the Holy God, and must turn from sin (God will help them if they are sincere).

## **Salvation Free – Discipleship Cost your Life**

The person must know that salvation is free, but discipleship will cost them their life.

## **7<sup>th</sup> – Peter Preached for a Decision**

**(Acts 2:37 NKJV) Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"**

**(Acts 2:38 NKJV) Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**

### **Sudden & Unexpected / Only Holy Spirit / God Teams with Us / Cut to the Heart**

Pierced to the heart, and it means to “sudden and unexpected”. Boom they were hit! Only through the Holy Spirit can this happen. God chooses to team with us, His Spirit moving upon them, and through us. We can see because this message was scriptural, Christ centered, bold, people were cut to the heart, and ready to respond.

*(Acts 2:37 NKJV) Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"*

### **7<sup>th</sup> - Preached for a Decision / They need to Make a Decision / Ready to Pray - Sincerity**

Peter's message was great because he preached for a decision. When we share the gospel, share it so that the person knows they need to make a decision, that they must make a decision yes or no for Jesus. You may tell them that tomorrow is not guaranteed. Maybe if the Lord leads you, you can even offer to pray with them at the end. Whether you are preaching from the pulpit, or going one-on-one, you can be preparing them along the way by telling them that shortly they will have the opportunity to make a commitment for Jesus Christ (whether altar call, or invitation to pray together). Let them know, God's says Today is the acceptable time; and they have to take what they have just heard and consider it seriously for their eternity is at stake; now by no means do we force a prayer for salvation and give a false sense of security, but if repentance and sincerity is displayed from their heart, we need to be ready to lead them in prayer.

*(Acts 2:38 NKJV) Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

*(2 Corinthians 6:2 NKJV) For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*

### **Conclusion**

**(Acts 2:39 NKJV) "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."**

**(Acts 2:40 NKJV) And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."**

**(Acts 2:41 NKJV) Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.**

### **Peter's Message was Great / Yours will be Too**

Peter's message was great because of these 7 things, and so too will be yours.

#### **Peters Message was Great Because:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> - Peter Knew his Audience
- 2<sup>nd</sup> - It was Scriptural
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – It was Christ Centered
- 4<sup>th</sup> – It had a Logical Flow
- 5<sup>th</sup> – He had Boldness
- 6<sup>th</sup> – It was Repentance Based
- 7<sup>th</sup> – Peter Preached for a Decision

### **Resultant 3000 Saved / How exciting for the 120 – It will be Exciting for You Too**

The resultant of this Spirit Empowered message was that 3,000 were saved, and not just saved but saved from a perverse and warped world. How exciting it must have been for those 120, and how exciting it will be for you.

### **Evangelize - Fossilize / My Life Counted**

Beloved, if we don't evangelize, we shall surely fossilize. When I die, I want to look back and say, my life counted, I made it count.

## **Notable Quotes**

Here are some notable quotes by Christian leaders over the years that help bring me back to the necessity and urgency of sharing the gospel:

*"We must be global Christians with a global vision because our God is a global God." - John Stott*

*"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." - Jim Elliot*

*"A tiny group of believers who have the gospel keep mumbling it over and over to themselves. Meanwhile, millions who have never heard it once fall into the flames of eternal hell without ever hearing the salvation story." - K.P. Yohannan*

*"I have but one passion - it is He, it is He alone. The world is the field and the field is the world; and henceforth that country shall be my home where I can be most used in winning souls for Christ." - Count Zinzendorf*

## **So – Who – Where - When**

So for you today, who, where, and when.

# A Vision of The Lost

**by William Booth**

Co-Founder of the Salvation Army  
(1829-1912)

On one of my recent journeys, as I gazed from the coach window, I was led into a train of thought concerning the condition of the multitudes around me. They were living carelessly in the most open and shameless rebellion against God, without a thought for their eternal welfare. As I looked out of the window, I seemed to see them all . . . millions of people all around me given up to their drink and their pleasure, their dancing and their music, their business and their anxieties, their politics and their troubles, ignorant - willfully ignorant in many cases - and in other instances knowing all about the truth and not caring at all. But all of them, the whole mass of them, sweeping on and up in their blasphemies and devilries to the Throne of God. While my mind was thus engaged, I had a vision.

I saw a dark and stormy ocean. Over it the black clouds hung heavily; through them every now and then vivid lightning flashed and loud thunder rolled, while the winds moaned, and the waves rose and foamed, towered and broke, only to rise and foam, tower and break again.

In that ocean I thought I saw myriads of poor human beings plunging and floating, shouting and shrieking, cursing and struggling and drowning; and as they cursed and screamed they rose and shrieked again, and then some sank to rise no more.

And I saw out of this dark angry ocean, a mighty rock that rose up with its summit towering high above the black clouds that overhung the stormy sea. And all around the base of this great rock I saw a vast platform. Onto this platform, I saw with delight a number of the poor struggling, drowning wretches continually climbing out of the angry ocean. And I saw that a few of those who were already safe on the platform were helping the poor creatures still in the angry waters to reach the place of safety.

On looking more closely I found a number of those who had been rescued, industriously working and scheming by ladders, ropes, boats and other means more effective, to deliver the poor strugglers out of the sea. Here and there were some who actually jumped into the water, regardless of the consequences in their passion to "rescue the perishing." And I hardly know which gladdened me the most - the sight of the poor drowning people climbing onto the rocks reaching a place of safety, or the devotion and self-sacrifice of those whose whole being was wrapped up

in the effort for their deliverance.

As I looked on, I saw that the occupants of that platform were quite a mixed company. That is, they were divided into different "sets" or classes, and they occupied themselves with different pleasures and employments. But only a very few of them seemed to make it their business to get the people out of the sea.

But what puzzled me most was the fact that though all of them had been rescued at one time or another from the ocean, nearly everyone seemed to have forgotten all about it. Anyway, it seemed the memory of its darkness and danger no longer troubled them at all. And what seemed equally strange and perplexing to me was that these people did not even seem to have any care - that is any agonizing care - about the poor perishing ones who were struggling and drowning right before their very eyes . . . many of whom were their own husbands and wives, brothers and sisters and even their own children.

Now this astonishing unconcern could not have been the result of ignorance or lack of knowledge, because they lived right there in full sight of it all and even talked about it sometimes. Many even went regularly to hear lectures and sermons in which the awful state of these poor drowning creatures was described.

I have always said that the occupants of this platform were engaged in different pursuits and pastimes. Some of them were absorbed day and night in trading and business in order to make gain, storing up their savings in boxes, safes and the like.

Many spent their time in amusing themselves with growing flowers on the side of the rock, others in painting pieces of cloth or in playing music, or in dressing themselves up in different styles and walking about to be admired. Some occupied themselves chiefly in eating and drinking; others were taken up with arguing about the poor drowning creatures that had already been rescued.

But the thing to me that seemed the most amazing was that those on the platform to whom He called, who heard His voice and felt that they ought to obey it - at least they said they did - those who confessed to love Him much were in full sympathy with Him in the task He had undertaken - who worshipped Him or who professed to do so - were so taken up with their trades and professions, their money saving and pleasures, their families and circles, their religions and arguments about it, and their preparation for going to the mainland, that they did not listen to the cry that came to them from this Wonderful Being who had Himself gone down into the sea. Anyway, if they heard it they did not heed it. They did not care. And so the multitude went on right before them struggling and shrieking and drowning in the darkness.

And then I saw something that seemed to me even more strange than anything that had gone on before in this strange vision. I saw that some of these people on the platform to whom this Wonderful Being had called, wanting them to come and help Him in His difficult task of saving these perishing creatures, were always praying and crying out to Him to come to them!

Some wanted Him to come and stay with them, and spend His time and strength in making them happier. Others wanted Him to come and take away various doubts and misgivings they had concerning the truth of some letters He had written them. Some wanted Him to come and make them feel more secure on the rock - so secure that they would be quite sure that they should never slip off again into the ocean. Numbers of others wanted Him to make them feel quite certain that they would really get off the rock and onto the mainland someday; because as a matter of fact, it was well known that some had walked so carelessly as to lose their footing, and had fallen back again into the stormy waters.

So these people used to meet and get up as high on the rock as they could, and looking towards the mainland (where they thought the Great Being was) they would cry out, "Come to us! Come and help us!" And all the while He was down (by His Spirit) among the poor struggling, drowning creatures in the angry deep, with His arms around them trying to drag them out, and looking up - oh! so longingly but all in vain - to those on the rock, crying to them with His voice all hoarse from calling, "Come to Me! Come, and help Me!

And then I understood it all. It was plain enough. The sea was the ocean of life - the sea of real, actual human

existence. That lightning was the gleaming of piercing truth coming from Jehovah's Throne. That thunder was the distant echoing of the wrath of God. Those multitudes of people shrieking, struggling and agonizing in the stormy sea, was the thousands and thousands of poor harlots and harlot-makers, of drunkards and drunkard makers, of thieves, liars, blasphemers and ungodly people of every kindred, tongue and nation.

Oh what a black sea it was! And oh, what multitudes of rich and poor, ignorant and educated were there. They were all so unlike in their outward circumstances and conditions, yet all alike in one thing - all sinners before God - all held by, and holding onto, some iniquity, fascinated by some idol, the slaves of some devilish lust, and ruled by the foul fiend from the bottomless pit!

"All alike in one thing?" No, all alike in two things - not only the same in their wickedness but, unless rescued, the same in their sinking, sinking . . . down, down, down . . . to the same terrible doom. That great sheltering rock represented Calvary, the place where Jesus had died for them. And the people on it were those who had been rescued. The way they used their energies, gifts and time represented the occupations and amusements of those who professed to be saved from sin and hell - followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. The handful of fierce, determined ones, who were risking their own lives in saving the perishing were true soldiers of the cross of Jesus. That Mighty Being who was calling to them from the midst of the angry waters was the Son of God, "the same yesterday, today and forever" who is still struggling and interceding to save the dying multitudes about us from this terrible doom of damnation, and whose voice can be heard above the music, machinery, and noise of life, calling on the rescued to come and help Him save the world.

My friends in Christ, you are rescued from the waters, you are on the rock. He is in the dark sea calling on you to come to Him and help Him. Will you go? Look for yourselves. The surging sea of life, crowded with perishing multitudes rolls up to the very spot on which you stand. Leaving the vision, I now come to speak of the fact - a fact that is as real as the Bible, as real as the Christ who hung upon the cross, as real as the judgment day will be, and as real as the heaven and hell that will follow it.

Look! Don't be deceived by appearances - men and things are not what they seem. All who are not on the rock are in the sea! Look at them from the standpoint of the great White Throne, and what a sight you have! Jesus Christ, the Son of God is, through His Spirit, in the midst of this dying multitude, struggling to save them. And He is calling on you to jump into the sea - to go right away to His side and help Him in the holy strife. Will you jump? That is, will you go to His feet and place yourself absolutely at His disposal?

A young Christian once came to me, and told me that for some time she had been giving the Lord her profession and prayers and money, but now she wanted to give Him her life. She wanted to go right into the fight. In other words, she wanted to go to His assistance in the sea. As when a man from the shore, seeing another struggling in the water, takes off those outer garments that would hinder his efforts and leaps to the rescue, so will you who still linger on the bank, thinking and singing and praying about the poor perishing souls, lay aside your shame, your pride, your cares about other people's opinions, your love of ease and all the selfish loves that have kept you back for so long, and rush to the rescue of this multitude of dying men and women.

Does the surging sea look dark and dangerous? Unquestionably it is so. There is no doubt that the leap for you, as for everyone who takes it, means difficulty and scorn and suffering. For you it may mean more than this. It may mean death. He who beckons you from the sea however, knows what it will mean - and knowing, He still calls to you and bids to you to come.

You must do it! You cannot hold back. You have enjoyed yourself in Christianity long enough. You have had pleasant feelings, pleasant songs, pleasant meetings, pleasant prospects. There has been much of human happiness, much clapping of hands and shouting of praises - very much of heaven on earth.

Now then, go to God and tell Him you are prepared as much as necessary to turn your back upon it all, and that you are willing to spend the rest of your days struggling in the midst of these perishing multitudes, whatever it may cost you.

You must do it. With the light that is now broken in upon your mind and the call that is now sounding in your ears,

and the beckoning hands that are now before your eyes, you have no alternative. To go down among the perishing crowds is your duty. Your happiness from now on will consist in sharing their misery, your ease in sharing their pain, your crown in helping them to bear their cross, and your heaven in going into the very jaws of hell to rescue them.

William Booth was the founder of The Salvation Army, a Christian ministry to the poor now operating in 113 countries around the world.

## *Supplemental Notes on the 70 Sevens of Daniel chapter 9*

**(Exodus 12:2 NKJV)** “This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.

### **Jewish Calendar**

They made their months according to the lunar calendar. And so, the Passover is related to the third new moon after, or the third full moon after the winter equinox, and thus, differs from ours from year to year. That’s why the Jewish Passover isn’t always related to our Easter. Sometimes, they come about the same time, but they are calculated on a different basis than we calculate Easter Sunday.

### **So Important – New Calendar / 1445 Years Later – Divides Time / God set the Clock**

The Lord says this is so important, that you are to make a new calendar based off of it. This event (the Passover) will be the beginning, first month of the new calendar. 1445 years later, the same thing will happen, when the Final Passover Lamb is birthed, all of mankind will live to a new calendar. Jesus Christ divided time, BC – AD. Whether man realizes it or not, every hour, every day, every month, every year they live, they live in light of Jesus Christ. No matter how much they refuse to recognize and accept Him, each day they live on this earth is calculated from His birth. God set the clock for all of mankind, so they know where they should be investing their time, from which point is the starting point for all man. Man needs to be checking the clock; its been 2005 years, 11 days, 19 hours, and 30 minutes (1/11/06 730pm) since He left the throne and became the God-man so that He might show us the way, and that He still is the way – a person only need look at the calendar. All of man is living on God’s Time.

**(Exodus 12:3 NKJV)** “Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: ‘On the tenth day of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household.

### **Very Specific / Deviate brought Death / Can’t deviate Day or Sacrifice / No Debate**

The instructions for this sacrifice were very specific. Very detailed, and very direct and failure to follow them exactly of to deviate from them resulted in death. Just as then, so too now, there is only one way for death to pass over man, and that way is God’s way, and that way is only through the Lamb. These people could not choose a cow, a bull, a chicken, only the lamb/goat. They couldn’t do it on the 13<sup>th</sup>, or the 15<sup>th</sup>, but the 14<sup>th</sup> only. There would be no council of men to decide if this was acceptable, or if these really were the words of God, or is that really what God meant when He said it, there would be no debate what to call it – Passover or Feel good Feast.

### **1 Way Only / Yes Narrow – Thankful there is a Way**

There was this 1 way only, exactly as God said to do it. Some people say Christianity is too narrow, I say I am glad that there is “even a way”; that a Holy and Awesome God would allow a sinner like me to come before Him, blows me away. Forget how narrow; rejoice that there is a way at all.

**(Exodus 12:4 NKJV)** ‘And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man’s need you shall make your count for the lamb.

**(Exodus 12:5 NKJV)** ‘Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

### **Spotless – Picture of Jesus**

The lamb must have been spotless, without blemish, a type a picture that the Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world and allow death o Passover all who where covered by His blood, He too would be spotless, without sin.

*(Luke 23:3 NKJV)* Then Pilate asked Him, saying, “Are You the King of the Jews?” He answered him and said, “It is as you say.”

*(Luke 23:4 NKJV)* So Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, “I find no fault in this Man.”

**(Exodus 12:6 NKJV) 'Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.**

### **Jewish Calendar – Night to Night / Blue & Black Thread**

The lamb was slain at twilight on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of that month. In the Jewish calendar the day begins at sundown (when you can not tell the difference between a blue thread and black thread). So the lamb must have been slain between sundown to sundown.

### **2 Specific Purposes – Protection & Prophecy / 10<sup>th</sup> Nissan – 14<sup>th</sup> Nissan / Jesus fulfills Passover**

This Passover was given for 2 very specific purposes (just to name a few), for Protection, and for Prophecy. Protection, to provide the way for death to Passover all who would apply the blood to their homes. And secondly, for prophecy for these dates (the 10<sup>th</sup> and the 14<sup>th</sup>) would be the exact dates that Jesus would ride into Jerusalem (10<sup>th</sup> of Nissan) and allow for the first time to be heralded publicly that He was the Messiah (the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15). And then, the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, He would be crucified there upon the cross. Jesus would fulfill the Passover completely and perfectly.

### **To Get there – Look at Daniel 9**

To get there, to know that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, and was crucified on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, we must go to Daniel chapter 9. “Daniel’s prophecy of the seventy ‘sevens’ (weeks) (vv.24 - 27) provides the chronological frame for Messianic prediction from Daniel to the establishment of the kingdom on earth and also a key to its interpretation.”

*(Daniel 9:20 NKJV) Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God,*

*(Daniel 9:21 NKJV) yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.*

*(Daniel 9:22 NKJV) And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, “O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand.*

*(Daniel 9:23 NKJV) “At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision:*

*(Daniel 9:24 NKJV) “Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy.*

*(Daniel 9:25 NKJV) “Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.*

*(Daniel 9:26 NKJV) “And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.*

*(Daniel 9:27 NKJV) Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate.”*

### **Weeks – Shabua – Unit Measure / Daniel reading Jeremiah / 490 years**

The Hebrew word for “weeks” used here is shabua meaning “a unit of measure.” “So here, Seventy Weeks means seventy sevens. It could be seventy sevens of anything. It could be units of days or months or years. In the context of this verse it is plain that Daniel had been reading in Jeremiah about years, seventy years. Jeremiah had been preaching and writing that the captivity would be for seventy years). So then seventy sevens would be 70 times 7, equaling 490 years. But we have the blessings of all the Scriptures and all the history books that we know this is talking about years.

### **24a / Holy City is Jerusalem**

Verse 24a – Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city: *We know that Daniel was a Jew, and we know the holy city is a reference to Jerusalem. So this prophecy deals with the nation Israel and God’s prophetic timetable.*

### **24b / All Verses deal with Jesus / To Finish the Transgression / It is Finished**

Verse 24b – *To finish the transgression:* All the verses in verse 24 deal specifically with Jesus Christ. For as we will see only Jesus Christ could fulfill them. *To finish the transgression:* John 19:30 *When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the*

*ghost.* "As Jesus hung on the cross He took the wrath of God for our sins. After He completely paid the price for our transgression, He dismissed His Spirit."  
(John 19:30 NKJV) *So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.*

#### **24c / Make end of Sin / Only Jesus Could and Did / Reconciled to God**

Verse 24c – And to make an end of sins... *Jesus made an end of sin for all those who believe. God says in Hebrews 8:12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. Jesus put an end to sin once and for all, no one else could have done this. The verse goes on to say, and to make reconciliation for iniquity: Reconciliation means to be made right. Isaiah 59:1-2 Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. It is because of man's sin that man is separated from God. And to be separated from God is to be not right with God, but God has provided a way for every man to be right with Him through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.*

#### **24d / Everlasting Righteousness / End of 490 – Kingdom Established**

Verse 24d – and to bring in everlasting righteousness: *"Everlasting righteousness refers to the return of Christ at the end of the 490 years to establish the kingdom." It is obvious that we do not have everlasting righteousness right now because evil is still in the world. But the day is coming when God's grace is over, and God will put an end to all evil. After the millennial kingdom, when God sends Satan and all unbelievers to the Lake of Fire, then will the everlasting Kingdom be established.*

#### **24e / Seal up Prophecy / All will be Fulfilled – including this One**

Verse 24e – And to seal up the vision and prophecy: *"This means that all that is said here will be fulfilled, as well as all other prophecies in Scripture." We must remember that at the time Daniel wrote all this it was several hundred years before the prophecy was fulfilled. This prophecy indeed was fulfilled, which is encouraging to me for I know that all will be fulfilled. I am especially encouraged to know that means that Jesus will be coming back to establish His kingdom.*

#### **24f / Jesus the Anointed One**

Verse 24f – and to anoint the most Holy. – *This is a reference to Jesus Christ Himself because in verse 26 there is a reference to the Messiah (called anointed) which is clearly Jesus Christ.*

#### **Dan 9:25 / Decree to Rebuild Jerusalem**

The 70 "sevens" would begin Gabriel said, with the issuing of the decree to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem.

(Daniel 9:25 NKJV) "Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.

#### **The Years Calculated / Babylonian Calendar – 360 days / Julian 365.25 = 476 yrs**

Here in verse 25 we see a total of 69 seven year periods (7 + 62 = 69) (69 x 7 = 483 years) (173,880 days) before the Messiah would come. The first 7 (49 yrs) is believed to the end of the prophets, the end of the OT which does line up with the 400 years between the OT and the NT. The last 7-year period will be talked about in verse 27, which deals with the antichrist making a 7 year peace pact with the nation of Israel in what we call the Tribulation period (Rev 6-19). Now these years are based on the Babylonian calendar, which is 360 days in a year. Using the Julian calendar, 365.25/yr, that equals 476 years (also note that 1BC to 1 AD is one year, not 2). Note the Julian calendar was the calendar at the time of Jesus implemented in 45 BC by Julius Caesar – today we use the Gregorian calendar which is a modification of the Julian calendar).

#### **4 Decrees – Persian Rulers / Artaxerxes – March 14, 445BC**

This decree was the forth of four decrees made by Persian rulers in reference to the Jews:

- The first was Cyrus' decree in 538 B.C. (2 Chron 36:22—23, Ezra 1:1—4, 5:13).
- The second was the decree of Darius 1 (522—486) in 520 B.C. (Ezra 6:1,6—12). This decree actually was a confirmation of the first decree.

- The third was a decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus (465-424) in 458 B.C. (Ezra 7:11—26). The first two decrees pertain to the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem and the third relates to the finances for animal sacrifices at the temple. They say nothing about the rebuilding of the city itself. Since an un-walled city was no threat to a military power, a religious temple could be rebuilt without jeopardizing the military authority of those granting permission to rebuild it.”
- “The fourth decree was also by Artaxerxes Longimanus, issued on **March 14, 445 B.C.** (Neh 2:1-8). On that occasion Artaxerxes granted the Jews permission to rebuild Jerusalem’s city walls. This decree is the one referred to in Daniel 9:25.”

### **Notes on 14 March 445BC**

We can derive the year 445 because history supports that he began his reign in 465BC, and Neh 2.1 says in the 20<sup>th</sup> year – so 445BC (Nisan being March).

*(Nehemiah 2:1 NKJV) And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, that I took the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had never been sad in his presence before.*

Here is an excerpt from the 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica:

*ARTAXERXES I., surnamed Macrocheir, Longimanus, Longad, because his right hand was longer than his left (Plut. ~ax.i.). He was the younger son of Xerxes, and was raised to throne in 465 by the vizier Artabanus*

Now, the March 14<sup>th</sup> is not actually recorded, in all cases in my research it just records March 445 BC. March 445 BC in the Julian calendar was the month Nisan in the Jewish. So simply take the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month of Nisan, do the mathematical calculation (Jewish calendar to Julian), and it comes out on the Julian calendar to March 14, 445 BC. If I was to attack this prophecy, this is where I would attack; however the best you are going to be off is 14 days, and 14 days divided by 173,880 days is so minute, that in probability and statistics you would consider the variance – a non factor. However prophecy must be exact, but I would hate to miss the Messiah by 14 days. 1% error would be 1,700 days, ½ % 850 days, ¼ % is 425 days, a 1/10 of 1 percent is 17 days. So that is quite a gamble to cast off this prophecy.

### **History Tells Date / Countdown Begins – 483/476**

“So history tells us the order was given on 14 March 445 BC in our calendar we use today. So the countdown began, and 483 Babylonian years / 476 years using our current calendar, from that day the Messiah would come.

### **Golden Nugget / Tiberius Caesar – Luke 3 / 15 there for Us / Written by God**

Now here is a golden nugget in the Scriptures, which at first reading means little to us, but when we place it in the big picture, it becomes golden, The Baptism of Jesus. The baptism of Jesus Christ happened in the 15 year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar. The Lord intentionally placed the “15” there for our sake – this book is so amazing, if one would just study it, they could only come to one conclusion, written by God, all about God, the God who loves us so deeply that He would trade places with us. I’ll become sin, so you can become a son.

*(Luke 3:1 NKJV) Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene,*

*(Luke 3:21 NKJV) When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened.*

### **Romans Impeccable Account / 19 August 14AD**

Tiberius Caesar was a Roman Emperor and the Romans kept impeccable historical accounts of there empire. We use their secular history writings to tell us that Tiberius began his reign 19 August 14AD. So Jesus began His public ministry (baptism) between 19 August 28AD and 18 August 29AD, and we need this nugget to unlock this prophecy. I believe it was sometime after April 29AD, because the timeline fits more properly when we see Scriptures relating to the Passovers that Jesus celebrated. The fact that Jesus’ public ministry was 3 and half years, does line up with a 29 AD assumption. Here would be a place of challenge for the skeptic, but if Jesus wasn’t the Messiah, then someone who was crucified a year earlier would have to be the Messiah, and.....not a bone would be broken, born a virgin birth,

born in Bethlehem, from the lineage of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and King David, betrayed for 30 pieces of silver, along with the other 300 prophecies the Jesus fulfilled.

### 14<sup>th</sup> of Month – The Passovers

The Jewish Passover was always celebrated on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month, that month is called Nissian which falls in our March/April calendar.

*(Exodus 12:6 NKJV) 'Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.*

*(Leviticus 23:5 NKJV) 'On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the Lord's Passover.*

### Jesus Celebrated 3 Passovers / Based on Baptism 29AD / First 30AD

Jesus celebrated 3 Passovers: John 2:23, John 6:4, John 11:55. Based on His baptism in 29AD (15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius Caesar), Jesus first Passover would have been in 30AD, second in 31AD, and His final Passover would have been 32AD.

### 32AD – Jesus rides Donkey into Jerusalem

In that year 32 AD Jesus went up to Jerusalem for the Passover, He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey on the first day of the week, that day was the 10<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, for our Julian calendar that comes out to April 6, 32 AD. And on that very day Jesus rode into Jerusalem and was heralded the Messiah.” Thus also fulfilling:

*(Psalms 118:24 NKJV) This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.*

*(Psalms 118:25 NKJV) Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity.*

*(Psalms 118:26 NKJV) Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.*

### Jesus never Received Public Worship / Luke 19:39-40 / Lamb brought into the Home

“Prior to this day Jesus had never allowed public worship of Himself. Every time they tried to make Him King He would slip away from them, but the day He rode into Jerusalem on the donkey He actually promoted it.” The Lamb is being brought into the home, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, just as required.

*(Luke 19:39 NKJV) And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples."*

*(Luke 19:40 NKJV) But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."*

### Exactly 173,880 Days

How many days was it from March 14, 445 BC, to April 6, 32AD – **173,880**.

476 years X 365 days.....	=	173,740 days
14 March to 06 April (both inclusive).....	=	24 days
Add for Leap Years.....	=	<u>116 days</u>
		173, 880 days

\*Note on Leap years: if one were to divide 476 by 4 they would get 119 days. That would throw this calculation of 3 days. However, calculating leap years is much deeper than a divided by 4. The following is an extract from Wikipedia Encyclopedia on the Julian calendar in respect to leap years – The [Revised Julian calendar](#) adds an extra day to February in years divisible by 4, except for years divisible by 100 that do not leave a remainder of 200 or 600 when divided by 900. In easier to understand, 3 days must be subtracted from 119 because centennial years are not leap years, though every 4000<sup>th</sup> year is a leap year. So 116 is what the mathematicians have calculated would have been the number of leap years over this period.

### Messiah Cutoff

“For seventy years Daniel had longed for the restoration of the city and temple of God. Now that it was about to take place his attention was directed to a more distant and loftier peak in the history of redemption. Even a new temple in a rebuilt city made by human hands could be destroyed; Daniel's eyes were therefore to be fixed on a temple (John 2:19), on one that could not be destroyed (Rev 21:22-27) Daniel was receiving the prophecy of the coming Messiah. But verse 26 starts off with that He would be

cut off. "Jesus was crucified that week and rejected by man. Jesus did not receive the kingdom at that time.

*(Daniel 9:26 NKJV) "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.*

### **Prince to Come – Destroys Temple 70AD**

The prophecy continues with a description of the judgment that would come on the generation that rejected the Messiah. "The prince to come refers to 70 AD when Titus and the Roman army destroyed the city of Jerusalem and the temple. Just as Jesus prophesied in Luke 19:43-44.

### **Jews Dispersed – But Kept Nationality / May 14<sup>th</sup> 1948**

"The Jewish people were then dispersed throughout the world. But Israel is the only nation who kept a nationality without a homeland, for almost 2,000 years they had no place to call home. But May 14, 1948 the Jews were gathered back together into their homeland." This is a miracle, and God has a reason for it; and that is for final prophetic events leading up to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

### **To the Day / As Sure Came First Time – Will Come Second Time**

It would be a mistake to read the Bible as dry history and miss all that God has for us. Reading this prophecy gives me a deep desire to share the gospel with the lost. As I study prophecy it becomes clearer and clearer that the return of Christ is soon. To the day, to the day He came, and what does that mean to you? As sure as the Prince of Peace came the first time, He will come again the second time.

### **3 Days in Grave**

Now, to see this all the way through; Jesus had to spend three days in the grave:

*(Matthew 12:40 NKJV) "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*

### **He Rose on the 17<sup>th</sup>**

So Jesus would have rose again on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

## ***Timeline – Jewish Calander***

### 10<sup>th</sup> (Nissan) – Sunday – First Day of Week

- Jesus Rides into Jerusalem

### 11<sup>th</sup> – Monday

### 12<sup>th</sup> – Tuesday

### 13<sup>th</sup> – Wednesday

### 14<sup>th</sup> – Thursday – Passover Sacrifice – Jesus on the Cross

- 14<sup>th</sup>/after sunset – Jesus eats with the disciples
- 14<sup>th</sup>/ after sunset – Jesus in garden and arrested
- 14<sup>th</sup>/before 9am – Jesus sentenced to crucifixion
- 14<sup>th</sup>/9am to 3pm – Jesus hangs on the cross
- 14<sup>th</sup>/3pm He dies. (Matt 27:45)
- New day begins at sunset, Jesus put in the grave before sunset (around 6pm).

### 15<sup>th</sup> – Friday – Unleavened Celebration

- 15<sup>th</sup>/6pm to 6am = 1 night in grave (Feast of Unleavened all day)

### 16<sup>th</sup> – Saturday – Sabbath

- 16<sup>th</sup>/6pm to 6am = 2 nights in the grave (Sabbath Day)

### 17<sup>th</sup> – Sunday – First Day of week – Resurrection – Feast of First Fruits

- 17<sup>th</sup>/6pm to 6am = 3 nights in the grave
- 17<sup>th</sup>/ early morning Mary sees Jesus at the Garden Tomb
- The Feast of Firstfruits all day.

### **Same Day Ark Rested – 17<sup>th</sup> of Month**

The same day the Ark rested, symbolizing in advance that Christ would be our rest, and our escape from judgment of God, our ark of salvation, our new beginning. The 7<sup>th</sup> month, would become the first month right here after God says this month is now the first month.

*(Genesis 8:4 NKJV) Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.*

### **Protection & Prophecy**

What a wonderful, glorious study of His Word. You can be sure of His Word, every last word of it will come to pass. My, my how Awesome He is – Give Him glory for He is worthy of all Praise and Glory.