

# The Harvest Sermon Series

October, 2021 // Rock of Grace

Our God is a God whose very nature is to seek and save the lost, no matter the cost. The world is His field, and He says it is ripe for the harvest. God desires for workers to be willing to go into the ends of the earth to share the unbelievable love of God through preaching, teaching, baptizing, serving and sacrifice. My desires is that you and I will be empowered to join God in His work in the world.

Noelle, one of our deacons and good friends reminded me of a great quote from Henry Blackaby in his book *Experiencing God* “We should be constantly asking God “God, what are you doing in the earth, in my town? and... How can I join You?”

In each and every town, God is up to something. Sure He’s redeeming people through His grace and the message of the Gospel - that’s His desire in EVERY town. But, in each town, there are certain miracles that will take place. There are certain ministries that will begin. Why? Each person is given unique things to steward - assignments - I’ve taught on this often here. When we do that well, we live out God’s call on our life which is always and ultimately to bring more sons and daughters into God’s family - to extend God’s family - to use the words of Jesus ... “Bring in the Harvest”

## WEEK ONE: Everyone’s Invited

Everyone’s invited to God’s party. Sinner, saint, religious, reprobate, retired, teenager, college kid, high school drop out, class clown, top of the class, no matter who you are, YOU are invited to the Harvest Party - the wedding feast of the Lamb - to God’s Party!

### The Parable of the Wedding Feast

<sup>7</sup> Now he told a parable to those who were invited, when he noticed how they chose the places of honor, saying to them, <sup>8</sup> “When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honor, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him, <sup>9</sup> and he who invited you both will come and say to you, ‘Give your place to this person,’ and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place. <sup>10</sup> But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, ‘Friend, move up higher.’ Then you will be honored in the presence of all

who sit at table with you. <sup>11</sup> For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

### **The Parable of the Great Banquet**

<sup>12</sup> He said also to the man who had invited him, “When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. <sup>13</sup> But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, <sup>14</sup> and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.”

<sup>15</sup> When one of those who reclined at table with him heard these things, he said to him, “Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!” <sup>16</sup> But he said to him, “A man once gave a great banquet and invited many. <sup>17</sup> And at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’ <sup>18</sup> But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it. Please have me excused.’ <sup>19</sup> And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them. Please have me excused.’ <sup>20</sup> And another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’ <sup>21</sup> So the servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame.’ <sup>22</sup> And the servant said, ‘Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.’ <sup>23</sup> And the master said to the servant, ‘Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. <sup>24</sup> For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.’ ”

[\*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version\*](#). (2016). (Lk 14:7–24). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

What is Jesus saying here? I’d like to summarize it with two thoughts:

**All are invited to God’s party. We must come to the party, thankful, not prideful.**

Romans 3:23 “all have sinned and fallen short of God’s standard.”

Every’s a sinner in need of God’s grace. The problem is ... not everyone knows that.

**Romans 6:20-23 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. <sup>21</sup> But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. <sup>22</sup> But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. <sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Everyone's already been forgiven by the same Creator God who put that law into place - the law that says "sin deserves death" God the Father provided a way out of the problem of sin and the punishment of sin by allowing JESUS His only Son, to die in our place.

When we died, we died Scripture says. Jesus not only died for you; He died as You Paul indicates.

Today, I believe God wants us all to understand that GOD is LOVE and LOVE has invited you to the PARTY All are invited to God's party. We must come to the party, thankful, not prideful.

**GOD is LOVE and LOVE has invited you to HIS party!  
LOVE wants to forgive you of every sin that made you feel terrible on the inside and filled your heart with anxiety and regret!**

It doesn't matter whether you are "on top of the world" or you are "at the bottom of the barrel" God's LOVE is the what you MUST learn to receive and focus on. I'll explain why.

**Lamentations 3:22** *The faithful love of the LORD never ends! His mercies never cease!"*

I don't know about you but I am shocked at that statement – at that truth! That God's love NEVER ends! His mercy NEVER ceases!" And that, by definition, IS LOVE because God Himself is the epitome of LOVE – the very embodiment, if you will, of love! And HE NEVER ceases! He has always been and will always be and His LOVE for you – for ALL humanity - is never going to end!

It doesn't matter what you've believed about God your entire life. Maybe you have misunderstood God.

You may have believed that God is angry with you – that God is "out to get you" That God is this "Master of the universe" that has always been against you – that He doesn't really care NOR does even really know that you exist.  
If you've believed any of those things, you couldn't be further from the truth!

He is and will always be INFATUATED with you! After all, YOU are HIS creation! And He loves you SO MUCH!

**NEXT> Love is not love until it's demonstrated right?!**

When I was 21 coming back from college I couldn't' told Danielle over and over "I love you, baby" Every day, "I love you" But guess what, if I never pop the question – if I never decide to give up my life as a single, independent person and say "Danielle, I want to spend every day committed to you - every moment I can with you – please marry me, I will provide for you – I will love you – I will spend my future with you, for you.." If I don't ever *demonstrate* that I love her, guess what, she is NOT going to feel *loved* for very long!

The world promises you something it can not give. Jesus promises you something only He can give. God demonstrated His love for us by sending His only Son, Jesus, to die on a cross for us while we were still sinners! **Romans 5:8 says "God showed or demonstrated His love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners!"**

## **NEXT> 1. God's love SAVES us so we can come to the party.**

We can see from the Bible that God's entire motivation for saving us was love - He loved us and STILL loves us *that* much! God's motivation is always love. Probably the most quote verse of all time, John 3:16, again tells us the motivation behind Jesus leaving Heaven to die in our place. "For God so LOVED the world (thats you and me) that He gave His one and only Son, Jesus, that whosoever believes in Him will have eternal life!"

What a promise!

God is declaring with His own mouth - saying - "Hey, I love you SO MUCH that I gave up my only son to DIE for you - in your place - taking the punishment of your sins - just so you could be forgiven and spend eternity with me in Heaven, in the place I've created for you! If I didn't love you that much...If I didn't send my Son, Jesus, to die in your place, then you would NOT be able to spend eternity in Heaven with me, but instead, you would have to spend eternity apart from Me... away from Me in Hell!" That is GOD's loving promise to us - that He did everything He had to do to SHOW how much He loves us.

God WANTS US to choose HIM! He WANTS US to love Him in return! He WANTS US to but listen, church, He can't make us. HE will not FORCE us to love or choose to serve Him. We must choose ourselves- in our hearts - to repent of our sins, accept the free gift of Love - the gift of Jesus dying for us - the gift of forgiveness and choose to follow Christ for ourselves.

God's love is seen in His justice. He had to exact justice for sin so as not to compromise his integrity and character. He is both loving and just so in His love for us, He sent Jesus to take the punishment we deserved. Justice was served by God Himself receiving our punishment and yet love and mercy was shown by God Himself receiving our punishment.

### Love Saves Us!

"Just in the nick of time, Christ saved us" God's Word says. Listen, don't be misled anymore! God is enamored with you!

Remember when I say "Love" I'm speaking of God Himself because God IS love. 1 John 1:7-9 *"... love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. <sup>9</sup> In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him."*

## **How do we know we need GOD to save us?**

Well first let's look at scripture: 1 John 1:8-10 says in the NLT **NEXT>**

***"If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth. <sup>9</sup>But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness. <sup>10</sup>If we claim we have not sinned, we are calling God a liar and showing that his word has no place in our hearts."***

Now let's look at the same passage in The Message translation: **NEXT>**

***"He'll forgive our sins and purge us of all wrongdoing. If we claim that we've never sinned, we out-and-out contradict God—make a liar out of him. A claim like that only shows off our ignorance of God."***

Look, I know I needed God to save me! I am a selfish, jerk without God. God has to renew me constantly or I'd be a wreck!

For those of you here today that maybe were invited by a friend or somehow heard of Rock of Grace or maybe you have a different religious background, I wanted to kind of summarize the Big Story: the reality of God creating everything, then sending Christ to save us and why He had to that ... and then I realized that John Chapter 1 already does that really well so let's take a look at this on the screen.

**NEXT>**

**John 1:1-18** *In the beginning the Word (Who is JESUS) already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He existed in the beginning with God.<sup>3</sup>God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him.<sup>4</sup>The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it. **NEXT>***

*<sup>6</sup>God sent a man, John the Baptist, <sup>7</sup>to tell about the light so that everyone might believe because of his testimony. <sup>8</sup>John himself was not the light; he was simply a witness to tell about the light.<sup>9</sup>The one who is the true light, who gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. **NEXT>** <sup>10</sup>He came into the very world he created, but they didn't recognize him. <sup>11</sup>He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. <sup>13</sup>They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God. **NEXT>***

*<sup>14</sup>So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son. <sup>15</sup>John testified about him when he shouted to the crowds, "This is the one I was talking about when I said, 'Someone is coming after me who is far greater than I am, for he existed long before me.'" **NEXT>** <sup>16</sup>From His abundance we have all received one gracious blessing after another. <sup>17</sup>For the law was given through Moses, but God's unfailing love and faithfulness came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup>No one has ever seen God. But the unique One, Jesus, who is Himself God, is near to the Father's heart. He has revealed God to us!"*

Jesus Christ - his attributes - his kindness towards everyone - even people unlike Him, his compassion towards the hurting, his generosity towards those needing a healing... all of the attributes of God reveal the character of God - which is, in summary LOVE.

**NEXT>He IS love and it was His LOVE for you and me that motivated Him to send Christ to save us. Why? We're invited to His party to His family to His house!**

How else do we know that we needed saved?... that we somehow have a problem - an inherit seemingly defect - a natural desire to do wrong?

Well, take a look at kids! Do you have to teach your kids to disobey you? No! Do you have to teach your kids to shout "NO!" to you when you ask them to pick up the toys? No! you don't! Do you have to teach your kids to hit one another? No. Why? They do that ALL on their OWN! =)  
 You have to teach them NOT to hit one another; NOT to say "NO" when you ask them do something. You have to teach them to share and to respect authority and to be selfless and generous instead of selfish... WHY?  
 Because since Adam and Eve disobeyed God, sin entered the world and through that entrance of sin, we ALL are born with a sinful nature - with a nature that needs redeemed - a nature and a heart that needs replaced with the divine nature of God. And God made that exchange possible by sending Christ!

**\*\*\*You know I don't want to get too personal but how else do you know that you need saved? Look in the mirror!  
 I know I needed saved! I know I *STILL* need God's grace to forgive me every day!**

If you haven't received GOD's free gift of salvation and you're telling yourself that you are just naturally a good person and you're not in need of help - then you have deceived yourself - you've believed a lie that says you are "just fine without God" Friends, we are never just fine without God! We need God desperately to save us from our sins and even after becoming a child of God, we will still struggle against sin and selfish thinking while here on earth so we'll still need God to forgive us daily and teach us how to live for Him and be like Jesus.

## **NEXT> 2. God's Love not only Saves us, it Sustains Us**

I can't express how much I love my kids! My four girls and our little guy Lukas. I can't put it into words and yet I know that God the Father loves them even more. He loves you even more!

WE, are LOVED by Father God SO MUCH! We are His children, His treasured possession, His very own people and yet we go through things don't we?!?! We go through hard times - things we don't understand!

We, at times, still have fears and anxiety and we worry about our future and all of these fears are natural and logical ... "what if I get laid off? How will I provide for my family?" But if every fear and every decision there is God's love! Filling your heart with peace!

Can I tell you today that God's LOVE can replace that fear inside your heart!? Listen to **NEXT> 1 John 4:18. "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love."**

Because of God's love, we are able to stop worrying and living in fear because fear will cause you to sin. It will paralyze you from living the life Jesus gives us to live.

Fear often has to do with punishment... Jesus already took our punishment of sin when we chose to die on the cross for us!

We can invite people into a life free from fear and anxiety, free from depression, sadness and unforgiveness, free from regret. JESUS and ONLY JESUS offers that!

**There is a harvest of people who need to know this truth! This is truth that YOU have if you are a Christian here today!**

**What are you doing with it?**

If you're not yet a believer in Jesus, I want to let you know that you are invited!

You and I and every single person at your workplace, every single neighbor on your street is invited to the party of Jesus!

JESUS is revealed to be the picture of God and is the revelation of God given in both the Old Testament and the New Testament of the Bible.

For example, turn with me to John 8:12

Jesus shares something interesting saying **"I am the Light of the World" - Jesus JN 8:12**

On the surface we might say, oh, **Jesus is "light" in the darkness. This is a metaphor Jesus is giving us because without Him, we live in darkness and what's it like to live in darkness? Confusing, sad, painful - you hit your shin on the coffee table in the dark! LOL**

And all that's true. He is the LIGHT in the midst of the darkness.

But, when we look closer and read John 7, we see that Jesus shared this truth on the Feast of Tabernacles.

**The feast of Tabernacles was the celebration - the PARTY - that celebrated the glory cloud and the fire by night that was the LIGHT of the Hebrew people when they were in the wilderness.**

Quick History lesson: Moses helped the Israel people escape slavery in Egypt. Once they escaped Pharaoh and his army, miraculously by the hand of God, they were in the wilderness, a desert for 40 years before they entered Canaan, the promised land.

While in the wilderness, God provided a cloud over their tabernacle during the day. It was a symbol of God being with them, God separating them from the rest of the world. Then by night, there was a pillar of fire above the tabernacle! Can you imagine that!? That huge bon fire in the sky served as a reminder that GOD was with them, protecting them, guiding them. The same God who helped them escape had not abandoned them!

**Jesus is saying this during the party.**

**EVERYONE is invited to the party Jesus is saying.**

**IN the OT it was ONLY the Hebrew people who had the light of the world and the blessing of God. Jesus is saying “that was then and this is now”  
He was saying ‘I am fulfilling the law of Moses and I am making the LIGHT OF GOD available to ALL people!’ WOW**

That must have excited Gentiles or Samaritans who heard this statement first-hand or repeated later ... and it must have ticked off the religious elite who wanted to be the ONLY ones with the light of God.

Please remember that this “PARTY” I speak of today isn’t in full swing until Jesus comes back. There’s an eschatological argument I try to bring in almost every sermon I preach, because it’s important that you realize that your full joy will come in eternity. Your joy will be complete when Jesus comes for you!  
Your engaged to Jesus but the wedding hasn’t yet begun. The wedding begins when He returns in glory to take you home to the place He’s prepared for you!

Let’s look at a man in the OT writing about his suffering and that that is world only gives him pain until he remembers the Lord.

Turn to **Lam. 3:16** and we’re going to read a portion of this chapter beginning with verse 16. The author is going on and on venting to the Lord about how terrible his life has been lately. Anybody here ever do that? Nahhh, I didn’t think so. =) Your lives are ALL perfect with never any problems ... “fine and dandy” aren’t they?! Listen to just a portion of his grief and then listen for his resolve. Lamentations 3:16

*<sup>16</sup> “He has broken my teeth with gravel; he has trampled me in the dust.*

*<sup>17</sup> I have been deprived of peace; I have forgotten what prosperity is.*

*<sup>18</sup> So I say, “My splendor is gone and all that I had hoped from the LORD.”*

*<sup>19</sup> I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall.*

*<sup>20</sup> I will remember them, and my soul is downcast within me.<sup>21</sup> Yet this I call to mind*

*and therefore I have hope: <sup>22</sup> Because of the LORD’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail.<sup>23</sup> They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.<sup>24</sup> I say to myself, “**The LORD is my portion**; therefore I will wait for him.” <sup>25</sup> The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD.”*

I want to read verses 21-25 again in the New Living Translation, It says ... **“Yet I still dare to hope when I remember this:<sup>22</sup> The faithful love of the LORD never ends! His mercies never cease.<sup>23</sup> Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning.<sup>24</sup> I say to myself, “The LORD is my inheritance; therefore, I will hope in him!” <sup>25</sup> The LORD is good to those who depend on him...”**

Verses 18 and 19 are actually prophetic, speaking of Jesus’ suffering on the cross, when it reads “My splendor is gone. All that I had hoped for... I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall.” The Gall is speaking of the bitter alcohol that was given to Jesus when He was on the cross asking for a drink. But this feeling of hopeless comes to us all at different times in our lives and we must do what we see here - we must remind ourselves of God's unending love. Notice how it says in Verse "I say to myself 'the Lord is my portion; the Lord is good to those whose hope is in Him..."



We must, like David, encourage ourselves in the Lord at times.  
 JESUS suffered feelings of hopelessness so we wouldn't be hopeless!  
 JESUS experienced pain for a while so we would be pain-free for eternity!  
 JESUS suffered the punishment of our sin - like we talked about in romans at the beginning of the sermon - so we could be forgiven and be victorious over sin!  
 JESUS was whipped and beaten so we could be healed, body, soul & spirit!  
 Believe in this JESUS!  
 Believe in the one the Father sent to you FOR you!

### **I want to invite you to believe in the One who suffered so you could celebrate!**

Romans 8 says that ... Nothing can condemn you when Christ Jesus has saved you!  
 Are you saved? Have you called upon that name - that name of Jesus - that name above every other name!  
 Because of God's love, He invites us to the party, saves us of our sin, promises us the very thing we long for deep within our bones - to live in a place where there is no pain, no accusation, no guilt, no compromise, no murder, no cancer, JESUS gives us that promise and it's a promise He is able to keep!

Last point today - Until you get to heaven and while you are here on earth, I have more good news for you! **Until you get to heaven, God's love satisfies you here and now!**

### **3. God's love Saves Us, Sustains Us and Satisfies Us**

If you're not yet a Christian and you haven't found this satisfaction in your life through Jesus Christ, I want to ask you... what is wrong on the inside?  
 What is wrong with our American culture!? We are NEVER satisfied. Actually I should ask "What ISN'T wrong with our American culture?"  
 I mean we are constantly being bombarded with this message  
 "Just buy this ---fill in the blank --- and you'll be happy!"

"Just do this -- and you'll be happy!" "Just buy this... on layaway... and you'll be satisfied in life!"

Guys, car and truck companies wants you to believe that you will finally be really cool and really satisfied when you just have the new \_\_\_\_\_  
 Listen, I am past that in the name of Jesus! When I roll up in my Honda MiniVan, pumping my Maverick City! Come on I am cool! I don't NEED a new truck to give me a sense of happiness! I don't need a new car to give me a sense of happiness. Why? My Lord has made me happy! MY JESUS has made me happy!

Women, Lorel wants you believe that if you just buy they're make up, your skin will be smoother, you'll look prettier and you will be happier. You're 58, I know but you'll look 28 if you'll just buy this cream! lol

If you will just drop a buck to nip and tuck baby YOU will be finally satisfied!

Companies are constantly trying to convince us that we won't quite be satisfied until we have the next big thing, and look just right - our image needs to match the image on the magazine .j...right? We are bombarded with this paradigm and for many of us, it's *become* our paradigm - *our* way of thinking and you need remained today that ONLY Jesus satisfies you!

Yes, my theological point, my thesis today is this ... **Jesus makes you happy.**

**Come on my THESIS is JESUS! Tweet that!**

Yes, my friend. The happiness that you long for can only be found in Jesus Christ!

Turn to **John 7:37-39**

**<sup>37</sup> On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. <sup>38</sup> Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' " <sup>39</sup> Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.**

For many of us, we are constantly on the search for satisfaction - for approval - from our boss, from our spouse, from our parents.. we are restless, looking for approval and love and affection - bottom line, we want to be satisfied in life.

Father God's love is so rich! It's so pure! Jesus reveals His love! Have you met Jesus?!?

It's so incredible and once you start realizing this and experiencing His presence in your life, you'll find that THIS is the satisfaction you were looking for!!!!

King David puts it like this in Psalm 16:11 "You have made known to me the pathway of life. You fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."

Look at what David says to the Lord in **Psalm 63. NEXT>**

*"I have seen you in your sanctuary and gazed upon your power and glory.*

*<sup>3</sup>Your unfailing love is better than life itself; how I praise you! <sup>4</sup>I will praise you as long as I live, lifting up my hands to you in prayer.<sup>5</sup> You satisfy me more than the richest feast.*

*I will praise you with songs of joy. <sup>6</sup>I lie awake thinking of you, meditating on you through the night. <sup>7</sup>Because you are my helper, I sing for joy in the shadow of your wings. <sup>8</sup>I cling to you; your strong right hand holds me securely."*

You see how David has no fear, how he feels secure and at peace. You see, being satisfied isn't about having something, it's about having someone - JESUS the Prince of Heaven as your very best friend!

David found out as did the Disciples, Paul and many others... that our souls (our mind, will and emotions) are only satisfied when we come into relationship with Father God and rest in His love.

Church, are you resting in His love on a daily basis? I know I haven't been. I know I used to, I know on occasion, I do, but I know I need to start making it a priority again to take time to rest in His presence and be satisfied in His love.  
Let the Love of God just pour over your heart. Every day.

Tomorrow morning, it will be Monday. There will be tasks to accomplish and goals to meet, deadlines from your boss. And you'll have the choice to be stressed out and panic *or* be calm and at peace knowing that God is on His throne and if you know Jesus, you know that! Nothing can stop the Harvest Party that you're going to! One day you'll be with Him and nothing can change that amazing truth!

Are you satisfied? Have you allowed God's love to do that? To take the pressure off – the pressure to perform, the pressure to be something or achieve a certain social status? ...

There is JOY for you! There is REST for you! Promised and given to us by Jesus! Mt **11:28-30**

**28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."**

God IS love and His presence is HERE... now... today... right now... wanting to fill you with joy, with peace, righteousness, with LOVE.

## COMMUNION

### ALTAR CALL

[PLAY the playlist Instrumental, string with His Mercy](#)

Can everyone bow their heads and close your eyes with me? **USHERS, "DIM" the lights to the "DIM" setting please.**

There's two segments to this response time.

FOR PRODIGALS:

The first one is for those of you who've never received the free gift of God – salvation. If you've never received Jesus Christ as Your savior and you'd like to make that decision today to be forgiven and to start living for Him, I'd like you just meet with one of our trusted leaders on our prayer team in the back of the room. In the back of the room, we have prayer team leaders who would love to walk you through making that decision to follow Jesus Christ.

I'm not gonna pressure you nor try to convince you ... the Holy Spirit will do that. In fact, if your heart is about to beat out of your chest, that's not the lighting nor the music, it's the Holy Spirit calling your name. It's Jesus Himself knocking on the door of your heart – wanting to come in and be your Savior and your closest friend. If that's you, just meet with one of our prayer team members in the back.

#### FOR BELIEVERS:

The second part of this altar call is for those of you who are just in the Rat Race, on the hamster wheel, running and running and running and you're just plain tired. If today, you realized that you've been trying to earn God's love or if you realize that you just need to stop worrying and start resting in His unfailing love, then why don't you just take some time right now to talk to God and tell Him how you feel. Make a commitment to God that from this day forward, you'll learn to be content in any and every situation, that you'll learn to be thankful and at ease – filled with joy – just KNOWING that you are HIS child. Make it a prayer – ask God to help you relax in His love. Take some time to talk to Him right at your seat or here at the altar.

**Hebrews 3:12-14** reads ... *“See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called ‘Today,’ so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness. We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end.”*

That scripture starts out with “see to it” in other words – make sure you put in effort so that... “be intentional about your life in Christ” Other scriptures say “be careful then how you live...” If you CHOOSE to not allow people to speak into your life when you need it, you're choosing to be deceived.

If you CHOOSE to not read your Bible but only believe what you hear from others' you're choosing to miss out on important truth that you NEED.

If you CHOOSE to repeatedly sin, over and over, every day, willfully ignoring the Spirit of God with conscious effort,

Whether it's continuing to lie to your spouse, your coworkers, your boss, if it's a lying habit  
Or if you continue to look at pornography every day, knowing you're sinning over and over and over,

Or if you're living together before you're married and trying to have the benefits of marriage without the commitment of marriage and every day you're doing this. ...

Anything you're doing EVERY day KNOWING you're going against the plan of God, then you're *choosing to reject the faith that you once knew; you're choosing NOT to hold on to your faith like we read about. You're choosing NOT to endure to the end to be saved. Therefore you're choosing to be deceived.*

Don't misunderstand me here. This doesn't mean you have to be perfect to go to heaven. No you don't' have to be perfect to go to Heaven. You have to be humble to go to heaven. You see in arrogance, you tell yourself that you can continue to sin without the consequence of God.

But in humility if you sin, you will soon-after repent and genuinely ask God for forgiveness and INSTANTLY your slate is clean and you've got a fresh start.

## **WEEK TWO: So Go & Tell Them!**

*Matthew 28:18-20*

The expectation of Jesus was for His followers to actively go into the world with one goal, to make more disciples. He has all authority in heaven and on earth, and He has given it to us. This command is not optional, it is expected. So, go.

*Acts 1:6-8*

The Lord of the Harvest is bringing His kingdom to earth. The time when this will fully be a reality is not for us to know, but we have a part to play in its arrival. Through the Holy Spirit, we have received power to go and announce the Kingdom of God through our words and our actions. We are to go from places that are near to places that are far away to change the world.

## **WEEK THREE: The Good News**

**Your message should sound “beautiful” even if everyone doesn’t receive it. Beautiful Feet**

*Romans 10:13-17*

The gospel is truly good news for all who have ears to hear. But how can people respond to this good news without it being presented to them? The people of God must be willing to be sent. Those who share this gospel are world changers and beautiful for their loving service.