

Harmony of the Gospels

Part 11

“Can Anything Good Come From This?”

A salesman was driving up a lonely country road one dark and rainy night when he had a flat tire.

He opened the trunk, **NO LUG WRENCH.**

The light from a farmhouse could be seen dimly up the road, so he set out on foot through the driving rain.

Surely the farmer would have a lug wrench that he could borrow.

But then he thought *“It is late at night, the farmer is probably asleep in his warm, dry bed.”*

“Maybe he won’t want to be woken up in the middle of the night, perhaps he won’t even answer the door...”

“...And even if he does, he is surely going to be angry at being awakened in the middle of the night..”

The salesman continued to find his way through the darkness...his shoes and socks soaked now from the rain...

*“...Even if the farmer does open the door for me, he is probably going to yell at me **“What’s the big idea waking me up at this hour...”***

The thought of this made the salesman angry, *“what right did this old farmer have to refuse him the loan of a lug wrench?”*

After all, here he was stranded in the middle of the night, in the middle of nowhere!

The salesman finally reached the door of the farm house and banged loudly.

A Light went on inside and a window opened above, a voice called out **“Who is it?”**

The salesman’s face now white with anger yelled back at the farmer, *“You know darn well who it is, its me and you can keep your blasted lug wrench, I wouldn’t borrow it if it was the last one on earth...”*

We can talk ourselves into just about anything can’t we?

- ☞ **We can so thoroughly think things through** that we are convinced what the outcome is going to be.
- ☞ **But the reality is** that we really do not know anything about what is going to happen to us even once minute from now.

James 4:14-15

14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.

15 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."

Even as some of the first men, Andrew, John, Peter and Nathaniel are introduced to Jesus, when they find out that He is from Nazareth, they immediately start to form opinions about what kind of man Jesus must be...."Can anything good come from Nazareth..."

Benjamin Franklin once said:

"Do not anticipate trouble, or worry about what may never happen. Keep in the Sunlight"

Charles Sanders Pierce (1831-1914)

Who is the most original and the most versatile intellect that the Americas have so far produced.

He was a mathematician, astronomer, chemist, metrologist, engineer, inventor; psychologist, historian of science, lifelong student of medicine; as well as many other accomplishments.

Mr. Pierce said:

"Those who dwell continually on their expectations are apt to become oblivious to the requirements of their actual situation."

Is there a part of you past or present life that you are dwelling on?

- ☞ **Are you looking at these things** and asking the question: "*Can anything good come from this?*"
- ☞ **May I say to you**, the exact areas of your life that you think are never going to change or seem the most hopeless, **these are the very areas that the Lord is most interested in and is right now presently working in.**
- ☞ **You just cannot see** the results of His work yet.
- ☞ **Remember:**

Hebrews 11:1

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things **not seen**.

2 Corinthians 4:18

while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

The kind of Faith that impresses the Lord and gets His attention, is a **trust in Him without seeing any results** or even the indication that He is working.

- ⊕ **A sincere belief** that the Lord is Good and He does love you, and He is working out a plan in your life that will turn out for good.
- ⊕ **If you can maintain that faith, despite seeing any present evidence**, you will see some amazing things happen in your life.

John 1:35-51

35 Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples.

36 And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

37 The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

Don't lose site of the fact of who Jesus is: "**The Lamb of God**".

- ⊕ **Jesus has already** removed all of your sins.
- ⊕ **That means** it is as if they never existed.
- ⊕ **The root meaning of "Justification"** is "Just—as—if—I—Had—Never—Sinned..."
- ⊕ **In heaven there is no record of you ever sinning** a single time, because you accepted Jesus death on the Cross as payment for your sins.
- ⊕ **So you can go on today** with great confidence that you are "Clean before your Lord".

Most likely the two men that are here with John the Baptist are Andrew and John.

- ⊕ **Notice here in verse 36** that John and Andrew were following John the Baptist, here at this point John introduces them to Jesus, John the Baptist wants them to follow Jesus from now on.

It is very important that we do not try to get people to follow us, because as you know we will always let them down and disappoint them at some point.

- ⊕ **John is very happy** to turn people over to follow Jesus, that is the purpose that he came for.
- ⊕ **Phillip was the same way**, he was always just brining people to Jesus and introducing them to Him.
- ⊕ **Beware of anyone** that is seeking to draw people to themselves, it means they have an agenda of their own.
- ⊕ **The true servant of the Lord** will always point you back to Jesus and seek to get you to follow Him and not them.

John 1

38 Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?"

- ⊕ **Notice the question** that Jesus asks these men—"What do you want?"

☞ **This is the same question** that Jesus is asking you this morning: *“What do you want from Me?”*

1. To provide you with money?
2. To provide you with companionship or love?
3. To provide you with material needs?

John 6:26

Jesus answered them and said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, **you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.**”

Jesus knows that most of the time, people follow Him because of what they can personally get out of it, not because He is so wonderful and they love Him so much.

John 12:9

Now a great many of the Jews (**The Leaders**) knew that He was there; and **they came, not for Jesus’ sake** only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead.

They didn’t come just to see how wonderful Jesus is, but because they wanted to see the wonders of seeing a person raised from the dead.

John 6:53-68

53 Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, **unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.**”

60 Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, “This is a hard saying; who can understand it?”

61 When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, “Does this offend you?”

66 From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.

67 Then Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you also want to go away?”

68 But Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

Jesus was saying that just like when you eat bread or drink the cup, it goes into your body and becomes a part of you, **that unless you take Jesus into your inner most being and are consumed with Him and He becomes YOUR LIFE, you not have eternal life.**

- ☞ **It is not enough** to just **know about** Jesus, We must truly **KNOW JESUS.**
- ☞ **That is,** have a close personal relationship with Him.

Matthew 7:23

And then I will declare to them, “I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!”

I think that it is important at this point this morning that all of us really evaluate why it is that we are following Jesus.

- ⊖ **Know that it is just our nature** to have the wrong motivations for why we do things.
- ⊖ **Most of the time** in our life, if something does not directly benefit us personally, we do not want to do it.
- ⊖ **All of us** are the same in this regard, so if this statement convicts you, know that it also convicts me when I say it.

1 Corinthians 11:31

For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.

Philippians 2:12

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation** with fear and trembling;

This is a greatly misunderstood verse, it is not talking about working for your salvation, it is talking about having already received salvation, **we need to work out all the details of the struggle with our old flesh** that doesn't want to please the Lord, and the New Spirit within us that genuinely wants to please the Lord.

Why are you following Jesus, why are you coming here to Calvary Chapel?

- ⊖ **Are we coming** here to get something out of it for myself.
- ⊖ **Or are we coming to give something back** to the Body of Christ because of what I have already received from Jesus?

Listen...The only way we are going to truly be blessed and filled and have all of our own personal needs met, **is by giving up our own life, our own agenda, our own need to be fulfilled.**

- ⊖ **When you come here** with **no other agenda** other than to give to meet the needs of the other people in this fellowship, you will find that all of your own needs are met.
- ⊖ **But if you come** and have the preconceived idea that in order to get all my needs met I will give, it doesn't work.
- ⊖ **It must be from a sincere**, selfless heart that you want to bless people, meet their needs and serve them.
- ⊖ **Then out of no regard for yourself**, the Lord will in turn meet every need you have.

Sorry, but this is how the Lord set it up, and it is the only way that it works..

- ⊖ **This is the question Jesus is asking us today:** *“What do you want from me?”*
- ⊖ **Notice the response** of these 2 men: *“Where are you staying?”*

John 1

38 Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "**where are You staying?**"

If after Jesus checks your heart on **why you are following Him, is it to fulfill your expectations or your agenda**, and you may see that it has been in the past, but now that you know that, you can change that to others agenda and need, and you still want to follow Jesus.

- ⊖ **But if the Lord calls you** on having your own agenda and your own priorities and **you get mad and leave, then your heart wasn't right in the first place.**
- ⊖ **He will have to change your heart first**, then you can come back and begin to serve him.

Jesus Checked Andrew and Johns true reason for following Jesus and they got their hearts right, and the evidence of that is the next question:

"Where are you staying..."

- ⊖ **This shows** that they were serious seekers, **they want to know where to find Jesus**, so they could learn more about him.
- ⊖ **God calls each one of this morning** to examine our motivations for following Jesus, why are we doing it?

John 1

39 Jesus said to them, "**Come and see.**" They came and saw where He was staying, and **remained with Him** that day (now it was about the tenth hour).

If you can be challenged by the Word of God, and you find that your motivations are not always right, that many times we do things for our own benefit and for our own agenda, but you accept that challenge and then change your heart, then REMAIN WITH JESUS...

- ⊖ **That is what we want for all of you** to do, remain with us.
- ⊖ **Don't leave** when you get your feelings hurt.
- ⊖ **Don't stop coming** because you didn't get what you want out of one of the services.
- ⊖ **Don't quit** because your ideas weren't heard.
- ⊖ **That is not why** we are here...
- ⊖ **We are here to give of ourselves** with no preconceived ideas of what we can get out of it.

John and Andrew were confronted with their own hearts and saw that their motivations were not right, and they did something about it and then they did the most important thing THEY REMAINED...THEY DIDN'T QUIT...

John 1

40 One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was **Andrew**, Simon Peter's brother.

41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ).

42 And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. **You shall be called Cephas**" (which is translated, **A Stone**).

Jesus said to Simon, who's name means "**Shifting or sinking sand**"

- ☞ **I am going to change you Simon**, no longer will you be "*Shifting Sand*", I am going to make you "**Peter**", or in Greek "**Petros**", *a little stone*...

Jesus is called "**The Rock**", or in Greek, "**The Petra**", a huge rock.

- ☞ **Simon**, I am going to make you into "*A Minnie Me*".
- ☞ **You are going** to become just like me...

Isn't that awesome, the Lord sees Simon for what he really is, unreliable, shifting, uncommitted, afraid, unreliable, unfaithful, and call Simon by a new name...

- ☞ **You will be** called "Peter."
- ☞ **The Lord sees you this morning** with all of your faults, and He knows what name the world calls you by right now.
- ☞ **But He has a New Name for you.**
- ☞ **A name** that He has given to you that describes from His viewpoint, all that you are GOING TO BECOME.

Aren't you glad the Lord doesn't base his view of you on how you are right now?

- ☞ **He sees you the way you are going to be someday, perfect...**

Revelation 2:17

Jesus speaking: "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.

John 1

43 The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me."

44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

45 **Philip found Nathaniel** and said to him, "**We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote**-- Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

- ☞ **In Matthew and Mark's gospels** Nathaniel is called "Bartholomew", here John calls him "*Nathaniel*"

- ☞ **Notice that Philip is a serious student of the bible**, he must have been looking at his o/t to see what it said about the messiah and found that Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the messiah.
- ☞ **Philip was most likely referring to** Deuteronomy 18:15-18

Moses speaking:

Deuteronomy 18:15-18

15 "The LORD your God will raise up for you **a Prophet** like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, **"LIKE ME"—MOSES IS A DELIVERER—JESUS IS A DELIVERER.**

16 "according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.'

17 "And the LORD said to me: 'What they have spoken is good.

18 **'I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.**

- ☞ **This prophecy was believed by the Jews** to be one dealing with the coming of the Messiah, Philip was a student of the bible, and he believed Jesus is that "prophet" spoken of by Moses.

One of the biggest problems that Jesus church has today is that His people do not know what His Word says

Matthew 22:29

Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God

Do you know who Jesus said this to?

- ☞ **The Scribes and the Pharisees** and the Sadducees, the men that were supposed to be the teachers of the Word of God.
- ☞ **They didn't know** what the Bible says, and they weren't teaching the people the Word of God.

You can trace every problem in Jesus church today to one source, **People don't know what God's Word says.**

- ☞ **We find** that we have very little need of outside counseling here because the people that are coming every Sunday and Wednesday and are hearing the Word of God, they get all the counseling they need from the Bible.
- ☞ **We find that we have much less arguing**, fighting and divisions here because we are always being taught by the Word of God about how to resolve conflicts and love each other.
- ☞ **All of the disagreements** and the arguing that goes on in the church are due to people not knowing the scriptures about the absolute need for Christian Unity.

- ☞ **All of the complaints** and the striving in the church are due to the people not knowing what the bible says about being servants to each other and not seeking our own agendas.

You cannot believe some of the things that I have heard people say over the years and some of the demands they have made...some of them you just smile and walk away shaking your head and say; **"What are they thinking?"**

It is kind of like some of these actual items that people said that were put into actual church bulletins...

Due to the Pastor's illness, Wednesday's healing services will be discontinued until further notice.

*The associate Pastor unveiled the church's new giving campaign slogan last Sunday: **"I Upped My Pledge--Up Yours."***

The cost for attending the Prayer and Fasting conference includes meals.

Next Sunday a special collection will be taken to defray the cost of the new carpet. All those wishing to do something on the carpet will come forward and do so.

A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow.

Don't let worry kill you--let the church help

Those things make as much sense as some of the things that we say to each other sometimes...

I mean we really need to get back to our own personal study of the Word of God, everyday **so that we know what the Bible says and we know how to speak to each other and how to act with each other..**

John 1

46 And Nathanael said to him, "**Can anything good come out of Nazareth?**" Philip said to him, "**Come and see.**"

Just like the Salesman in the first story that we looked at this morning, we can talk ourselves into just about anything.

- ☞ **It is not people that is our real problem**, it is how we handle what they do to us and what they say to us.
- ☞ **It is not our circumstances** that are the real problem, it is how we talk ourselves into how bad we think it is.
- ☞ **It is not our needs** that are not being met that is the real problem, it is the fact that we are not content where the Lord has us at the present time.

"Can anything good come out of this...?"

Here, Nathaniel hears that Jesus is from Nazareth and he immediately forms an opinion of what kind of a person Jesus must be just based on what he knows about Nazareth.

- ☞ **Nazareth:** was a city despised by the Jews because it was the home of a Roman army garrison.
- ☞ **Because the Jewish people despised** being ruled by the roman government and because the population of roman soldiers in Nazareth had low moral values, the Jews despised this city.
- ☞ **None of the old testament prophecies** mentioned that the Messiah would come from Nazareth, they all said that He would be born in Bethlehem.
- ☞ **The majority** of the Jewish population believed that Jesus had come from Nazareth because this is where he was raised, they did not know Jesus was born in Bethlehem.
- ☞ **They could not accept** anyone as the Messiah who came from Nazareth.

How many opinions have you already formed this morning about people here in the church, your own circumstances, or people you work with, based on just what you already know about them?

- ☞ **Just as people didn't know** the whole story about where Jesus was really from, and they assumed that because they thought that He was from Nazareth, they formed a bad opinion of Jesus.
- ☞ **But they didn't know the whole story yet**, Jesus was really from Bethlehem.

Maybe we have formed opinions of people here in our church, or our family or our Job or current situation and we don't really know all the facts yet.

Better to wait on the Lord and let Him show us what is really going on as we wait for Him to reveal it to us.

1 Corinthians 4:5

Therefore **judge nothing before the time**, until the Lord comes, **who will both bring to light the hidden things** of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.

John 1

46 And Nathanael said to him, "**Can anything good come out of Nazareth?**" Philip said to him, "**Come and see.**"

Notice Philip's response, "come and see"...in other words, "Hey come and see for yourself".

- ☞ **There are many people** who will not come to investigate Jesus because they have preconceived ideas or prejudices about him—we need to encourage them to come and see for themselves.
- ☞ **Encourage people** to check out Jesus claims for themselves

We have formed many opinion about things, even how we think that Jesus works in our life, the truth is, we DON'T HAVE A CLUE HOW THE LORD WORKS...

Isaiah 55:8-11

8 “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD.

9 “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

10 “For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater,

11 So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

Have you said in your present situation: “**Nothing good is going to come out of this...?**”

- ☞ **Really**, didn't the Lord promise to make it turn out for Good.
- ☞ **Make up your mind**, either you believe that or you don't.
- ☞ **If you believe it**, then start living like you believe it.

Romans 8:28

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

John 1

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!"

- ☞ **Deceit; Greek: “Dolos” false.** This statement by Jesus means that He knows that Nathaniel is an honest man.
- ☞ **Jesus knows us intimately**—yet he still loves us!

John 1

48 Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were **under the fig tree, I saw you.**"

49 Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"

50 Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, '**I saw you under the fig tree,**' do you believe? You will see greater things than these."

51 And He said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter **you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.**"

- ☞ **In verse 48**—the term to “*sit under the fig tree*” means: **“to meditate upon the scriptures”**.
- ☞ **Jesus was using a play on words to say to Nathaniel** he had seen him studying the scriptures, Nathaniel is a sincere seeker.

Jesus told Nathaniel, Even before Phillip called you to come and follow me, I had already seen you...”

Remember that the Lords knowledge of you and your life did not begin the day you were born, He has known you before He made the earth and the heavens, and He was loving you even then...

So...instead this morning we need to start saying: “No matter what is going on in my life right now, the Lord is going to work it out in His time, for my Blessing, I BELIEVE THAT!