

SENT #1 – “LOVED AND CHANGED TO GO”

Review

➔ **Live Loved** – in the conviction that God loves us in accepting us and empowering us by his grace. ➔ **Live Changed** – with the desire, the dream and deliberate pursuit of becoming like Jesus.

Connecting the Dots from “Loved & Changed” to “Sent”

- Living loved and living changed enables us to live sent.

A Message in Words

- ▶ *Matthew 28:18-20* “Then Jesus came to [his disciples] and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
- “Disciples” are people who follow a leader out of love and the desire to be like them. This isn’t just a teacher/student relationship, it’s a love relationship. To “obey” Jesus is to walk into the arms of love.
- One of the primary biblical words for this love is “salvation.” To save (rescue) someone from harm is to love them. God saves us from the penalty of our sins; from the presence and power of our sins; from our alienation from him, ourselves and others; from an eternity apart from him.
- If we to live as sent people, we must feel the power of this love-message. We must see people as needy - desperate - for this love.
- We become the conduits for God’s love to reach a lost person, just like wire conducts electricity, and pipes conduct water.
- Sent people talk to lost people about being loved. The “gospel” of Jesus is simply, “God loves you.” He pursues us, reveals himself to us, and draws us to himself in Jesus.
- If we understand anything about love, it means God not only offers people forgiveness and fellowship, he offers them the freedom and healing of living changed. E.g.: ▶ *2 Timothy 3:1-4*: “People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God...” ▶ *Galatians 5:22-23* “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” **Who doesn’t want this?**

A Message in Action

- Our message is not primarily with our words - it is a message of our lives. When we live loved, and when we live changed, it’s a message of light and hope to the world.

▶ *2 Corinthians 2:14* - God “uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere.”

- We are an aroma. What kind of aroma is up to you and me. Our calling is to be a fragrant aroma that attracts people to Jesus. ➔ **“Do I attract people to Jesus?”**
- Good news: God can use stinky people who are humble, broken, repentant, who apologize, who confess their stinkiness to those who smell it, and make serious steps toward change. In fact, some of the most beautiful aromas come from Christians who were real stinkpots! *It’s never too late to live loved and changed and sent.*
- ▶ *Matthew 5:16* “Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”
- We must *accept our calling* to be sent with this light into the world. We must get into the darkness and love people. Don’t hide light in a church building or your house – let it shine so all can see it . . . so that one day the people in the darkness will glorify your Father in heaven.

A Power to be Sent

- Being loved and changed helps us be better sent messengers because God changes our hearts.
 - ♦ Living loved and changed means we’re freed from self. So we live for God’s glory more than our own, and we live for the good of others more than our own. *2 Corinthians 5:14*, “Christ’s love compels us.” Living loved by Jesus compels us to love others – even if they say “no thanks for now”.
 - ♦ Living loved and changed means we’re freed from fear. We live with the conscious and confident conviction that God is always compassionately acting for our good in every circumstance: ▶ *Romans 8:31*, that “if God is for us, who can be against us?” ▶ *vs. 32*, “if God gave Jesus up for us all, how will he not also along with him, graciously give us all things?” This is believing that we lack nothing and that we have everything we need through Jesus. ▶ *vs. 36-38* - that when “trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword” comes – even “death” – “[nothing] shall separate us from the love of Christ.” God’s love to us isn’t primarily experienced in removing our trials, but in sustaining us and transforming us and redeeming those trials. So when we live loved and changed, we have courage to be sent – without fear ruling us.
 - ♦ Living loved and changed means we look at people differently – they are loved by God and have the hope of being changed by God.
- To keep these to ourselves is not only selfish, it’s counter to the very message that God is giving to us. Yes, we are loved and changed for God’s glory and our joy, but also for others! We are called to proclaim the kingdom of God – his loving rule on earth!
 - ➔ *Start hungering for more of God’s love and change in your life. Then watch God give you a hunger to be sent with his love into your world!*