

Turning Completely to Jesus

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Date: 09 February 2014

[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. Thank you, Bob. If you would open with me to Matthew chapter 4. Matthew chapter 4, and we will start in verse 12.

Last week you were able to see how that Jesus withstood temptation. He was tested before he began his public ministry. He was tested and dealt with Satan and beat Satan and won the victory over Satan, and proven to us that we can, through the Word of God, overcome.

And now he is going to begin his public ministry. So if you have your Bible, look at Matthew chapter 4, verse 12 with me. The Bible says, Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee.

And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the seacoast. And if you skip down to verse 16, he is there. So the people which sat in darkness will see a great light.

Light is sprung up. Father, I pray now that you might help us as we study your Word. And as we look at people that turned completely to you.

[1 : 07] People that decided to completely serve you. They left all. They decided with everything in them that they would honor you and magnify you and serve you. And I pray, God, that you'd help me to be that person that would say that you are worth more than all of the things that I can have, all of the activities I can partake in, my family and everything, that you are first and you are number one in my life.

You get all the preeminence. First place, second place, all the way, Lord. You're number one in everything. And I give you praise for what you do now. In Jesus' name, amen. Well, the first thing I want you to do is in verse, if you got your Bible open in verse 12, you ought to circle the Word now.

So Matthew says, all right, he just overcame the temptation. And now the time had come. The first thing, the time had come. John's in prison. And that means that John's earthly ministry is basically over.

And Jesus has waited until the right time. The forerunner had prepared his way. And Jesus now steps forward to take his ministry. I don't know if it ever dawns on you.

But when I read the Bible, I put myself back in those shoes. I put myself in the life of that person. Here's Jesus, who is God in human flesh. We got that out of the Gospel of John.

[2 : 19] We know that, that Jesus was God come in human flesh. Amen? And so he was here on earth. And you realize he has been alive on the planet now for 30 years.

He has been alive on the planet for approximately 30 years. And the Bible said, and now, it says, now when Jesus heard, now when he hears that John's been cast into prison, now he steps forward to do his ministry.

I wonder how hard it would be for me to wait 30 years to do what I knew I was supposed to do. I wonder how hard it would be for me to wait 30 years to do what I knew I was supposed to do.

But God, Jesus worked on God's timetable. You know, God's at work in our lives. Every one of us in this room, God is working in our lives. God has a purpose for your life. You're not just an accident.

You're not just a person here. And consequences are taking place. And it's coincidence that's going on in your life. God is at work in your life. Jesus has been on the planet for 30 years.

[3 : 18] He's been God all that time. He only has one brief moment that we see him come forward. And that's when he's 12 years old. And at the age of 12, he goes to the temple. And you remember, he founds all the spiritual leaders.

And he asks them questions. And he is really teaching them right there at the age of 12. And yet he will wait 18 more years before he begins his public ministry.

I wonder if I could do that. Am I willing to allow God to work in my ministry at his speed, his plan, or do I wish to have it all now and to have it my way?

And I would just say before we move on, now Jesus begins his ministry. And I'd like to say to those of us in this room that are going into full-time ministry, you know, I've lived my life basically wishing that I had for today what God had planned for me tomorrow.

I have often not been satisfied where I am. I've often been saying, God, if I could only have that little bit more, if you'd only give me that many more people saved, if you'd only give that many more people in my church, if you'd only let me have this much more happen in my life.

[4 : 19] And I've not often been willing to work on God's timetable. I don't know where that is for you because I've lived all my life in the ministry, but I can only assume that some of you have the same idea.

Man, I want God to do it now, but Jesus has waited 30 years to begin his ministry. Jesus is the light of the world. Look if you would at Matthew chapter 4. Look if you would at Matthew chapter 4.

And there's a prophecy going to be fulfilled that Isaiah the prophet wrote. That's verse 14. And he says in verse 16, The people which sat in darkness saw great light, and to them which sat in the region in the shadow of death, light is sprung up.

Jesus is the light of the world. In the Garden of Eden, man knew what it was like to walk with God. In the Garden of Eden, man knew what it was like to walk with God.

Adam and Eve were naked, but probably clothed to the brightness of his glory. You remember when Moses went up in the mountain, and he came back down after he goes up to get the Ten Commandments, he comes back down, and his face shined so much that nobody could look on him.

[5 : 20] He had been in God's presence, and his face was shining with that brilliance, the light of God that affected his face. He ended up having to put a veil on so people could look at him. And here's Adam and Eve walking in the garden.

There's the light of the world. And then they decide that they will do things their own way. And they walk away. As light, Jesus can show men the way.

He is the way, the truth, and the life. As light, he can show men their darkness. It's hard to see yourself as you really are in the darkness. I will not know I'm dirty until I see the light.

I will not know where to go to get clean unless I see the way to get there. Jesus is the light of the world. And light's a great thing. But light is also a fairly revealing thing.

Whenever light comes along, whenever light comes along, it shows us things like they really are. Have you ever been where they put spotlights on you and people are looking at you and they can see you and they get in close and they can see all your blemishes?

[6 : 19] That's what's going on. Jesus is the light of the world. Years ago, I guess we were, I don't know, 20, 21, 22. I'm not sure exactly how old we were back then.

In my early 20s, I got a job as a rainbow vacuum cleaner salesman. I sold one to me. I am a real good salesman. How many of you have ever heard of a rainbow vacuum cleaner?

Look at that. How many of you all ever sold rainbow vacuum cleaners? How many of you sold one to anybody besides yourself? And so one of the things they did in this story was they gave us a big, high-powered light.

And we would come into your house and we would sit down and we would say, your carpet's not as clean as you think it is. And then you would take this metal shield around the light and you'd rub it across the carpet and then you'd pull the light up and turn it on and all that dust that's in that carpet came flying up.

And then you would try to get them to let their baby come over there and breathe. And when they breathed, all that junk would go into their mouth. And so you can't see it. It's in the air right now, but you can't see it without a real bright light.

[7 : 20] And then we would say, you should buy our vacuum cleaner because if not, they're going to keep breathing that junk. The light shows you how things are. Jesus is the light of the world. He comes to earth and we don't want to really see that.

Honestly, we don't want light. I couldn't keep that job because I felt like I was a liar every time because I knew that even after we ran that vacuum cleaner we were still going to be there. But still, so I had to end up quitting.

But still, the light of the world, it's hard to see yourself. People are in darkness. They had physical light, but they had no idea about spiritual light. Man has lost his way.

Man was in the Garden of Eden and he got separated because he disobeyed God. But then, even these religious people that are Jewish people, they're separated from God. They've lost the light. They don't know how to get to God because they got caught up in rules and regulation and morality.

And they were thinking, I'm good. I wash my hands the right way. I eat my food the right way. I don't work on Saturday. I don't eat pork. I don't eat shrimp. I've got my way to God, but they had lost the way.

[8 : 26] And Jesus is the light and He comes to the world and He shows them. They thought the law was for them to do, but law was never for us to do. Can you hear this? God never intended for you to keep the law.

God intended for the law to show you you couldn't keep the law. And when you found out you couldn't keep the law, then you would accept mercy and grace from God. And yes, as you lived it, the law will become a part of you, but you'll still never live up to it.

It'll always be God's grace and God's mercy. The light of the world was here. The main question is, have I seen myself in His light? The main question is, have I seen myself in His light?

Have I realized that I have sinned against a holy God? Do I see my failures and my sin? Do I see how sick I am and how much I need Him?

So I would like you to look this way just a second. It's an interesting progression in the passage of Scripture. He starts His ministry, He starts it off with light. And then in just a minute, the next word we're going to look at will be repent.

[9 : 25] But you see, light calls for me to say, look at me, let me examine me, let me see what I am and how I am and who I am. Have you come to a place in your life that you realize that you sinned against a holy God?

Have you come to a place that you saw yourself as dirty and filthy and useless and nobody ought to save and nobody ought to love you? Have you ever come to a place when you really said, I need God?

I hate to say this, but many of us grew up in church and we grew up being good kids. I mean, I've been in church all my life. I've always been a good kid. I come out of a good family. I've always done good stuff.

And it's very easy to begin to think I'm pretty good unless you let holy light from God shine on me and I realize how I have not been good.

It's amazing how a good godly home can do harm to a child. It's amazing how a good godly home can do harm to a child because what ends up happening is all their life they were told good little Christian boys and girls don't do these things.

[10 : 28] Good little Christian boys and girls do do these things. And so when they do these things they think they're good Christians and when they don't do these things they think they're good Christians when the truth is unless they accept Jesus Christ as their Savior they're not Christians.

Can you say amen? Morality never gets anybody to Jesus. Light shows me that I'm not moral. Light shows me that no matter how much good stuff I've done God can see the truth.

You do realize who Jesus has come to. You do realize who he's been talking to they're the Pharisees. These are the greatest rule keepers of the world of history. These are the guys who do all the good stuff and do all the right stuff but light sprung up and said no you're not.

Number two look if you would with me down to verse 17 and write down the word repent. Jesus starts his ministry he is light he brings light to the world and it is now time to repent.

Look what he preaches in verse 17. From that time Jesus began to preach and to say repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

[11 : 31] Once we see our condition it should sicken us. Once we realize the condition we're in it should break our hearts. When you know that you're dirty in sin failing sick it will cause you to want to turn to Christ and realize man I need him.

You know that to get saved you repent not only of your bad deeds but you repent of your good deeds. That's pretty hard for us. Some of us come with a lot of good deeds. We're like God I'm a really good guy.

I have been baptized I've been christened I've had everything done to me that can't be done to me I've spoken in tongues I don't eat pork I don't eat shrimp I'm a good guy here I come with all this good stuff and I need you to save me and here was Jesus' message repent.

Repent. Repent means to change your mind or opinion your heart your direction. Repent means to realize that you have been thinking all that you have been thinking is wrong.

It means to make a decision that says I have been wrong and my new thinking will cause me to change everything about my life. Repent means to give up what I have been doing and what I thought was good enough.

[12 : 38] Repent means to realize that my sin is offensive to God and I will not continue in it. Could I just let you could I get you to think with me just a second about how we live? Typically we go about doing our own life and I'm talking to you I'm really not talking to the sinners I'm talking to you I'm talking to a guy like me who was brought up in a deacon's home and a Sunday school teacher my mother was a Sunday school teacher she was in charge of the Women's Mystery Society I grew up in a good godly home I was teaching the Bible by the time I was 15 I was always in church and so I was raised in this whole philosophy of how good I was.

I was raised I didn't do those things I didn't I've never I've never drank alcohol I've never I've never used drugs I smoked a handful of cigarettes to prove I was macho when I was a kid and I'm a pretty good guy and so what repenting means is see some of us are walking this really good path we're walking this really we're like Pharisees we do all the right stuff but there has to come a time when I look and I say wait a minute it's not how good I am it's not what I do and I gotta say wait a minute I need to think like God thinks and here's how I tend to grow up thinking this is how we tend to grow up we tend to grow up thinking I didn't do what they did and I didn't do what they did and that person's an alcoholic and that person smokes, cusses, drinks and dances and that person commits adultery and that person and we're real good at pointing our fingers so we can feel good about ourselves but we have to repent and say you know what I know I'm a sinner I have failed God and all these good things I've done are no good of no value they are filthy rags and I repent and say it's not me it's Jesus and if in the same way you've been walking in sin it's the same thing that goes on Jesus said light shows you who you are light shows you who you are and now he says it's time to repent it's time to turn we are to turn we're to turn we're to turn away the light will do one of two things it will make you run and hide or it will make you see your need of help and you will ask you will cry out for help as you continue to grow in the Lord and grace you should know that we do not repent one time we live a life of constant repentance we constantly learn what's pleasing to God and desire that we see that what he dislikes and want to dislike it also before I leave repentance can I just show you this on May the 6th 1962

I realized that I had sinned against the Holy God and I began trusting the Lord Jesus as my Savior but over all these years I constantly find out things that really don't please God and I'm like when I see that I'm like if he doesn't like that and I like him I'm going to try to do what he prefers I want to serve him I want my life to be like him and so I'm looking in my life all the time saying let me see it in the light of your word let me understand what you got going on and let me change these things about me do you realize you ought to be growing and changing as a Christian can you say amen how many of you have been married over 10 years hold your hand up do you realize that you're not the same person you were when you married her or him do you realize that when we get married we think we know them we think we're right we think we're just exactly what they want I married Betty I was 18 years old it was 1973 August the 18th I get married to Betty I must be the exact perfect thing she wants but she has spent 40 years modeling me and changing me she has spent 40 years saying no you won't do it that way you'll do it this way no we don't do this

I can remember the first time I went to her house and we sat down to eat and they had all them forks there at my home when I grew up the little fork we call those children forks and the big forks we called adult forks anybody else around here will grow up like that thank you Joe me and you right there together anyway and I got down and they had me a children's fork and an adult fork at the same table and I was like what in the world they're confused in this house more than one spoon more than one fork more than one everything and I'm like what in the world they're just showing off all the junk they got I guess amen well you're laughing about it because you come out of that mansion house I knew it but you know what happened all of a sudden I had to learn which fork to use I had to learn what to do I had to learn that you take your napkin and you put it in your lap that don't make sense to me I mean leave it on the table who won't sit in their lap amen but no there's all these things and slowly I change you realize what's happening as you grow in Christ every day in your life you're saying you know what I am saved and I'm on my way to heaven but as I look and as I grow I say I need to put that aside I need to take this off and put that on

I need to change the way I've been thinking I need to change the way I've been acting because repentance is a daily act in our life I want to please Jesus can you say amen right there that leads me to the third thing go with me if you would as he moves into ministry it's now time for Jesus to begin his public ministry he preaches repentance and many have repented now he begins calling his disciples look at verse 18 and 19 with me Matthew chapter 4 verses 18 and 19 and Jesus walking by the sea of Galilee saw two brethren Simon called Peter and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea for they were fishers and he said unto them follow me and I will make you fishers of men I want you to underline in verse 19 follow they were to imitate him they were to leave what they were doing and they were to come follow after him and they were to imitate him they would become fishers of men people who won others to the doctrines and teachings of Jesus Christ Jesus walks out he is the light of the world he calls on men to repent and the next thing he does is say

[18:04] I need some of you to follow me and he starts calling these people these that will become his apostles I want you to notice some things about them they were successful people somewhere along the way we figured out that if you can't do anything else you can be a pastor if you can't do anything else you can be a preacher if you can't do anything else you can be a missionary but if you can be successful you ought to go and do that these were successful men do you notice in the passage that they had nets in verse 18 they were they're casting a net and they left in verse 20 they had ships they were successful men in other passages we know they had people on their payroll they had people working for them they were businessmen they were small businessmen they were leaders they were responsible in their work they were responsible with their families they were responsible to their workers these were no peons these weren't the dregs of society these weren't people that couldn't make it somewhere else they were already making it when Jesus came along and called them and here's what they did they left all they left all would you look at verse 20 with me they showed no hesitation in verse 3 it says and they straightway left their nets and followed him would you underline straightway put a circle in it straightway he comes walking by and these guys have got businesses they got nets they got ships they got employees they got their dad there they got their family working there and he said hey follow me and I'll make you fishers of men and they just get up and take off and walk it was immediate they didn't say check with me at the end of the week

I got to put in my two week notice I need to talk to my dad and make sure this is okay I need to get family permission they straightway left their nets and followed him look at verse 22 if you will verse 22 and they immediately would you put a circle around that they immediately left the ship they immediately left the ship and their father and followed him notice they left their businesses their nets and their ships in other verses we'll find out in other chapters we'll find out about other people they also left their father they're doing the work I don't know either these are grown men they're working in the family business I don't know anything about where you grew up but I can tell you where I grew up and buddy if I were to walk away in the middle of a job my daddy would have just killed me right on the spot I mean he would have hit me in the head with something I mean I wouldn't have got away they stood up and they walked away they left their father no one no one was questioned about it no way everyone didn't think they were overreacting whenever you decide to follow Jesus everybody says don't get too far into it a new Christian comes in and accepts

Christ as their savior they get fanatical they're excited about Jesus and they have to kind of calm down so they can fit in with the rest of us at first they want to do anything they can serve Jesus in any way they can and we'll quietly bring them back down to our level if we can but Jesus was worthy of being followed finally got God wants you to do and doing it should demand everything in you and all you can do look at verse 19 tremendously powerful thing he says to them and he said unto them follow me and I will make you fishers of men they were fishing for fish they had a business they had nets they had ships not just a ship they had ships they had different boats that were out there working and he said follow me and I will teach you how to get men to come follow a new doctrine how do we apply this to our lives do you realize that God is at work in your life you know something goes on in us I don't know exactly what happens but we tend to almost think we're just by coincidence an accident we're here but God is at work in your life do you realize that God has a timetable that he's working on in you he knows where you are he knows where you should be he knows what you should be doing right now you and I should every one of us should be saying

I got saved this is a brand new life I was born again I have new life I'm following Jesus Christ I'm on his timetable I'm supposed to be serving him I belong to him he purchased me I'm his and I should serve him with my life well you do that is you get into his word and you see more of your life in the light of the word and make sure you're living out what he has for you let me tell you when you got saved it ought to have been something different it ought to have been you were busy about your fish and you were busy about your ship and you were busy about your nets and all of a sudden you say hey you know what Jesus has a purpose that's what's going on in these apostles lives and he said follow me and I will make you fishers of men get into the he that began a good work in me will complete that good work he will carry me all the way through he's doing a work in me but on my side of this equation

I want to be constantly thinking I want to serve Jesus I want him to be pleased with me I want to do what I ought to do repenting ought to be a part of life it ought to be that I don't even remember when I quit that I just know this every day of my life I'm seeking to please Jesus more repenting ought to be a part of our life how about this one find the ministry you should do and get in it listen to what I'm about to tell you Matthew writes the gospel of Jesus and it starts off as he starts his ministry says it's time and he tells them I'm light and he tells them to repent and he puts them in the ministry did you know you have a race to run Hebrews chapter 12 verses 1 and 2 you have a race to run God has a career for you he has a path for you to run on he has a job for you to accomplish with your life you aren't just a person who goes to church on

[24 : 08] Sunday you are born again blood bought Christian that serves Jesus you should say God where do I belong where do I fit in what can I do you should be seeking your place of service for the Lord Jesus let me give you some practical steps about how to do that start where you are right now you know if you came to me and you said God wants all of us to be serving in the Bible there's no place for spectators there's no place where you come and sit in the bleachers everybody's on the field and everybody's in the game so start where you are now begin using all you are to serve the Lord Jesus you should say God these are the talents and these are the abilities you've given me what can I be doing in your service how can I honor you how can I glorify you how can I follow you how can I make fishers of men use your intelligence your money your position your influence for all of his purposes

God's given you a job and he put you in that job and you got influence and people at that place are like man we know him he's a big shot he's a leader he influences people but how many do you influence for Jesus when's the last time Jesus got mentioned where you are when's the last time your funds were used for Jesus Christ when's the last time your position was used when's the last time your power was used we're almost secret agents all week long we go to church on Sunday morning and we carry our Bible we got on our Baptist face have and all that you are to be used for his purposes do what you can to get others to know Christ be ready and available for whatever door or ministry that God would open for you whatever place God might have for you to serve honestly every place you could possibly work for

Jesus is a valuable place maybe it's a nursery maybe it's doing some cleaning maybe it's singing in the choir but whatever you ought to be constantly saying man I want God to use my life there's not two groups of people in this room there's not like well there's Austin and Robert and Trent and boy they're the full time guys and they're serving Jesus everybody in this room ought to be serving Jesus we ought to be following him say amen if you believe that then let's get at you realize that the ability to sing the ability to teach the ability to make money the ability to do anything you do was a gift from God you didn't have it you didn't earn it you didn't work it up you didn't read enough books to get it the Bible says everything you have you receive the Lord so all of it belongs to him and so you should back up and say God you have given me this ability to speak you have given me this ability to do music you have given me this ability to teach you have given me this ability to motivate men you have given me all these things

I have got under my leadership under my stewardship I am in charge of them God I want to use them for your honor and your glory I don't want to just exist I want my life to count go with me if you would down to Matthew chapter 4 verse 23 next as they served Jesus got famous verse 23 Jesus went about all Galilee teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom Jesus is the one that's working he's the one that they're watching he's the one that they're helping but the more he does the more famous he becomes the more he does the more famous he becomes verse 24 his fame spread throughout all Syria and they brought in all these sick people from all these places with all these different diseases and they came Jesus was being made famous as he preached as he taught as he healed people and these men are helping they are becoming fishers of men and bringing people the crowds came look at verse 25 if you would and there followed him great multitudes they came from everywhere chapter five next

Sunday morning he's going to begin the sermon on the mount people are coming from everywhere they're coming for the wrong reasons they're coming for the fishing they're coming for whatever number of things that they might be coming for whatever good things he could do for them healings or whatever miracles he might work they're coming for the wrong things but he's going to preach to them he got them together in big crowds he preached the truth most of them will walk away but some will follow him some will end up following him so I have some questions for you and I quit will you get on God's timetable and say Lord here's my life here's everything I have here's who I am and I know Jesus you are time to quit making excuses let the light show you where you are what's going on in your life and help you know what needs changed begin living a life of constant repentance always learning always changing always turning more like

[29 : 27] Jesus more like Jesus that's what I want to be I want to be his I am his I'm saved but I want to turn more more like him will about guys who turned completely to Jesus they were going down their normal everyday life the light shone on them he said repent and they moved into ministry and then Jesus got famous so here's my question for you where are you in your service for Jesus where are you on that timetable of serving Jesus how much do you give your life your time your treasure for Jesus how much does the motivating factor in your life if Jesus came by and said follow me would you say mama is not as important daddy is not as important wife is important Jesus is important business isn't important Jesus is important where are you they turned completely to Jesus they served him with everything in them and they will become these guys are going to be his apostles but they left and they followed

Jesus I challenge you to say everything about me is going to be about Jesus everything about me is going to be about Jesus it's not my job for me it's not my money for me it's not my treasures for me it's going to be about Jesus I want to live for him father in heaven I pray your name would be glorified and magnified I pray you show yourself in a end they could tell others about you they could get people to come and follow you this message was recorded at vision Baptist church in Alfred Georgia for more information log on to www.visionbaptist.com where you can find our service times location contact information and more audio and video recordings