

Who will go? Lord send me!
July 30, 2017
Sermon by Pastor Diana J. Perkins

There is a parable in the Bible that gives us something to think about. It is found in Matthew 21:28. A father of two sons goes to the first son and says, "Son, go work today in my vineyard." The son answered him by saying, "I will not", but afterward he repented and went.

He went to the second son and told him to go work in his vineyard that day and he answered, "I go, sir" but then he didn't follow through.

Which one of these did what his father requested? The people answered, "The first". Jesus told them that the tax collectors and harlots would go into the kingdom of God before these that had heard the message, had seen the miracles, had claimed to answer the call, yet didn't follow through with the commitment. The people that the religious sects looked down on and scorned would one day be surprised as these very ones that had lived a life of sin in disobedience to God later repented of their sins and rebellion and became followers and workers in the vineyard for the Lord.

One of Jesus' own disciples, Judas, betrayed him and sold him for 30 pieces of silver. Jesus had entrusted him with the bag of money that supported his ministry. Yet Judas stole from the bag and criticized Mary when she ministered to Jesus with expensive perfume. See John 12:1-7. Jesus told Judas to leave her alone for she was preparing him for his burial. As you read verses 10-11, you will notice that the chief priests consulted together concerning putting Lazarus to death because people were accepting Jesus as the Messiah because of this miracle. The very people who were supposed to be experts and keepers of the laws of God were rejecting Jesus, God's only Son.

In Mark 2:14, Jesus passed by and saw Levi sitting at the tax office and said to him, "Follow me" and he arose and followed him. Then as Jesus sat in his house, many tax collectors and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples; for there were many and they followed him. The religious elite scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with tax collectors and sinners and began to criticize him. "How is it that he eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners?"

Jesus answered them with these words: "They that are well have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

As you study the Bible, you will find Jesus revealing his deity to a Samaritan woman who came at an odd time to get water because she was an outcast in her society. John 4. He didn't overlook her sins, but he told her everything that she ever did, offered to give her living water, and sent her into the city to bring her friends back to also hear the good tidings that the Messiah had come. In Mark 5, Jesus went into the country of Gerasenes. There he was met by a man that was filled with a legion of demons. This person was such that society demanded that he be kept away from people. He dwelt among the tombs and

no man could bind him even with chains. Many times people had tried to restrain him with fetters and chains and he had broken them from his body. No man could tame him. He cried out night and day in the mountains, naked and cutting himself with stones. However, when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him. Jesus demanded the unclean spirits to come out of him and he set the man free and returned him to his right mind. Jesus allowed the demons to enter pigs and the pigs ran into the sea and drowned. The people of the city came and saw the one who had been afflicted with demons clothed, sitting and in his right mind, and they were afraid. They asked Jesus to leave their coast and as he was entering the boat to depart, the one who had been afflicted asked to go with him. But Jesus told him to go home to his family and friends and tell them what great things the Lord had done for him having compassion on him. The man departed and began to publish in Decapolis what great things Jesus had done for him and all men did marvel.

Jesus delivered Mary Magdalene of seven devils. In Mark 16, Mary is weeping outside the tomb where Jesus had been laid for the tomb was empty. Her heart was broken and she spoke to a man that she supposed was the gardener. He asked her why she was weeping and she told him that someone had taken Jesus from the tomb. If he knew where he was to please tell her and she would go and take care of his body. When he said, "Mary" she recognized that it was Jesus and she worshipped him. He told her to go and tell his disciples to meet him in Galilee for he was going to his father and would meet them later. She was sent as a messenger to spread the news the Jesus Christ is risen!!!

In Luke 19, there is a story of Jesus as he passed through Jericho. There was a man named Zacchaeus who was chief among the tax collectors and he was very rich. He had desired to see Jesus and when he realized that he was too short to see over the crowds, he ran ahead and climbed up in a sycamore tree so he could get a view of Jesus as he passed by. Yet, as Jesus drew near to the tree where he sat, Jesus stopped, looked up and saw him and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide in your house." Quickly he came down and received Jesus joyfully. When the people saw what had taken place, they murmured saying that Jesus had gone to be a guest with a sinner man. Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, half of all my goods I am going to give to the poor and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I am going to return it fourfold. This was the penalty given by the Law of Moses in Exodus 22:1. Jesus said, "This day is salvation come to this house forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

How different from the rich man who came and asked Jesus what good things must he do to gain eternal life. He called Jesus "Good master." This rich man made four mistakes. First he thought of Jesus as just a good teacher rather than recognizing him as God. Either Jesus is God or he is not a good man. He thought he could earn his way into the kingdom of God by doing good works. When Jesus spoke of the divine law of God, no one

in the natural state can attain perfection as the law requires. He made a mistake by thinking that he had already kept all the commandments. He said he had kept them all of his life and what did he still lack? Jesus answered him that if he desired to be perfect, he was to go and sell what he had and give it to the poor, and he would have treasure in heaven. He was commissioned to come and follow Jesus Christ. Jesus looked at this man and loved him, but when Jesus spoke these words, the rich man walked away sorrowful for he had great possessions. It is sad to realize that this world had too much of a hold on the rich man for him to give it up for the cause of Jesus Christ. He was blinded to the glory that would be his if he followed Jesus.

When the disciples asked Jesus concerning him and who could be saved, Jesus told them that with men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.

In 1 Corinthians 6:9-12 the Apostle Paul gives an exhortation to the Christians at Corinthians that is worthy of our consideration and meditation.

He asked them this question, “Don’t you know that evil people won’t have a share in the blessings of God’s kingdom? Don’t fool yourselves! No one who is immoral or worships idols or is unfaithful in marriage or is a pervert or behaves like a homosexual will share in God’s kingdom. Neither will any thief or greedy person or drunkard or anyone who curses and cheats others. Some of you used to be like that. But now the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and the power of God’s spirit have washed you and made you holy and acceptable to God.

Paul goes on to speak about what he had learned about self-control. He relates that he refuses to allow anything to master control over him other than the Spirit of God. We are not to do anything indecent with our bodies but are to use them for the Lord who is in charge of our bodies. God will raise us from death by the same power that he used when he raised our Lord to life. Your bodies are part of the body of Christ. Anyone who is joined to the Lord is one in spirit with him. If you are sexually impure, you join yourself to that person for the Scripture says that “the two shall become as one person.” You should know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit that is in you and it is a gift from God. You are no longer your own. God paid a great price for you. So use your body to honor God.

I listened to a testimony on the internet that touched my heart. A preacher was speaking about a woman who was carrying a baby and she was seven months along. She went to a doctor seeking an abortion. The procedure was given, yet the child was born alive. There were consequences from the procedure for the child would be affected physically and mentally from her decision. His mother took the baby home but was not wanted. As time went on, the child suffered abuse physically, mentally, emotionally and terrible things happened to this little boy. He stuttered so badly that no one could understand anything that he said; he was treated so cruelly that he wanted to die and school was a nightmare for him. At 10 years old, he was placed in a “Special Education” class with other children

that were labeled “unteachable” and they all spent the day finger painting and passing time doing mindless activities.

But one day, a special lady came into the classroom carrying a Gideon Bible. She spoke to the teacher saying that God had impressed on her to come to his “mission field” and reach the lost for him. This changed the boy’s life and the seeds of love were planted and began to grow. She told him Bible stories that caught his attention. She taught about Moses and the fact that he stuttered but God was with him and he did wonderful things by God’s spirit leading him. She encouraged him to memorize Bible verses and the more that he listened, the more he learned, and the looser his tongue got. He accepted Christ and this precious lady continued to work with him and after a time, the stuttering was overcome, his learning capacity expanded and he was able to get an education. As an adult, he entered seminary and is now a pastor. His testimony is powerful, uplifting and encouraging to anyone who feels like that no one loves them, believes in them, or even wants to give them a chance at life. That precious lady loved that little boy into the kingdom of God and God answered with miracles that have transformed his life. The blessing didn’t end there, for God began to work within his family and now every one of his family believes in Jesus Christ and is living for God and working in his vineyard. Will you also answer his call?

Do not think that you are too sinful, too worldly, or unable to do anything for God for he is able to take a worm and thrash a mountain, cause water to pour out of a rock, cause the blind to see, the lame to walk, the broken hearted to rejoice in their salvation and receive healing. Faith in God can move a mighty mountain; faith in God can calm the rugged sea. Faith in God can lift a heavy burden; Faith in God will set you free.

Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever. Bless his holy name!

What he has done for others, he will do for you. It is no secret what God can do. He took a little boy’s lunch and fed 5000 men plus women and children and had 12 baskets of fish and bread left over. He is looking for willing workers and he will multiply your efforts.

If you have said “no” to Jesus in the past, (repent) change your mind and offer him your service to work in his vineyard. Life will take on new meaning and you will have great rewards awaiting you in the kingdom of God! You overcome by the blood of the Lamb and with the word of your testimony. There are many who say “yes” but don’t enter the vineyard to work, but those who have been forgiven much loves much and once they have tasted of the Lord’s grace and mercy, they appreciate the blessings that have come their way and they go and reap a harvest of souls for the Master!