

## 05 | Lifelong Evangelism

### Week Five

Welcome back to our series. We made it to week five and our topic today is Lifelong Evangelism. I'd like to just open with a little description of this. It says, "This is our lifelong mandate from the Lord Jesus Himself—the King of all kings has called us as His believers into His service. And our duty is to go into all the world and proclaim the good news of His salvation to all who will believe in Him and to baptize them in water and then teach them to carry out this mandate, as well." If you're anything like me, I grew up in the church ... and praise God for it. There are a lot worse places to grow up. I do not regret the church that I grew up in or the life that I have lived, save for this one thing—I'm 41 years old and I did not live a life of evangelism. Never mind the years that I spent in the world, living in sin and partying and living for myself.

But even as a believer, before I walked away—and sadly—even after coming back, I didn't take serious the words of God—the words of our Lord Jesus. I'm going to read them to you now. Starting in Mark, Chapter 16: 15, 16 ... Jesus, this is Him speaking. And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved. But whoever does not believe will be condemned. Jesus, again in Matthew, Chapter 28: 19, 20, says these words. "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching

them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always to the end of the age." I'm going to read this again. "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always to the end of the age." According to Jesus—His very own words to his disciples—this is what the life of a believer should look like.

We're to go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to all creation. And when they believe, we're to baptize them. We're to go in and make disciples of all nations and baptize them and teach them. Baptize them in the water, baptize them in the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the things that Jesus has taught us to observe. That's the life of a believer. But as I said earlier, if you're anything like me, you grew up in the church and your life didn't look anything like this. Lifelong evangelism is the mandate that Jesus Himself gave to His early church. And we have not carried that out the way we are supposed to. Particularly here in the West in America and church, Christianity has become—for many—an option of whether or not you want to go to church on Sunday. Some profess to be Christians and come at Christmas and Easter and they live like the rest of the world. But if you ask them, their faith is Christian, they believe. Some of us will attend every Sunday. We'll even serve on campus in a ministry. And, we'll show Christian love to people, our neighbors and we'll live godly lives, will lift our hands and sing worship and will pay our tithes; But unfortunately, so many of us stop there. And we don't do the two things that Jesus actually told us to do.

This might seem shocking to you, but Jesus never once told His disciples to go to church. Nowhere in Scripture will you hear Jesus telling His disciples to go to church every Sunday. Now we know, we're told not to first take the assembling of ourselves together. It's good that we assemble together as believers—all the more as we see the day approaching. We need to come together and have fellowship, edify and build up one another ... spend time together. But Jesus' words were not to go to church, not to gather in a building, not to sit and sing "x" amount of songs and hear a good teaching and then go home. The Commission of Jesus was to carry out the commission that He left us with. We were to be the church. We were to take it to the people. We were to proclaim His message to all nations, to all creatures ... baptize them. Teach them to be disciples.

In fact, if you read the language He uses is, "Everything I told you to do, you tell them to do." Which means they go, and they teach them what Jesus said, "To go and make disciples." To break it down in simple terms, we were told to be disciples, who make disciples, who make disciples. And yet the average Christian believes that going to church on Sunday and living a godly life is what Jesus asked of us. And you can't actually find that in Scripture anywhere. Shocking, isn't it? I know when I first heard it put in simple terms like that, I thought, "I don't believe it ... how did I miss this my whole life?" Well, it's simple. This is what we were taught. From the time that I was born—I was born and raised in the church. I went to Sunday school in the morning, went back Sunday night, and came again on Wednesday. And if it was anything going down at the church, man, we were there. We were there for every event, every potluck, every function, Vacation Bible School, kids' camp, every Easter play ... I was in every Easter play, every Christmas play ... didn't want to

but didn't have a choice. I was in it. To me, that was the Christian life. I believed in Jesus. I was good. Granted, I was also born an evangelist, so I did have a natural bend when I was young to tell people about Jesus. But I outgrew it. The enemy got a hold of me. I spent many years in bondage and when I came back, I was not on fire like I was when I first believed. As young as I was—a child ... when I first believed, I was a child, and I did ... I evangelized. But that's not the norm for the average churchgoing, Bible-believing Christian. They think they're doing what they're supposed to do by going to church and being good. And yet, if we just simply sit down and look at what Jesus actually said, we've missed it. We've actually gotten it backwards. We've got it wrong.

Instead of taking the gospel to the nations, we've come and we've sat down in a seat in a building and let somebody else tell us what it says. Which is ironic because we already know. Now listen, I'm not knocking the church or saying it's wrong or that it's bad. I come to church every Sunday. I love my pastor. I love it when he teaches me the word, but at the end of the day, that is not what Jesus called me to do. Do I need it? Yes. Do I enjoy it? Absolutely. But if I'm going to obey Jesus, and the call of God on my life. I'm not going to just come on Sunday and let my pastor tell me what the Bible says and encourage me and edify me and remind me to live godly. No, I'm going to take what I've been given, and I'm going to take it to anyone that will listen. And I'm going to do my best to win people to the Lord and disciple them and teach them to do the same. And until I do that, I'm not really living the life that God has called me to. I'm not living out the commission that has been given to us. This life of evangelism. This life of dying to yourself. Laying it down and following Jesus, like He actually said.

Jesus said some things and He used some pretty strong language, and oftentimes we forget. Jesus said, "If you're going to follow me, pick up your cross, deny yourself. Deny yourself. Don't take care of yourself. Don't feed yourself. Don't read to better yourself. Don't come to church to better yourself. And yeah, we need those things. But in order to follow Jesus, we have to deny ourself and what we want. We have to pick up our cross every day and follow Him.

The Apostle Paul said, "It's no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." And he goes on to say, "This life that I now live, I live by faith," but it's different. Paul had an epiphany and he said, "I'm dead. I died to myself and I'm alive and Christ Jesus, and now my life is different than it was before." Is your life different? Or does it look like everybody else except for you going to church on Sunday? Are you still living your life? Have you died to yourself? Have you picked up your cross, denied yourself and followed Jesus? Because in order to follow Him, you have to do what He says. If you're truly going to follow Him, you have to follow Him as the scriptures say. And the scriptures say that we're to go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole of creation and whoever believes, we're to baptize them. The Scriptures say, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations." You go therefore and make disciples of all nations, and you baptize them. You baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. And you teach them. Don't leave it up to themselves to find out what the Bible says. You teach them. It doesn't say, "Invite them to church and let your pastor teach them." You teach them.

You go and you make disciples of all nations. And you baptize them and you teach them, "... to observe all that I have commanded you." And this is the best part of it all,

"Behold, I am with you always to the end of the age." You're not alone. Jesus said, "Behold, I am with you. And not only am I with you, but I am with you always to the very end of the age. I'm never going to leave you. I'm never going to forsake you. I'm never going to stop being there for you." But you're the one that's going to do it. Jesus is going to help you. We talked about in our last teaching, we have the power of the Holy Spirit to do this.

But this is a lifelong call of God. This isn't something you retire from. You don't do it for a certain amount of years and then say, "All right, well ... I guess I've done this long enough." No, you don't stop. You don't stop. And it's not something that you just do occasionally or when you get around to. This is the call of God and you're like, "This is a mandate from the Lord Jesus Himself." And if you're a believer and a follower, this is what your life should look like.

Now, with that being said, each of us has a different role to play. Each of us has a different gift. And the Lord made you. And He knows how to use you. He knows where you'll be most effective. He knows what comes natural and where you need help. But we can't get away from the words of Jesus. If you're a follower of Jesus, that means you're a disciple of Jesus and you observe all that He commands ... or you don't. It's cut and dry. It's a hard pill for some people to swallow, and they've never looked at it that way before. Read it for yourself. This is Jesus speaking here. This is the Master. This is His way. And listen, if you're following Him and you're truly following Him, it's His way or no way. There is no, "Well, I follow Him differently." Then, I'm sorry, you don't follow Him at all. We don't decide how we follow Jesus. Jesus told us how to do it. Either we do it or we don't. And this is part of it—a lifelong evangelism. The taking up of our

cross daily, dying to ourselves and laying it down for our neighbor. Jesus said, "The two greatest commandments were to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength and with all your mind and love your neighbor as yourself." That means we love God and we love our neighbor. We love God and we love our neighbor the same way we love ourselves according to Jesus.

But the sad reality is, most of us love God and we love ourselves, and we've forgotten about our neighbor. We've neglected our neighbor. We've left our neighbor to their own devices. We left our neighbor to themselves. We haven't loved our neighbors the same way we love ourselves. We wouldn't want ourselves to go to hell. We wouldn't let ourselves go to hell. And if we truly love our neighbors the way that we love ourselves, we won't let them go without a fight—not without pleading. Like Paul said, "I beseech you." There's this earnest desire to see people come to the Lord. It's almost as if He's begging them to consider these words. "I'm begging you to consider what I'm saying—what the Scriptures say." Do you have that heart for your neighbors? Because that's the heart that Jesus has for your neighbors. That's why He told you to love them. That's why He sent you to preach. And look, your neighbor doesn't have to be the person next to you. Maybe they're already saved. Or maybe you've already been told, "Don't come around here talking like that anymore." Pray for him. But Jesus gave a pretty broad narrative of what your neighbor is. To put it in a nutshell, every creature needs to hear the gospel and every nation has to be baptized and receive the Lord and receive salvation. And it's up to us. There's nobody else who is going to do it.

This is the lifelong call of God. This is the mandate from the Lord Jesus Himself, whom we love, who gave His life for us, who rose up in victory and made a way to bring us into eternity and then said, "Hey, go make sure everybody else knows. Make sure everybody else knows about this. I'm coming back soon. And when I come back and I gather My people to myself, those who are left, will not inherit salvation. They will not inherit the Kingdom of God. This Earth is reserved for judgment by fire. He's going to renovate this earth by fire. And then He's going to create the new heaven in the new earth. The new Jerusalem is going to come down. God's going to live there and dwell forever among us. And we'll spend eternity in that kingdom. Whoever rejects Jesus won't be a part of that kingdom. Tell them now. "Tell them now about my kingdom." That's the heart of our Lord. "Tell them I'm coming." There's a real king with a real kingdom. Jesus said, "You go and you preach." And when this gospel of the kingdom has been preached in all the earth, then the end will come. He's counting on us to preach the gospel of His kingdom. He's coming to establish His kingdom on this earth...on the new earth, forever and ever and ever. And we need to tell people now, because there's coming a time not too long from now when it's going to be too late, and millions and millions and millions of people will go to hell.

But I believe God and I believe the power, the Gospel and the Holy Spirit. And I believe God wants to show Himself strong on our behalf. I don't think that 3000 souls being added in one day is a thing of the past. I believe we're going to see a mighty revival and millions of people are going to come into the kingdom. And we get up under the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and we allow Him to use us and we take this mandate serious and say, "God, no matter what, I just want to win souls. I want to be a soul-winner for Your kingdom. I want Your Holy Spirit. I take Your word serious.



Help me to preach it. Help me to live it—die to myself and live the call of God on my life at any and all cost." Lay it down now. I'll tell you what, I'm not scared of nothing because I'm already dead. I died to myself long ago, and it's no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me. And if you're not there, you can get there. You can get to the point where nothing else matters. You just say, "Oh, I know Jesus is coming soon and I know people are on their way to hell. I know time is short, Lord. I don't want to do anything else with my life." I wish I lived my whole life like this. I wish the Church of God was like this. I wish His bride was like this. I wish that we didn't just have good teaching, but we were on fire—that our hearts broke for the lost to the point that we did something about it. We didn't just come and get taught and receive, but we took this mandate and we ran with it.

I'm praying that God sets His church on fire again, that the fire of the Holy Spirit comes upon His church like never before. And I mean like never before. We talk about how Peter led 3000 people to the church in one day. I want to get to heaven to hear Peter talk about the time 10,000 people were led to the Body of Christ in one day, where a million people all around the world repented, when revival broke out and repentance became the norm. It became more normal than sin. People were crying out for repentance because we did our part. We got the gospel to the nations and by the power of the Holy Spirit, we delivered this word—this life-saving, life-giving gospel of salvation.

I'm believing for those days and they're coming. I'm going to be a part of it and I pray that you want to be a part of it, too, because that's the first step. The first step of saying, "Yep, I haven't done this. I've been a good, honest Christian, and I've gone to church every Sunday, but I have not done this,

not the way I was supposed to." Now's the time to get honest ... be real with yourself. And you're not meaning anything to God that He doesn't already know. But it's good to admit it to yourself, "I haven't done this or this hasn't been my passion. This hasn't been what drives me." Let's pray that we don't go another day, ignoring the words of our Lord Jesus and taking this commission lightly. Heavenly Father, we present ourselves to You. We thank You that Your mercies are new every morning ... that You forgive ... that You cleanse us of all unrighteousness. You make us whole. You make us new ... white as snow. You take our sin as far as the East is from the West and You remember them not ... for your own sake, You will not remember them. We have a fresh start. There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. We do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. We repent for being in the flesh. And we choose from this day forward to walk in your Holy Spirit, to walk in the anointing of God on our life ... to walk out the call of God in our life.

Ephesians 2:10, "For you are His workmanship created for good works which were prepared beforehand that you should walk in them. Ask the Lord—the good works that He has prepared for you to walk in and then do it. Walk in them with the power of the Holy Spirit. Walk out the call of God on your life—the mandate on your life to make disciples and preach the Gospel to every creature. Some of you are going to go out into the world and just preach. Some of you are missionaries. Some of you are called to be evangelists. Some of you are called to go and preach—preach the gospel and get them plugged in and places where disciples are being made. Some of you, your role is to disciple people one-on-one. Some of you are going to disciple many people. But we all need to be engaged in this call of God in our life. My natural inclination ... my natural bend is to stir people

up ... to stir up other people to do the work. But I'm still called to do this. It doesn't come as easy and as natural as preaching and proclaiming, as evangelizing does. But I need to make disciples, too and I'm learning. This is new. I grew up in the church, and yet, ironically, this concept is new to me. But I'm doing my best and God is helping me and I'm seeing fruit. I'm baptizing people in my pool. I'm baptizing them in the Holy Spirit. I'm discipling them, I'm plugging them in, I'm getting them plugged into communities and doing my best to plant churches.

I'm doing my best to run with the call of God on my life. And listen, I never knew that God had called me to this. I didn't know that I was going to be in a role of an of an apostle and a church planter. That's not a grace that I even knew was on my life. And yet it is. I decided, "God, no matter what, I'm going to live for you. I'm going to lay it down at any and all cost. Do whatever you ask me to do." And guess what? It turned out He wanted to do a lot. He wanted to do a lot with me. I'm a very simple man. I'm not an educated man. I'm not a smart man. I'm a very simple man. And God is using me to do things that I never thought I could do. And the same is true of you. Some of you are actually very intelligent. And yet the Lord is saying, "I want you to know Jesus Christ and Him crucified." You take the word of God. And you run with the simplicity of the truth that is found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ—that there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. And we must be saved. The world needs to hear it. Regardless of your personality, your education. What you like or don't like. This is what Jesus has called us to.

And I beseech you, my brothers and sisters ... I urge you not to take this lightly. Jesus is coming soon. Time is running out.

And we want to stand before him, and not only hear, "Well done, My good and faithful servant," but know that we did our best. We gave it all. We left nothing on the table. I want to look around and be like, "I made a difference. I brought people with me and I trained other people to bring people with them." And not because I care about numbers or I want to say, "I got this many. How many did you get?" No, I just want to see people come into the kingdom of God. Pray on these things, and if you don't get it and don't have it ... It's okay if you don't get it right away. Keep praying until you get it. Keep crying out. Pray every morning, "God, make me a disciple-maker. Make me a soul winner. Make me one who proclaims the Gospel of salvation to every creature, and does my part to make disciples of every nation ... and get plugged in." Get plugged in with the group of people who are going to help you and train you and encourage you. Attend church. Don't stop. But don't stop there. You have to be the church. We are the Church. The Church of Jesus is built with living stones, and that's me and you. It's not a building. It's somebody that the Spirit of God dwells in. Wherever two or three people went that had the spirit of God, that was the assembly. That was the Church of God. They didn't need a building. They just needed His Spirit dwelling in them. Amen? I love you and thank you for joining us on this series. God bless you and we'll see you soon.