

Children's Moment

February 8, 2015

Title: Show Others You Care

Object: Small Gift to Give, Greeting Card

Scripture: “When evening came, after the sun had set, they *began* bringing to Him (*Jesus*) all who were ill and those who were demon-possessed. And the whole city had gathered at the door. And He healed many who were ill with various diseases, and cast out many demons.” Mark 1:32-34

How do you show someone that you care about them? (*Give the children time to respond.*) Those are all great ideas! Here is a list of ten things that you might do to show someone you care about them.

- Listen to what they have to say.
- Say, "Thank you" when they do something nice for you.
- Forgive them when they do something that hurts your feelings.
- Put their needs ahead of your own.
- Write them a kind note.
- Give them a gift for no reason at all.
- Offer encouragement when they are discouraged.
- Volunteer to help them when they have a difficult task.
- Invite them to do something special with you.
- Share a snack with them.

There are many ways we can show someone that you care about them. The best way is by the nice things that we do for them each and every day. When someone is sick, a visit from a friend might do them more good than a dose of medicine. When someone is sad or having a bad day, a smile and a friendly "hello" would surely brighten their day. When you see someone alone, if you sat down and talked to them - it just might make them feel as if someone cares about them. A simple act of kindness can say a lot more than a gift.

Jesus was always kind and helpful to the people he met. One day He was in the home of Simon Peter. Peter's mother-in-law was sick in bed with a fever. Jesus went into the room where she was and took her by the hand and helped her out of bed. When Jesus touched her, the fever left her immediately. Later that evening people brought everyone who was sick and those who were demon-possessed so that Jesus could heal them. The Bible says that the whole town was gathered around outside the door. Jesus healed the sick and drove out evil spirits. Jesus showed His love by caring for those who needed His healing touch.

The next time you want to let someone know how much you care for them, remember that we show others we care, not just by sending them gifts, but by showing acts of kindness each and every day - just like Jesus did.

Dear Father, Jesus taught us how to care for one another. Help us to follow His example and show our love by acts of kindness toward others. In Jesus' name we pray. 2Amen.

-S- The Way, Truth, Life**The Way - Jesus**

That last night as they were together and after Judas had left Jesus begins speaking to prepare the eleven for His arrest, death and resurrection saying, ³“If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, *there you may be also.* ⁴“And you know the way where I am going.” As the events of the evening unfolded the disciples were surprised and shocked – Jesus would be leaving, Judas was a traitor and they feared that Jesus would be arrested – what was their future? The disciples were rattled and confused, Thomas speaks up for the disciples saying to Jesus ⁵“Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?” Jesus responds in a direct and clear manner saying, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”

The Truth - Exclusive

To a certain extent at the time Christ walked on the earth and but certainly for those of us living today people can claim anything, believe anything and that is their right, as long as they do not claim Christ. Is this not evidence of the truth of the Bible – for the true way is narrow and the way of destruction is broad. The world says every way is good, except the Way of Christ. The world seeks any way that is without Christ. This reminds me of the story of the Devil and one of his fallen demons. They were walking the earth and observing people. As they were walking they came up behind a man and the man suddenly stopped. He saw something shining; he paused and then bent down and picked it up. The demon

asked Satan, “What did the man find?” Satan replied, “He found a piece of truth.” “What are we to do,” asked the demon, “Finding truth in the world is dangerous to your rule.” Satan said, “Oh, don’t worry. I will help the man take that small piece of truth and turn it into a religion that will worship anything but the One of God. He will think he has found salvation and in truth he will belong to me.”

Christianity is offensive to the world, because of Christ and His claims and because the path of reconciliation with God is exclusive. If one takes God at His Word, both Written and Living then salvation has but one way, *Jesus the Christ is the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Him.*” How often do you think upon this? We get so busy with living life that most of us feel we cannot afford to take the time to ask and contemplate the basic questions. Our lives are built in reaction to the world as we travel through life. Many of us live in the tyranny of the urgent. And when we are not caught up in the tyranny of the urgent, we often seek diversion from those urgent matters that so preoccupy our thoughts. The answer to living in reaction to the urgent is setting aside time to read the Bible, reflect, meditate, consider and listen to God – sounds a lot like time with God – sounds like prayer.

Right vs. popular. Right is work and popular is easier. Take time to look around you - if a religion eliminates the true Jesus of the Bible with His exclusive claims and substitutes another Jesus you create religions that are more popular and easier to understand. Of course, popular puts man in charge and makes god much more manageable and understandable. In many churches people are big and God is small. But the driving reasons to have a Jesus that is NOT the Jesus of the Bible to so that people are not offended and not held accountable and people can define and control God. If you preach the true Jesus – some will hear and respond, but

the world in general will be offended. In the world's enlightened and liberal thinking you are free to believe what you want – as long as it is not the true Jesus. Just like in the story of Satan, his demon and the man who found a piece of truth.

The Way, Truth and Life - Jesus

This morning we come to the most exclusive and offensive claim ever made by anyone. Jesus is exclusive and sadly for the majority of the world, who are unsaved, Jesus is offensive. Matthew records in chapter seven that Jesus taught with authority and His authority came from God directly. In the Gospel according to John that we have spent over a year studying, **Jesus said to them (His followers and disciples), "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst."** (John 6:35) This is exclusive, Jesus alone fills people's souls that are in deep spiritual hunger – Jesus alone gives true **life**. Jesus continues saying, **"I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."** (John 8:12) Only Jesus brings people out of spiritual darkness into the **light** of the true God. Again this is exclusive – no gray – Jesus is the warm and bright **light** of truth that pushes back the darkness of this lost world. Jesus says, **"I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."** (John 10:9-10) Jesus is the **way** back to God, the **way** of eternal life. Jesus gives **life** that lasts. On the other hand Satan steals life and destroys people spiritually. Again Jesus is exclusive and Satan is inclusive – embracing all who do not worship Christ. Because if one does not choose the narrow way of Christ then all other paths lead to destruction.

In this same passage Jesus continues explaining that He is exclusive and different

than anything that has ever come to this earth saying, ¹¹“I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.” (John 10:11) Who in the history of man has laid their life down not for just one person, or even a few people, but for as many people throughout the generations that God calls back to Himself? Satan and the fallen world destroy life. Jesus gave His life for the sake of salvation for mankind, but Satan destroys lives for his warped purpose and desires. Jesus continues in verse 14 saying, “I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, ¹⁵even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.” (John 10:14-15) It is very apparent when one observes the world around them that those God has called do know Jesus and those who are lost do **not** know Him for they are spiritually blind and spiritually dead.

Being blind to the possibilities of the truth has a cost – some here on earth and some for eternity. Hopefully we all remember our history lessons. Napoleon was fighting his war and as you will remember it did not turn out well for him. There was a relationship between France and America because of their help in our revolution. An American by the name of Robert Fulton was commissioned by Napoleon because of his idea that would help him win his war. Can any one tell me what it was that Robert Fulton invented? Fulton was an American engineer and inventor who is credited with developing the first commercially successful steamboat. But, Napoleon wanted something different and in 1800, he was commissioned by Napoleon Bonaparte to design the “Nautilus”, which would be the first practical submarine in history. Fulton is also credited with inventing some of the world's earliest naval torpedoes. The British Royal Navy was the first to use Fulton’s torpedoes. I want to focus on the Nautilus submarine. As Fulton was explaining his concept to Napoleon for the Nautilus – Napoleon responded, "What,

...sir, you would make a ship sail against the wind and currents by lighting a bonfire under her decks? I pray you excuse me. I have no time to listen to such nonsense." Because Napoleon was blinded by what he could not see, his world was limited. He could see the possibilities and the truth as Fulton did. Napoleon's destruction followed just as surely as the lost cannot see the truth of the Bible and Christ and this brings their own destruction.

Jesus continues to show He and He alone is exclusively the only way to be reconciled back to the Holy God. "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25-26) This is the question of eternal life – "Do you believe this?" Jesus is the only way and you must, must believe in Him as the Christ. This is exclusive and therefore offensive to the lost world. Then the last great "I AM" we have not come to yet is our study of the Gospel According to John and it is found in the next chapter, ¹"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. ²Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. ³You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you unless you abide in Me. ⁵I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing." (John 15:1-5) All of these direct sayings of Jesus are exclusive, but none are as clear and concise as "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; **no one** comes to the Father but through Me." (John 14:6) Because we have been called by God, and saved by Christ and indwelt with the Holy Spirit we see these sayings of Jesus for their truth and find joy, peace and thanksgiving in them. For us these true sayings of Jesus bring spiritual life and enable us to surrender our lives to God as

He has laid out in His Word the Bible. After the fall in the garden, mankind was lost and Jesus came to bring a “Way” back to God.

The Way – Reconciliation

The “Way” supposes a journey with two points – the beginning and the end. The way or course of travel – in our study it is the path from man’s total ruin in sin to reconciliation with the Holy God – God the Father. Yes, I see, but how do we deal with the guilt of sin? Justice requires that sin must be paid for and paid in full.

Even God’s mercy does not fulfill justice. Sin must be paid for. Jesus, God the Son, came to earth to undertake the requirement of paying for all of mankind’s sin and pay them in full to meet the requirement of justice. Jesus died in our place bearing upon His body God’s just and right wrath and then by His death removing the guilt and punishment of sin forever. The result of this act was foretold in Psalm 103:12,

“As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.” The Psalmist knew God would accomplish the forgiveness of sin and satisfy

the requirements of justice through Christ. The preacher Charles Spurgeon spoke of his struggle with sin and the struggle of every Christian. This is my struggle, so I want to read to you what Pastor Spurgeon wrote and I will put it up on the screen,

“Whenever I feel that I have sinned, and desire to overcome that sin for the future, the devil at the same time comes to me and whispers, ‘How can you be a pardoned person and accepted with God while you sin in this way?’ If I listen to this I drop into despondency, and if I continue in that state I should fall into despair, and should commit sin more frequently than before; but God’s grace comes in and says to my soul, ‘Thou has sinned; but did not Jesus come to save sinners? Thou art not saved because thou art righteous; for Christ died for the ungodly.’ And my faith says, ‘Though I have sinned, I have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the

righteous, and though I am guilty, yet by grace I am saved and I am a child of God still.’ And what then? Why then the tears begin to flow and I say, ‘How could I ever sin against my God who is so good to me? Now I will overcome that sin,’ and I get strong to fight with sin through the conviction that I am God’s child.”

The Truth is Light

The second claim of Jesus is that He is truth. Jesus is specifically the truth of and about God His Father, and the truth of God includes all other truth. Jesus made this clear, **“I and the Father are one.”** (John 10:30) Because the Jews were spiritually blind and did not have the light of truth in them they picked up stones to throw at Jesus – they wanted Him dead, because He convicted them of their sin. If you call yourself Christian, what do you see in Jesus about God the Father? Jesus is the reality of God and so we know that God is personal. God is a person, not some impersonal power out somewhere in the universe. God then possesses all the traits of personality and desires to communicate with His one creation that was made in His image, His creation that shares His personality traits – humans. God wants to communicate in a way that people come to know Him personally. It is through Jesus this happens and only through Jesus. It is exclusive. A person can only come to know God is holy and understand what holy is from Jesus – there is no other path to God’s holiness. Jesus is the only way to the truth of God.

The Life - Regeneration

The third part of Jesus’ statement in verse 6 is that He is to be **“the life”** – for all who believe in Him as the Christ. The whole Bible bears testimony that natural man is separated from God by sin and is spiritually lifeless. Mankind walks in the way of the world and because of his love for the world mankind has no love for the

things of God. Mankind does not fear God and is only concerned for their own glory and people live for their own self-serving ambitions. Self is the driving force, not the glory of God. When the prodigal son returned from a country far away the father said, “This son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.” (Luke 15:24) It is Christ, and Christ alone that is able to make such a spiritually dead person alive. In fact Jesus promises to give life to all who will come to Him. This then brings us back to the question the Apostle John asked in chapter 11, “Do you believe this?” If we believe Jesus is the Son of God this then gives great encouragement for living the Christian life. If the life of Christ gives the life of God to those who believe in Jesus we then possess eternal life beginning here on earth. No matter what this world throws at us we can no more perish than can God the Father. Early in John’s gospel it is recorded, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” (John 3:16) The question for us is “Do you believe this?” If you believe, then this is exclusive and it certainly not the way of the world – because you are not of the world then the world will hate you. This seems perfectly logical. It is time for Christians not to worry about being rejected and hated by the world for our exclusive approach to God through Jesus. We cannot be taken from God for as Jesus said, ²⁷“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; ²⁸and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father’s hand. ³⁰I and the Father are one.” (John 10:27-30) The question for us is “Do you believe this?” If we believe we should embrace the truth of Jesus’ exclusive statement, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me” should be a way of Christian life.

Joyce shared a thought with me this week from her Bible Study Fellowship lesson that sums up our study this morning and some of the struggles we have had as a community in the last week or so. Let me close with this, the Book of Numbers chapter 5 brings into focus “that if God’s people are to be in fellowship with God and useful for His service, they must be pure in heart. That means that a right and trusting relationship with other Christians is NOT optional. Disharmony with God or with His people makes spiritual victories impossible.” This is the very reason Canyon Bible chose as our heart verse to live out Mark 12:30 and 31, “YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH. YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF. There is no other commandment greater than these.” If we as individuals, families and as community live this covenant promise before God and each other we will be spiritually victorious.

If you have listened and believed what the scriptures have taught us this morning – that God is exclusively true. If you have come to believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that He and the Father are One. That our only hope is to believe in Jesus and know it is true when He says, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.” Then we also know the truth as we have so often learned from the Word of God – it is God who seeks us out. If you are here this day and God is awaking your soul – do not hesitate – come pray with me allow God to bring you to spiritual life – life eternal. We are family – do not be embarrassed come forward so we may gather around you and prayer together.

Benediction

“The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.”

Numbers 6:24-26 (NIV)