

CHRIST'S CALLING AND PURPOSE (JOHN 15-16)

I originally started with a title for our message as "Our Calling and Purpose in Christ Jesus". Yet really, as we have been looking at the teachings and the parables of Christ Jesus this past summer, and of what is the overall revelation given to us throughout the Word of God, it is Christ Jesus who is seeking us, seeking out the lost sheep. It is then, through Christ's calling that we then receive our calling, as God is presently building His eternal kingdom, through Christ Jesus. We then can see how it is, in the words of the Apostle Paul, from "glory to glory", from God's glory, to Christ's glory, to our glory in Christ Jesus (**2 Corinthians 3:18**), and then also from "faith to faith" (**Romans 1:17**). From the sharing and showing of the love and the gospel of Christ Jesus from one person to the next.

First, it was Jesus' mission to, in His own Words, seek out "the lost sheep of Israel." (**Matthew 15:24**) To His disciples, He called out to them, "come follow Me". He then later on told His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me". (**Matthew 16:24**) Prior to that Jesus had stated, "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it." (**Matthew 10:38-39**)

After Jesus had risen from the dead on the third day, after being crucified on a cross, He expounded upon His new calling and purpose for His disciples, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (**Matthew 28:18-20**) "AH!"

The disciples then, at that point, had a clearer understanding of Jesus' references to taking up their cross and following Him. Later, the Apostle Paul explains Jesus' final mission and purpose. Notice how many times Paul mentions the "Righteousness of God". "But now the righteousness of God [as He is perfect in all of His Ways (**2 Samuel 22:31**) and His Works (**Deuteronomy 32:4**)] apart from the law is revealed [through Christ Jesus], being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus." (**Romans 3:21-26**) What can get overlooked in the understanding of, and sharing of the gospel of Christ Jesus, is that a major

element to Christ's calling was to demonstrate the righteousness of God. What is our testimony to our faith? To take what Paul just said there, out of context, is to possibly conclude that one just believes on Christ and then that is the end of the story. But what really speaks of our having that faith in Christ Jesus, that He is our righteousness needed to be reconciled to God, to be a child of God, and to have a relationship with God? Once you get to the heart of Paul's message to the folks in Rome, in **Romans 8**, we can have that "aha!" moment. The Apostle Paul says this, "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are **in Christ Jesus**, who do not walk according to the flesh, but **according to the Spirit**. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us **who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.**" (**Romans 8:1-4**) That is the perfect segue (segway) to **John 15**. But first, as we are led to "believe on Christ Jesus" for dying for our sins, and then raising from the dead on the third day, we are also then receiving Him, to be as Paul put it, "a new creation". He tells us, "Therefore, if anyone is **in Christ**, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (**2 Corinthians 5:17**). As Jesus proclaimed to Nicodemus, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is **born again**, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (**John 3:3**) In the previous chapter to **John 15**, Jesus told the disciples, "If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—" (**John 14:15-16**) That doesn't mean we have to be living perfect lives to come to Jesus, we'd all be doomed, wouldn't we? It is though as the Apostle Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, after the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the disciples of Christ Jesus, "Repent [that one recognizes a need for change and then heeds to that need—a need for His Righteousness] therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord." (**Acts 3:19**) "AH!"

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The Vine and the Branches (John 15:1-8)

"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away [lifts up]; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you [those who are already a branch in Him; they've already received the Righteousness of God through Christ]. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; **for without Me you can do nothing**. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw

them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples."

Not only are we getting all the nutrients, so to speak, through our abiding in Christ, to bear the fruit of the Spirit, there really is no intended separation between who we are and who He is, at all times. Yes, we all fall short of the glory of God, there is but one who is perfect in all of His Ways and Works, yet there should be a clear distinction to who we are as children of God. Yes, we are all humans, but what a difference it is when we do "abide in Him" and partake of those "times of refreshing [that] come from the presence of the Lord." One more thing to mention before we move on. God's desire for us is to not be motivated by fear, that is, fear of punishment, fear of God's wrath, or fear of being cast into the eternal fire. As the Apostle John says, "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!" (1 John 3:1) Our response then? "We love Him because He first loved us." (1 John 4:19) Yes, we are told to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure." (Philippians 2:12-13) The writer(s) of Hebrews similarly says, "Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it." (Hebrews 4:1) Yet we are also told, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love." (1 John 4:18) Jesus continues:

Love and Joy Perfected (John 15:9-17)

"As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. [His commandments are summed up by Jesus saying the great commandment of God's is to love Him with all of our heart, soul, strength and mind and to love our neighbors as ourselves. Yet, we are reminded, Jesus tells us "abide in My love". Truly, as we are obedient to the calling of Christ Jesus, He becomes us.] These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. [I want to be a friend of God's, of Jesus, how about you?] No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My

name He may give you. These things I command you, that you love one another." [from glory to glory & from faith to faith]

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The disciples already knew that Jesus wasn't just saying to love our friends and to hate our enemies. Because after all, those who we may think of as our enemy may one day be a friend of God's! Who knows, right? As Jesus said, "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust." (Matthew 5:43-48) But wait, didn't Jesus call many of the Jewish rulers hypocrites? How is that then loving one's enemies? It is always to be our hope, as love hopes all things (1 Corinthians 13:7), that others will also come to know the Truth and that the Truth will make them free! (John 8:32)

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The World's Hatred (John 15:18-25)

"If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. He who hates Me hates My Father also. If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause.'

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JOHN 16

Jesus Warns and Comforts His Disciples (John 16:1-4)

"These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me. But these things I have told you, that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them. And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you."

The Work of the Holy Spirit (John 16:5-15)

"But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?' But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.

And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; [they're still at best living according to the law] of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more [Jesus IS our Righteousness]; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. [choose this day and every day whom you will serve, the ~~loser~~ or the WINNER!] I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you."

Sorrow Will Turn to Joy (John 16:16-24)

"A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me, because I go to the Father." Then some of His disciples said among themselves, "What is this that He says to us, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me'; and, 'because I go to the Father'?" They said therefore, "What is this that He says, 'A little while'? We do not know what He is saying." Now Jesus knew that they desired to ask Him, and He said to them, "Are you inquiring among yourselves about what I said, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me'? Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you. And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full."

Jesus Christ Has Overcome the World (John 16:25-33)

"These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but I will tell you plainly about the Father. In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I shall pray the Father for you; for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God. I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father." His disciples said to Him, "See, now You are speaking plainly, and using no figure of speech! Now we are sure that You know all things, and have no need that anyone should question You. By this we believe that You came forth from God." Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe? Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will

leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. These things I have spoken to you, that **in Me you may have peace**. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, **I have overcome the world.**"

Jesus is telling us, abide in His love, that in Him our joy may be full, and then in Him we have that peace that surpasses all understanding-through the trials, the tribulations, through the sorrows, and through the grief, and through the pain-we are told, "**be of good cheer, I have overcome the world**". The mission of Christ Jesus was to demonstrate the Righteousness of God, and to take our punishment for our sins against God, of which is bestowed upon us the mercies of God, and He also then overcame death by raising from the grave, so that we can be 1. reconciled to God, 2. become children of God, and to 3. have a right relationship with God through Christ Jesus. That is then from Glory to glory. The next part of His calling is now our calling. The calling of Christ Jesus for us to share and show the love and the gospel of Christ Jesus, as we abide in Him, of which we all the can partake in the fruit of the Spirit.