

A Clear Mission, A Clear Message
Jesus and the Outsider, Pt. 1
Luke 24:36-49

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I. PRAYER

- i. Would you help us to be a church that plunges deep into the depths of knowing you and at the same time a church that casts our nets wide to reach those who are farthest from you.

II. INTRODUCTION

- a. Well, over the last few weeks, we have been studying various parts of Luke's Gospel.
 - i. So, three weeks ago, we were in Luke 9 where Jesus transitioned his ministry from Galilee in the Northern part of Israel and began his journey to Jerusalem where he would head toward the cross.
 - ii. Two weeks ago, we studied Luke 19, which was when Jesus arrived in Jerusalem where ultimately, he would go to the cross.
 - iii. Last week was Easter.
 - We were in Luke 24 and studying why it was necessary that Jesus go to the cross and why it was necessary that he was raised from the dead.
- b. Well, this morning we are starting a new Sermon Series called "Jesus and the Outsider."
 - i. And to begin this series I want us to pick up in the Gospel of Luke where we left off last week.
 - That is in Luke 24 at the Resurrection of Jesus.



- ii. Because I want you to think about the people who were following Jesus throughout his ministry.
- Just three years prior to Jesus' death and resurrection, they were normal people working normal jobs.
 - And this guy comes around and tells them to drop everything they were doing to follow him.
 1. And these guys aren't crazy.
 2. But the Holy Spirit burned within their minds and their hearts and they knew they had to follow this guy.
 - So, they begin to follow Jesus...
 1. This guy who claimed he was the Son of God.
 2. This guy who claimed he was the Messiah.
 3. This guy who could heal the sick, make the blind see, control the weather, and raise people from the dead.
 - And they follow him all the way down to Jerusalem.
 1. And things start to get out of hand.
 2. And Jesus is arrested. He's put on trial.
 3. He's tortured and brutally executed on a cross.
 - And people began to question them...if they were friends of Jesus...
 1. And many of them denied Jesus out of fear...
 2. It's hard to blame them...
 3. Why is this guy who said He was God being executed on the cross?
 - And Jesus dies and is buried in a tomb....and all is silent.
 1. Think about how long Saturday was.



2. Is that it? Was this all a hoax?
 3. What do we believe in now?
 4. What do we do with our lives, now?
- iii. And in Luke 24, after Jesus is raised from the dead, he is going to appear to his disciples.
- And what Jesus is going to do is he is going to bring clarity to everything.
- c. We are people who need clarity.
- i. God created us with minds that can reason and use logic.
 - And it is right that we want clarity when it comes to how we relate with God and what God wants from us.
 - And in this interaction between the Risen Jesus and these shell-shocked disciples, Jesus brings such needed, perfectly timed clarity.
 - ii. You know, my wife and I lived in Dallas for a little bit while I was doing some seminary work.
 - And I got a part-time job at a public policy consulting firm.
 1. This was a firm run by a very well-connected Texan.
 2. So, the firm had all sorts of contracts with local governments around the Dallas metroplex.
 3. So, cash was not in short supply.
 - But, after I started working at the firm it didn't take me long to realize, I don't think anyone around here knows what we do.



- So, I remember I would show up for work and I'd go to my boss's office, and I would say: "Hey Rick, what can I do for ya today?"
 1. And Rick would go: Hey Allan, yeah sit tight, I'll be by in a bit..."
 2. So, I would go to my office and sit tight.
 3. An hour later I would go back to Rick..."Uh, hey Rick, what can I do for ya."
 4. Oh, sorry, Allan. Here...and he would hand me a few tasks to do...
 5. It would take me 20 minutes to do it.
 6. I'd go back to his office...let him know that I was available for more work...he would tell me to sit tight.
 7. And I would spend hours at this office DOING NOTHING! It drove me crazy!
- So, I started searching for new jobs.
 1. And I'll never forget one day I went in to work and I got called to my boss's office.
 2. And Rick goes: "Uh, Allan, it has been brought to my attention by my director of IT that you have been using your work hours and company computers to search for and apply to other jobs."
 3. "Now, tell me Allan, are you unhappy with your current work situation."
- Uh oh. I got caught.
 1. But I said YES! I am unhappy! We don't do anything around here!
- And some people might go: Allan! What is your problem? You had a great gig! You're getting paid to do nothing!



1. But no! That's miserable!
- God has designed us to be motivated when we have clarity and purpose.
- iii. And listen, in the interaction that we are going to read between the Risen Jesus and His disciples, Jesus is not just going to provide clarity to His disciples...
 - Jesus is going to launch the world's most influential and resilient institution that His disciples will lead.
 - And that institution will have the influence and resiliency that it has because Jesus is going to give it a crystal clear mission and a crystal clear message.
- iv. And that institution is the church.
 - The church has a clear purpose. A clear mission. A clear message. There should never be a time where the church is bored and unsure what to do.
 - And although over the next 2000 years, the church will be attacked, all sorts of radical and subtle false teachers try to get it off message, it will be politically marginalized, and many other things...it will endure because Jesus Christ has given it a clear mission, a clear message, and the power of the Holy Spirit to hold it together.

III. LUKE 24:36-49

a. Read Luke 24:36-49 (w/ context of v.36)

- i. So, when Jesus appears to his disciples, they were obviously in a state of disbelief.
 - They just saw this guy get brutally killed on the cross and buried in a tomb.



- Sure, they have been hearing people say that he had risen from the dead...but sometimes it's just hard for us to believe in the super natural.
 1. Even when it is right in front of our eyes.
 2. So, what does Jesus do? Look at v.44-45.
- ii. He does a Bible study!
 - Jesus reveals his identity as the risen Christ by pointing his disciples to the Scriptures, which at this time would have been the Old Testament.
 1. And he shows his disciples how all of the Bible is pointing to this very moment where Jesus died, was raised, and is now commissioning the church.
 2. Earlier in Luke 24, the Risen Jesus encountered some people as they were walking on a road to the Emmaus...Jesus does the same thing...
 3. Read **v.27** and then **v.32**.
 4. Jesus reveals Himself through showing Himself in all of the Scriptures.
 - So, church, would you hear this:
 1. If this book is good enough for the Lord Jesus, who is standing in front of his disciples with holes in his hands and holes in his feet and they're still looking at him not believing that he was raised from the dead...
 2. If it was good enough for Jesus to say: "Okay...you don't believe that it's me...someone get me a Bible."
 3. And for him to open it up and say: "Look, let me show you it's me..."



4. If the Bible is good enough for Jesus, it's good enough for us.

IV. A CLEAR MISSION

- a. So, Jesus makes it clear that all of the Bible is about Him and this moment where he was crucified and raised.
 - i. And so, the disciples get it. Jesus opened their minds. It was the most legit Bible Study you've ever seen.
 - And as soon as the disciples get it, Jesus tells them what they are to do with it.
 - Read v.46-48.
 - ii. So, Jesus helps the disciples to understand the content of the Scriptures and then he commissions the disciples to take this message about the crucified and risen Savior to all of the nations...starting in Jerusalem.
 - The mission that Jesus gives the disciple and also the church is clear...preach the Scriptures to all nations.
 1. And all of the Bible supports this mission.
 2. It is clear, that God's mission ever since we sinned against him was to pursue us so we could be reconciled to him.
 3. Go back to Genesis 12, when God first appears to Abraham.
 4. He tells Abraham you are going to be the Father of the Nation of Israel.



5. And God very clearly explains to Abraham what his purpose is in raising up the Nation of Israel in the Old Testament.
 6. Genesis 12:2-3 – “And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”
 7. Joe read from Psalm 67 earlier.
 8. Remember v.1-2 – “May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, that your way may be known on earth, your saving power among all nations.”
- This is just scratching the surface, but all of the Bible is one unified story about God accomplishing salvation for us outsiders in and through Jesus.
 - This is why at Grace Hill Church we only preach the Scriptures and we always preach Christ.
 1. Because the Scriptures are all about Jesus...the black letters and the red letters.
 2. The Old Testament points to and looks to the crucified and risen Savior.
 3. The New Testament responds to and expounds upon the crucified and risen Savior.
 4. The message of the Bible is all about God redeeming for himself a people in and through Jesus.
 5. That’s what Jesus says here in Luke 24.



- b. So, the whole Bible is about Jesus because the whole Bible is about how God pursues the outsiders to make them insiders.
- i. The Scriptures say that God created us to live in his Kingdom but we have sinned against him, we have rejected His Kingdom and therefore have been expelled out of His Kingdom.
- We are outsiders.
 - But from the beginning of the Bible to the end, we see an unfolding story about how God makes a way for those who are on the outside of the Kingdom of God to be admitted back in to the Kingdom of God.
 1. That way is Jesus.
 2. Who came as one of us. Died on the cross in our place. Was risen from the grave paying off our debt of sin.
 3. And now offers us reconciliation with God and citizenship in God's Kingdom if we will repent of our sin and trust in Christ as our Lord and Savior.
 - And the church has been commissioned by God to continue that mission of going after outsiders and proclaiming this message that forgiveness of sins is available in and through Jesus Christ.
- ii. Don't you find it interesting that immediately after Jesus helped the disciples to understand their Bibles, his immediate call on their lives was to go and proclaim it to the outsiders.
- The more we understand the Scriptures.
 - The deeper we go into theology.
 - The deeper we plunge into the things of God.



- The more mature and seasoned we are in our walks with Christ.
 - The more we will understand the reality that our God does not desire for any to perish and we will cast our nets wide in proclaiming the good news that forgiveness of sins is available in Jesus Christ.
 1. Why does the church exist?
 2. Why doesn't God just end the misery of the world and let us all go to heaven now?
 3. Because the church is God's plan to get this message to everyone on the outside.
 4. It's God's Plan A.
 5. There is no other plan and this plan will not fail.
- iii. There seems to be this rivalry in church world between churches that emphasize going deeper in their walk with God and churches that emphasize going wider in reaching people.
- And the churches that go deep are accused of not reaching people.
 - And the churches that go wide are accused of not being deep and sincere in their walk with Jesus.
 - Why can't we be both?
 1. When I read Luke 24...it seems to me that a deeper understanding of the Bible leads to a wider mission.
 2. That the deeper we know the heart of God the more we will realize that he has commanded us to go proclaim to the nations.



- c. The deeper we plunge into the things of God, the wider our reach will be because Jesus has given the church a clear mission.
- Here is how Matthew records it in Matthew 28. The risen Jesus said to his disciples: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ 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, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
- i. This is our mission.
- This is why we planted Grace Hill Church.
 - It wasn't to create another church option in Northern Virginia.
 - It's because we believe that the more churches we have who don't question the words of Jesus but take these marching orders from our Lord and Savior seriously...the better because more outsiders will be reached.

V. A CLEAR MESSAGE

- a. But you might say: “Allan, I'm with you. The mission is crystal clear. I don't dispute it.”
- i. But I have to be honest, I have a really hard time with this. We're always talking about evangelism and telling our neighbors and co-workers about Jesus...but let me be straight with you.



- It makes me uncomfortable and I don't want to do it.
 1. Can anybody relate with that?

b. Well, I have two responses to that.

- i. The first is that Jesus has given us a clear mission.
 - And there is sense where we are called to sacrifice our comforts and our fears out of love for those who are outside of the Kingdom of God.
 - And the more you walk with Jesus and the more you plunge into a deep knowledge of the Scriptures, the more you'll see that this is what we're called to.

c. But, the second response is that Jesus also has given us a clear message.

- i. And I want to encourage you with this because I believe that one of the reasons why we get so uncomfortable with our call to go after outsiders is because we overcomplicate the message.
 - We believe that what Jesus is asking us to do, is to be the one who does the work of converting an outsider into an insider.
 1. To be the one that convinces them that they should believe in Jesus.
 2. To be the one that has all of the answers to all of their questions.
 3. To be the one what is winsome enough, smart enough, compelling enough to make them believe.
 - And if that is the expectation on us, that should cause us to be nervous.



ii. But look at our text again here in Luke 24.

- We have the disciples who have been walking with Jesus for three last three years.
- They have been listening to his teaching and watching his works.
- They have been students of the Scriptures.
- They have the resurrection Lord Jesus right in front of them with holes in his hands and feet from the cross.
- And they still don't get it!
 1. How many times have you said: Well, if I actually got to see Jesus with my eyes of course I would believe!

iii. Read v.44-45.

- See, the Bible tells us that the Gospel and the truth about Jesus Christ are spiritually discerned truths.
 1. That our natural minds left to themselves cannot comprehend.
 2. In fact, to the natural mind, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is considered foolish.
- This is what Paul teaches us in 1 Corinthians 2:12-14 – “Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. ¹³ And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. ¹⁴ The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.”



- iv. In other words, what we learn in Luke 24 and here in 1 Corinthians 2 is that when it comes to the message that we have been given, we deliver the message but it is God who activates it.
- Our job is not to make someone believe. Only God's Spirit can do that. Our job is to faithfully deliver the message.
 - This is exactly why at the end of Luke 24 Jesus gives them their mission and message, but tells them to wait until they receive the Holy Spirit!
 1. Read v.49.
 2. I'm not sending you alone! You deliver and the Spirit is going to activate it in people.
 3. This is why Jesus tells us in Matthew 28 after giving us the Great Commission that he will be with us always.
 4. This is why before Jesus ascends into heaven, He tells his disciples in Acts 1:8 – "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."
- v. Jesus has given us a clear message and our job is to deliver that message clearly and his job is to activate belief.
- This is why Paul says in 2 Corinthians 4:1-2 – "Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart. ² But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but



by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God."

vi. So, here is the clear message:

- Read v.47.
- Repentance and the forgiveness of sins is available in the name of Jesus Christ.
 1. Repentance – We have all sinned and need to humbly confess our sin and turn from it.
 2. Forgiveness is available through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- Repentance and forgiveness of sins is available in the name of Jesus Christ.
 1. Our job is not to force people to believe this, our job is to deliver the message.
 2. Our job is not to make this message more palatable, our job is to deliver the message.
- Now is it good for us to increase our knowledge of the scriptures, be able to dialogue well with people and answer their questions, and grow deep relationships with people as we share Christ with them?
 1. Of course!
 2. But these are not prerequisites for us to deliver the message and they certainly aren't prerequisites for someone to believe the message.



- d. God has given the church a clear mission and a clear message.
 - i. Go after the outsiders and tell them that repentance and forgiveness of sins is available in the name of Jesus Christ...no other name.

VI. CONCLUDING POINT & SERIES PLUG

- a. Let me close by saying this:
 - i. God has called us to mobilize the insiders to reach the outsiders. But, our religious impulses will tempt us to judge the outsiders and protect the inside.
 - As Mike Cospser says: “What all religions share in common is a sense that the world is neatly divided into those who are in and those who are out. The in-group has found enlightenment, adheres to the right moral code, and makes the right blood-and-sweat sacrifices.”
 - ii. But Jesus does not call us to this. He sends us on a mission to the outsiders.
 - And that’s why we are starting this new series called “Jesus and the Outsider.”
 - Because Jesus is a model for us on what it means to go after the outsiders.
 - And I want us to spend some time as a church thinking about what it means to be on mission and on message here in Northern Virginia.
 - And I want us to learn from Jesus as he engages the outsider and I want us to confront our own religious impulses to keep the outsider out.



1. So, this is something we are going to be doing as a whole church together. Both on Sunday mornings and in our Community Groups.
- iii. So, I hope you'll join us through the next several weeks as we consider this.

VII. PRAY

