

Russell Kelfer

**While He Was
Speaking:
As He Went**

993-B

Series: Let God Be God

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INTO HIS LIKENESS RADIO

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Now, be honest. If you were writing the script, would it be anything like what really happened? If you were an author, writing a story about the Almighty God who created Heaven and Earth, the one who literally spoke the worlds into being, the one who flung the stars in space, the one who holds the universe together by the breath of His power; and you decided to write a chapter on what it would be like for God to come to planet earth, would your story be anything like the real thing? Of course not.

We would not have written it into the script for God to be born of such humble beginnings. We certainly would not have written that Almighty God would be scorned and rejected by His own people...the people He had chosen for Himself. We would not have allowed the priests and the rabbis, nor the scribes or the Pharisees to treat Him as they did. We would never have allowed the Creator God to have no place to lay His head. He would have dwelled in a palace, at best. He would have been given the finest of educations, all the possessions the world offered, and elevated immediately to a throne of power and authority over all the earth. The last thing we would have let God do was die...let alone for a crime He did not commit.

No, we would not have written it this way. God would not have suffered, been persecuted, been railed at, been spit on, been mocked and scorned as He was. Not Almighty God. And if we were writing the script, Beloved, *we would never suffer or be persecuted either*. The reason is simple. We would write the story from man's perspective: what brings happiness on this earth; what brings comfort on this earth; what seems fair from this world's perspective. We would write it from the vantage point of the flesh. God, on the other hand, wrote it from the heavenlies, from the vantage point of the spiritual. The two are diametrically opposed the one to the other.

That is why, I believe, so many of us struggle so in living the Christian life. Instead of taking the Word for what it is and simply

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letting God be Himself in us, we try to fit God into the mold of this world...even this world's religiosity, and thus we stifle His attempts to be Himself in us.

When Jesus walked this earth 2,000 years ago, He was demonstrating what it is like when God lives in a human body in a world dominated by sin. He wanted us to see how God in us would live the Christian life. Our job would be to let Him.

It's not really all that difficult. The problem isn't how *hard* it is, but rather, how *stubborn we are*. We won't let go! We want to refashion God into *our image*, instead of letting God refashion us into His. Today's story from the Life of Christ demonstrates once again how natural the Christian life is when we relax and let God live it, yet how *unnatural* it is from the vantage point of the world.

Jesus has just been to a party, a most unusual party. I trust you remember the scenario. A brand new convert, a tax-collector named Matthew, decided to host a banquet for all of his vocational cohorts at his home. Now tax-collecting, you'll remember, was not an honorable profession, and Matthew's friends were not honorable men. "Publicans and others of ill-repute" is how the Bible described them. Nevertheless, God went. And since God went, some of God's followers and some of God's accusers went as well. Some went because they wanted to be where He was. Some went because they wanted to see what He'd do. Some went because they wanted to trap Him into behaving in a manner unacceptable to the religious hierarchy of the day. But there was a bevy of Bible-thumpers there and an equal amount of undesirables, and there was the Living Son of God right smack in the middle of it all.

The religious crowd didn't take too well to what was going on, God eating and drinking with outcasts! That didn't fit their concept of God at all! Now they had two choices...the same two choices we have. They could redefine their image of God based on what Jesus did, or they could try to force God into the preconceived image they had already conjured up. Had they done the former, their hearts would have been softened. By choosing the latter, their hearts were hardened instead. For whenever you try to bend God to fit Him into your mold, you simply lose your perspective of who He is.

You remember what happened. They accused Jesus of being seen with the low-life of the city; and God, they assumed, would

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never do that. Therefore, this man couldn't be God. Jesus, as always, met the issue head-on. He didn't ignore them; nor did He apologize for being Himself. He simply explained the Truth. He said, "I am the Great Physician. I have not come to listen to sick people tell me how well they are. I have come to help people who know they are sick, and are willing to admit it. I have not come to call the (self-) righteous, but rather to call (those who know they are) sinners to repentance."

The disciples of John the Baptist, meanwhile, who were sitting over in the corner, were doubly confused. They didn't understand God's behavior, either. To them, religion consisted of self-denial. They were fasting regularly, and it irritated them to see Jesus and His disciples at a party given by publicans, no less, eating and drinking as though there were no tomorrow. This did not conform to their image of God. So they, too, had a choice. They could come to understand God, or they could reject God based on the fact that He was not behaving as they expected.

You think about it. You are confronted with that choice every day. God does not always do things exactly the way He would had you written the script. In fact, more often than not, the story line departs 180 degrees from yours. You have a choice. You can accept the fact that the will of God is good and perfect and acceptable, but that the ways of God are higher than ours, and begin to worship. Or you can fret and fume and allow a hostile spirit to develop within you that God says is not fitting into the image you've designed, nor is He designing your life accordingly.

Were you God, you never would have allowed that sickness to come. Were you God, you would have made yourself rich. Were you God, that loved one would never have died. That storm would never have come. That space shuttle would never have exploded. That child would not have turned out the way he did. That marriage would have been free from complications. Were you God, the wind and the waves would never have beat against that boat; and there never would have been a Roman Cross on a hill called Golgotha. It never would have happened, and you and I would be lost in our sins.

At any rate, the disciples of John the Baptist, though confused, were sincerely confused. They simply didn't understand. So Jesus took the time to explain to them why *they* were fasting, but His disciples were not. It reads like this:

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²And Jesus said to them, ³“Can you make the young men of the wedding party fast? ¹Can they mourn while the bridegroom is with them? ²But days are coming when the Bridegroom will have been taken away from them, and those are the days when they will fast.”

(¹Matthew 9:14,15; ²Mark 2:18-20; ³Luke 5:34,35 TLOCIS)¹

Jesus had a plausible, logical explanation. Now was not the time for the disciples to fast. For a brief season, the bridegroom was present. Once He is taken, *then* they will fast. Then Jesus lovingly sat them down and taught them a parable. It was a story about sewing a piece of new, unshrunk cloth on a worn-out garment, and about pouring new wine into old wineskins. The King of the Universe, the Living God, took the time to explain to these disgruntled followers of the Baptist, the principles behind what He was doing. Oh, how patient our God is. He did not scold them for asking. He lovingly gave them God’s perspective in return. Thus we come to today’s text:

¹While He was speaking these things to them, ²a great multitude gathered about him; and he was near the shore of the sea. ³And behold, there came a man whose name was Jairus, ²one of the officials of the synagogue; and when he saw him, ³he fell down at Jesus’ feet and ¹worshipped him, ³and besought him to come to his home. For he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying. ²So he pleaded with him earnestly, saying, “My young daughter is ¹right now ²at the point of death. Come, I pray you, and lay your hands upon her, that she may be healed and live.”

¹Then Jesus arose ²and departed with him,¹and so did his disciples. ³And as he went, ²a great crowd kept following and thronging about him.

(¹Mt 9:18,19; ²Mk 5:21b-24; ³Lk 8:41,42 TLOCIS)¹

It is the story of a typical day in the life of God. And several keys unfold that help us see what a typical day in the life of God in us should be like. Our outline:

- I- “While He Was Speaking; As He Went”
- II- An Impossible Choice
- III- Sure Someone Touched You
- IV- Sorry God, You Missed Your Chance
- V- While You Are Speaking; As you Go

¹ The Life of Christ in Stereo: The Four Gospels Speak in Harmony; by Johnston M. Cheney; © 1969 Western Conservative Baptist Seminary, Portland, Oregon

While He Was Speaking: As He Went

“WHILE HE WAS SPEAKING; AS HE WENT”

Those two phrases capture the essence of the life of Christ. If you want to do an interesting study, take a concordance and find the number of times in the life of Christ we read, “as He was speaking...” or something similar. The life of God flowed through Jesus Christ. So everything He did was an adventure, and every place He went was an exciting challenge. Have you ever stopped to realize that Jesus, who was *always filled with the Spirit, never stopped being spiritual?* He was being spiritual when He rested in that boat. He was being spiritual when He hosted a supper on the grounds. He was being spiritual when He cooked breakfast for His team. He was being spiritual when He ate, when He slept, when He preached, and when He didn’t. He was being spiritual when He walked, when He worked, and when He rested. Everything He did was led by the Spirit. Everything. When He was washing dirty feet; when He was cleansing the temple, when He was preaching to multitudes, when He was walking with one; never at any time was Jesus Christ less than God the Father wanted Him to be.

Therefore, every interruption was a divine interruption; and every apparent intrusion on His time was not an intrusion at all, but rather God’s way of utilizing that time in whatever way would most glorify His Name. Jesus didn’t have to sit down and have a committee meeting to find needs to meet. He was just Himself wherever the Father placed Him, and *while He was speaking*, and as He went, people came to Him. From the most unexpected places, they came. With the most unbelievable problems, they came. At the most inconvenient times, they came. And always, always, always, He was about His Father’s business.

Jesus had stopped to explain to a nervous bunch of John’s followers why His team wasn’t fasting. But He had time to do that. And even as He did that, *in fact, while He was speaking*, a great multitude gathered about Him. Jesus never had a problem drawing a crowd, because He did the two things you and I must do if we want to be used of God: He taught the Word and He met needs. Not one or the other...both. Oh, that churches could see that divine balance in Jesus’ life. Teaching without loving is cold and unfruitful. Love without teaching will warm men’s hearts, but not change men’s lives. Jesus did both. And so must we.

A great multitude gathered about him,

And behold, there came a man... (Mark 5:21b,22a TLOCIS)

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You and I would have been so enamored with the multitudes we would have missed the man. Not Jesus. He never saw the crowd as a unit. He only saw the people...one by one. I stand up and look out at an auditorium of people, and my mind focuses on numbers. Jesus looked at the multitudes and saw multitudes of individuals. Whenever we get too busy to listen to one lonely man, or one weeping widow, or one struggling child, because the grind of organizing to get more people has taken its toll, we are on the way down the highway to mediocrity.

Jesus loved the multitudes. But when one man who was desperately hurting stepped up, the heart of God wrapped itself around that one man, and it was as though he were the only one in the crowd. So often, someone who is really hurting will come up to me while I'm preparing to teach or have just finished teaching, and I will abruptly sweep them aside, lest I lose my train of thought or miss my chance to speak to the multitudes. God forgive me. He was never too preoccupied with what He was about to do, to do what the Father sent Him to do.

AN IMPOSSIBLE CHOICE

And just who was this man? His name was Jairus. He was the administrative superintendent of the synagogue. It was his job to oversee the services, care for the facilities, and see that nothing improper ever took place there. For him to come to Jesus was a step into the realm of possible censure. He faced certain persecution and possible banishment from his coveted position. He simply had to be desperate to be where he was at that moment. Jesus didn't go looking for a project; He didn't have to organize the "witness to the leaders of the synagogue" movement. He simply went about the task of being who He was, and the Father saw to it that His days were filled with just the right amount of ministering, and just the right amount of strength.

This man may well have been one of those who had plotted to trap the Master and bring an end to His ministry. That wouldn't matter to Jesus. Paul was such a man. And God was looking for such a man as Paul. Jairus had a need, a deep need, and that need would allow Jesus to reveal to Jairus who He was. So Jesus stopped and listened, not the way we listen; He listened with His heart...and His heart was moved with compassion. Jairus' daughter was dying. His only daughter. Jairus didn't begin by asking. He began by worshipping. Oh, that we could remember

the sequence.

Jesus listened to his story; and immediately, He arose and departed with him to follow him to where his daughter was. I can imagine the disciples' concerns. Here He was, leaving a crowded church service, filled with ardent admirers, to help a man who may well have been leading Him into a trap. *While He was speaking, the crowds gathered; and while He was ministering, Jairus came.* And as He went...behold, a great crowd surrounded Him, and literally encased Him in a tomb of human flesh. He scarcely could move, and yet He was on His way to reach a dying child. What a time to have to go bumper to bumper in five o'clock traffic! Was Jesus paralyzed with fear that He wouldn't arrive on time? No, not at all.

You see, the Father never runs out of time. And neither will we, if we learn to rest and let God be Himself in us. Just watch this sequence of events unfold, and you'll see what I mean. Now let's continue reading where we left off.

³And as he went, a great crowd kept following and thronging about him.

¹Then behold, ²a certain woman ¹who had been diseased with a flow of blood for twelve years—who had suffered much under many physicians ³but could not be cured by any, ²and had spent all she had and was in no way improved but instead had grown worse—having heard about Jesus, came up in the throng behind him. And she touched ¹the border of his garment, for she was saying to herself, “If I may but touch ²his clothes, I shall be cured.” And instantly her flow of blood was dried up, and she knew in her body that she was healed of the affliction.

(¹Mt 9:20,21; ²Mk 5:25-29; ³Lk 8:43,44 TLOCIS)

SURE, SOMEONE TOUCHED YOU

Talk about a complicated life. Here's God, living in a human body, coming to do the Father's will. Put yourself in His place. It appears to be the Father's will to teach the multitudes. But while you're teaching the multitudes, Jairus comes along and interrupts you with a touching story about a dying daughter. So it appears to be the Father's will for you to heal Jairus' daughter. You're on your way to heal Jairus' daughter, and boom, the crowds overwhelm you and won't let you move. It appears to be the Father's will for you to deal with the multitudes, and wham, here comes a woman who has suffered much for twelve years...physical weakness,

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social rejection, emotional trauma. She reaches out and touches the hem of your garment, and *immediately* she is healed. Well, so much for that, you and I would proclaim. Our program healed her. Get her to fill out a visitor's slip so we can count her on our monthly reports, and let her go. But for Heaven's sake, don't stop. You've got to do the Father's will, remember? Read on.

¹Then immediately Jesus, knowing in himself that the power had gone forth from him, turned about in the throng and said, ³"Who was touching me?" ²Who touched my clothing?" ³With all denying it, Peter and ²the disciples ³who were with him, said ²to him, ³"Master, ²you see the crowd that is pressing all around you, and yet you are saying, 'Who touched me?'" ³But Jesus said, "Somebody touched me; for I knew that the power went forth from me." ²And he started to look around to see the one who had done this.

So the woman, frightened and trembling, knowing what had been done to her, ³when she saw that she was not hid, ²came and fell down before him and told him all the truth, ³declaring before all the people why she had touched him and how she was instantly healed. And he said to her, ¹"Be of good courage, daughter; your faith has healed you. ²Go in peace, and be well of your scourge."

(¹Mt 9:22; ²Mk 5:30-34; ³Lk 8:45-48 TLOCIS)

Here's God on His way to heal the dying daughter of the synagogue superintendent, when a pathetic woman touches His robe, and is healed. As I said, you and I would have chalked her up to the fruitfulness of the ministry, counted her as a by-product, used her tear-jerking story in our fund-raising brochure, and pressed on. Not Jesus. The power of God had flowed through Him and touched someone, because that someone had reached out and touched Him. He was moved with compassion. He stopped dead in his tracks and asked, "Who touched me?" The disciples, with their usual incredible level of sensitivity, responded, "Sure somebody touched you...you're in the middle of a mob scene... what do you mean somebody touched me?" Everybody touched you!"

Jesus answered, "Guys, you don't get the picture. I mean somebody touched me! It appeared for a moment that they would get lost in a sea of semantics. The issue wasn't who physically touched Him, but who spiritually reached out to Him. The disciples couldn't tell the difference. Often, neither can we. Jesus in us, however, always can. At first, everyone denied it. Then,

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the woman, frightened and trembling, fell down at His feet and confessed. Jesus spoke love to her troubled spirit. “Be of good courage, daughter,” He whispered, “Your faith has healed you. Go in peace, and be well of your scourge.” You say, “Wow, what an afternoon. But what about Jairus’ daughter?” Good question. Next verse.

²While he was yet speaking, there came some from the home of the synagogue official. ³One of them said to him, “Your daughter has died; trouble not the teacher ²further.” ³But Jesus, having heard ²the word that was spoken, said to the official of the synagogue, “Fear not; only believe, ³and she shall be restored.”

(¹Mt 9:23-26; ²Mk 5:35,36; ³Lk 8:49,50, TLOCIS)

SORRY, GOD, YOU MISSED YOUR CHANCE!

The flesh would respond like this: “Wow, Jesus, did you blow this one! You set as your first priority to heal this girl who was dying; along comes a throng to slow you down and, suddenly, from out of nowhere, a pathetic woman who’d been suffering for years gets in the way, and before you know it, the child is dead. Next time, Lord, stick to your daily checklist, and these things won’t happen.” So much for the flesh. *It’s always wrong.* I mean, this woman had been suffering for twelve years, you and I would surmise, but this girl’s case is a matter of life or death. Now it appears to be death. “Sorry, God, you missed your chance,” we would have self-righteously declared. And don’t we often, in so many words, say just that. “Lord, if you have only been here,” Mary and Martha declared. “Had you only been on time.” Nonsense. God is always on time. And God in us is never late, either. You know the rest of the story. The delay only gave God a chance to bring more glory to Himself. Now there could be no explaining away what was about to happen. Jesus spoke to the child, raised her from her sleep of death, and word went out through all the region that even the keys to death belong to the Living God. Indeed they do.

WHILE WE ARE SPEAKING; AS WE GO

The lessons behind this lesson are many. We will, however, concentrate on only one, but that one is a heavy one. It is the issue of letting God be Himself on a day-to-day basis. Watch Jesus live the life. He was never flustered. Never hurried. Never panicked. Constantly interrupted. Continually vulnerable.

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Usually misunderstood, even by those He was training to take over the ministry. What did He do? *He relaxed*. He took one day at a time; one hour at a time; one minute at a time. He knew that if He was in the Father's will, it didn't matter what the clock said. The Father owned the clock. He knew that even what *appeared to be too late*, would only further bring God glory, so long as He was living and walking by the Father's timepiece.

So the Master quietly rested and took one thing at a time. One interruption at a time. One crisis at a time. And if while He was yet speaking, another crisis arose, He quietly dealt with what seemed to be most immediate and left the long-range solutions in the hands of the Father. You and I would have panicked. But God in us would have been at rest. And that, Beloved, is the key to the Christ-filled, joy-filled, Christian life—letting God *be* Himself. When you do that, you do not become paranoid over the seemingly impossible amount of ministering before you. When you do that, you do not become frantic, even if, *while you are speaking*, or *as you are going*, another seemingly impossible crisis arises. God can handle seemingly impossible crises. And *when He does*, they become miraculous opportunities for Him to demonstrate who He is.

In closing, why don't we stop right now and take a deep breath and simply ask God just to be Himself in us in the week to come. Let's tell Him we'll stop letting the flesh crowd in and cause us to fear. We'll let the Christ-life flow through us unhindered, and as it does, we'll relax. We can't do it, anyhow. So why get so tense? And if we know God can, then why not enjoy letting Him?

No telling what may happen. We may be ministering to a crowd, and *as we are speaking*, someone with a great need will surface seemingly out of nowhere. We may stop to go where we're needed, and *as we are going*, someone may reach out to us, seeking to get in touch with the Master. We'll be tempted to panic. We musn't.

Instead, we need to remember this story...and relax!

God is at rest in us. May we be at rest in Him.

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For Application

1- Try to imagine how you would have planned God's entrance into planet earth as a man. What kind of home would you have chosen for God to dwell in? What kind of reception would He have had? Would He have been born in a manger? What would the results of His trial had been?

2- How would you have changed the circumstances of your life if you were God? Be honest. What would you have eliminated from your life that you had no control over? What would you have lost, spiritually, had your life been according to your plan?

3- What was troubling the disciples of John the Baptist? Can you identify with their complaint? Can you think of a modern day parallel? Can you explain Jesus' answer?

4- Had you been Jesus, how would you have dealt with the woman who touched you? You were already late to Jairus' house to save his daughter. Would you have told her to wait? Would you have simply ignored her, since she was already healed?

5- What can you do, practically speaking, to help you to stop being frantic when life's divine interruptions crowd into your day? How can watching Jesus as He ministers help you to rest amidst life's pressures? Memorize this passage as a reminder of how the Master dealt with intrusions into His schedule.

6- Spend some time alone with God examining your priorities. Do you see people as individuals? Would you have stopped what you were doing, as Jesus did, to listen to the problems of one man? Design a project to help remind yourself when you look at a group, that you are looking at individuals, each with a personal need.

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210-226-0000 or 1-800-375-7778

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