

His Mission (The Reason for the Season Series – Part 3)

It is finally Christmas week in what has been the hardest year most people in the world have ever experienced. Everyone needs hope – especially this year. This is the season of Hope. The Holy Spirit put this four-part series in my spirit during the week of Thanksgiving. Between the two holidays, the focus for the last five to six weeks of the year is on thanks and giving– *thankful hearts giving generously.*

The first part was entitled ***His Motive – Answering Why?*** We examined the creation beginning of mankind to the sinful fall of Adam and Eve (Genesis 2-3), God's salvation for Noah and his family (Genesis 6-8), the story of God's provision of a sacrifice for Abraham to spare Isaac (Genesis 22), and a quick glimpse of what happened to God's chosen people after many generations of idolatrous sin and disobedience. We learned that despite all the sin and evil in the world, ***God's motive for creating and sparing mankind was love. It still is today.***

The second part was entitled ***His Message.*** And Jesus' message to man was clear then and remains so today. But it is no more popular than when God spoke it through the Old Testament prophets. After ~400 years of silence, God sent John, the last prophet, to again declare the message everyone needed to hear and receive, but few were willing to humble themselves and do so. So God sent His Son, Jesus, to give it one last try. In all of these attempts by God to demonstrate His love, the message was the same. ***Repent.*** I explained what that means in great detail.

His Mission. There is nothing complex or veiled in the mission of Jesus Christ–could not be clearer or more straightforward. He stated it on several occasions throughout

the Gospels. The version I like the best for teaching His mission is the one found below because it keeps a key word we identified last week in His Message – **repentance**.

The first statement of the mission of Jesus was given by the angel of the Lord (probably Gabriel) when he appeared to Joseph to tell him not to be afraid to marry Mary.

*“you will call His name Jesus for **He will save His people from their sins.**”* (Matthew 1: 21)

The name Jesus means “the Lord is Salvation”.

Jesus’ mission is salvation for sinners.

In Matthew 9, the setting was this. Jesus had just called Matthew to follow Him from life as a tax collector to disciple of the Christ. Quite a switch! Jesus was hanging and dining with other “sinners and tax collectors” which drove the Pharisees crazy. They called Him out on it. That led to His response about those who are healthy or sick. He made an analogy between the healthy not needing a doctor, just the sick, and those who consider themselves righteous as opposed to sinners. As the great Physician, Jesus said,

*“...I am not come to **call** the righteous, but **sinners to repentance.**”* (Matthew 9: 13b KJV)

Simply stated, this aspect of His mission perfectly dovetails His message:

His mission is to call sinners to repentance.

The two-fold mission of Jesus is clearly:

▪ **Call
sinners
to
repentan
ce**

▪ **Save His
people
from
their
sins**

His Call. When I called to my children as they were growing up, I expected two things from them—hear it and respond to it. Jesus expects no less from those who hear Him.

As we know from reading the gospel accounts of His day to day life and ministry, many thousands of people heard Jesus' call. Many followed Him all around the country listening and watching all the miracles He performed.

“Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says,

‘YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE; FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES, OTHERWISE THEY WOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES, HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN, AND I WOULD HEAL THEM.’

*But **blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear.**”* Matthew 13: 13-16

Our Response. We not only need to hear His call, but we must respond. Many “heard” the words of Jesus then as they do today. But they did not hear to respond in obedience. Their refusal to do so led to judgment and eternity in hell just like Jesus warned. John, the Apostle, wrote many walked away.

“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and

are life...As a result of this many of His disciples (followers only, not converts) withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore. John 6: 63; 66

Why? His message was not what they wanted to hear—His mission not what they had in mind. They wanted freedom from the Romans. Their idea of Messiah was a military deliverer or one from God Who overthrew them, however. They did not want God, just their “freedom”. Those same sinful desires cost their ancestors their nation and favor with God.

His Salvation. When the angel spoke those prophetic words to Joseph, he did not fill in the blanks about *how* this would happen. Joseph was fully aware of God’s requirement of blood sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins—kill the unblemished offering. He practiced it himself as Jesus was raised. He just had no idea his son would BE THE SACRIFICE.

Jesus spoke frequently of His impending death, but the true disciples did not want to believe what they heard. You may recall Jesus rebuking Peter for one of his denials that could happen. As we know, it did happen. Six trials. Beating and abuse. Nailed to a cross and crucified on it. Shame and taunting as He died. Then death. We do not have time to go deeply into those elements of His sacrifice as we do during Holy Week.

We do know His last words could have been written today as “mission accomplished!” John recorded them this way (and he was there).

He said, “It is finished!” And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.” John 19: 30

The work of Jesus on the cross was finished. Salvation by His blood had come to the world to all who receive Him as Savior.

I close with words from CH Spurgeon, one of the greatest preachers in history, who wrote and preached,

Christ Jesus came into the world," not to half save you, not to save you in this direction or that, and in this light or that, but to save you from your sin, to save you from an angry temper, to save you from pride, to save you from strong drink, to save you from covetousness, to save you from every evil thing, "and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." This is a glorious truth, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." He came to Bethlehem's manger, and afterwards to Calvary's cross, with this as His one business, that He might save sinners.

Is He not able to save? Is He not just the Savior that we need? God and yet man in one adorable Person, He is able to sympathize because He is man, and He is able to save because He is God. Blessed God man, Jesus Christ, Thou art able and willing to save me, and Thou art able and willing to save all other sinners who will believe in Thee!

Jesus came to save you and me from our sins. I have bowed before Him in broken repentance of my sins and drank His blood of mercy. I reached out and received His gift of grace that brought forgiveness and salvation. Two questions remain tonight:

Have you? If not, why not?

For Christ's sake,

Walter