**Lost People Matter to God**

Sunday - June 7, 2020

We are going to continue our series today called Eyes on Jesus, but before we do, I want to address something that we’ve been talking about at Bible Study the last couple of weeks.

Our nation is very divided once again. So much dissention, division, bitterness and anger.

Many of us are still reacting to the brutal Memorial Day murder of an unarmed man in Policy custody in Minneapolis, less than two weeks ago.

It’s a harsh reminder of the evil that prevails in our world, and it sometimes frustrates us because we want to do something about it but we’re not sure what.

Currently the most troubling issue, along with COVID19 is*:*

***Racism****, (which effects many races).*

*We see every day how much hurt, anger and violence this issue raises, particularly in our cities.*

*Many of you have shared some of your other deep concerns in these times:*

*The most ancient, insidious and deadly form of racism is* ***“Antisemitism****”, which may not be as talked about, but never goes away .*

*And always heavy on our hearts and minds is the most horrific violation of Human Rights that ever existed.* ***Abortion.***

*These are troubling times. We see clearly that we are in a battle, not against flesh and blood but as Eph. 6:12 tells us is “*against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”

The early church faced similar oppression just as they were starting out. Their oppression came at the hands of the Romans, but also the “Jewish” Leaders, such as Herod.

Acts 12 tells us how Herod had James, one of the favorite apostles of the early church arrested and murdered with a sword while in custody. It pleased the people, so he had Peter arrested as well, and he was next.

I imagine that the church was *infuriated with righteous anger* and wanted to react. But what did they do? What would *we* do?

Here’s what they did:

**Acts 12:5** “So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him.”

God intervened…

By the end of the Chapter;

* Peter was freed from prison by an angel
* Herod was struck dead and was eaten by worms

and

* Acts 12:24 “the word of God grew and multiplied!”

There are many things you can do in response to injustice, but according to the word of God, **prayer** is the most powerful and effective.

Regarding Racism. We must *lead* the world by example of what it means to act in the opposite of Racism.

To do that we must come to a place where we *do not* regard and identify ourselves OR others in terms of our outward appearance, but only by who we are, and who they are “IN CHRIST.” We must demonstrate that in our love toward one another.

Put on new clothes:

***Gal. 3:26-28 “So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, 27for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”***

***“clothed yourselves with Christ” –*** *no longer identified by your outward distinctives, but by Christ within you*

***Jew nor Gentile, - (Ethnicity)*** This does not mean they never referred to people as Jews or Gentiles anymore, they did. It means that in Jesus, those things do not matter. ALL are equally given access to the Father. Our ethnicity and race, while it stills exists, and is important to our background, should not be part of our identity of who we are in Christ.

***neither slave nor free, (Socio-Economic)*** This does not mean that everyone is the same socio-economically, It means we are not to value or identify anyone according to that status, only who they are in Christ.

***nor is there male and female (Gender)*** This is NOTa call towards gender-neutrality, only that men and women, while different physically, we are the same spiritually, and equal in Christ.

When we look at each other through the “eyes of the Spirit”, we see beyond race, ethnicity, socio-economic status and gender. We see people as God sees them.

***1 Sam 16:7 “*The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."**

**This is how we are to look at one another, the way God looks at us!**

As a kid (growing up during the Civil Rights & Women’s Lib movement, I was taught never to refer to a doctor who was a woman as a “female doctor”, just a Doctor. Or my neighbor who was Jewish, as my Jewish neighbor, just my neighbor, or my friend who was black, as a “black friend”.

This is why it bothers me when I hear people refer to a *White Pastor*, or a *Black church*, a*, Hispanic worker* or an *Indian family*. This is not how God looks at us!

If a new Chinese Family joins the church. They are a “new family”. Praise God! that’s it.

*Ben Carson – “Neurologist”,*

*ML King –* “I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.”

*We’ve got to get to a place where we do too.*

This may be how we are now, for practical reasons but it’s not the direction we should be going and it’s definitely not how we will end up when we are in heaven.

In order to end racism, discrimination, and prejudice within the church, we need to commit to seeing people as God sees us, not how society defines us. If we can lead by example, we could be a shining light that pierces the darkness of all the racial tension that exists in society today.

No longer a worldly point of view:

***2 Cor 5:16-17 “16 So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”***

***“from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view”***

***Not by skin color,***

***Ethnicity,***

***Culture,***

***Accent***

***Heritage***

***Background***

***Socio-economic status***

*If anyone is in Christ, let us first and foremost regard them as that, “In Christ”*

This is not just the absence of racism, it the opposite of racism.

Racism is a very important and sensitive issue to many people, so it should be for us.

As much as we are able, we need to offer them the peace of Jesus.

**But what is most the most important issue to Jesus?**

I believe it happens to be the *first* of the

Seven Core Values of the Christian and Missionary Alliance:

**“LOST PEOPLE MATTER”**

**#1: “Lost People matter to god, he wants them saved.”**

“Jesus’ primary mission was, in His own words, *“to seek and to save what was lost”* (Luke 19:10). It is clear from His parting words to the disciples that His intent is for us to be just as concerned with this activity as He was.” *(John Soper)*

Jesus’s Three directives:

1. **Mark 16:15** “He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.””
2. **Mark 28:19-20** “Therefore go and make disciplesof all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” *(The Great Commission)*
3. **Acts 1:8** “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” *(His Final Words)*

Jesus clearly makes his desire known to us through these three directives and throughout the gospel.

Which brings us to our text in our Journey through Mark called “EYES ON JESUS”

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When we left off he had just been ejected in Nazareth.

Soon after he left Nazareth he conducted a training project with the Apostles.

He sends them out two-by-two on a short-term mission trip with practically nothing to bring along, and directs them to thrive in ministry in unfamiliar and sometimes hostile environments.

**MARK 6:7-11** **“7**And he **called** his twelve disciples together and began **sending** them out **two by two**, giving them **authority** to cast out evil spirits. **8**He told them to **take nothing** for their journey except a walking stick—**no food, no traveler’s bag, no money.** **9**He allowed them to wear sandals but not to take a change of clothes.

**10**“Wherever you go,” he said, “**stay in the same house** until you leave town. **11**But if any place **refuses** to welcome you or listen to you, shake its dust from your feet as you leave to show that you have abandoned those people to their fate. **12**So the disciples went out, telling everyone they met to repent of their sins and turn to God.”

The Mission:

**7**And he **called** his twelve disciples together

1. **CALLED:**

The disciples were CALLED by Jesus, they didn’t just happen to discover Him by chance. It’s important to know that we are called by God.

and began **sending** them out….

1. **SENDING**:

They were sent by Jesus, they did not just wander off.

**John 17:18**  **18**Just as you sent me into the world, I am sending them into the world.

1. **TWO-BY-TWO:**

Working in pairs: the common practice of the early church

Jesus often sent his disciples in pairs.

Two disciples were sent to find the donkey for Palm Sunday ([Luke 19:29](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2019.29)).

He sent Peter and John together to prepare for the Passover ([Luke 22:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2022.8)).

Prior to becoming disciples, Peter and John had worked as pairs with their brothers Andrew and James.

Peter and John continued to work together as a pair after Jesus died ([John 20:2-3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2020.2-3); [Acts 3:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%203.1), [4:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%204.1), [13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%204.13)).

The book of Acts continues with the team of Barnabas and Paul, who soon split into Barnabas and John Mark (the gospel writer), and Paul and Silas.

We should all have a ministry partner. If you don’t have someone to share in ministry with, ask God to send one, (they might already be in place.)

**Ecc. 4:9-10** **9**Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. **10**If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble

1. **AUTHORITY**:

giving them **authority** to cast out evil spirits.

They were to operate in HIS authority, not just their own credibility and strength.

**Matt 28:18** Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth.

They operated in his Authority, NOT just using His name to cast out demons. That simply does not work:

1. **TAKE NOTHING**:

8He told them to ***take nothing*** for their journey except a walking stick.

This is the same way Moses was sent to Pharaoh.

Jesus was reinforcing his Sermon on the Mount teaching of “*COMPLETE dependence on God”*:

**Matt 6:31-33**

**31**“So don’t worry about these things, saying, ‘What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?’ **32**These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs.**33**Seek the Kingdom of Godabove all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.”

* **no food**, - They need to rely on God for their daily bread
* **no traveler’s bag**, - They could not depend on their own provision.
* **no money** – They were not to be self-sufficient, God would provide

He allowed them to wear sandals but **not** to take a *change of clothes*. – They even needed to trust God with what they wore.

**10**“Wherever you go*,”* he said, “**stay in the same house** until you leave town.

The work of the Lord took place in Homes throughout the region. The early church began in the Temple, but they met in homes.

**Acts 5:42** And every day, in the Temple and from house to house, they continued to teach and preach this message: “Jesus is the Messiah.”

1. **REFUSED/REJECTED**:

**11**But if any place refuses to welcome you or listen to you, *shake its dust from your feet* as you leave to show that you have abandoned those people to their fate.

* **Rejecting the Apostles** was the *same as rejecting Jesus*. There are consequences.

**Luke 10:16 16**Then he said to the disciples, “Anyone who accepts your message is also accepting me. And anyone who rejects you is rejecting me. And anyone who rejects me is rejecting God, who sent me.”

There is serious Judgement on those who reject the Lord. We don’t like to talk about it but as much as there is eternal blessing for those who accept Him, there are eternal consequences for those who reject Him.

1. **GO OUT**

**12**So the disciples went out, telling everyone they met to repent of their sins and turn to God.

**This is why the mission of preaching the gospel is so important.**

Jesus is calling ALL of us to the work of this ministry!

**2 Timothy 4:5** “But you should keep a clear mind in every situation. Don't be afraid of suffering for the Lord. Work at telling others the Good News, and fully carry out the ministry God has given you.”

**Lost People Matter to God and He wants them to be saved.**

Our job is to go out and tell them that.

**2 Cor.5:18-19** “All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: **19**that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.”

Let’s commit in these troubled times to offer people what they need most.

Beyond their crisis, anger, depression, fear and even sickness,

Their most dire need is to be “reconciled to God”

“he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.”

They desperately need what we have,

Let’s offer that to them the best we can.