

Ambassadors for Christ

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2 Corinthians 5. We're going to look at verses 19 and 20 and I know some of y'all are saying, "Wait a minute, we are supposed to be studying the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 7." But this is the first Wednesday of the month and so that means we give our tips for personal soul winning. Started this a year or two ago and the first Wednesday of the month I try and give out some tips for being a personal soul winner. Tonight I want to address what I'm calling resident representatives. Resident representatives.

Look at verse 19 of 2 Corinthians 5. The Bible says this, "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." Now look at this next statement. I underlined it in red in my Bible, "and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." So what did the Lord commit to us? The word of reconciliation, being reconciled to God, or you could put it this way, being made right with God. He is given to us that responsibility. Look at verse 20, "Now then," because that we have been given this committed to us the word of reconciliation, "Now then we are," what? "Ambassadors for Christ." Now look at this next statement, "as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." So I'm going to talk about resident representatives. I'll explain what I mean in all this here in just a moment.

Let's pray first.

Father, as you bless our time in your word, I pray you would speak to our hearts. Lord, we recognize this is not just the words of a man, these are the words of God and they are important for us to pay careful attention to. So I ask you to help us to grasp what is being said here, what our responsibility, what we are being told our responsibility is as Christians, and our role here in this world. I ask, Lord, again in this hour that you would fill me with your Holy Spirit. I present my body and yield my will. I pray you would speak to us. I pray it would not be me talking but, God, I pray it would be your Holy Spirit speaking with our hearts, something supernatural being stirred in our hearts. And I ask this, Lord, with all my heart. In Jesus' name. Amen.

How many folks here, you are saved and by saved I mean you know for sure that when you die your sins are forgiven and you're going to heaven? How many folks here, you are saved and you know it? Say amen. Amen. I trust that's true. As a saved person, a person that has accepted Jesus Christ as Savior, somebody that has been born again, spiritually

born into the family of God, God has left us here on earth. How many people noticed that God left you here on earth? Yes, it's pretty obvious. But he has left us here for a purpose and one of our great responsibilities and I hope you get this, one of our great responsibilities as a Christian here on earth, why are we here? What's my responsibility now as a child of God? It is to be an ambassador for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now it seems like politics have taken over the world. Either I didn't pay as much attention to it years ago or it's more dominant now than it was before, but it's like on every hand. And we hear talk in the news and in politics, we hear talk about ambassadors. An ambassador. The United States of America has ambassadors I believe to just about every nation of the world.

Now we are going to have group involvement. Somebody tell me what is an ambassador? When we say we have an ambassador to Kazakhstan, what is an ambassador? Okay, he's a representative, that is correct. That is partially correct but I want to suggest to you he's more than that. Anybody else want to take a shot? What is an ambassador? Okay, all right, he represents the United States to the people of Kazakhstan. Anything else? What's that? An advocate of the United States. He represents, he advocates for us. All right, he's a spokesman, kind of getting along with what I'm thinking. I did a little research on what an ambassador is and I learned this: an ambassador is a representative to another nation, Kazakhstan in my illustration, but he's more than that. We have numerous representatives of various fields will go there, NASA would have some representatives and different things like that, but an ambassador is according to my research the highest ranking authority representing the United States in that country. He has authority as an ambassador to speak with authority on behalf of of the President and the United States as a nation. So it's a pretty significant position to hold as an ambassador.

Now some of these guys, they will donate so much money the President if he gets elected, he'll get some cush ambassadorship to some little island nation down in the Caribbean somewhere. And I sent some money in, I was hoping I would get selected for that but it didn't happen. So an ambassador, how many people would agree with me if you are selected by the President, I guess, the one that chooses, you're selected by the President to be an ambassador to another nation, how many people would agree with me that's a pretty significant position to hold? Sure, that's a very important position to hold. And again, it has the idea of having authority. Here's one definition I found, it says the highest ranking "minister" of one country, and here's another aspect, residing in a foreign country. They live there. They permanently live there. An envoy, on the other hand, is somebody that represents the country but they don't live there. They show up for a while, they deal with an issue, then they go back home. So that's an envoy but an ambassador, it's where they live. They move there. They bring their family. Generally they will bring their family there and they live there and they represent – get this – they represent the policies, the values and the interests of their home country.

Some countries don't share our values. For instance, some of the Middle Eastern countries would not share our values in their treatment of children, their treatment of women and different things like that. They don't share our values so when the

ambassador shows up in that country that doesn't share the values of the United States, they are there not just representing the policies that we hold to but also they are designed to represent our values also and not to adopt the values of that country. So I'll explain what I mean by all of this.

So an ambassador is a very significant position, a very important position, and actually a position that holds authority, can speak with authority to the leadership of that country on behalf of of the United States. Did you notice in 2 Corinthians 5:20, you and I as Christians, as saved people, we are what? Ambassadors. That is one of the significant reasons that God has left you and I after he saved us to be here in this "country" in the world. We are here as representatives of another country speaking on behalf of that country and its king, with authority, representing the policies of that country and the values of that country, and the interests of that country here in this world. I'm telling you, as a Christian, you and I have a significant position in this world as an ambassador.

An ambassador is the highest ranking authority in that country on behalf of the home country. Generally, a home country, now it may be different now with communication but in years gone by, generally if the United States of America wanted to communicate with the authorities of Kazakhstan, for instance, they would generally go through the ambassador. The ambassador would come into the presence of the President, he would sit down with him and he would communicate. "The President of the United States and the nation of the United States want you to understand this," and that was the means of communication from one country to another, it was generally through the ambassador.

Now what does that make you and I as Christians? I'm not sure, I want to be careful with this and I don't want to go to seed with this but I think there is at least an element of truth in the statement: you and I as Christians as ambassadors in heaven are the highest ranking authority representing heaven here on earth. Now of course, as we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and the authority of the word of God, I'm not trying to usurp any of that but I mean humanly speaking as humans. What I'm trying to say is this: the preacher doesn't have any more authority on this planet than any other Christian has representing him. Do you follow what I'm saying? You say, "Oh, the Pope, he's the highest ranking authority from heaven on earth." No, he isn't. You and I as believers, as Christians, we are ambassadors. We can speak with authority from heaven to this old world. Now, it is only through the word of God. We understand the word of God is our sole authority but I put this down: we are the highest ranking representatives of heaven on earth.

As an ambassador, now I'm going to get to personal soul winning here in a minute so bear with me, as an ambassador, we are given the responsibility to communicate heaven's policies here on earth. Every single one of us. "Well, it's the preacher's job to tell this old world what God says in his word." Well, it's the preacher's job to teach and preach the Bible. Ephesians tells me that that the preacher's job is to train the people so that they can do the work of the Lord. So every one of us as Christians, as ambassadors, we have the responsibility to communicate to this world the policies of heaven. The policies of heaven.

Now what is the most important policy of heaven? What is that policy that God wants communicated to this world through his ambassadors? Take your Bible, if you would, and turn with me to Matthew 28. Now keep your place in 2 Corinthians, we're going to come back to this. Matthew 28. To be honest with you, I had fun with this, studying this. This is kind of a neat thought in my mind. As ambassadors, heaven has a policy that it wants this world to understand and you and I as Christians being these ambassadors, we are to communicate very clearly to this world what that policy is.

Matthew 28, look with me at verse 19. Most of us are very familiar with this. If your Bible is like mine, I have it underlined in red and highlighted, verse 19 and 20. Notice verse 18. I'll start in verse 18, "Jesus came and spake unto them, saying," look at this, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." The word "power" there has the idea of authority. Jesus has the authority. Then he gives us this commission as ambassadors. This is the policy. This is the message that you need to convey. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," look at this, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." So here we have this policy, so to speak, that you and I are given by God as a Christian to take into this world, to communicate, to teach this world. "World, this is what God, my home country and the ultimate authority from my home country, this is what he wants you to be aware of. This is what he wants you to understand."

All right, so what are we teaching them? Come over to Mark 16. Matthew, Mark, next book. Come to the end of that book and he tells us more specifically what it is we are teaching or preaching to this world as ambassadors. Mark 16:15. How many people already know without looking, you know what Mark 16:15 says? Anybody? Sure. "And he said unto them," look at this, "Go ye into all the world," you are my ambassadors, you are my representatives, you have authority from heaven to speak on my behalf, "Go ye into all the world and preach the," what? "Gospel to every creature."

So this matter of personal soul winning when you and I as Christians want to communicate to others the Gospel, the Lord Jesus Christ, this is what I'm trying to get at here: it is more than just a nice thing to do. I witnessed to somebody. Oh, well that's a nice thing to do. How many people agree it's a nice thing for a Christian to witness to other people? Sure it's a nice thing but it's more than a nice thing. We have been given a commission by God as his ambassadors, a responsibility to communicate to this world this policy, this Gospel that God wants this world to understand. Every one of us from the little children all the way through.

We have the county fair there set up, the booth, and Monday night and Tuesday night, that is fun and we had a good time and we had the senior citizen representatives last night. But Arisa got in on it also and they had a blast, eating hot dogs and popcorn and French fries and I think they witnessed also at some point in there. But it's more than just a nice thing to do, we are actually standing there on behalf of God. I'm going to point this out, on behalf of Jesus Christ communicating to them a message that God wants this

world to hear. It's more than just something nice to do, it's incredibly important. It's a commission we have to communicate very clearly this policy from heaven.

Now what is this policy? Here's where I want to give you some practical tips. I've done this before but I want to do it again. It's good to remind us. Every ambassador ought to have a copy of heaven's policy with them at all times, right? Ought to have a copy with them at all times. I believe every Christian if you're going to take seriously our responsibility to witness to others, you ought to get you, this is my advice, you ought to get you a what I call a sharing Bible. I have a Bible designated specifically for sharing the Gospel with other people. As an ambassador, that's my responsibility. I want to zero in on it and without going into all the reasons why which we've done other times, you ought to have a specific Bible designed specifically for witnessing. I have another Bible I use for hospital visiting, and for visiting Brother Gary who is right on heaven's doorstep just waiting for God to call him home. It may happen while I'm talking to you. I have another Bible I use for that but I've got one I carry with me specifically for soul winning. And what you ought to do is get that specific Bible just for sharing the Gospel with others and you ought to highlight or indicate in there the key points of the Gospel.

Now, I believe the best place in the Bible to share the message of the Gospel with other people is the book of Romans. People use various places. That's fine but for me I like Romans, what we refer to as the Romans' Road. How many people are familiar with what we call the Romans' Road? Probably more than half. I think you ought to highlight that. If you would on your notes there or somewhere, you ought to jot these verses down, and I do a little alliteration with them. I'll do sometimes, number one if I'm as an ambassador, I'm communicating this Gospel policy to someone here on earth from heaven in place of Christ, I'm speaking on his behalf, the first thing I want them to know, write this down, Romans 3:23, and I call that this: there is a problem on planet earth. There is a problem with humanity. Romans 3:23 tells us that problem is what? Sin. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." As an ambassador, the message from heaven that God wants communicated to this world through his ambassadors is for mankind to understand that they have sinned against God, we have broken God's law, we are sinners. How many laws of God have to be broken for you and I to become a sinner? One. In fact, James tells us if I break one law, I'm guilty of all. I have sinned.

I had a couple of boys there at the fair booth on Monday night and we got talking and we had different things to capture their attention and engage them in the Gospel, and there were two young boys, they were probably 14, 15, in that range there, and I said, we started going through this and I showed them from the Bible how that we are all sinners. I said, "Do you understand all of us, myself, all of us, we are sinners? Do you understand that?" "Well, yeah." I said, "Do you know what sin is?" "Yeah, it's bad." I said, "Yeah, it's bad." And I had a little thing on the 10 Commandments leaning up there and I pointed over to them and I said, "There are the 10 Commandments. This is God's requirement. This is God's standard for mankind and we have fallen short of it. We have failed." I said, "One of those commands," I pointed at it, "Thou shalt not bear false witness," what is it, commandment 6 or 7, somewhere around there. I said, "That means you shouldn't lie." I looked at them and they are getting serious. Kathy said later, she goes, "Boy, they

sobered up pretty quick." And I said, "Have either of you boys ever told a lie?" "Yeah." I said, "Really?" They said, "Yeah." I said, "How many do you think you said? Do you think you've ever said five lies?" "Oh, good grief, yeah." I said, "Really?" "Yeah." I said, "You've broken God's law five times. Do you think you've done it more than five times?" "Oh yeah, a lot more." I said, "What do you think, 50?" "At least." "One hundred?" "Yeah, probably more." I said, "You've got to be kidding me. You've broken God's law over 100 times. Do you know what that makes you? A sinner." "Yeah."

So the first point we want to communicate in the Gospel and if you're using Romans, Romans 6:23, is there is a problem and that problem is sin and we have come short of God's glory. And somebody might get in their head, "Well, I've told the lies," and by the way, there are nine other commands. That's just one of them. "I've told lies but haven't told as many as that guy." Well, that's wonderful but the standard isn't being better than that guy. The standard is God's glory and that verse tells me we have all done what for God's glory? We have fallen short of that. We haven't lived up to it. I don't care how good you may or may not be or you think you are, or I think I am. None of us have been as good as God. All of us have fallen short of God's glory. So there's a problem with mankind and you and I as a Christian, our responsibility is to communicate to this world there is a very very serious problem in humanity. We have sinned against our Creator. We have broken our Creator's laws.

That leads us to number 2, Romans 6:23. I put it this way: there is a price that needs to be paid. The problem is we've sinned. We have broken our God, our Creator's law, and now there is a price to be paid. Anybody ever get pulled over and get a speeding ticket and the consequence was a price that had to be paid? As stinky as that is, the price for sin is far greater. The wages of sin is death and this is when those boys really sobered up. I pointed out, I said, "That death there is not just physical death. If you'll read the context, it's my standing, my relationship with God. It's separation from God for all eternity, not just physically dying but my soul and spirit, me separated from God for all eternity. The only place that would be is hell. So the price for your sin and my sin, the judgment on our sin, the consequence of the wages of our sin is to be separated from a holy God for all eternity in a place called hell." This is what we are to communicate to the world. The wages of sin is death.

And I asked those boys, I had my Bible and I said, "According to this verse, if you died now where would you go? According to Romans 6:23?" And they looked down and they said, "We'd go to hell." I said, "You don't want to go to hell, do you?" And they said, "No." I said, "Well, God doesn't want you to go to hell either. That's where the good news comes in. There has been a payment made. That price has been paid." That's my third message, is the payment. "For the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." I said, "Listen, there is a horrible price over our heads because of our sin but God's Son, Jesus Christ, loves you and God loves us and Jesus came and he paid that price for us. The wages of our sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life. It's a gift. That gift has been paid for by the person Jesus Christ so that you and I don't have to go to hell for our sins. We can be forgiven and go to heaven." And here's the verse that goes with the payment, Romans 5:8, "But God commendeth his love

toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." The death on the cross was not a martyrdom, it wasn't a mistake, it wasn't even murder, in and of itself, it was God paying the price for your sin and my sin, suffering eternal hell so that I don't have to, in our place.

So our message as an ambassador is to this old world on behalf of Jesus Christ, in his stead you and I as believers need to communicate to this world there is a problem with mankind, it's we are sinners, we have broken our God's law, our Creator's law. There is a price to pay for that, that's death and hell. But there has been a payment made by God's Son, Jesus Christ, and he paid that price for us, was buried and rose again. Now just because Jesus died on the cross was buried and rose again doesn't mean everybody is going to heaven. He offers it to us and he promises, that's my fourth point, he promises that "whosoever shall call on him shall be saved," Romans 10:30. The promise. Now you can add on their Romans 10:9 and 10, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

But that's the promise of God. I said to those two boys, as God's ambassador, not Dennis Leatherman, it wasn't me, I'm just standing there on behalf of Jesus Christ telling these guys what God's policy is. I said, "Do you believe this book is true?" They said, "Oh yeah, that's God's word. That's true." I said, "Do you believe it promises that whoever calls on the Lord shall be saved? Do you believe that's true?" "Yeah, we believe that's true." "Do you believe if you called on the Lord and do what that verse says that God will do what he says, keep his promise?" "Yeah, he will." I said, "All right, let's pray and call on the Lord." Right there in front of God and everybody, those two teen boys bowed their heads and they called on the Lord Jesus to be their Savior. I believe we had a couple last night also. They had some last night.

As ambassadors, that is our policy that we are to communicate. Just like the ambassador to Kazakhstan stands before the President and communicates to him the policies of the United States of America, you and I as Christians stand before this old sinful world and we communicate to them the Gospel of Jesus Christ, tell them what his policy is, as I just outlined right here. We are ambassadors and so what we need to do is make sure we clearly understand what that policy is, what the Gospel is, so that we can tell others. So that ought to be in my mind, that ought to be a lifelong study on how I can share with others as clearly as possible, as accurately, as thoroughly as possible, the message of the Gospel, the policy from heaven, so that they can clearly understand what their Creator, their God, wants and expects from them.

So as an ambassador, we put down, we are to communicate heaven's policies. Let me give you the two others very very quickly. Not only that, but as an ambassador, we are to represent heaven's values. How many people agree with me America is in a mess? How many people agree with me our values aren't what they used to be? But I'm here to tell you compared to most of the world, our values are still pretty good. Now they are going down fast but you ask, Donna Miller is not here, but she came the other year, they were

over in Italy I think, somewhere, they went on vacation, they came back and she said, "Pastor, you know, as bad as America is, good night, Italy is terrible. Their morals and values and those types of things." Now here is the thing: as a Christian, as an ambassador here in the United States, we are to represent very clearly the values of heaven. How many people agree with me the values of heaven and the values of the world are two very different? The priorities of God in heaven and the priorities of the world are very different. We have a little survey we do occasionally out in the community and one of the questions, "Do you believe that God's standards are different than the world's standards?" Do you know what the answer to that is across the board 100% all the time? Something to this effect, "Oh, good grief, yes!" Everybody understands that.

And so you and I as an ambassador, we aren't to take on the values of the country where we are living representing the home country, we are not to take on the values of the host country, we are to clearly represent the values of our home country. And when an ambassador begins taking on the values of their host country, they can no longer accurately represent the values of the home country. Jesus put it this way in Matthew 5, "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, it is no good to be salted. Good for nothing but to be cast out to the path." In other words, it lost its values of its home country. Nobody buys flavorless salt. Why would you do that? Our effectiveness in this world is found in the fact that our values are different than this world. That's where our influence is. We get the message out but my life as a Christian, as a soul winner, needs to represent the values of heaven, not the values of the world. That's why these churches all around the world are making a terrible mistake by bringing things of the world into their services. They are losing their savor. They are losing their uniqueness. They are losing their distinction and you and I need to be distinctively Christian because we are ambassadors. "Oh, it doesn't matter." Christians, "Well, it doesn't matter." I say, "Yeah, it matters. We are not our own. We are representatives of God and of heaven."

So as an ambassador, I am to represent heaven's values very clearly. We are in this world but we are not of this world. I like this statement. I think this is accurate. I'm sure it is: we are the closest thing to God that some people are ever going to see in this life. We are the closest thing to God and as time goes on, fewer and fewer people understand who and what God is. And for some of our young people in our schools, our public schools, some of our young people, you're the closest thing to God those people are ever going to see in this life. Now after this, they're all going to stand before God and see him face-to-face. As far as here and now, what else is in this world that stands in Christ's stead, in the place of Jesus Christ before this world? What else in this world is there except for the Christians? We're the representatives of Jesus Christ. We are the closest thing to God this world is going to see. Some of these countries where the ambassador is, that ambassador is the closest thing, the only thing American they're going to see maybe.

We were in Kazakhstan. Dave is back there. He was there. I was trying to think. Jerry went and Pat. We went up in the mountains one day, we took a day and did a little sightseeing and we were going up there and we stopped at a little roadside thing and there were some local people there and we got talking and one fellow could speak, he was kind of escorting us, he could speak English a little bit, enough to translate for us. We

met him over there and this lady came over, "American!" We're there, "Yeah." I know how to communicate. And through him she said this, "What do you think of Kazakhstan people?" And I told him to tell her, "I think you're very nice beautiful people. Beautiful country," and I said, "We love your country." And she goes, "Do you think we're stupid and backward?" Through the translator she said, "Do you think we are stupid and backward people?" I don't know why she would ask that and I said, "No, absolutely not. You have a beautiful city. You're wonderful people." And through the interpreter she said, "Thank you." I said, "What do you think of America?" "Ah, very rich. Very rich." That's probably one of only, maybe the only American she would ever see. I was the closest thing to America perhaps she would ever see and for you and I as Christians in this old sinful world, I believe in many ways you and I are only the closest thing to God that this world is ever going to see. So how many people agree with me, it's pretty important we do right? It's pretty important we live right, that we adopt heaven's values because we are standing in Christ's stead, in his place.

So we are to communicate the policies of heaven. We are to represent heaven's values. By the way, come back here. I want to show you real quick and then I'm going to quit but come back to 2 Corinthians 5. This is a neat statement. Neato. Verse 20, are you there? "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you," and I've been saying this to the message, "we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled." Now what did Paul mean when he said we are praying you, we are asking you, we are pleading with you in Christ's stead? What does he mean by that? In the place of Christ. In other words, I am standing here before you in the place of Christ, in his stead, in his place, on his behalf, pleading with you to be reconciled to God, to be saved, to trust Christ, to accept this Gospel. So that's where I get the idea is we are in many ways the closest thing to Jesus Christ people in this world are ever going to see. In this life.

So we have to communicate this world's values. How many people agree with me heaven's values are, honesty is an important part of heaven's values? Do you agree Christian should be honest? So if I am lying, if I claim to be a child of God and I lie, I am misrepresenting Jesus Christ. I am misrepresenting the values of heaven. If I am dishonest, if I am immoral, if I steal. God has given to you and I a phenomenal responsibility, an overwhelming in many ways responsibility. We are to stand in the place of Christ on his behalf, communicate the message of the Gospel and represent the values of heaven to this old sinful world. It's part of our soul winning.

There was a big thing years ago, lifestyle evangelism, and the whole idea behind that was, well, don't tell people how to get saved, just live a good Christian life and then they'll want to get saved and they will understand that. I don't buy that at all. The Bible doesn't say go into all the world and live the Gospel, it says go into all the world and preach the Gospel. That's communicate. You have to understand there was a sign, I've said this before, in Pennsylvania outside a church it said, "Preach the Gospel. Use words if you must." I'm going to suggest to you you cannot preach the Gospel without words. Now having said all that, does that mean my lifestyle is not important? No. My lifestyle needs to back up what my lips are saying. I need to communicate the policy of the Gospel

clearly but my life has to represent the values of heaven very clearly. So what I'm saying and how I'm living.

American values. One of the American values is all people are created equal, should be treated equally with respect. That's one of our values. So what if a representative, our ambassador in Kazakhstan, tells the Kazakhstan people, "These are our values," and then he goes out and violates those values in his actions? What is that going to do to our policy? It's going to undermine it. It's not going to have much authority. It's not going to have much credibility. And that's when you and I as Christians, we are not careful and we undermine our message by not representing heaven's values.

Let me give you the third responsibility that you and I have as ambassadors is to pursue heaven's interests diligently. One of the jobs the ambassador has in that foreign country is to pursue the interests of the United States in this country. I think, someone correct me if I'm wrong, I think we still have an ambassador in Iraq, correct? I think we're correct there. Nobody knows so I'll just say we do. Honestly I think we do. I'm pretty sure we do. We did. So would you agree, one of the interests of the United States is that ISIS not take over Iraq. That would be in our interest that that not happen. In Afghanistan, one of our interests for the last almost 20 years now, 15, 16 years, has been that the Taliban not control Afghanistan. That is in our interest that doesn't happen. So the ambassador's responsibility is to communicate to that country and its leadership, "Listen, America does not want this to happen. Our interest is that you squash ISIS and we will help you. We will do it for you if you don't do it because that is not in our interest." Do you follow what I'm saying? So you and I as ambassadors for heaven, you and I as ambassadors for Jesus Christ in his stead, we are to communicate to this world God's interest, the interests of God.

So the policy is the Gospel. We went through that. Romans' Road. The values are to live by heaven's values. And what are the interests of heaven? What is the interest of heaven? "The Son of man is come to," what? "Seek and to save that which is lost." So heaven's interest is that people get saved. The policy is the Gospel. The values are how we live. But what heaven wants is people to be saved. "For the Son of man has come to seek and to save that which is lost." Jesus when he was 12 years old told his parents when they left him behind in Jerusalem, they found him in the temple and he said, "I must be about my Father's business." What is he saying? "I am pursuing God's interest. I am pursuing God's interest here on earth." And his whole purpose for being here was so that people would be saved.

In 1 Corinthians 9:16, Paul said this, "woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" He said, "I have become all things to all men so that all might be saved." What God wants to happen is people be saved. That's heaven's interest, people would be saved. God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. If you're here tonight or you're under the sound of my voice and you don't know for sure that your sins are forgiven, that when you die you go to heaven and not to hell, I'm telling you right now the interest of God is that you get that settled and you trust Christ as your Savior and know that your sins are forgiven. The last thing God wants to happen is for a person to

die in their sins unforgiven. "I don't believe God would send someone to hell." I don't either, he's done everything he can to keep people out of hell but he leaves that choice up to us. We can accept what he has done. But the interest of heaven is getting people saved. Getting people saved.

As a church, we are a congregation of ambassadors. Each of us individually have this responsibility. And as a church, we often pool our resources to accomplish that responsibility. Thus people have given very generously in years gone by to put a radio station up. Why do we have a radio station up? So that people can be saved. That's the bottom line. Teach the word of God and all that but we want people to be saved.

People give very generously to assemble Romans booklets. Why do we do that? So Brother H. can go around, "Mountain Lake, they sure assemble over there. They do a great job." No, that's not why we do it, we want people in Panama to be what? Saved. Because that's heaven's interest and we are ambassadors for heaven. Mexico, Dominican Republic. We give hundreds of thousands of dollars to missions every year so that people will be saved. That's heaven's interest. We go Thursdays and we set up a booth at the fair.

I had a preacher come by Monday night. He came by and we got talking and he didn't tell me he was a preacher at first. We got talking a little bit, different literature, and he goes, "Well, what is an independent Baptist?" I said, "Well," and I tried to explain we are not part of a denomination. We talked a little bit. He started to leave and I said, "Well, where are you from?" He said, "Oh, we're down Frederick area." I said, "Okay. Are you vacationing?" "No, we've got a place up here. I'm a pastor." I said, "Ah-ha!" He goes, "Are you looking for any staff members? We want to move up here." That has nothing to do with the message. I just thought of that little story while I was talking. Anyway I got talking to him and he is saved and he pastors a little Bible church. And I didn't hire him so don't worry.

Our responsibility is to pursue heaven's interest. I came across an article last week that is absolutely heart wrenching. Some of you no doubt heard this. It's down in Florida. The headline says this: teens who laughed as a man drowned will face charges. Anybody see that headline? Apparently I think it was last week, July 21, around there, New York Post. It says they posted on social media footage of a man drowning in a lake. He was disabled and in disturbing footage recorded by one of the teens shows this fellow, his name was Dunn, who was disabled struggle as he screamed for help out in the pond. The police spokesman said the teens ages 14 to 16 had told him not to go into the water but as he started to struggle and scream for help, they just laughed. They didn't call the police. This is on the video the whole time this guy is recording it. They laughed the whole time. He was screaming for someone to help and they just laughed at him. The teenagers didn't stop joking about him when he failed to surface the last time. One of them laughingly said, "Oh, he just died," and the others laughed. They left the park without notifying anyone and three days later his body was discovered in the pond. We are deeply saddened and shocked at both the manner in which Mr. Dunn lost his life and the actions of the witnesses to this tragedy.

How many people agree with me that's disturbing? That somebody would be that cold and those boys or girls, whatever, those young people ought to pay dearly for that in my mind. Now as horrific as that is and I'm not trying to throw guilt or anything but I'm simply trying to emphasize, how many people agree with me those young people had a responsibility to do everything they could to try and save that man's life? This is what I'm getting at: you and I as Christians have a responsibility to do everything we can to get as many people saved as we possibly can for a number of reasons, one of which, we are ambassadors. We are here in Christ's stead. We are standing in his place in this old world and God's interest is that people be saved. And as personal soul winners, that ought to drive us. And I'm preaching to myself as much. I get cold and surely none of us would laugh at the thought of somebody dying and going to hell, but how often are we just cold and indifferent about it when we do have opportunity to intervene? We do have opportunity, not only opportunity, we have responsibility to do everything we can to get that person to Christ and get them saved, and yet so often we just go about our business. "I'm busy. Visitation night, that's the night my favorite TV show is on. Oh, I can't do that. Give out tracts? What would people think?" Do you follow what I'm trying to say? So let's learn the policy, the Gospel. Let's live the way we should as representing heaven. And then let's get after heaven's interest. Amen?

Father in heaven, I pray you would help us. I know you have stirred my heart anew about this matter of being about our Father's business and getting this Gospel out to this old sinful world. I pray you would help us and stir us and challenge us.

I wonder how many this evening would say, "Preacher, I'm saved. I know I'm saved. There is no doubt about it but I find myself," and I'm including myself in the statement, "I find myself getting a little cold, a little indifferent about this matter of witnessing and bringing others to Christ" And you'd say, "Tonight this thought of an ambassador, the responsibility that comes with that, stirs my heart and I want the Lord to help me be a little more active in engaging people with the Gospel, a little more active in bringing others to Christ." Are there any like that? "Preacher, my heart is stirred." An my hand is raised because the Lord convicted me. And God bless your hands all around. Maybe it would be a good thing tonight to just find a place alone and say, "Lord, stir my heart. Help me to be that ambassador you've called me to be." And God will help us.

How many would say, "You know, my lifestyle really to look at it honestly isn't really lined up with the way a Christian ought to be in representing God"? And you'd say, "Preacher, pray with me. My lifestyle needs some attention. My values need some attention to line up with the word of God." Are there any like that? "Preacher, pray with me." God bless you. Several hands around.

Is there someone here tonight that would say, "Preacher, I'm not sure I'm going to heaven when I die"? I know you don't want to go to hell. Nobody in their right mind does. And you'd say, "Preacher, pray for me, that God would help me settle this that I could know that I am forgiven and I'm on my way to heaven and not to hell." Is there any like that by the uplifted hand? Pray for me. Pray for me. God bless you and God bless you.

Now we can show you from the Bible very simply, very clearly how you can settle that and how you can know that. So if you raised your hand tonight whether it's I need to be stirred to witness to others, or my life needs some attention living the Christian life, or I'm not sure I'm saved, I don't want to go to hell, when we give the invitation, I invite you to come on, find a place at this altar and let's pray and ask the Lord to help us.