

## SENT #4 – “QUESTIONS ANSWERED”

### Review

- Our purpose in life is to live joyfully for the glory of God by **“living loved, changed and sent”** (Parallels “Come, Become and Love.”)
- These summaries give us focus when life is hard or confusing.
- When we live loved by God and experience change from God – then we have a message worth sharing with people around us.
- We are blessed to be a blessing, we are changed to bring change.

### Common Questions about Being Sent into the World

➔ *How can I simply and clearly share the gospel with someone?*

- A good summary of the gospel is this: **God loves you.**
  - ▶ *“For God so loved the world that he sent his one and only Son...” (John 3:16).*
- And that love is most clearly experienced through **a Love-relationship with Jesus.**
- The result is **Rescue and Life.** Rescue from being separated from God, from ourselves and from others. We are given life instead – a life of love, joy and peace and life that never ends.
- Our part is to **love, follow and trust Jesus.**
- (Note: Some will initially be attracted to some aspects of being Rescued and being given Life more than other aspects.)

➔ *What are some common distortions of the gospel that we should guard against when communicating the gospel of Jesus in words?*

- (1) That you just have to believe facts about yourself and Jesus to be saved.
  - The Greek word “pisteuo” in our New Testaments is often translated “believe” – but the Greek word actually means “to trust in, to rely on”. It’s not a merely mental thing, it’s a heart thing. It’s primarily a relational act, not an intellectual act.
- (2) Emphasizing Jesus as “savior” can reduce the gospel to be about saving from eternal judgment rather than saving in a whole sense of also saving from sin’s power and presence in our lives.
  - Also, emphasizing Jesus as Savior can imply that following him as Lord is optional – and it’s not. Romans 10:9 “If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” There’s no such thing as being a Christian and NOT being Jesus’ disciple.
- (3) Another distortion is that the goal of salvation is primarily getting to heaven and avoiding hell.

- Jesus emphasizes bringing his kingdom to earth – now. Salvation is about now *and* the future.

➔ *Can people be saved without directly knowing about or trusting in Jesus?*

- There are differing views on this. My personal conclusion: *God judges people on the basis of the light they have and their heart-response to that light.* Romans 1 & 2 says people are without excuse because they have the evidence of God’s created world and their God-given consciences. A right relationship with God is not primarily about information – it’s about relationship.
- There are evidences of people in the Bible loving God without knowing Jesus, and these people are accepted by God. Acts 10:34-35 (Peter to Gentile soldier, Cornelius): “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts those from every nation who fear him and do what is right.”
- Salvation comes through no other name than Jesus. No one is made right with God solely because of their actions – or even because of their faith. We are forgiven and restored to God because of what Jesus did on the cross (Acts 4:12).
- Why evangelize? (1) Many people may not respond to the evidences of creation and conscience – and hearing about Jesus opens their eyes. (2) We want people to know the fullness of God.

➔ *How do I deal with my fears about being bold as Jesus’ witness?*

- Start with love – compassionately acting in their best interest. With verbal love (affirmation, praise, respect, etc.), then action love.
- But the day finally comes when you know God is asking you to invite them to church, ask them about their spiritual beliefs, or ask them what is holding them back from following Jesus.
- Most common fears: Fear of being rejected by them, not being liked by them, not being respected by them. *2 Timothy 1:7-9 “For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, who has saved us and called us to a holy life...”*
- He gave us his Spirit – of power, love and self-discipline; makes us unashamed of Jesus, and willing to suffer for his sake.
- “How do I get this power and boldness?” Through dying to self and living by faith. Die to needing to be liked, needing to be admired, needing to be accepted, needing to be in control. “God, take my will, my reputation, my goals, my pride, and have your way with me.” AND believe (faith) that God is up to something – up to something in the people around us, up to something in us. . and that he can use even me if I am willing to act in faith.

**Live as loved, changed and sent - it’s what we have been made for – and it’s what the world needs!**