

The Mission

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[0:00] Luke 19 verse 10.

The Lord Jesus says, For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you again for missions, for the mission you came with, to seek and to save that which was lost.

Help us, Lord, to consider that today. Make it something we can be a part of, we pray. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Mission. The Lord Jesus set the scene. He set the role model for us as his people. The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

And for us to seek after him ought to be the first thing, the prime thing that every one of us should be about, to seek after him, to put first things first.

[1:16] As we read in Matthew 6 verse 33, that familiar one. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

That's the number one, isn't it? So it begs the question, what is the mission of the church? That's really my theme today. What is the mission of the church?

And first we'll look at what the mission is not. What the mission is not. And then second, what the mission is. So the mission of our Lord for his church for us is not what we're seeing commonly around about in the popular church scene today.

A paradigm shift is going on. A paradigm shift that's bringing dramatic change in how we do church in many circles. And we're not immune to it either.

Every one of us is not immune to it. This shift means that churches are gearing everything to being non-threatening and so-called seeker-friendly. Seeker-friendly.

[2:29] That's the flavour of the time we live. Now, I'm not against modern technology and use of media. That's all well and good.

It can be a means we can use that doesn't compromise. But the shift that I'm talking about here goes much more deeper, much more sinister. It goes to the very heart and substance of what drives the church.

And we're seeing that shift going on. In fact, it's almost the mainstream really now. Where it's humanistic, it's feel-good, it's very soft.

And it's missing the point. I put it to you today. What is the mission of the church? God created the church.

He is the head of the church. He sets the pace. Now, that's a limit, brother Tom, to seven amens, I think. So, wait till I say something really good. You've got to hold on to your hat there, Tom.

[3:34] What is the mission of the church? What is it? What is it really and truly? His design is that the church, the church, the assembly, is to be his, for his own people, for the redeemed, not for the faithless, rebellious and unrepentant.

Now, that's not to say we certainly welcome everyone, lost and saved, to gather with us. But it's when the church is all geared and engineered such that there's really, the message is watered down and neglected.

Someone said this, that the church meeting only became the primary place for the lost to hear the gospel preached because church members throughout the 20th century couldn't maintain enough faith and courage to talk about Jesus Christ outside of the church sanctuary.

So true. In Numbers 11.4 we read that God's people were having a bit of a grumble. They wanted to go and get some of the veggies from Egypt that they liked so much.

And one of the reasons they were groaning and grumbling was that it was a mixed multitude. We see that in Numbers 11.4. And the mixed multitude that was among them fell a lusting. And we're

seeing a mixed multitude at times such that you could almost see where believers are outnumbered by unbelievers.

[5:08] And that is not necessarily the case not with us at times. I'm not saying that just because you go to McDonald's you're a hamburger. Just because you come to church you're a Christian.

It's not true. And we want to challenge everyone to consider yourself. A paradigm shift is happening. And the problem is a mixed multitude where it's just such that the world is being accommodated and the church the real church the saints of God are being desensitised so much by this.

such that the modern church by and large has a watered down diluted polluted gospel. It's a paradigm shift. And the change we're seeing is such that the church has failed to obey the Great Commission.

You can say amen brother. And anyone else can too. The church has actually failed to obey God's mission. And it's amazing to what degrees churches will go to compromise the truth into half-truths a market-driven mentality and a social club philosophy.

We don't want that. We want to be a called out people. Now again I want to balance that by saying we don't want to be a holy club.

[6:30] that you're not good enough unless you wear just the right kind of clothes or look the right kind of way carry the right kind of Bible. We want you to be welcome here whoever you are.

But we don't want to tone the message down such that it's become so palatable that there's nothing to it. We don't want to become such that we're a church of the Laodiceans where they're bragging on about we're rich we're increased with goods we got it all together we got the crowds we need of nothing and yet God says you're blind poor miserable naked and sometimes we can depend on the carnal means the worldly methods to draw a crowd to the extent that we're losing the real thing and as was talked of in the Bible reading the love of the world is a danger isn't it?

It's a danger for me. I love the world sometimes I've got to guard myself and repent often the love of the world if we love the world the love of the Father is not in us we need to be challenged about that are we to conform to the culture or confront it like salt to be different God's word tells of a time of a spiritual apostasy of a falling away from the truth of destructive days damaging demonic days of deception in 2 Timothy 3 13 but evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse evil men and seducers they're going to grow worse and worse deceiving and being deceived on the eve of the 20th century William Booth the founder of the Salvation Army was a man of great zeal and vision he saw a new gospel coming a new gospel for the new century he foresaw that by the end of the 20th century much of the church would be preaching a Christianity without Christ forgiveness without repentance salvation without regeneration heaven without hell there's a balance to the message we must declare it faithfully this is where we are at today a departure from the truth an apostasy in the Greek apostasis a desertion a forsaking a departing a leaving a getting away from biblical principles that's what

God says it's going to happen and friends I put it to you that it is happening seeker friendly Christianity it actually inoculates people against the real thing where we become so spiritually bankrupt and so away from his word that we're missing the truth seeker friendly man does not seek God unless God does a work within what does man do in Genesis man hides from God he picked the fruit and ate it in rebellion in disobedience and he was ashamed and he fled he tried to hide from God now none of us can hide from God you can't hide from God you can't hide from God in church you can't hide from God behind your Bible you can't hide from God behind the religious language you might use if you're lost you're in great peril and you're facing his judgment and friends man does not seek God like Adam he hides from God and the mission of the church is not to be seeker sensitive accommodating sinful man so what is the mission of the church what is it Luke 19 10 for the son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost it's a saving message it's a saving saviour it's a saving gospel it's salvation by faith in Christ and that ought to be our driving passion as his people his mission ought to be our mission the same mission our Lord had our Lord's last command should be our first concern go ye go ye go ye call to be mission minded call to militant evangelism call to aggressive action now there's times you might invite people to come to church that's all well and good but the message is much more than come to church it's come to Christ and that's the message we must impart we must go and tell open our

mouths and to be sensitive to the seeker the seeker the one who still seeks and saves the lost the seeker the spirit of God he's still searching he's still tugging at heart strings he's still grieved he's still got a heart and he wants us to have that same sensitivity towards him and to be his people what is the work of the spirit what is the work of God's spirit is to convict the world of sin it's to encourage the faithful it's to lead us into all truth it's to empower us as his people to overcome sin to cause us to witness to cause us to worship him and the spirit of Christ in us will make us like him the spirit of Christ it will make us want to seek and to save that which was lost to a faithfulness to be a bible driven church bible driven amen so follow

[12:32] God's blueprint the bible amen and where we find the absolutes of God's truth where do we find the answers for the issues that confront us it's in this document it's within these covers God's message to man it's where we find the truths of biblical purity how our hearts can be made clean washed how we can be a holy people not by any frantic effort of our own but entirely of his awesome grace biblical purity biblical separation not that we can be holier than thou but that we can be like him we can be like him and we can draw others by his help to be like him amen to come and find him where we can find biblical authority God's authority for man that by which we can test all things prove them and see that which is good and putting first things first but seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you amen

I was interested in one of those bible readings before it in contrast the lust of man to the pleasing of God the tug of the world and God's ways they're quite contrary 2 Timothy 2 15 it says study to show thyself approved unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth instead of a preoccupation with making the church less threatening and more comfortable attractive and less offensive our preoccupation should be with him should be with him what pleases him what is his will for us that we be a holy people holy holy that the holy things should preoccupy us a knowing of Christ a revealing of God's glory a carrying out of his purpose his mission what is our mission to be is our mission to be customer driven as if we kind of market ourselves to keep up with the church down the road customer driven or bible driven bible driven that must be what drives us the clear gospel message like movie hand he put it this way three R's movie the old time preacher three R's three R's ruined by sin redemption by Christ regeneration by the holy ghost that's what we need we need to realise our ruin our lostness our absolute lack ruin redemption salvation his grace his redeeming love and regeneration his transformation his power within the human heart turning it from darkness to light regeneration that must be our message and do we really want revival what is revival there's a lot of talk about revival revival revival means getting the life again the life life in

Christ the life of his spirit it's a breath of fresh air it's a turning aside from flesh and compromise it's a turning unto him he who is holy he who is life life eternal true revival will not come unless we see true repentance repentance not an accommodating with the world but a refusing of it someone said this there's no longer a dividing line between the church and the world it's so true isn't it yet there should be a genuine awakening will awaken us to bible truth it will awaken us to the life that God can impart to the sinful soul as God prompts repentance in us repentance is a lacking message a lacking message in 2 Timothy 2 it says how God can give repentance to the acknowledging of the truth that people can recover themselves from the snare of the devil who are taken captive by him at his will thank God repentance is still available today it's for a limited time only you know if I could use that marketing ploy if you could excuse me doing that it is for a limited time only like the door on the ark there's a time when

God's going to close it and time will be up people and we need to be that people that really truly love our saviour enough to refuse the world to repent in fervent prayer to seek his face to seek his only life and truth and to reject that which is false and compromise that which is inoffensive anemic spineless Christianity that will not declare the message the new paradigm fad driven church it's occupied with chasing new fads gospel gimmicks sideshows to the extent of making the holy place where we gather to worship the thrice holy god into some kind of a rock concert or a nightclub or a circus performance is that what God really wants and look the place we gather is just a building with bricks and mortar but where we assemble how we assemble or we need to glorify

God whatever it be whether we are in a mud hut or under a corrugated sheet of iron out in the desert we don't want to compromise the truth we don't want that slippery slope that spiritual shipwreck we don't want to be an idolatrous church that's spiritually sick apathetic and barren and God's damning judgment is against it judgment must begin at the house of God our mission must be clear and strong unadulterated the inerrant word of God we have a message for this mess age this age that is messy here is a relevant scripture I'm going to be relevant now that's one of the buzz words isn't it 2 Timothy 3 1 this know that in the last days perilous times shall come that's relevant perilous times it's not a time to accommodate but a time to resist worldly influence to seek a scriptural model a

[19:58] Christ centered church our mission is not to accommodate the masses to give them what they want to accommodate a worldly mindset but it is to be messengers of the only truth that this world desperately needs the truth of salvation by God's grace through faith so declare that whole counsel of God that must be our message and we must not mess with the message every one of us is one heartbeat one breath away from death bang you're gone you face eternity we want to be right with him don't we we want to be right with him individually and as a church and if you're outside of his church you're going to face eternity without

God what a torment that would be of itself we're called to proclaim the hard truths the hard truths truths such as God's wrath hell the exceeding sinfulness of man God's judgment is not seeker friendly he will be your judge and mine but thank God at Calvary if you're saved today your sins were paid in full the judgment has been vented expended fully dealt the death blow that should have fallen on you has fallen on him the cross is not seeker friendly and he calls you to one too it's not seeker friendly take up your cross daily follow me the message of repentance from sin it's not seeker friendly Christ is the saviour from sin he is the one to whom we must turn and as a church we must hold fast to sound doctrine our goal is not a building of services and programs around meeting people's needs but a desire for the glory of God that's the ultimate to be that God fearing church who will test everything by the word and who will be a people who will submit to the incarnate word our Lord Jesus himself who is the head of the church to be that biblical church oh how we long to be that a biblical church where we'll see sinners confronted convicted and converted by his mercy that's what we want to see true conversions not just a glim kind of casual oh yeah sounds convincing enough yeah I'll put up my hand and go on true conversions people are soundly converted soundly converted where there's an exchanged life you exchange your dross and filth and scum of your own works with his infinite glorious beauty and precious righteousness as his gift to you what an exchange what a transformation that's what we long for will we be that church that assembly of the called out ones or will we be a stiff neck people looking for the next paradigm shift looking for the next wind of doctrine to fill our sails and take us down some road will we adopt that which is the biblical basis for the church or just find the latest marketing gimmick what is the condition of the church the church the assembly of God's people what is the condition are we bent on entertaining the people or edifying giving the people what they want or what they need the message of life will we obey

Ephesians 5 11 have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather reprove them why are some churches dark black have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather reprove them we're meant to be children of light 2 Timothy 4 it says preach the word be instant in season and out of season reprove rebuke exalt with all long suffering and doctrine for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine but after their own lust they shall heed to themselves teachers having itching ears and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables will we be part of the counterfeit church will we compromise truth to suit the crowd if it draws a crowd it must be right that's their philosophy now we love seeing people come don't get me wrong but we don't want to mess with the message we don't want to be like the one spoken of in 2 Timothy 2 17 that their words eat like cancer like a gangrene like a sore a poisonous canker some teachers words are like that we need to be very aware of that it's not our self needs that matter it's our spiritual needs and well meaning people are making a great mistake it's like Uzzah when he messed with the ark and he tried to move it his own way do his own thing it was a new move a move of man it was a false fire we see what happens when men mess with the message when they conform to the world or what we do like Paul he stood before Felix and Felix

trembled when he spoke to him he wasn't very seeker friendly he wasn't very seeker sensitive when Paul confronted Felix and he reasoned with him of righteousness temperance and judgement to come Felix trembled he still didn't he didn't respond but well he responded but he didn't respond to trust Christ he responded to reject him and so friends we want to have a strong biblical testimony to be consistent to confront the perversions of popular Christianity and we don't want to make the mistake as we all can to think well if it feels good it must be right

[27:03] I got a holy god's shiver just there must be something's happening must be god talking to me god these little buzzers of electricity or whatever it might be oh I heard this voice oh god told me this yeah god told me this told me that just like he you know it's just your own imagination be wary of that be wary of that not discounted god can talk to us but this is how he talks to us it's got to be in accord with his scriptures if they talk not according to the words because there's no light in them and so we gotta be very aware it's not intuitions emotions passions feelings that guide us it's his word that must be the plumb line friends and again I'm not discounting that god can move us and prompt us in very personal ways but it's his truth that is the ultimate that determines what we are to do here's a good quote from Spurgeon he said this Spurgeon said discernment is not knowing the difference between right and wrong it is knowing the difference between right and almost right there's a lot of almost right going on and we need real discernment way back in

Eden Satan's first opening lines really hath God said yeah hath God said Genesis 3 1 he's still saying that huh you don't have to be stuffy Bible believing people you know let's follow the new move the new fag the new paradigm shift attacking the scriptures he still does that he delights in that he delights in giving people feelings that contradict his truth God's truth and it's dangerous and deadly to play games with God we don't want to miss it people we don't want to miss it we don't want to miss God's biblical plan for the church to play games with God to settle for a watered down new age version to seek God's absolute truth friends I'm speaking to myself as well as to all of us here and I'm not saying we've got it all together we've got it all just so down pat that we've got the monopoly on the truth so we not and Luke 14 are some hard truths our Lord Jesus is there Luke 14 25 he wasn't very sick and friendly it says and there went great multitudes with him and he turned and said unto them if any man come to me and hope not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters yea and his own life also he cannot be my disciple that's pretty strong isn't it that's a hard truth wasn't a message about building man's self esteem but a message addressing man's sin that's what we need not some seeker friendly service with catchy buzzwords and a cool hip style itch ears but a message that confronts man's sin not to repackage the gospel but to reclaim it to reclaim it the mission of the church it's anchored in biblical doctrine and friends our earnest longing is to be that church that assembly that gathering together of God's saints of God's people and yet not to be a holy club but we don't do anything with it there's a lot of fat

Christians a lot of Christians are very fat you need to do some exercise amen please don't think I'm attacking anyone who's larger than others I'm talking about spiritual things here you can get spiritually fat spiritually lazy spiritually dormant spiritually apathetic and our mission must be the gospel the gospel not to be a secularized church with a worldly gospel but to be a church that set its house in order that will repent from fleshly carnal means and to stand squarely on God's word and again that's not to say we can't be somewhat creative we can use modern technologies it's not about being stuffy stuff shirted it's about being biblical that's what we want that's what we long for and if we're really biblical really truly biblical we'll recognize the days in which we live where there is an abandonment of truth and we need to be faithful to our

Lord's mission for the son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost he didn't come just to seek but to save them and the message must be not just a seeker sensitive but it must be a saving message a message of salvation and that means an abandonment of the world and the lust and the tug of the world to a love and devotion to our Saviour that he prompts within us as we read sink here the Lord while he may be found call upon him while he is near Isaiah 55 verse 6 thank God he is still the seeker after souls he is the seeker when we of our natural selves would not seek

him we would hide like Adam he still seeks you he is seeking still and if you are lost he is seeking you now he goes to the lost and people today if you are lost please please don't miss it don't miss it [33:05] God is relentless if he's got your name on his list he's going to be relentless he won't give up it's a bit like the salvation army they don't give up on anyone's motto I was reading lately God doesn't give up he searches and he seeks and he keeps on seeking and he's going to make you restless very restless until you find your peace in him he'll make you restless and Christian if you're disobedient he's going to chasten you he's going to chasten you he's going to make you feel uncomfortable uncomfortable about your neglect of your soul about your neglect of prayer about your neglect of soul winning Christian he's going to prompt in you the same spirit but he had that longing to seek and to save that which was lost there's opportunities there's tracks there's ways you can witness don't neglect that please consider how can

I be a missionary in this locality how can I be a missionary how can I seek and save that which was lost let us pray a ending Thank you.