

Where Do We Go From Here? (Part 3)

Sunday, January 14, 2018
10:30 AM

Joshua 3:1-4 (NIV)

Crossing the Jordan

3 Early in the morning Joshua and all the Israelites set out from Shittim and went to the Jordan, where they camped before crossing over. **2** After three days the officers went throughout the camp, **3** giving orders to the people: “When you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the Levitical priests carrying it, you are to move out from your positions and follow it. **4** Then you will know which way to go, since you have never been this way before...

Jeremiah 6:16-17 (NIV)

16 This is what the Lord says: “Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls. But you said, ‘We will not walk in it.’ **17** I appointed watchmen over you and said, ‘Listen to the sound of the trumpet!’ But you said, ‘We will not listen.’

So far we have identified 6 important truths (ancient pathways) which God has given us to help us know which way we are to go in this new year

1. God is on the throne and is in control... Trust Him with all your heart and He will direct your paths
2. The devil is still at work... Resist him and he will flee from you
3. Our days are numbered... Some of us may not be here next year
4. The Word of God is necessary food and brings nourishment to our souls
5. You must be born again
6. There is encouragement through the Fellowship of Believers

As we continue to “stand at the crossroads and ask for the good way,” there is still more direction that God wants to give to us if we are willing to listen and obey

- Prayer is powerful and brings us into the presence of God

James 5:16 (NIV)

16 ...The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

James 5:16 (KJV)

16 ...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

In teaching us how to pray, Jesus first words demonstrate that prayer begins with relationship (Our Father who art in heaven). But his next few words reveal that he intent of our prayer is to bring the presence of God.

In following this ancient path we realize that we do not need to try to make prayer powerful. Prayer is powerful. It is powerful because God is powerful. Prayer is nothing more than a deliberate entering into the presence of God and an entering of the presence of God into our realities through purposeful and continued invitation.

Revelation 3:20 (NIV)

20 Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.

PRAYER - "It's what opens the floodgates for God to come down and be involved in our everyday circumstances." - Priscilla Shirer

"The little estimate we put on prayer is evidence from the little time we give to it." "No learning can make up for the failure to pray. No earnestness, no diligence, no study, no gifts will supply its lack." - E.M. Bounds

VIDEO: War Room

- The great commission is still God's Mission and should be ours

Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV)

19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Luke 14:23 (NLV)

23 Then the owner said to his servant, 'Go out along the roads leading away from the city and into the fields. Tell them they must come. Do this so my house will be filled.

What are we doing to fulfill the great commission?

Many of us bring Jesus with us when we go to church but not so much to our everyday lives. We pray for the sick and ask people to receive Christ in church services. What about living like Jesus, going about doing good, healing, delivering, setting captives free, and bringing good news every day, everywhere to everyone? We bring him to our home group meetings and Christian conferences, where we profess him amid safe,

supportive community. But much of the rest of the time we keep him hidden in our hearts. Deep down, for many of us, that doesn't sit right. And it shouldn't.

When we consider our lifestyles as Jesus followers, most of ours don't fit the New Testament model. Christ sent out his 12 disciples to proclaim the good news, heal the sick and be willing vessels to bring about his kingdom on earth. Later, he sent out 70 disciples with the same instructions. He baptized 120 people and sent them out to do the same. Finally, after his Resurrection, he gave this commission to 500 people who saw him. Jesus told each of these groups, "Everything I've taught you to do—preach the gospel, heal the afflicted and bring about my kingdom—you're to do in my name. Now go into all the world and do as I've commanded. I'll supply you with all the power you need to be my witnesses."

That's the New Testament model. But the gap between it and the way we live our faith is vast. At one end is God's wonder-working power, and on the opposite end is our lifestyle. That night in the hotel, I was compelled by the Holy Spirit to close the gap.

In Bosnia, a pastor and I were leaving a café when we saw a military veteran in a wheelchair, begging. He had lost a leg in the civil war, and his other leg was hurting. "I may have to lose this limb too," he told us. "It's burning, and I can barely stand being out here."

I asked if we could pray for him. Like a lot of people I approach, he looked skeptical but seemed also to have a yearning hope. As we prayed, his expression softened. "My leg feels better," he said. "It's cool, not burning anymore." I told him, "Jesus did that." "Jesus?" he said. "I just watched a video that somebody gave me called 'The Jesus Movie.' You mean it's not just historical? I didn't know he was still alive today."

I've seen firsthand that reaching out to people in love isn't duty—it's exciting, adventurous and fun. And it's a reality meant for all of us, from the most gifted preacher to the shyest introvert. It was a lifestyle for Jesus' followers in the first century, and it is meant to be ours today.

- From <<https://www.worldchallenge.org/newsletter/2017/doing-works-jesus>>

Luke 19:10 (NIV) {Story of Zacchaeus}

10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

JESUS WARNED PEOPLE ABOUT HELL BECAUSE IT MATTERS TO HIM WHERE THEY SPEND ETERNITY. IT MUST MATTER TO US AS WELL.

Frankly, hell should be a motivator. Scripture presents urgency about time running out. One day, there will be no more time. We must make the most of today. Hell is sobering. Its reality, harshness, desolation and godlessness call us to measure our efforts as the body of Christ and consider how we engage with people on a day-to-day basis.

- MARK A. HAUSFELD, Why Hell Matters

- Love is still the greatest commandment

Matthew 22:36-40 (NIV)

36 “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” **37** Jesus replied: ““Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ **38** This is the first and greatest commandment. **39** And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ **40** All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

John 13:34-35 (NIV)

34 “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. **35** By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

From these two verses we see yet another of God's ancient paths that when travelled will bring rest to our souls - Loving God and loving others. I have always said that according to John 13:35, unbelievers have a right to determine whether or not there is a God based on the way we love one another.

If you want a definition of Love then read 1 Corinthians 13 and John's 1st Epistle. John speaks of Love more than 25 times in these 5 chapters. And according to Jesus' Parable about the good Samaritan, love is something we do (he one who showed mercy was the one who loved his neighbor) as opposed to something we feel or something we think. Jesus ended that parable by reminding us to *"Go and do likewise."*

Pat McMahon, a talk-show host in Phoenix, once interviewed Mother Teresa for his program. He was so impressed with her that afterward he told her that he wanted to do something for her. "I'd just like to help you in some way," he said.

She said to him, "Tomorrow morning get up at 4:00 a.m. and go out onto the streets of Phoenix. Find someone who lives there and believes that he's alone, and convince him he's not."

I believe in the type of ministry Mother Teresa talks about here. But we must also remember that you don't have to venture into the inner-city during the wee hours to find those who believe they are alone.

You see them everyday. You sat with some yesterday in worship. You'll work with some in the office today. You'll see them in the shops and pass them on the streets. Some even live in your neighborhood.

*The world is full of people who believe they are alone, living empty and isolated lives. **It is up to you and me to make a difference.***

- Forgiveness is not optional

In Matthew Chapter 6 we read Jesus' final instructions on prayer followed by an even stronger emphasis on the act of forgiveness that he had just spoken about.

Matthew 6:12-15 (NIV)

12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. **13** And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.' **14** For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. **15** But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Colossians 3:13 (NIV)

13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

This too is a good path that we must follow if we want to find God's direction for us in this new year.