

TITLE: FAITHFUL TO HIS PLAN

AIM FOR THE MESSAGE:

- BY LISTENING: PEOPLE WILL RESPOND TO THE HEART OF GOD BY DEVELOPING THE HABIT OF ENGAGING IN CONVERSATIONS WITH PEOPLE, AND BY LOOKING TO LOVE AND HELP THEM, WHEREVER, WHENEVER AND HOWEVER, AS CHRIST JESUS WOULD.

INTRO

IF FAILURE AT ANYTHING KEPT YOU OR I FROM TAKING THE NEXT STEP, THEN WHERE WOULD ANY OF US BE TODAY? PROBABLY OUT ON THE STREETS WITH NOTHING TO OUR NAME. BUT WHAT IF THIS WAS THE CASE FOR YOU AND ME; AND, YET WE BOTH CLAIM TO BE FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST? WHAT *WOULD* YOU DO WITH YOUR LIFE? OR BETTER YET, WHAT *SHOULD* YOU DO?

BEGIN

CERTAINLY FOOD, SHELTER, AND COMPANIONSHIP WOULD BE AT THE TOP OF OUR CONCERNS, BUT DO WE HONESTLY SEE THIS FROM OUR PREDECESSORS IN THE BIBLE? TAKE FOR EXAMPLE OUR GREATEST MODEL OF HOW CHRISTIANS SHOULD LIVE. I'M SPEAKING OF JESUS, WHO SAID THAT EVEN HE HAD NO PLACE TO LAY HIS HEAD. IN OTHER WORDS, JESUS COULD RELATE TO BEING HOMELESS. IT ALSO MEANS THAT HE CAN RELATE TO PEOPLE WHO ARE LIVING OUT ON THE STREETS, AND I DARE SAY THAT HE IS CALLING US 'THE CHURCH' TO THE STREETS. NOW, I KNOW THAT THIS DOESN'T SET WELL WITH MANY OF US WHO ARE LISTENING TODAY, BUT I'M WANTING US TO AGREE THAT WE CANNOT CONTINUE DOING WHAT WE HAVE ALWAYS DONE AND EXPECT DIFFERENT RESULTS. NOR CAN WE STOP DOING WHAT WE KNOW TO DO, OR STOP GOING TO PLACES WE KNOW WE SHOULD, JUST BECAUSE IT IS HARD. FOR, WE MUST LET GOD BUILD HIS CHURCH AS HE NEEDS TO. TO HELP US IN THIS JOURNEY, LET'S REMEMBER THE WORDS OF JESUS WHO SAID, THAT EVEN THE GATES OF HELL WOULD NOT PREVAIL AGAINST HIS CHURCH. YES, WE WILL CONTINUE TO GATHER AS A CHURCH. BECAUSE SCRIPTURE SAYS TO NOT FORSAKE OUR GATHERING TOGETHER. HOWEVER, WE MUST ALSO LEARN TO SCATTER AS HIS CHURCH.

AND, FOR THE NEXT SIX DAYS I'M ASKING THAT YOU SEEK GOD IN PRAYER, BY ASKING HIM WHERE HE WANTS YOU TO GO NEXT SUNDAY AS HIS AMBASSADORS, MINISTERS, SERVANTS, OR MISSIONARIES. LET'S GO, THAT WE MIGHT BE AVAILABLE TO SERVE BOTH HIS NEEDS AND SOMEONE ELSE'S, AS OPPOSED TO US COMING TO THE CHURCH BUILDING HERE AND BEING SERVED. NOW I KNOW IT IS NOT NORMAL FOR SOME OF US WHO HAVE BEEN CHRISTIANS FOR AWHILE, BUT GOD IS CALLING US TO JOIN HIM IN THE COMMUNITY. IT'S AS SIMPLE AS GOING OUT WITH EXPECTATION THAT WE'LL SEE GOD MOVING IN PEOPLE'S LIVES. AND BY LISTENING AND RESPONDING TO WHAT GOD SHOWS YOU, SOME OF US MIGHT EVEN BE ABLE TO HELP ANOTHER PERSON SEE AND ACCEPT CHRIST FOR THE FIRST TIME.

SO, LET ME BE CLEAR THAT FOR THIS NEXT SUNDAY, WE'RE NOT GOING TO 'COME TO CHURCH' AS WE USUALLY DO; INSTEAD, WE'RE GOING TO 'BE THE CHURCH' WHEREVER GOD LEADS US. YOU MAY FIND YOURSELF IN A CONVERSATION LISTENING TO SOMEONE WHO IS DEALING WITH A HARD SITUATION AND YOU SIMPLY CLOSE THE TIME IN PRAYER. HOWEVER, I JUST ASK THAT YOU FIND A WAY TO CONNECT WITH THEM AT A LATER TIME IN ORDER TO SEE HOW THEIR DOING. OTHERS, MAY SIMPLY START THE DAY BY WALKING THE STREETS AND CHOOSE INSTEAD TO STOP AND PRAY FOR THE BUSINESSES AND THE DIFFERENT GROUPS THAT ARE AROUND YOU. BUT BE SURE TO ENGAGE WITH PEOPLE AS THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTS ITSELF. AFTER ALL, YOU AND I MIGHT JUST BE THE ENCOURAGEMENT SOMEONE NEEDS TO RETHINK THEIR PREVIOUSLY HELD VIEWS OF CHRIST/CHRISTIANS.

BODY

WE SEE THIS BEING GOD'S HEART FOR THE CHURCH AS WE LOOK CLOSELY TO THE SCRIPTURES. LET'S LOOK AT THE LIFE/MISSION OF PAUL: **ACTS 13: 46-47**; AND **ACTS 14: 8-17**.

- PREACHED TO THE JEWS, AND THE GENTILES
- TASKED WITH BRINGING SALVATION TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH
- EXPERIENCED MIRACLES BECAUSE THEY WERE OBEDIENT, READY, AND AVAILABLE
- HELPED PEOPLE SEE GOD AND THAT HE HAD ALWAYS BEEN WITH THEM

LET'S LOOK AT THE LIFE/MISSION OF JESUS: **JOHN 12:12-26; 27-33**; AND **JOHN 12:46**.

- PEOPLE CAME TO SEE CHRIST JESUS BECAUSE PEOPLE HAD TOLD THEM ABOUT HIM
- AS THE NEWS REACHED THOSE WHO HAD NEVER HEARD, JESUS WAS SATISFIED
- WE MUST BE WILLING TO GO PLANT OURSELVES, AND BE (BLOOM) WHERE OTHERS ARE
- OUR TASK IS TO HELP OTHERS SEE/EXPERIENCE A BETTER ALTERNATIVE TO THIS LIFE

END

IT IS NOT HARD TO FIND EVIL, DARKNESS, BROKENNESS, OR NEED ACROSS OUR COMMUNITY. BUT, HOW WILL YOU RESPOND WHEN YOU DO? GOD WANTS EACH OF US TO SHINE HIS LIGHT SO THAT PEOPLE WILL PLACE THEIR TRUST IN HIM AND EXPERIENCE HIS EVERLASTING LOVE. AND IF YOU HAVE RECEIVED JESUS AS YOUR SAVIOR AND LORD, THEN YOU HAVE THAT WHICH THE WORLD NEEDS. YOU HAVE HOPE THAT PASSES ALL UNDERSTANDING, LOVE EVERLASTING, JOY LIKE A FOUNTAIN, PEACE LIKE A RIVER, AND POWER THAT EVEN THE DEVIL CANNOT RESIST. SO, WHAT MUST WE DO? COME, THIS MORNING, LET US PRAY THAT GOD BE GLORIFIED IN US. THAT THE WORLD IS TURNED UPSIDE DOWN AND ALL WE SEE AND WANT IS JESUS, THE NAME ABOVE ALL OTHER NAMES. JESUS, THE KING OF KING, AND LORD OF LORDS. OUR FRIEND. OUR HOPE AND SHINING LIGHT. HIS MAJESTY. THE KING OF GLORY. JESUS. LET US PRAY – SEEKING HIS KINGDOM, HIS WILL TO BE DONE. AND LET US PRAISE HIM – FOR THAT WHICH HE HAS ALREADY DONE AND IS ABOUT TO DO IN US. HIS FAMILY/CHURCH/CITY.