

"THIS IS HOW WE DO IT"

PART 2

OUR OBJECTIVE: *STUDY THE BIBLE SCRIPTURES TO DISCOVER HOW WE AS BELIEVERS IN CHRIST JESUS LEARN HOW TO LIVE OUT GOD'S WORD AS WE RECEIVE IT INTO OUR HEARING.*

KEY SCRIPTURES: *JAMES 1:21-23/LUKE 11:28/MATTHEW 7:24
JOHN 14:15-18/TITUS 2:7/PSALM 119:105/MATTHEW 22:35-40
LUKE 10:25-37*

FAITH COMES BY HEARING, AND HEARING COMES BY THE WORD OF GOD. (ROMANS 10:17)

WHEN WE GENUINELY BELIEVE SOMETHING, WE ACT ON THAT TRUTH. IF WE BELIEVE THE STOVE IS HOT, WE DON'T LAY OUR HAND ON THE BURNER. IF WE BELIEVE A CHAIR WILL HOLD US, WE SIT IN IT. THE SAME IS TRUE WITH GOD'S WORD; IF WE BELIEVE IT, WE ACT ON IT. TO BE A DOER OF THE WORD IS TO PUT OUR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AND HIS WAYS INTO ACTION. WHEN WE ARE DOERS OF THE WORD, AND NOT JUST HEARERS, WE EXPERIENCE MORE OF THE FULLNESS OF THE LIFE WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN IN CHRIST. WE REFLECT GOD'S GLORY MORE TO THE HURTING WORLD. WE BETTER UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE GOD'S WAYS AND HIS CHARACTER. BEING A DOER OF THE WORD MEANS PUTTING INTO ACTION THE TRUTHS GOD HAS GIVEN US. OF COURSE, WE MUST STILL HEAR THE WORD BEFORE WE CAN DO IT. WE MUST BOTH INTENTIONALLY LEARN THE TRUTHS OF GOD AND BE FAITHFUL TO APPLY THEM TO OUR LIVES. AGAIN, BEING A DOER OF THE WORD IS NOT ABOUT ACHIEVING SALVATION THROUGH OUR WORKS, NOR IS IT ABOUT SANCTIFYING OURSELVES. RATHER, IT IS ABOUT ABIDING IN CHRIST AND ALLOWING HIS WORD TO FULLY AFFECT OUR LIVES.

THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN RAISES MANY QUESTIONS. HOW DO WE RELATE TO PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT FROM US? WHAT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS THE MANY HURTING PEOPLE IN OUR WORLD? WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

“WHICH OF THESE THREE DO YOU THINK WAS A NEIGHBOR TO THE MAN WHO FELL INTO THE HANDS OF ROBBERS?” THE EXPERT IN THE LAW REPLIED, “THE ONE WHO HAD MERCY ON HIM.” JESUS TOLD HIM, “GO AND DO LIKEWISE” (LUKE 10:36-37).

“THE WORD IS LIVING AND ACTIVE, SHARPER THAN ANY TWO-EDGED SWORD” (HEBREWS 4:12). CHRIST OFTEN CUTS DEEP INTO THE HEART OF WHAT WE BELIEVE; HIS TRUTH FREQUENTLY THREATENS OUR COMFORT.

WHO WERE THE SAMARITANS?

SAMARITANS APPEAR TO HAVE EMERGED FROM THE INTERMARRIAGE OF JEWS AND PAGANS. WHEN “ASSYRIA CONQUERED ISRAEL” IN 722 BC, “THEY TOOK MOST OF ITS PEOPLE INTO CAPTIVITY” AND “RESETTLE[D] THE LAND” WITH FOREIGNERS; “INTERMARRIAGES ALSO TOOK PLACE.”

THIS GROUP DID NOT ADHERE TO JEWISH LAW — GOD’S LAW — AS STRICTLY AS THE PHARISEES DID. THE SAMARITANS WERE INFLUENCED BY PAGAN TRADITIONS. “THEY WERE THE DESPISED ENEMIES OF THE JEWS.”

IN LUKE 10, JESUS WAS SPEAKING TO A JEWISH LAWYER, SOMEONE WELL ACQUAINTED WITH THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL AND OF THIS LONG-STANDING ENMITY BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS. HE AND THE REST OF THE AUDIENCE WERE FAMILIAR WITH THE FACT THAT JEWS AND SAMARITANS HATED EACH OTHER. THEY WOULD MOST CERTAINLY HAVE CROSSED THE STREET TO AVOID ONE ANOTHER.

JESUS’ SIMPLE MESSAGE IN THIS PARABLE

IN THE BEATITUDES, CHRIST HAD DECLARED “BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL, FOR THEY WILL BE SHOWN MERCY” (MATTHEW 5:7). CHRIST’S MESSAGE WAS THAT IF WE WISH TO BE RECONCILED TO THE FATHER, WE MUST DEMONSTRATE LOVE TOWARDS ALL PEOPLE, REGARDLESS OF RACE, RELIGION, OR SOCIAL POSITION.

LOVE IS ACTIVE, INCONVENIENT, RISKY, AND MIGHT NOT BE RECIPROCATED. WHAT IF, IN JESUS’ PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN, THE WOUNDED TRAVELER HAD DIED, OR WAS UNABLE TO REPAY THE SAMARITAN?

THIS PARABLE FORESHADOWS CHRIST’S SACRIFICE ON THE CROSS AND THE FREE GIFT OF GRACE HE OFFERS TO REPENTANT SINNERS. JESUS TOOK A RISK: “WHILE WE WERE STILL SINNERS, CHRIST DIED FOR US” (ROMANS 5:8). HE PAID EVERYTHING SO THAT THOSE WHO BELIEVED IN HIM FOR SALVATION WOULD BE SAVED WHILE KNOWING MANY WOULD REJECT THE GIFT. GOD ASKS THAT WE MEET LOST PEOPLE IN THEIR PAINFUL MESSES AND LEAD THEM TO THE CROSS, RISKING REJECTION BUT HOPING TO WITNESS THEIR SALVATION.

WHEN WE ARE DOERS OF GOD’S WORD IT STRETCHES OUR LIVES AS WE TAKE ON GOD’S DIVINE NATURE. (2 PETER 1:2-4)

IT IS GOD’S DIVINE POWER THAT BREAKS THROUGH THE DARKNESS OF THIS WORLD AND ITS INFLUENCE ON HOW WE LIVE FOR THE LORD. IT IS THE GRACE MULTIPLIED IN US THAT KEEPS ENGAGED IN LIVING OUT GOD’S WORD.

