

Back to Basics

(The Priorities of God's People) Part 1: Evangelism
Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, July 12th

If Satan can't keep us from a personal faith in Christ, He'll seek to keep us from practically Following Him! (John 10:10; 2 Cor 11:2,3; Col. 2:6-10; Phil. 3:17-20; Gal. 2:20-3:1; etc.) The very nature of Sin is to cause us to drift away from God's Path, Priorities, and Purposes. James 1:12-16

In order to avoid the drift of sin, we need to be able to accurately "plot" our position using reliable reference points. Without such "reference points" we'll not recognize how far we've drifted from God's original course/purpose for us. (Heb. 12:1,2)

Every believer has the same Basic Priorities (Points of Reference) revealed in:

- **The Great Commission (Mt. 28:18-20)**
- **The Great Commandment (Mt. 22:36-39)**

This morning we'll consider the first of these "Priorities"! Acts 1:8

'But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me...'

This is the first element of the Great Commission. (Mark 16:15; Mt 28:19; Mt 4:19; Mark 1:17)

In 2 Kings 6 & 7 Israel faced a terrible Distress (Famine) and Four lepers faced a Dilemma.

These lepers eventually learned that God had provided a Great (but unknown) Deliverance.

This Discovery led them to a Point of Decision. (whether they would share what they knew!)

1 Cor 10:11 reminds us that *"all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."*

So What does this ancient Story have to do with us?

We, like Israel in 2 Kings 6,7 face:

1. A Great Distress.

A. Famine Amos 8:11 *'Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine, not a famine of bread, nor a famine of water, but of hearing the words of the LORD.'* (See Hosea 4:6)

2 Tim. 3:1-3 *"perilous times will come men shall be lovers of their own selves ... without natural affection..."*

1) 1/5 kids conceived in U.S. are aborted. (862,320 in 2017 Guttmacher institute)

2) >1/4 kids don't have Father at home.

a) **Kids from fatherless homes account for:** 63 % of youth suicides; 90 % of all runaways
85 % of all behavioral disorders; 71% of High School dropouts; 70% of incarcerated juveniles;
75 % of patients in substance abuse centers; 75 % of rapists motivated by displaced anger

<https://www.liveabout.com/fatherless-children-in-america-statistics-1270392>

B. Fear : Lk 21:26 *'Men's hearts failing them for fear.'*

1) Heart disease is still the # 1 killer!

2) We're seeing American Born terrorism at work!

C. Frustration: Is. 55:2 *'Wherefore do ye ... labor for that which satisfies not?'* (See Hag. 1:6,7)

D. Fury: Looking to blame others!

"If this country doesn't give us what we want, then we'll burn down this system. I could be speaking figuratively or literally...it's a matter of interpretation." Hawk Newsome NYC BLM

E. Faithlessness: John 5:40 *"And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."*

Instead of turning back to God, many turn to drink, drugs, deception. Jn 10:10

2. A Great Dilemma.

A. Like the lepers, each must decide: *What can I do? Where can I go? Who can I trust?*

3. God has already provided a Great Deliverance!

Mt. 11:28 *"Come unto me, all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."*

John 10:10 *"The thief comes... to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly"*

A. Those who come in faith to Jesus will find:

- 1) Pardon: Ro. 8:1 *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ..."*
- 2) Peace: Ro. 5:1 *"We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."*
- 3) Protection: Jn 10:28 *"I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish..."*
- 4) Provision Phil. 4:19 *"My God shall supply all your need..."*
- 5) Purpose Acts 1:8 *"ye shall be my witnesses..."* (See also 2 Cor. 5:19,20)

Application:

We Face the same choice as the lepers who experienced God's Great Deliverance, while those back "in the city" were starving!

- 1) Will we horde God's Pardon, Peace, Protection and Provision for ourselves and so miss His Purpose?
- 2) Or will we Partner with God in sharing His provision, peace, plan, etc., with others regardless of the risks, ridicule or rejection?

They didn't have to convince them, But they did have to tell them!

Ez. 3:17,18 *"I have made thee a watchman ... therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, ... to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand."*

"If there is one thing which pierces the Master's heart with unutterable grief, it is not the world's iniquity, but the Churches indifference." FB Meyer.

Like the starving citizens of Samaria, Each must decide what they will do with the message of hope.

Heb 2:3 *"How shall we escape, if we neglect (amele'ō: are careless of) so great salvation?"*

Sōtēri'a: deliverance, rescue

During a Billy Sunday evangelistic campaign, a mentally impaired boy came faithfully each night to sing in the choir. *"Joey was not very bright,"* said Homer Rodeheaver, the well-known song leader, *"but he never missed any of our meetings and wouldn't leave until he shook my hand. Sometimes I was embarrassed by the way he constantly tailed me, and I secretly wished he'd go away."*

Then one evening a man came to Rodeheaver and said,

"Thank you for being kind to my son Joey. He's not right mentally, but never has he enjoyed anything so much as singing in the choir. He worked hard doing simple chores for people so he could contribute to the collection. Through his pleadings my wife and five other children came to this evangelistic campaign and have now received Christ. Last night his 75-year-old grandfather, who has been an atheist all his life, was saved, and tonight his grandmother also came forward.

Now our entire family is converted!"

Who will be in heaven because of your witness?