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The Call to Evangelism

1237-A

Series: The Four Callings of God

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INTO HIS LIKENESS RADIO

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There are two schools of thought. There are those who believe that the famous discourse of our Lord in John, chapter fourteen came just before the institution of the Lord's Supper. There are others who feel it was just after, and it could have been either. But in either case, it no doubt took place *at that dinner table in that upper room*.

Jesus had the disciples' attention. As we remember from our last lesson, what a day that had been. The God of eternity washed the dirty, dusty feet of His followers. And then, in a moment filled with life-changing intensity, He turned to them and said, "I have given you an example. Do as I have done." In one dramatic moment, God demonstrated the key to effective Christian leadership. The effective leader is the one who knows how to serve, without applause, without acclaim, and without recognition, because *as a slave, that's to be his natural response*. Jesus even went so far as to turn to the disciples and say:

If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

(John 13:17 NKJV)

Then, believe it or not, the atmosphere grew even more tense, as the King of kings turned and said those incredible words: "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, one of you shall betray Me.*"¹ The disciples, according to verse 22, all looked around stunned and said, "Lord, who could it be? Not me." Can you imagine being in an elder board meeting or a deacon board meeting, or something like that with a group of eleven or twelve men you trusted and loved with all your heart, and the pastor stands up in the meeting and he says, "It grieves me to say that one of you is a thief." And you look around and one of two things is going to be true. You're either going to doubt the validity of the statement itself, or you're going to look around and suddenly begin to question the hearts of men you've trusted all your life. In verse 25, John, obviously grieved beyond understanding says, "Lord, who is it?" And Jesus answered:

1 Matthew 26:21

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“It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it.” And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.”

Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, “What you do, do quickly.”

But no one at the table knew for what reason He said this to him.

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.

Having received the piece of bread, he then went out immediately. And it was night. (John 13:26-30 NKJV)

As we discussed in the last study, Judas was sitting just to the left of Jesus. Apparently, what Christ was saying to him was not understood by the others. In fact, the Holy Spirit takes great pains in this passage to tell us what they thought He meant. Their eyes were not open.

It was at this point, if it had not happened before, that Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper. In either case, the table was cleared, and the men were in a state of shock at what had been said and what had been demonstrated. At this point in time, I think there was no doubt that they were listening intently to what Jesus was saying. These guys had been dreaming of kings and kingdoms. And suddenly, God was speaking of betrayal, servitude and death. Now to this hushed audience of eleven, Jesus, sensing the atmosphere of fear and apprehension, begins to comfort their hearts. And no words ever spoken to man have been more quoted in times of grief than these. I want you to imagine with me that you are among those eleven in that upper room, perhaps at Mark’s house. We don’t know for sure. Imagine you are there, and you can scarcely believe what you’re hearing. Jesus stands to His feet. His eyes are filled with love and compassion and this is what He says:

“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

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And where I go you know, and the way you know.”

(John 14:1-4 NKJV)

The compassion of God. He feels our hurt. He feels our loneliness. He feels our pain. He mourns over our grief. He understands. He speaks kindness to broken hearts. He knew these guys were in a state of shock. Their problem was that they were beginning to understand what was about to happen, but they still didn't grasp what He was about. And they still didn't fully grasp, according to the next few verses, *who He was*.

THE PROMISE OF PROMISES

So, Jesus looks into their broken hearts and He says, “Peace.” He may be speaking to your broken heart and saying the same thing. He says, “Let not your heart be troubled.” What a word of love to a broken heart. “Neither let it be afraid.” Jesus is saying to you and to me, “I understand the frantic cries of troubled hearts. I understand the darkness that grasps a life that lives in fear. *I understand.*” And Jesus is saying, “*I do not want you to be troubled or afraid, though from the world's framework of circumstances you have reason to be. Never be afraid.*” The reason is that *never can anything happen to the Christian to nullify the sovereignty of God.* And what *they were grieved about was about to be part of God's great plan.* “For this cause.” You remember from our last lesson, Jesus said, “For this cause, came I into this world.”² So, to be troubled or afraid because God was accomplishing His will made no sense at all.

Now, if you have a piece of blank paper with you, I'm going to ask you to take it out and take a pencil. If you don't, you can write on your sleeve, on your husband's sleeve, on the chair in front of you—no, better not do that. Here is what I want you to do. Do it in your mind if you don't have a blank piece of paper. I want you to write this: “My Personal Worry List.”

Now, obviously the Scripture is somewhere bound to give us a list of the things that are appropriate to worry about and the things that aren't. So, what I want us to do in this moment is write down everything that comes to your mind that you know is appropriate that you worry about. Just write it down as quickly as you can. If you don't have room on the front, write it on the back. If you don't have room on the back, you don't have time.

² John 18:37

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Now, if you turn to Philippians 4:6,7 either in your Bible or in your mind, you will find an exhaustive list of what the Bible says you have a right to worry about. Zilch! Be anxious for what? Nothing. N-O-T-H-I-N-G. “But in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.”³ End of list. “Be anxious for nothing.”

What that is literally saying, believe it or not, is that the “worried” Christian, is a person who at that moment, is outside the will of God; not because of the circumstances in their lives, but because they are worried about the circumstances in their lives. So, Jesus is saying here again, “Let not your heart be troubled.” It’s a choice. Your heart will want to be troubled. There will be lots of appropriate reasons for you to be troubled, and Jesus is saying, “Let it not gain control. You are troubled because you are afraid,” Jesus said. “And why are you afraid?” He goes on:

“...you believe in God, believe also in Me.”

(John 14:1 NKJV)

Guess what? That’s why we are not to be afraid. Because Jesus is God. If He is who He says He is, we never, at any time, have cause to be afraid. Then He goes on and says:

“In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. [I’m not keeping any secrets, Jesus said.] I go to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”

(John 14:2-3 NKJV)

Jesus was going. That’s why they were afraid. But Jesus was coming back. That’s why they were *not* to be afraid. He was going for a reason, for a season. Jesus had a contract with His Father to go back and do some home building. He had a contract to build eternal, incorruptible mansions for each of His children to live in forever. When the homes were complete, when the contract was finished, He was to come back via space shuttle, an unbelievable space shuttle, so marvelous NASA can’t even figure it out, and like a heavenly vacuum cleaner, He was going to draw us into His presence to live forever. He said, “That’s why I’m going. That’s what I’m going to do. And that’s what’s going to happen when I come back. So, what are you

³ Philippians 4:6

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troubled about? If I don't go, you don't go," Jesus was saying. It is that simple.

They didn't want Him to leave. They wanted to be *with Him*. He wanted them to be with Him. That's why He had to go, so ultimately, "where He was, we could be also." There is no verse in Scripture more comforting to quote at the death of a loved one, if that loved one was a Christian.

THE QUESTION OF QUESTIONS

Jesus concludes these words with a statement that doubting Thomas couldn't quite get ahold of. He said, "You know where I'm going, and you know how to get there. You know *the way*." Then Thomas came back with the question of questions:

"Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?"
(John 14:5b NKJV)

I think that's one of the neatest questions ever asked in the Bible. "How can we know the way?" No question has been asked more as the hands of the clock of life move toward eternity than that one. "How can we know the way?" Philosophers and theologians have written books, and the question is always, how can we? How can we find joy? How can we find peace? How can we find life? How can we find God? If only more people asked Thomas's question. How can we know the way? I think there are different inflections. Some people say, "HOW can we *know* the way?" Other people say, "How CAN we know the way?" Still others say, "*How* can WE know the way?" Or "How can we KNOW the way?" Or, "How can we know THE *way*?" How can we know the way?

THE ONLY ANSWER

It doesn't matter how it's asked. The answer to the question is the cornerstone of the Christian faith. Jesus turned to them and said this:

I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.
(John 14:6 NKJV)

In response to the question of a doubting man came one of the greatest statements ever to fall from the lips of Jesus. In one sentence, Jesus erases forever the doubts that spring from the thoughts of the great philosophers and cults of history. Not only,

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beloved, did He, once and for all, settle the issue of how many ways there were to get to God, He settled the issue of how to get to God. They are three statements, but they are inseparable. It's the only answer that Thomas and Philip and Peter and John and all the others needed. And it's the only answer you'll need and it's the only answer I'll need from now until eternity. If men would accept this one statement from God as true, everything else would fall into place.

When you find a man with doubts about heaven, take him to John 14:6. When you find a man with questions about the uniqueness of the plan of God, take him to John 14:6. When you find a man asking the question, "What is truth?" take him to John 14:6. In fact, if someone comes to you and says, "I don't have time. I can only listen to one sentence from the Bible. Give me one sentence." Give him John 14:6; the entirety of the plan of God, packaged in a compact, concise expression of eternity, seventeen words long.

Now, how many of you like Thomas? How many of you don't like Thomas? How many of you don't like anything at this time of the morning? Okay. Take another cup of coffee. I like Thomas. Thomas was honest. He was really searching, and he took nothing at face value. And beloved, people who are honestly searching, find. He wasn't playing games with God. He wanted to find *the way*. He was for real, but he was confused. He did the thing you ought to do if you're confused. He went to God and asked God. If you are confused about how to find a meaningful relationship with God, go to God and read His Word. Ask Him what Thomas asked Him. "How can I find the way?" That was the question and Jesus gave *the only answer*.

THE I AM IS

Interestingly enough, He began by giving His name. He passed out His calling card. He always did. Remember Exodus 3:13? Moses was speaking, and he and God were having a conversation. He had a lot of questions, too. He was a little bit like Peter was. He said, "Father, I have a question to ask of You." Jehovah said, "Okay. What is it?"

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

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His name?’ what shall I say to them?”

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.’”
(Exodus 3:13,14 NKJV)

I AM that I AM. God is. He had no beginning. He will have no ending. He is alpha and omega. He always has been. He always will be, and He always will be the same. God’s nature cannot change, so He named Himself accordingly. All of His names have a meaning. He said, “I always have been, I AM. I have not changed, I AM. I never shall change. I AM.” Isaiah 44:6:

“Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel, And his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: ‘I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God.’”
(Isaiah 44:6 NKJV)

In Matthew 16:13, Jesus asked the question,

“Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am [is]?” (NKJV)

In John 6:35, He replied,

“I AM [is] the bread of life...” (NKJV)

In John 8:12, He added,

I AM [is] the light of the world. (NKJV)

Then in John, chapter 8:56, Jesus made this incredible statement:

“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.”

Then the Jews said to Him, [Whoa! Loose translation, modified text]. “You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?” [Give me a break. Loose translation.]

Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.”
(John 8:56-58 NKJV)

Whenever Jesus said, “I AM,” He spoke His Name. He said, “I AM the bread of life.” He meant, “I AM the Eternal God who is the bread of life. I have no beginning. I have no ending. I AM the bread of life.” Jesus as man was not offering salvation, Jesus as God was. And Jesus as man had to die so Jesus as God could. So, His opening statement to Thomas was designed to remind him and to remind us who He was.

Yes, these words came from the lips of their teacher, this one called Jesus. But the person inhabiting that body was God. And

lest they forget, it was the Eternal God who provided the way for their salvation. You may get in a conversation with somebody this week, and they will say to you, “Well, I don’t believe Jesus was God, but I will believe this. He was a “good man.” Do people ever tell you that? He was a “good man.” No. He was not a “good man.” Either He was God, or He was a liar. And if He was a liar, He was not a “good man.” Somebody coming here may be a pastor or an elder, or a teacher, or a friend. And they come up and stand up— somebody you really admire—and they say, “I’ve just come to tell you something. I just found out I’m God! And you would have a vote. And you would all vote that He was a good man, right? No!

THE I AM IS THE WAY

So, having defined who He is, Jesus now defines what He does. He is the Eternal God, the way. The question is obviously, “The way to what?” The answer is found in the first three verses of John 14. “You believe in God, believe also in Me. In my Father’s house are many [rooms]...I go to my Father to prepare a place for you...” The question was: “How do you find God?” Philip in verse 9, says, “Show us the Father, we’ll be satisfied. That’s all we want.” Jesus said, “You’ve seen Me; you’ve seen the Father.” The question was, “How do we find God?” And the answer was, “You already have. Jesus is the way.”

I want you to remember, Jesus did not answer, “I AM is *a* way to God. Men have tried that logic for generations. It gives all of the religions and cults and philosophies equal billing with God Himself. Jesus is not *a* way to God. Jesus is not *a* way to God. Jesus is THE way to God. The *ONLY* way to God. The *ONLY* way there ever will be to God. And to be sure they understood it, He looked at them straight in the eye and He said, “No man, no woman, nobody will ever come to the Father, but by Me. Got it?”

Now either Jesus is who He says He is, and either His Word is what it says it is, or we are wasting our time. And if He is who He says He is, God, and if His word is what it says it is, infallible, then when He says, “No one comes to the Father but by Me,” He means *no one*. *No one comes*. No one comes to the Father. “No one comes to the Father *but by Jesus*. *No one ever will!*

If your argument is that this theology is too narrow,

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too limiting, and without sufficient alternatives, take your arguments to God. That is the problem the Pharisees had, and Pharisees today still struggle with it. That's why Jesus had to say, "Straight is the gate, and narrow is the way and few there be that find it."⁴ It isn't the well-traveled path that leads to salvation. It is the narrow, exclusive, eternal road that goes through Jesus Christ, and there is no other way.

That "really nice guy" you know, who is morally upright and generous and kind and takes care of his family and loves his kids and does everything right, but holds to that humanistic philosophy that defies the need for the Cross, is lost and on his way to hell. Do you believe that? By the same token, that believer you know, who so often struggles and fails, but rests the total weight of his life and salvation on the shed blood of Jesus Christ, is saved and on his way to heaven. Do you believe that? Forget the logic. It's the truth. There is only one way to God; it's through Jesus Christ.

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:
(John 1:12 NKJV)

Only to them.

And, beloved, if you struggle with that concept, and many do, you'll never really be an evangelist. A disciple is one whose goal, remember, is to bring glory to God at whatever the cost. So, a disciple will do nothing to dishonor God. It dishonors God when you doubt His Word, and His Word says there is only one way to the Father, and that's by way of the Son. I John 5:

He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son.

[This is the record. Here are the facts. That's what it means.] And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. (I John 5:10-12 NKJV)

No matter what else He has. Got it? End of subject. There is only one way to find God. And every man or woman you

4 Matthew 7:14 (KJV)

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meet between now and when God calls you home, either will be born again by faith in Jesus Christ, or lost and on their way to hell. Do you believe that? The issue isn't how good they are, how bad they are, how religious they are, how naive they are, how generous they are, or how successful they are. The issue is whether or not they have *found the way*. The way is Jesus. Jesus isn't an example of the way. He is the way.

The illustration is given of a couple who are driving through town. Their parents had just moved and they were looking for where they lived. They had a map; they had an address, but they couldn't find it. They stopped at a service station. You know what they used to be. They used to be real, live people who would come out and talk to you. Now they are in a booth and they have a little thing you can stick your hand in and sign a card. But, anyway, back then there were still real, live people, and this guy came out and they asked the question, "We're looking for where my dad lives. Where is 4562 King Street?" "Aww, shucks. That's nothing. I'll *tell you the way*." *You go five blocks down this street, take a left. Go two blocks back the other way, take a right. Go six blocks to the right, six blocks to the left, three blocks to the right again. You'll find a big shopping center. Pull in, drive around the parking lot twelve times and then get out and holler, "I'm lost."* Now, even if he knew the way, you're still lost, right?

But suppose the next place you go, a kindly man steps out and He says, "You're not going to find the way by yourself. Why don't you let me *take you to your father's house?*" And instead of a set of complicated instructions, He gets in the car, takes over the steering wheel, says, "Move over." *The next thing you know, you are standing in the presence of your father.* The first guy *talked about the way*. The second one *became the way*.

And that's what Jesus has done for you. He has become the way to the Father. He's not going to give you a map to follow and hope you get there. He knows better. He says, "I'm going to prepare a place for you, and *if I go and prepare a place for you, I'm going to come back personally and take you to the Father's house.*" There's no danger of your getting lost on the way. He is the way. Find Him, you've found the Father. Trust Him, you'll spend eternity with the Father, *because He has guaranteed you safe passage. It's that simple. The trouble is, man doesn't like*

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things that simple. If we get it that simple, we don't need man to interpret it. So, we make things complicated so we can hire people to tell us what they mean.

THE I AM IS THE TRUTH

Jesus said it clearly, "I AM the way. Then He said something else. "Not only that, I am the living truth as well." The Psalmist said:

Teach me Your way, O Lord; I will walk in Your truth...

(Psalm 86:11 NKJV)

In Psalm 119 it says:

I have chosen the way of truth; (Psalm 119:30a NKJV)

You can't separate the *way* from the *truth*. Jesus can't be the way to God unless He is the truth about God. He is the proof that truth exists. You can go to school tomorrow and have a chemistry teacher who is immoral and still learn a lot about chemistry. You can have an English teacher who is a liar, and still learn a lot about English. But you cannot learn moral holiness from someone who is unholy. You cannot learn integrity from someone who is dishonest. You cannot learn humility from someone who is proud.

Truth about the nature of God must be learned from someone whose life is truth. That's why Jesus washed their dirty feet. He was *being truth*. He had talked to them for months about servitude, but when He washed their feet, *He became truth*. *He talked to them for three years* about love, but when He died, He became love. Truth became real. Jesus is the truth. He is the truth about God. Everything you'll ever need to know about God is found in Jesus Christ. He is the truth about faith. Watch Him at Gethsemane. He is the truth about peace. Watch Him on that storm-tossed sea. He is the truth about everything. Until you have seen Him, you have only *heard* the truth. When you have seen Him, you've *seen* the truth.

THE I AM IS THE LIFE

Finally, Jesus added, "I AM is life." That's what John meant a few moments ago when he said, "He that hath the Son hath life." You don't find salvation by reading about Christ. You don't find salvation by imitating Christ. You find salvation by

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receiving Christ.

In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

(John 1:4 NKJV)

Every man and every woman, when they reach the stage of accountability—and don't use the word age of accountability—because not everybody reaches it at the same time. But when you reach that stage of accountability, from that point on you have a guarantee. You are guaranteed death. And unless you come to the One *who is life*, the guarantee stays.

So that's the next great call to the Christian. You and I have been placed, beloved, in a world filled with people whose every breath may be their last. At the end of that last breath, lies eternity. "And as it is appointed for men to die once, but *after this*, the judgment."⁵ Everybody you pass on the street driving home from church today will spend eternity *somewhere*. Every member of your family will spend eternity *somewhere*. Every person who works in the office you work in; and in the building you work in, in the cafeteria line in front of you tomorrow, in the cafeteria line behind you; the waitress who waits on you at lunch today; everyone who parks in the parking lot where you park; every parent whose children are in the school yours are in; every person who lives on your block; every person who lives on the next block; will spend eternity *somewhere*. And I don't need to remind you, but I will, there are only two choices, beloved.

Either they have had an encounter with the Living God and receive Jesus Christ as their Savior, or no matter what anyone tells you, they will spend eternity in hell. H-E-L-L! You remember how to spell it. We don't hear much about it anymore, at least not in churches. We hear it on television a lot. It's not fashionable anymore to talk about your neighbors going to hell. It's not acceptable to talk about your fellow employees going to hell. Hell has been removed from today's religious vocabulary, but that's the only vocabulary it belongs in.

"This is the whole truth," Jesus said, "about life and death." Jesus is the *only way* to the Father. He is the living embodiment of *all* truth. And in Him, and in Him alone, is life. Everyone "in Him" is life. Everyone not "in Him" is dead. Oh, they may

⁵ Hebrews 9:27 (NKJV)

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have a smile on their face, and they may be physically fit and mentally alert, and jogging up and down your street. They may be president of the company or unemployed. They may be deeply moral, or flagrantly indecent; headed for greatness or headed for oblivion. Beloved, it doesn't matter. If they are not believers, they are headed for an endless eternity separated from God, where "the fire is never quenched, and the worm never dies." You say, "Who in the world preached a hellfire-and-damnation sermon like that?" His name was Jesus Christ. It's found in Mark, chapter 9.

If only those of us in this room today, could recapture the "life or death" urgency that captivated the church in the first century. You see, the great emphasis then was on the salvation of the lost. Their commitment came from the fact that every day could be their last day to witness to the saving power of Christ, and an endless eternity of torment awaited those who never heard, or said, "No!"

And yet, in our modern tabernacles of religious activity, so often we scurry about as though simply *by being busy* we are fulfilling the Great Commission. We think because we spend so much time in the locker room, we're running the race. We think because we visit the hospital, we're doctors. We spend so much time listening to Christian sermons and Christian tapes, reading Christian books, and going to Christian seminars, we think we're fulfilling the Great Commission. We think God said, "Go ye, therefore, into the church parking lot and become spiritual, organizing in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Ghost." I don't mean to be sacrilegious; I mean to be honest.

Put yourself in that upper room and ask yourself, how much of what you do, how much of what *we do*, actually results in confronting the lost of this world with the claims of Christ? How many of our ministries involve preaching and teaching and enunciating principles of how to live the Christian life to people who aren't Christians? And how often, by the sin of omission, do we lead them to believe that because they are being Christianized, they're okay? I think the most devastating statistic I have heard in years—and apparently, it's true—a survey done indicated that of key evangelical churches in the United States in the last five years, 85% of the new members, or

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the people coming into the church, are people playing musical church. They are moving for one reason or another from church to church. Less than 15% of people coming to evangelical churches today, are lost people being saved. Beloved, if that's true, we have missed our purpose.

We've been called to be evangelists. Our mission field is everywhere we go. Our prospects are everyone we see. And our ministries and our churches are the battlefields where the conflict between Satan and God for the lives of men and women will take place. If we so much as compromise one iota in what we teach, in what we preach, in the frequency with which we clarify the gospel; if we so much as imply, even by omission, that there is more than one way to the Father, or there is a way to slide into the Kingdom without the Cross, their blood is on our hands. Paul said in I Corinthians 5:17-20:

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,

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.

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.

(II Corinthians 5:17-20 NKJV)

That is our calling. We are ambassadors. That is our message. Be reconciled to God. There is only one way, beloved; there is only one who is truth, the truth about God, and there is only One who gives life to man. There is only one. There are no alternatives. No substitutes. No options. Either a man or woman comes to God by way of Christ, through the Cross, or he stands before God clothed in his own righteousness, and is condemned to hell. Not because God chose it. Because he chose it or she chose it. Too hard? Too narrow? It's the gospel. And, beloved, if we are not in the process of evangelizing the lost, it may be because we have listened to the devil's lie and we've softened the truth. I think we need to memorize, some of

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us, Romans 10:13-14 again. Maybe we need to repeat it every morning when we leave the house.

Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Now how can they call on one in whom they have never believed? How can they believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how can they hear unless someone proclaims Him? (Romans 10:13,14 Phillips Translation)

So, as you leave this place, I would remind you, Jesus may come today. He may come tomorrow. He may not come before our stay on earth is finished. But, beloved, one thing we know. Until our stay on earth is finished, we have been called to be ambassadors for Christ. Our message is simple. Let's not complicate it. "We pray you, on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God."⁶ "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."⁷ There is no other way. There is no other message. And there is no other plan. Beloved, we have been called to *be* evangelists. The only question is whether or not we choose to answer the call. The choice is ours.

Let's pray.

Our Father and our God,

We fall before You in humble acknowledgement of how many of us have failed to be the evangelists we were called to be. We have a myriad of arguments, Father. We tell You that our personalities are not that way; our temperaments are not that way. And yet, when something needs to be said or done that's important enough, somehow, we manage, implying that leading men and women out of the abyss of hell into the joy of heaven is not important.

We may argue that it's not our spiritual gift, or we've not been trained, or we may just argue that we're lazy. At least that's true. But, Father, You haven't rescinded Your call, and it includes us. So may we leave this place, this morning, with a confidence once again, that the truth is the truth, is the truth and it will never change. You are the only way, the only truth, the only life. And no man will ever come to God, unless he comes through Jesus Christ. We have the answer. May we

⁶ II Corinthians 5:20b (NKJV)

⁷ Acts 4:12 (NKJV)

The Call to Evangelism

*leave this place today, with the words on our lips and a song
in our hearts, be reconciled to God.*

*In Jesus' name.,
Amen.*

The Call to Evangelism

A CHALLENGE TO FURTHER STUDY

1- What is the source of a “troubled” heart? What is the source of “fear?” How could God *command* us not to be troubled or afraid? What is His alternative?

2- Do a study of the life of Thomas. What do you think he meant in John 11:16? Read John 20:19-31. Do you know someone who struggles like Thomas to believe without proof? What did Jesus do when Thomas wanted proof? What happened then (verse 28)? What gentle rebuke did Jesus give (verse 29)?

3- Can you share John 14:6 with confidence? Is there any doubt in your mind that *unless a man or woman comes to Christ by way of the Cross and is reconciled to God, he or she is bound for eternity in hell?*

4- Do a word study on the word “hell.” Is there any doubt in your mind about its reality? Do you live as though you really believe that all those who never trust Christ as Savior will spend eternity there?

5- How can you explain the words “Before Abraham was, I AM?” (John 8:58).

6- Write out John 14:6 in your own words, finding companion Scriptures to further emphasize each of the three statements contained in that verse.

7- Agree with God this week to be a genuine Ambassador for Christ, your one message being, “Be reconciled to God” (II Corinthians 5:20).

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(02.16.22.dvd)