**More Like the Master**

In His Mission

Lesson 4

*“For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost”*

*(Luke 19:10)*

**Mission Accomplished**

 From the beginning of time and the creation of the world, God’s mission from heaven has been to save mankind from sin on the earth (Ephesians 1:4; 3:11). John announced at the beginning of his gospel that Jesus, as God, came to give light to the world (John 1:1-13) and to declare God to the world (John 1:14-18). When the angels made announcements to various individuals about Jesus’ birth, they told how that Jesus’ mission was to come and save mankind from sin (Matthew 1:21-23; Luke 1:31-33; 2:11). Those individuals who came in contact with Jesus as a babe understood that Jesus would grow up and save the world from sin (Matthew 2:1-12; Luke 2:21-39). Even John the Baptist understood that Jesus’ mission on earth was to save mankind (John 3:23-26). Jesus knew that he did not come to earth from himself, but he was sent by the Father (John 8:42) and he *“came forth from the Father”* with a mission (John 16:27-28; 17:8).

**Jesus and His Mission**

 Jesus fully understood his mission. Jesus understood that he came to fulfill the Old Law (Matthew 5:17). He came to call sinners (Matthew 9:13; Mark 2:17). He came to bring a sword, a fire, and to divide through his teaching (Matthew 10:34-35; Luke 12:49-53). As the good shepherd, Jesus knew that he came to give life (John 10:10). Jesus said that he came not to judge the world, but to save the world (John 12:47). When Pilate asked Jesus if he was a king, Jesus answered, *“You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth”* (John 18:37). It is clear from Jesus’ own words that he fully understood his mission.

 Jesus willingly accepted his mission. From an early age, Jesus knew his mission in life was to serve his Father and save mankind. When Jesus’ parents found him in the temple at age 12, Jesus asked them: *“How is it that you sought me? Know you not that I must be in my Father’s house?”* (Luke 2:49; literally, “in the things of my Father,” or, “about my Father’s business”). On another occasion, Jesus quoted Isaiah 61 and knew his mission was to come and preach good tidings (Luke 4:16-21). It was not by accident that Jesus came to Galilee, but this was his divine mission to fulfill Old Testament scripture (Matthew 4:12-16; Isaiah 9:1-2). Jesus’ mission was to be the *“light of the world”* and bring the “light” of truth to a sinful world of “darkness” (John 3:19-21; 8:12; 9:5). Jesus knew his mission was *“to seek and to save that which is lost”* and he always worked to that end (Luke 19:10). It is clear from Jesus’ own attitude that he willingly accepted his mission.

 Jesus remained focused on his mission. Jesus was focused on doing his Father’s will as we have already seen in Luke 2:49. However, Jesus was also focused on other things which worked together to fulfill his mission. For example, he was willing to leave the glories of heaven in order to begin his mission (John 17:5; Philippians 2:5-6; 2 Corinthians 8:9). On earth, Jesus focused on his preaching mission. When the multitudes on one occasion did not want Jesus to leave them, he said that he must go elsewhere to preach, *“for to this end came I forth”* (Mark 1:36-39; Luke 4:42-44). Jesus was always focused on who sent him (God) and for what purpose he was sent (John 7:28-29). He knew from where he came and where he was going (John 8:14). He was also focused on his miracles. Jesus said, *“We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work”* (John 9:4).

 Jesus was also focused on going to Jerusalem to be sacrificed there. When it was time, Jesus “*steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem”* (Luke 9:51-56). He said during one Passover, *“Yet a little while and I am with you, and I go to him that sent me”* (John 7:33). He was focused on the “time” and the “hour” that his mission would be accomplished (John 7:6,8). Jesus knew when *“the hour is come”* and *“the hour is at hand”* (Matthew 26:45; Mark 14:41; Luke 22:14; John 12:23; 17:1; see also John 2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 13:1; 16:32). He said, *“for this cause came I unto this hour”* (John 12:27). Jesus knew when *“his hour was come”* and *“he loved them unto the end”* (John 13:1). He knew that the “end” (aim, goal) of his mission was to *“bear witness unto the truth”* (John 18:37).

 Jesus was also focused on returning to heaven after his mission was complete. He focused on his earthly mission and beyond. The author of Hebrews writes: *“…who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God”* (Hebrews 12:2). When you see what Jesus accomplished in his lifetime, you see that he remained focused on his mission.

 Jesus relied upon his Father during his mission. Jesus knew that he was not alone in his mission. He knew his Father was with him. He said, *“And he that sent me is with me; he has not left me alone; for I do always the things that are pleasing to him”* (John 8:29). During his mission, Jesus relied upon his Father by praying to him and by reading from his Father’s word. He also relied upon his Father by not changing his Father’s mission. Jesus trusted his Father’s mission for him and that his mission would be accomplished according to his Father’s will, not his own will. Jesus said, *“…nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt”* (Matthew 26:39).

 Jesus completely fulfilled his mission. When Jesus prayed to his Father the night before going to the cross, he said: *“I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work which you have given me to do”* (John 17:4). Jesus was about to complete his mission and he was ready to come back to the Father (John 17:11,13). When Jesus was hanging from the cross, his closing words were: *“It is finished”* (John 19:30). Because Jesus knew his mission, and he stayed focused on his mission, and he relied upon his Father, he was able to completely fulfill his mission. Jesus is now exalted in heaven ruling and reigning at the right hand of God having completed his earthly mission (Acts 2:33; 5:31).

 Jesus knows he has one last mission. Jesus knows that he will come again to take his disciples home. He said, *“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also”* (John 14:3). Jesus knows that he will come again to raise all the dead (John 5:28-29), gather his own to himself (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) and judge the world (Matthew 25:30ff; Acts 17:30-31).

**The Christian and Mission**

 Like Jesus, Christians today need to have a sense of mission and purpose in life. They need to fully know and understand their mission in life. They need to willingly accept the mission that God has given them to do. They need to have a strong sense of serving God, saving the lost, and sojourning to heaven (serving, saving, sojourning).

 Christians need to stay focused on serving God. Our mission in life is to put God first and serve him (Matthew 6:33). We are to live and we are to die unto the Lord (Romans 14:8). Like Paul, we need to make it our “aim” to be well-pleasing to God through our obedience to God (2 Corinthians 5:9). Solomon wrote: *“This is the end of the matter; all hath been heard: fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every work into judgment, with every hidden thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil”* (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14). We serve God with our bodies and our daily living (Romans 12:1-2). We serve God in our worship (Hebrews 12:28-29; 13:15-16). We need to live in such a way that when it comes times for our death, we will *“fall asleep”* (die) in Jesus and be taken to heaven (1 Thess. 4:13-18). We need to live right so that we can die right. We need to *“die in the Lord”* so that we can rest in heaven from our labors (Revelation 14:13).

 Christians need to stay focused on saving the lost. Our mission in life is also to save the lost, ourselves and other lost souls around us (Acts 2:40). As a Christian, we need to continue to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12). Like Paul, we need to make it our “aim” to preach the gospel to those who have never heard the gospel (Romans 15:20-21). The soul of man is what is most important in life (Matthew 16:26), not the physical and material things of this life (Luke 12:13-21; 1 John 2:15-17). We will focus on making sure our soul is saved and the souls of our loved-ones and friends around us. We need to stay focused on saving lost souls from death (James 5:19-20) and snatching them from the fires of hell (Jude 22-23).

 Christians need to stay focused on sojourning to heaven. Our mission in life is also to sojourn to heaven. Faithful Christians need to lay up *“treasures in heaven”* (Matthew 6:19-20). Like Paul, we need to run the Christian race in such a way as to receive *“the prize”* (1 Corinthians 9:24). Paul did not *“run without aim”* (1 Corinthians 9:26) and neither should we. It is important to always be abounding in the Lord’s work, knowing that one day we will be rewarded for it (1 Corinthians 15:58). We will reap the great reward if we do not faint along the way (Galatians 6:9). Like Paul, we need to *“press on toward the goal”* and keep our eye on the *“prize of the high calling of God”* (Philippians 2:14). We have a hope laid up for us in heaven (Colossians 1:5) and we are not to let anything move us *“away from the hope of the gospel”* (Colossians 1:23). We will not let anyone rob us of our *“prize”* (Colossians 2:18). We will *“seek the things that are above*” and keep our minds set *“on things that are above”* (Colossians 3:1-4).

 Like Paul, faithful Christians will run so as to finish the race and receive the crown of righteousness (2 Timothy 4:7-8). We must be faithful and hold fast our confidence and assurance firm unto the end (Hebrews 3:6,14; 6:11). We need to *“press on to maturity”* (Hebrews 6:1). We will not shrink back to perdition but we will keep pressing forward (Hebrews 10:38-39). We will run the Christian race *“looking to Jesus”* (Hebrews 12:1-3). We must remember that we are just sojourners passing through this life. We will abstain from fleshly lusts as we journey to heaven and we will be an example of good works (1 Peter 2:11-12). We will grow and add to our faith and make our calling and election sure (2 Peter 1: 5-11; 3:18). We will trust in God to guard us along the way and keep us from stumbling (Jude 24). We will *“overcome”* all obstacles by faith and be victorious all the way to the end (1 John 5:4-5). We will stay focused on sojourning to heaven so that we may receive the great rewards there (Revelation 2:7,11,17,26; 3:5,12,21).

**More Like the Master in His Mission**

We all need to be like Jesus in our mission. If we are without a sense of mission and purpose, we will aimlessly drift through life and not be pleasing to God. Without a sense of mission, we will end up travelling the wrong road in life – the broad way *“that leads to destruction”* (Matthew 7:13-14). If we want to hit the target (heaven), we need to know what the target is, know where it is, and keep our aim and focus on it. It would be good for every Christian to always keep a mission statement posted close at hand: “Today I Am **Serving** (God), I Am **Saving** (the lost), I Am **Sojourning** (to heaven).” Let us all have our *“hope set on him”* (1 John 3:3) so that we can be pure and be ready for Jesus when he comes again. Let us all be “More Like the Master” in fulfilling our God-given mission in life!

**Questions**

1. What has been God’s mission from the beginning of time?

2. What was Jesus’ over-all mission in coming to earth?

3. How did Jesus approach his mission and how can Christians do the same today?

4. Who did Jesus rely upon to fulfill his mission and how can Christians do the same today?

5. What is Jesus’ final mission?

6. What is the Christian’s mission today with reference to God?

7. What is the Christian’s mission today with reference to the lost?

8. What is the Christian’s mission today with reference to heaven?

9. What are some examples in the life of Paul that show he stayed focused on the mission of 1) serving God, 2) saving souls, and 3) sojourning to heaven?