

10-3-21 Message
THE FOUNDATION OF ALL MISSIONS

This is missions month. It is our custom to take a whole month and dedicate that month to consider our responsibility as a Church and as Christians to consider the great commission and command of our Lord to be witnesses and to go and share the good news of the gospel to every creature.. meaning.. every nation and people.

Making disciples is the answer to every real problem we face today. This is the supreme goal of the church and why Jesus left us here.

We call missions, the GREAT COMMISSION.. why do we call it the GREAT COMMISSION .. we do so because it is the supreme purpose of the church and it is the last thing the Lord his disciples to perpetuate after he was gone.

I. What is the great commission or missions?

Mark 16:15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

Mark 16:16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

The great commission or missions involves three things. It has not changed through these 2000 years..

It involves..

1. PREACHING THE GOSPEL
2. BAPTIZING THOSE WHO BELIEVE
3. DISCIPLING OR TEACHING THOSE WHO BELIEVE AND ARE BAPTIZED..

Consider these three things..

We find this commission in many other places besides Mark Chapter 16

Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Matthew 28:20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen.

Luke 24:46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

Luke 24:47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Luke 24:48 And ye are witnesses of these things.

Through out the gospels Jesus made it clear that he wanted his disciples to be involved in this great commission.

The first thing he said to Peter and Andrew when he recruited them was...

Matthew 4:19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

So the great commission or missions involves three things..

1. PREACHING THE GOSPEL

The Gospel is the good news that Jesus died for our sins and arose the third day and now promises all that believe on him the gift of eternal life and the gift of the Holy Spirit and a resurrected body ..

2. BAPTIZING THOSE WHO BELIEVE

Urge those who believe to show their commitment to the message by being Baptized..

Baptism is the first step of obedience that you are commanded after you believe.

Do you like it when your children delay obeying you?
What makes you think God is pleased when we put off baptism.

3. DISCIPLING OR TEACHING THOSE WHO BELIEVE AND ARE BAPTIZED..

Tell those who believe that they need to continue in the faith and be taught all things that Christ commanded.. This is a lifetime commitment.

John said,

John 21:25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

Could you imagine, trying to teach someone a subject that could entail all the books of the world and that would not suffice it..

So people think it is too much to ask for people to attend 4 teaching sessions a week to do this..

Sunday School.. Sunday Morning.. Sunday Evening.. And Wednesday Night?

I think we have to have our heads examined if we think we can learn all things Jesus commanded us that easily. We are actually now going through the whole Bible... in our through the Bible Bible study series... We do so spreading that series out between Sunday School, and Wednesday nights and sometimes Sunday nights. What are the all things Christ commanded us to teach. I believe that is the Bible. I heard a preacher recently say he was in the ministry over 40 years and has yet to preach through every book of the Old Testament. Some of you have yet to read through the whole Bible. How are you going to learn all things if you don't come out to church and hear all things?

I was inviting someone to church one time, and he was an older gentlemen who said to me, "...at my age I think if I think I've lived long enough to get the message by now." In other words he was saying he didn't need church because he understood the message and there was nothing left to learn.

This is pretty sad, and pretty much sums up the attitude of many people today and it is an unbiblical attitude.

I remember when I was in college and I got sick one time and was not able to make classes for a few days.. Final exams were coming up and I sent my wife to the seminary office to copy the notes for the classes I missed from my Greek professor. In college or seminary if you just missed a few days of classes you would get behind and not be prepared for the exam. My wife came back home without the notes. Dr. Williams confided in her that there would be no exam. Instead he was going to have cake and a party for all the students, but no one was to know. I was the only one that knew. The point is when something is important that you want to learn you don't want to miss anything.

II. WHO ARE TO BE INVOLVED IN THE MINISTRY OF THE GREAT COMMISSION?

The question is who was commanded to go?

JESUS GAVE THE COMMAND TO HIS DISCIPLES..

Who are his disciples? His disciples are all those who have committed their lives to him in salvation, and are saved, baptized and seeking to follow his commandments. That sounds like the qualifications for church membership if you ask me. So every church member and saved individual is to obey the great commission.

In other words every one of us who are true Bible Believing Christians!

If you're saved you're suppose to be one of his disciples, from the least to the greatest! We are all to be witnesses of him.

1. Consider the maniac of Gedara who got saved.. Here we have a perfect example of how every born again Christian should be involved in home missions.

Luke 8:38 Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying,

Luke 8:39 Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him.

Notice when this man got saved and wanted to travel with Jesus, Jesus said, he had a greater job for him to do. He said stay home.

RETURN TO THINE OWN HOUSE .. AND SHEW HOW GREAT THINGS GOD HATH DONE UNTO THEE..

Missions must start at your own house... What good is it to go around the world trying to be a witness to others.. while your own family is going to hell. Witnessing must start where you are.

IT STARTS WITH SHARING YOUR TESTIMONY OF SALVATION:

I had a fellow who once called me and wanted to go door to door soul winning with me. That sounds really spiritual, but the problem was he himself did not have a good testimony. In other words.. he had no deliverance in his own life and was filled with the devil himself.

Remember, when a demon possessed lady tried to be a witness for the Lord. She followed Paul around and kept saying Amen amen.. listen to Paul making a scene.

Acts 16:16 And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:

Acts 16:17 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.

Acts 16:18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

Notice how the devil likes to confuse people by getting people who have a demon pretending to be a witness. This is a counterfeit Holy Spirit and many people witness under the power of demons and not the Holy Spirit of God. Jehovah Witnesses witness but they have no good news to share. They have a false spirit. So I did not go door to door with that fellow.

I want you to note. Jesus told his disciples to tarry in Jerusalem until they be filled with the Holy Ghost and get the power of God then he said, Ye shall be witnesses unto me...

The Lord told this man.. go home and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for you.. This is where witnessing starts. We need to have a testimony of what great things Jesus has done in our lives. We have to be able to say.. I was this.. and now I am this..

Here we read this man's testimony and what great things God did for him.

Luke 8:26 And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee.

Luke 8:27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in [any] house, but in the tombs.

Luke 8:28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, [thou] Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not.

Luke 8:29 (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.)

Luke 8:30 And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him.

Luke 8:31 And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep.

Luke 8:32 And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them.

Luke 8:33 Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.

Luke 8:34 When they that fed [them] saw what was done, they fled, and went and told [it] in the city and in the country.

A. Here is a man, who was filled with the devil. NOTE WHAT HE WAS...

Luke 8:27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in [any] house, but in the tombs.

He was naked and lost all sense of decency and modesty..

He was a man who abandoned his home and house to live with the dead..

He was a man who could not be restrained, others tried and failed..

Chains themselves could not even hold him..

He was a man that just wandered from place to place in the wilderness..

He was a man who progressively got worse and his demons were many.. Legion..

It said, of this man that he was in that state a long, long time.

Luke 8:27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, **which had devils long time**.....

I am sure everyone in his city knew about him.

But this man gloriously got saved..

Everyone, knew about this wild man.. because he was this way a long time.

Now a miracle took place and this man was gloriously saved.

Salvation is the answer to everyman's problems. When Jesus comes into a person's life the demons have to flee.

We have all kind of self help.. and self improvement programs. None of these are the answer.

I was thinking recently.. about the border problem. Think about this..

What if we could go down to the border and as people were crossing over win them to Christ and make disciples out of these people. Imagine if as they were crossing we could set up tents.. Feed them and preach to them and win them to Christ. Then start a church.. What an opportunity that would be.. But I think we would be arrested for doing that. But imagine what could be done with these people. They are coming here for freedom but the greatest freedom is found in Christ.

Christ is the answer to every problem that men face in this world.

Replace the demons in this man with any problem that men face and replace the demons with Christ and the person will be saved from those problems.

B. Notice, how the devils begged Jesus not to send them out

Luke 8:28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, [thou] Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not.

Do you know that when a person has a demon, it is painful to hear the gospel.. When they hear preaching about Christ .. it torments them.. Many times this is why people do not come to church or hate coming to church. It makes them feel uncomfortable.

C. When a person comes to Christ their transformation will become evident to all

Luke 8:35 Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.

Luke 8:36 They also which saw [it] told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed.

This person's change of life will be evident to everyone.

The first thing they notices was the difference in his appearance..

He was clothed.. If you are a Christian you should want to look like a Christian.. I remember when I was working at the mall a fellow came into the store who was suppose to be a Christian. He had long hair, wearing all kind of leather, like the Hell's Angels.. You would never know he was a Christian. This seems to be the trend. Preachers dress down.. Church people look and dress like the world.

Notice that this man was unclothed before. When a person has no problem making themselves naked, this shows a problem with morality, self restraint and self control. A spiritual person will be a moral person. A person's moral standards will change when Christ comes into their lives. This should be evident to all.

He was in his right mind God gives us a sound mind..

II Timothy 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

D. Some people will be afraid of the power of God to tranform lives..

Luke 8:37 Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again.

Why would they ask him to depart?

I think a lot of people are comfortable with the way things are without Christ. If Christ could do this for this maniac of Gadara.. Maybe he can do that in our own lives. This thought scares people. Jesus makes them uncomfortable with themselves. Every unsaved person has his demons.

These people were afraid of loosing their swine. They would rather put up with the maniac of Gadara then give up their swine.

2. NOTICE HOW JESUS TELLS THIS MAN TO GO HOME AND BE A WITNESS TO OTHERS THAT KNOW HIM..

Luke 8:38 Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying,
Luke 8:39 Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him.

A. HE TOLD HIM TO RETURN TO HIS HOUSE AND SHEW THEM WHAT GOD DID FOR HIM..

You greatest testimony is your personal testimony

What are the great things that God has done for you??

Being a witness.. must start where you are at..

a. Start are home with those who are closest to you...

Your salvation testimony should affect those who are in your home..

Do you know that home missions is the hardest missions to gain support for.

It seems all glamour to go to some foreign mission field.

MISSIONS MUST START AT HOME IN YOUR HOUSE..

Consider the greatest mission field of all we are failing in..

Who are the ones that are in your home..

SPOUSE.
CHILDREN..
GRAND CHILDREN...

If Christians would just be able to reach their own, just imagine how the cause of Christ would be furthered..

Look no one knows you like those who live in your home..

Children see right through hypocrisy..

No one can deny a living testimony..

Your testimony.. is this..

What you were before you knew the Lord..
What you are now that Christ has saved you..
What wonderful and good things God has done for you!!!!

Missions must start with your home..

What is the great commission..

Children need to be saved..

Children need to be Baptized after they are saved..

Children need to be taught all things.. Everyday there needs to be Bible teaching in your home...

I have seen parents whose own children are being neglected while they try to be a witness to other children.

I remember one time a lady who was busy bringing other children to church and I noticed her own children were not coming. Not one of her children are in church today. What good did she do?

Your own children are your greatest mission field.

Now the truth is that there are certain things I have seen families do with their children that without fail has not produced good fruit for the Lord..

The Bible says,

II Corinthians 6:14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

II Corinthians 6:15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

II Corinthians 6:16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in [them]; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

II Corinthians 6:17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean [thing]; and I will receive you,

II Corinthians 6:18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

II Corinthians 7:1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

What is a yoking up?

What is a fellowship?

What is a concord?

Let me suggest it is doing things together.. in a comradery..

Let me suggest.. it is teaming up..

Let me suggest.. it is fellowshipping together..

When you do this with your children with the world.. and unsaved children you are asking for trouble.

I have been a pastor now for 38 years. And in all those 38 years I have seen now a few generations of children grow up from being children to adults and come through the church. I have yet to see any children that have gotten involved heavily in sports in the public school that have stayed in the church after they have gotten older. NONE..

We are wholesale losing our children to the world I think maybe we ought to search out why. You say my children are going to be the exception. Why take the chance? You only have one shot at raising children. You don't get to do it all over.

So missions needs to start at home with winning and witnessing to your own family and friends. But then your local church needs to take priority.

B. MISSIONS AND WITNESS NEEDS TO START WITH SUPPORTING YOUR LOCAL CHURCH

If the church goes missions go..

We have put in our bulletin a faith promise commitment form. Notice how there is a commitment to giving the tithe first. What good is it to give to missions and neglect your local testimony and church.

Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

We see the perfect pattern of missions in the life and ministry of Paul the Apostle.

a. HE MINISTERED AT ANTIOCH.. FAITHFULLY..

Barnabas and Saul were faithful to minister at Antioch for years.. then in the process of their working in the local church we read..

Acts 13:1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

Acts 13:2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

Acts 13:3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid [their] hands on them, they sent [them] away.

We read this..

Romans 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Romans 10:14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

Romans 10:15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

We need to change the hymn that says..

So send I you.. to..

So send I me...

Does a soldier, choose where he will serve? How he will serve..

Yet we see time and time again people choosing ministries never seeking the blessing of their local church. Can God bless this?

Do you know.. we are all worked up about this problem with Covid in our nation today. You would think that Covid is the greatest cause of death today. That is all you hear about on TV. There is an agenda with this thing.

Yet the truth is that 80% of all deaths are caused by two diseases, and they are not Covid..

The two greatest Killers are:

Cancer

And Heart Problems..

80% of all deaths are because of these two diseases. The truth is.. that many people that have died of Covid, have had history of heart problems and cancer.

A heart problem.. is deadly .. because it is the center of your life support. Everything needs to proceed from the heart..

Cancer is a deadly disease because what happens is that God made your body to grow and replace unhealthy cells a certain way.. All growth needs to proceed for the benefit of the body. Cancer is when cells in your body decide to grow and multiply apart from direction of the body. God made your cells to grow for the benefit of the body not to weaken or hurt your body. When cells proliferate that are of no benefit to your body, these cells are called cancer cells. They become tumors and ultimately if and when they spread they attack the vital organs of the body and cause death.

Now, we are going to have a church calendar meeting, soon. At that meeting we try to set up our schedule for the whole year. Now there are many many good things that you can attend and support this next year. I am not saying they are bad in and of themselves.. But each of us have the potential of cancer. Cancer, is when a good cell decides to multiply apart from the structure and good health and benefit of your body. This becomes a cancer. We all have potential cancer cells they are just cells that are not healthy and are not beneficial to your body. They are rejected and your immune system tells them to not multiply or proliferate and just die. When your immune system gets weak.. these cells multiply and grow out of control and produce tumors. This growth left uncontrolled and restrained will kill your body.

Now, the church is likened to a physical body in the Bible.

I Corinthians 12:14 For the body is not one member, but many.

I Corinthians 12:18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

I Corinthians 12:27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

The Bible says the church is like a body and just like a body can sick so a church can get sick if that body does not function the way God intended it to function.

God works through chains of authority. Jesus is the ultimate authority.

We are all to be obedient and submissive to Christ, but Christ works through proper chains of authority! Each member is put in the body of Christ for the nurturing and edification of the body..

I Corinthians 12:25 That there should be no schism in the body; but [that] the members should have the same care one for another.

Just like there is a body singular.. God is in the process of building a body.. universally..

God ordained a family to raise children and provide a stable place for children to grow up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord..

The Church does not take the place of the family.. it is made up of a group of families that are networked together to advance the Kingdom of God.

There are things a church can do that a singular family cannot do, there are things a family does that the church cannot supplant. God has a place for both. The church if it is doing its job should be a help and support for your family..

One of the reasons we have a calendar workers meeting is to give an opportunity for us to get together to set up a schedule for the church that is healthy for your family and something that we can all get behind. The church is made up of healthy families and a good church should support the family.

Now in the process of time, when people have been faithful in their service to the Lord in their local church, God may call people out of the church to a greater ministry a more universal ministry. These people are called Evangelists, and missionaries. Paul and Barnabas are usually looked at as being the perfect examples of missions. They were sent out to perform a greater ministry of starting churches.

Their ministry was supported and sanctioned by the church at Antioch.

C. MISSIONS OR WITNESSING MUST SUPPORT THE GREAT MINISTRY OF SENDING PEOPLE OUT TO START CHURCHES AND MINISTER TO CHURCHES

Acts 13:1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

Acts 13:2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

Acts 13:3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid [their] hands on them, they sent [them] away.

When we have healthy families.. we will have..

A Healthy Church.. When we have a healthy church..

We will have healthy outreach and missions..

None should be a hurt or detriment to each other..

Those who are truly called to minister in a greater ministry such as in the ministry of the Evangelist.. if they are truly called of God to that ministry.. their call will be sanctioned and supported by their local church. I also believe these people who are called will also meet all the qualifications of a Bishop as articulated in I Timothy chapter 3. Therefore I can say their calling will not hurt their personal family either.

If it is of God it will produce health and life and God's blessing.

A missionary is the closest thing that could be the modern equivalent to an Apostle.

Just like Paul and Barnabas were sent out of Antioch, so too.. God sends out gifted ministers from the local church to minister to many churches.

Everything is a fulfillment of the pattern.

Just as the family should support the local church..

The Local Church should be a support to missions.. and those who are sent out.

When Paul and Barnabas went out.. they went out and started new Churches,.

So we see the pattern of Home missions in the maniac of Gadara..

The Lord told him go home and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for you..

So the commission is to the your home and family and friends..

Remember the Philippian jailer when he asked what shall I do to be saved,
Paul said believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thine house..

So that commission spills out to the church..

THEN IN TURN .. God calls some to go out.. and fulfill this commission to others
around the world.

THIS IS WHAT THIS MONTH IS ALL ABOUT.. WE WANT TO SUPPORT THESE
WHO DO THIS..

INVITATION:

Are you following the pattern of being a witness..
It must start at home.. and then spill out to the church!

MISSIONS INVOLVES BEING A WITNESS EVERYWHERE...

Acts 1:6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt
thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

Acts 1:7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons,
which the Father hath put in his own power.

Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye
shall be witnesses unto me **both** in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and
unto the **uttermost part of the earth**.

***I. Notice there is a tendency on the part of God's people to get side tracked
from our commission:***

Acts 1:6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt
thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

Acts 1:7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons,
which the Father hath put in his own power.

(1.) Christ is now parting from them, and parts in love; and yet he gives
them this rebuke, which is intended for a caution to his church in all ages,
to take heed of splitting upon the rock which was fatal to our first parents
_ an inordinate desire of forbidden knowledge, and intruding into things

which we have not seen because God has not shown them.

How many people are zealous to support prophetic books para church activities.. and papers and other things that tantalize our curiosity, but have no zeal or heart for witnessing.. or missions..

There are so many things in this life that would side track us from the true commission of our Lord...

We desire to spend all our time satisfying and entertaining our fanciful imaginations and hearts... but how little time we give to witnessing and the support of world wide missions and church building..

II. WHAT DID JESUS MEAN WHEN HE SAID, YE SHALL BE WITNESSES OF ME?

- 1. To witness means we should be willing to stand up and bear record to what our Lord stood for and has done in our lives.. Like Jesus said to the Maniac of Gadara, go home and tell everyone what great things the Lord has done for you. If you are saved he has done great things for you. When we become a witness we become like him.**

The greek word for witnesses is the word:

Martus, from which we get the word "Martyr"

Strongs concordance trace..

Martyr..

Translated..- witness 29, martyr 3, record 2;

1) a witness

1a) in a legal sense

1b) an historical sense

1b1) one who is a spectator of anything, e.g. of a contest

1c) in an ethical sense

1c1) those who after his example have proved the strength and genuineness of their faith in Christ by undergoing a violent death

They shall prove this, shall confirm their testimony, not as witnesses do, with an oath, but with the divine seal of miracles and supernatural gifts: You shall be martyrs to me, or my martyrs, as some copies read it; for they attested the truth of the gospel with their sufferings, even unto death.

2. TO WITNESS OF CHRIST INFERS THAT WE MUST BE LIKE HIM IN THIS WORLD:

John 17:14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

John 17:15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

John 17:16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

John 17:18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

John 17:19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

John 17:20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

John 15:18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before [it hated] you.

John 15:19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

John 15:20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

John 15:21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

John 15:23 He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

III. God's Twofold purpose of witnessing:

II Corinthians 2:14 Now thanks [be] unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

II Corinthians 2:15 For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:

II Corinthians 2:16 To the one [we are] the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who [is] sufficient for these things?

1. We are to more people a savor of death unto death...

To some when we preach we bring tidings of bad news and not good.. we are reminders that there is a hell..

Fellow trying to whitewash hell said, it was maybe not all that bad and that hell may be God's furnace, to keep himself warm.. I said, no it in the Bible hell is likened to God's garbage pit where he burns up all the trash.. Gehenna as a place of continual burning of trash outside of Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 33:11 Say unto them, [As] I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

A. *Ezekiel was an example of a messenger of death unto death:*

Ezekiel 2:4 For [they are] impudent children and stiffhearted. I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD.

Ezekiel 2:5 And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they [are] a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.

Ezekiel 2:6 And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns [be] with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they [be] a rebellious house.

Ezekiel 2:7 And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: for they [are] most rebellious.

Ezekiel 2:8 But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee; Be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house: open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee.

B. *Jeremiah was an example of a messenger of death unto death:*

Jeremiah 20:7 O LORD, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived: thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me.

Jeremiah 20:8 For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the LORD was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily.

Jeremiah 20:9 Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But [his word] was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not [stay].

There is a movement today to avoid the offence of preaching:

Churches are going more & more into Praise services and spending less time preaching and teaching the word of God..

C *We see this trend today as we find people who find preaching a Savor of death unto death and look for the preacher to provide a message or a ministry that appeals to their lust rather than their conscience...*

People often come to church to be entertained more than hear the word of God, this is evidence that our message to them is a message of death unto death

Ezekiel 33:30 Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the LORD.

Ezekiel 33:31 And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee [as] my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, [but] their heart goeth after their covetousness.

Ezekiel 33:32 And, lo, thou [art] unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not.

Ezekiel 33:33 And when this cometh to pass, (lo, it will come,) then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them.

II Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

II Timothy 4:3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

II Timothy 4:4 And they shall turn away [their] ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

II Timothy 4:5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

II Timothy 4:6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

II Timothy 4:7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished [my] course, I have kept the faith:

I believe that the end time church that majors on preaching may not be drawing the record crowds like the old days...

Is this evidence that we need new methods as some would argue?

Is this evidence that preaching is no longer the way to go today?

NO NO NO... It just means that as Paul wrote..

II Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

II Timothy 4:3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

II Timothy 4:4 And they shall turn away [their] ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

II Timothy 4:5 But watch thou in all things, **endure afflictions**, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

2. The second purpose of our witness is that people might be saved:

II Corinthians 2:15 For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:

II Corinthians 2:16 To the one [we are] the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who [is] sufficient for these things?

To the one we are a fragrance of death unto death...

To one we are a savour of life unto life...

Matthew 18:5 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

Matthew 18:6 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and [that] he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

Matthew 10:40 He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

Matthew 10:41 He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

Matthew 10:42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold [water] only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

A. Notice that a person who receives God's messenger receives the Lord himself..

This is why it is so important that we walk in the spirit and be Christ like..

How will people be saved unless they see Christ in us..

The day I got saved... what impressed me was the witness of so many who were saved..

I visited a church I was impressed by the Testimony of believers in the church...

a. This is the fragrance of a believer... it is actually the Holy Spirit that they sense..

The fragrance in the Old Testament was a picture of the spirit of God...

Exodus 30:9 Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering; neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon.

This was symbolically pictured in the Old Testament by the fragrances that could be smelled in the Holy Of Holies

*** There was a special perfume that was to be used only in the temple:**

Exodus 30:34 And the LORD said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum; [these] sweet spices with pure frankincense: of each shall there be a like [weight]:

Exodus 30:35 And thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered together, pure [and] holy:

Exodus 30:36 And thou shalt beat [some] of it very small, and put of it before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, where I will meet with thee: it shall be unto you most holy.

Exodus 30:37 And [as for] the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof: it shall be unto thee holy for the LORD.

Exodus 30:38 Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people.

*** There also was a special anointing oil:**

Exodus 30:31 And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, This shall be an holy anointing oil unto me throughout your generations.

Exodus 30:32 Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured, neither shall ye make [any other] like it, after the composition of it: it [is] holy, [and] it shall be holy unto you.

Exodus 30:33 Whosoever compoundeth [any] like it, or whosoever putteth [any] of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his people.

*** There was a special incense that was to be burned:**

Exodus 30:9 Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering; neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon.

b. A per-requisite to being a witness of Jesus Christ is that we be filled with the spirit of God:

Acts 1:4 And, being assembled together with [them], commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, [saith he], ye have heard of me.

Acts 1:7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Luke 24:48 And ye are witnesses of these things.

Luke 24:49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

The Lord told his early disciples to

TARRY till they be endued with power.. the idea here is to sit still.. and wait.. So they waited and had a 10 day prayer meeting in the upper room and waited for the promise of God..

After Pentecost they became witnesses for Jesus..

They became a sweet savour to God, some believed and some didn't.. but they in either case fulfilled the purpose of witnessing..

II Corinthians 2:14 Now thanks [be] unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

II Corinthians 2:15 For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:

II Corinthians 2:16 To the one [we are] the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who [is] sufficient for these things?

IV. Understanding the twofold purpose for witnessing we should rejoice every time we witness because each time we have an opportunity to share Christ we have been successful.. in accomplishing what the Lord wants us to do

Whatever the outcome we have obeyed the Lord. He alone will bring the increase.

He alone brings the results..

He alone saves we cannot do a thing.