

God's Rescue Mission James 5:19-20 "Faith Works"

July 8th 1973 was a memorable day in my life.

A) I was 10 years old and my dad took me to Chavez Ravine – Home of the LA Dodgers ... baseball game

B) It was a Sunday afternoon game – we had seats in the right field bleacher seats

1) Dodgers vs the Pirates { **DAD Pittsburgh roots**

2) It was a hot July day – **Ice cream cone melted!**

C) It was a great game – A Pitchers Battle – **Tommy John** was pitching for the Dodgers
Dock Ellis for the Pirates

D) Game was tied 2-2 went into extra innings

1) Then it happened – bottom of the 12th Dodger outfielder **Willie Crawford** hits a game winning home run over the centerfield fence.

Result: Impact: That day I became a diehard Dodger fan – Love affair that would last many years

Also that day my love for the game and my desire to play at that level – increased Dramatically!

Another memorable event that happened in my life was in 1988 – Joey Buran & I were on staff here together.

Joey took me to the legendary surf spot Trestles to catch waves.

Trestles is an awesome wave – Long rides – seemingly ride forever.

A) I was always intimidated to go there because – I wasn't good at Surfing – **Stuck to Bodyboarding**

B) I knew in those days I would never make it at Trestles – hard enough to catch a wave in that crowd as a surfer – **WAY HARDER as a bodyboarder**

C) **Joey was THE CAL KID!!!! HE WAS aggressive** – MY WAVE – RESPECT

D) Joey had me position myself – 20 yards from Peak

He would take off – see me paddle

Result: Impact – I became a Lover of Trestles – any time that Joey wanted to go I was there.

Also that day – a deeper friendship was forged – that has lasted: 27 years/ Pro surfer accepts – bodyboarder

One more event: 1989 Pastor Brian takes myself and 5 others on my first overseas mission trip – Yugoslavia / Hungary

On that trip I saw God do some amazing things – Two Churches were birthed

Result: Value: Impact: Heart for missions – **Passion for Church Planting**

A) Desire to take people on those kind of trips.

Now there is a **common thread** that runs thru all those stories / the reason I shared was not to get all **nostalgic on you. Walk down Memory lane. Turned 52**

The Common thread is this – In each one of those events that influenced my life in a certain way –

A) I was brought to a place by someone.

B) My life was impacted by another person!

C) And By far the most impacting event in my life was when someone introduced me to **Jesus Christ**

Here is my Point: God chooses to REACH PEOPLE THROUGH PEOPLE! –

A) He chooses to reach the Lost – through those who have been Found!

B) He chooses to impact UNBELIEVERS – thru those who have become BELIEVERS!

1) **That is the point of our text today! V.19**

Brethren, if **anyone among you wanders** from the truth, and { **God? turns/ Angel?/ Pastor?** } No! **someone turns him back**, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.

A) These two verses form a fitting conclusion to the book of James.

B)Theme: Faith Works – does something to us
C)Gain God’s perspective in trials – Working to make us more like Jesus.

1) The right way to deal with TEMPTATION

D)Gain God’s heart toward the Body – No Partiality

E)We recognize God’s role in every area of our lives
JESUS THE CENTER IN OUR PLANNING!

The Fitting conclusion – to this letter: Faith is working – HEART FOR THE LOST!

A)JESUS’ HEART – BECOMES OUR HEART
JESUS’ BURDEN – OUR BURDEN!

B)In Luke 19 – Jesus revealed what his mission was in coming to this earth.

1)SET THE SCENE.

C)He was on his way from Galilee up to Jerusalem

1)The road that would take him there passes by the city of Jericho – (SEE IT IF YOU COME TO ISRAEL WITH US!)

See, Jesus didn’t have to go through Jericho, He could have easily passed by.

A)He chose to go through – {CHOSE to go out of His way } -- The crowds were Huge around him.

B)Little Man Zacchaeus – Tax collector – a traitor hated and despised – sell out

1)Zach climbs a tree – Jesus stops – come down

C)I am going to your house for lunch!

1)There they are having lunch and Zach gets radically Saved!- A great conversation –

Now the religious leaders and the crowd can’t believe it – they are thinking – How could Jesus spend time with a guy like him.

A)Jesus knew what they were thinking and Answered their concern.

B)Luke 19:10 – “The son of man has come to seek and save the lost.”

C)This is my mission: This is my purpose – why I left heaven: Came to seek LOST PEOPLE!

1)Came for Hurting People – Wayward People – People beat up by life – People lost in Sin!

D)He invites us as a Church and as individuals to be a part of His RESCUE MISSION.

The phrase text: if anyone among you wanders makes it clear - among you those in the house of faith

A)He is talking about those who have backslidden

B)Wander speaks of a gradual straying for the truth

1)Backslidding is always gradual – little compromise here and there – leads to apathy – complacency

C)Enticed by the allurements of the world

1)Pretty soon you are way over there – no idea how you got there.

D)But it is Gradual – doesn’t happen over night!

One of the things that inspired me to preach this message and end the book of James this way. V.19-20

A)A few weeks ago I asked the question: How many of you know someone – once on fire.....

B)Someone who was once walking strong – that is not walking any more – or is not walking strong

1)75% of your raised your hands.

C)We all know someone who has wandered from the faith in one way or another.

1)Child – a friend – a co-worker

And the interesting thing to me about most people that I know who have backslidden.

A)IT IS NOT that they no longer believe the truth about Christ or the Bible – if you asked they do

B)They just don’t want to walk with God right now

1)No urgency for walking with God right now.

C)Danger is the longer they rebel – the harder their heart gets to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

AND For some of them – the problem is Satan has them so deceived they don’t know how to come back.

A) They live in constant condemnation /SHAME– believing the lie – there is no hope for them.

B) Our text gives us some insight into how this happens

1) The *origin of this problem* is found in the statement “wander from the truth” (James 5:19).

C) The *truth* means, of course, the Word of God. **“Thy Word is truth”** (John 17:17).

D) Unless **the believer** stays close to the truth, he will start to drift away.

1) Hebrews 2:1 **Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.**

The strategy of Satan from the very beginning was to get us to Doubt the Truth!

A) Lie to Eve – Did God really say – eat – die?

B) Really God is holding out on you- Eat and you are going to be just like him.

1) LIE: YOU DESERVE BETTER – This will make you happy!

C) He lies to us - **We give into compromise** – and nothing happens right away.

1) He whispers in our ear – see nothing happened – Ok – **God doesn’t care about this – no big deal!**{ LIE

But the Bible is clear the wages of sin is death!

A) Sin kills – Affects us – Destroys once he has led us down that road.

B) In Fact what does it mean in V.20 – He saves a soul from death

1) Is James talking Literal death? Could be, Sin often leads to literal death.

C) **Is he talking Eternal death** – People Leave their Salvation – Can’t lose – but people leave -

1) Theologians have debated that one for centuries

D) We are not going to solve that one today!

Romans 8:6 – Paul declared that to be Carnally or Fleshly Minded is Death.

A) Sin leads to death – Kills your intimacy with God – puts a wedge in your relationship.

B) **Kills relationships with other people.**

1) Kills your Joy – Robs you of your Spiritual Vitality

C) Some of you know someone in that place right now

1) Some of you yourselves are in that Place right now

D) **Backslidden – Prodigal** – 1st time back at church in a long time.

Here is another lie from the enemy – Gone to far and you Can’t come back.

A) Don’t believe the lie of the enemy – God loves you so much – His heart hurts to see you in this place.

B) He wants you to come Home – Waiting

1) His ARMS ARE OUTSTRETCHED TO YOU TODAY!

C) For those of us who know a prodigal – someone who has backslid

D) **The words of James – should JUMP OFF** the page at us!

1) I am a someone – you are a someone – God invites us to be a part of His RESCUE MISSION!

So how do we become a part of God’s mission?

A) **#1 Pray** – Pray for a Burden for the lost and those who have wandered.

B) Pray God’s heart – Angry at them or disappointed

1) Pray – God give me Your eyes and Your heart

C) Challenge Card 3 names – Pray for over the next few weeks – next few months.

D) Prayer helps us to be sensitive to God’s spirit

1) It was in Prayer – **Acts 10 vision to go to Cornelius**

#1 Pray

#2 Be Kind

A) Look for ways to bless and reach out – let them know – thinking about them.

B) Break the ice – by being willing to go out of your way { **Like Jesus with Zach** }

1) Be willing to go out of your way to get in contact with them.

C) Stop by their work – drop something off at their house with a nice note.

If we are going to help an erring brother, we must have an attitude of love, for **“love shall cover the multitude of sins”** (1 Peter 4:8).

A) Both James and Peter learned this principle from Proverbs 10:12 **“Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sins.”**

B) This does not mean that love “sweeps the dirt (SIN) under the carpet.”

1) Where there is love, there must also be truth (**“speaking the truth in love”** says Paul in Eph. 4:15);

C) BUT it is an understanding of this TRUTH: **Jesus death on the Cross – Covers that Sin!**

1) His Love that led Him to leave heaven and embark on this RESCUE MISSION to begin with.

D) **His Love Covers a Multitude of sins – John 8 Woman caught in adultery.....**

A) Neither do I condemn you – go and sin no more!

B) How could he say that? How could He do that?

1) He knew He was going to the Cross to pay the price for that sin!

C) His love – demonstrated by the Cross – Covers a multitude of sins

D) We just need to embrace it! Receive it

1) Confess the sin – He forgives

The **“Covering sins”** signifies forgiveness, and **“a multitude of sins”** indicates the extent of forgiveness.

A) This is viewed in the Bible as supreme blessedness. **“Blessed is he,” SANG the Psalmist, “whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered”**

B) What a blessed feat is accomplished when a sinner is turned away from his error.

C) Romans 2:4 **It is God’s Kindness that leads to repentance.**

D) Often times the instrument to display HIS KINDNESS IS YOU AND ME!

E) HOW? #1 PRAY #2 BE KIND!

#3 Invite: JESUS invited Himself to Zacchaeus’ house – I am not suggesting you do that – unless Lord leads

A) Invite them to dinner or coffee.

B) Re-open the lines the communication

C) Re-connect – Don’t let them be **OUT OF SIGHT OUT, OF MIND ANYMORE.**

#4 SHARE THE LOVE OF JESUS WITH THEM!

A) This might not happen in the first meeting – but look for an opportunity to speak the truth in love.

B) **The more you pray for them** – the more your heart will become burdened

1) **The more burdened** – the more sensitive you will be to the Holy Spirit.

C) **The more sensitive** you become to the Holy Spirit

1) That sensitivity will result in a greater sense of His leading you – when and how to share with them!

Jude 20-23

²⁰ But you, dear friends, must build each other up in your most holy faith, pray in the power of the Holy Spirit,* ²¹ and await the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will bring you eternal life. In this way, you will keep yourselves safe in God’s love.

²² And you must show mercy to* those whose faith is wavering. ²³ Rescue others by snatching them from the flames of judgment.

That last phrase is interesting: **Jude gives the picture of the fireman – rushing into the house to save the person trapped in the flames.**

Our world is on fire – God calls us to be his firemen – Rescue mission – those who are in danger.

Challenge Church: 3 names – Locally – Pray
Be Kind – Invite – **Christmas services** – Share

January – I AM STATEMENTS

EASTER

Close today:

Not a Believer - Jesus is calling you today

Come to him weary burdened – REST

PRODIGAL – COME HOME –

Sin is killing you – Find – Joy – Intimacy

Tired of this world – Kicking your butt

Come home –

Prodigal – Father Ran

God's heart – Run to you.....