

WHY DID JESUS COME?...Genesis 3:8-9, Rom. 3:23, 6:23  
Lenten-4<sup>th</sup>, TFBC, Mar 22, 09

Jesus came to earth with a mission. His mission would capture his every waking moment like no other person before him. It began at his birth, was evident in his childhood, continued through his daily life of ministry and finally to a passionate conclusion in which his life was threatened, brutally battered, unduly charged with crimes that would make any just man stand up and deny them, grossly misunderstood even by his dearest friends and followers, and ultimately to condemnation to a public death of agony. Why did he do it? Why did Jesus come?

The answer is easy to say but not as easy to swallow. **He came because of the love of God.** He came because people everywhere were confused, even tricked, but most often just stubborn and wrong about the Love of God. For Jesus all people everywhere needed this gift and had a right to know of the love of God. He found us hiding in small and shrinking dreams, in dead-ends of desperations, in phony lifestyles, in places of power, in darkness and ignorance, but mostly just stubborn and wrong about the love of God.

Jesus believed that everyone needed this elemental truth, this real joy of life and had a right to hear it right from the source, so there would not be any mistaking it for a fainthearted offer of false hopes. He believed this was what was missing in every life, every life, not just a few. He believed every person up to that time and every person yet to come had all missed this one gift that could make us all real people, people full of love and hope, people capable of love and goodness and doing what is right, people who could act like they had everything going for them.

Jesus came for you to have this gift; he called it abundance, the fullness of life. He came for the love of God. And his work is not finished; it still goes on. And there are people sitting here today among us that have not yet received his truth, his mission has not yet been taken seriously. The scriptures teach us that to live with sin is to be a slave to it, to live with blindness, deaf and mute. When God has to come looking for us, we have not heard the certain word of the damage that goes with our sin.

**1. Some don't believe it.** I read about a man in London, England named Arthur Arch who had just turned 95. For 42 years he had been precisely 20 minutes late for any appointment, class, meeting, or schedule he was to meet. It was not that he was lazy and dragging through life, he was absolutely prompt! He was just 20 minutes late! He reported that he had been fired from a half-dozen jobs for tardiness. He had missed trains, social gatherings, great announcements, even his own birthday party on occasion.

When asked why, he explained it this way, *"It is all very simple. In 1922 the clocks were changed 20 minutes to adjust for what some reported was a necessary chronological error. But I never accepted it! Nobody is going to take 20 minutes off my life! I have just kept my watch at the old time-20 minutes back."* He vowed to continue, to never change his watch just to be in step with the world! His last pronouncement was classic. *"I am going to die 20 minutes late to show them I was right!"*

Some have heard the story of Jesus and the news of God's love and will never believe it! **This is sin.**

**2. Some take it all too lightly.** When Jesus was invited to dine with a prominent man in Capernaum, it was to an opportunity to meet the public and explain his message and its sweeping popularity. He was given the prime teachable moment. The very dignified host became indignant over a guest who just couldn't

contain her gratitude at her release from a life of shame and degradation. She threw herself at Jesus, and weeping uncontrollably, she bathed his traveling feet with expensive perfume. Having no towel, she dried them with her own lovely long hair. It was quite a spectacle in anybody's book. Simon protested, even apologized to his important guest and his quite proper company. I suspect he urged the woman to stop immediately and may have asked that she be escorted out!

Jesus told Simon a story, one of 2 men who had debts forgiven by a company probably facing economic hard-times. One was forgiven \$250 and the other forgiven \$250,000 dollars. When Jesus asked which of the 2 would love the creditor more, the obvious answer struck a resounding note. The one with a greater debt would experience the generosity of the creditor to be overwhelming, and would have the greatest love for the creditor.

Jesus' point was this: many take God's love and forgiving grace lightly, and that is because they take sin so lightly! **This is sin.** The disgusting woman found the love of God giving her new life! The disgusted Simon was so concerned about propriety that he ignored how his own spirit was objectionable to God, so adverse to the love of God. Without a word the woman was reborn, made new. With many words that seemed so correct, Simon, convinced that what he was doing was not that bad, missed the only source of true forgiveness, a clean conscience, and a wholeness unattainable any other way.

Sin must not be forgotten because it has a blood price. The early laws of God in Leviticus clearly told the price of our disobedience. The cost was a spotlessly perfect animal sacrifice. Only that would break the heart of a blatant sinner, the death of an innocent one for the guilty. Only that would win them back to a right relationship with their Creator God.

**3. Some do not know what real sin is.** In Genesis it all started with Adam and Eve doubting what God said. They listened to another perspective, another point of view, and then were unable to resist the temptation to taste the one thing God had forbidden. **This was sin.** We clearly have been made for lives of peacefulness and productivity, lives of trust and obedience to God. We all have tested the limits of those boundaries, and all have crossed the line, all have sinned and lost the glorious inheritance intended for us. And most of us have forgotten what it was we did that God had said, *"Don't do it or you will die."* When we didn't die physically as we thought, we continued to live outside of his will. Now we don't know anymore what it is that we did wrong. We would rather argue with God about the fairness of his rulings, than go back to the basics and reclaim our birthright through obedient love. We have forgotten the love of God.

**4. Then, finally, some of us can't be told anything.** We have erected a wall as high and as wide as life itself between ourselves and God. We have shut God out and dared him to set foot or friend on our turf, daring him to tell us what to do. **This is sin.** Many people throughout history have taken the role of proving God false, since he wouldn't play the game our way and take us on in a head on skirmish of the wills. They really do not understand the nature of the love of God.

Our God would rather stand before these and in silence take all their dares, all their defiance and quietly bow and say, *"Do as you see fit to me. If you need to attempt a purging of your anger and misunderstanding, I will take it on, and in humility, I will let you crucify my love for you. I will take your hostility and soak it up like a towel on a spill that stains and ruins. I want to take it from you and set you free from its curse and stain. I love you; I want you to be free to love me, too."*

In 1983 President Ronald Reagan had carried the burden of a world divided as long as he could stand it. He made an historic visit to a world leader and took him on, him and all of the false values and propositions that would erect a wall between families, nations, and living possibilities. Reagan immediately got before the world audience on national TV and challenged the false pretense of a nation who would claim greatness while retaining a wall of separation. In 4 short words he challenged that act of defiance and wrong. "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down that wall!" Within 2 months the wall separating East and West Germany since the end of World War II was toppled and a reconciliation was in progress!

Our sin has built a wall between ourselves and our God. Sin is leaving home without caring, cutting ourselves off from the cradle of our existence. Sin is trying to live as though you had no home, no God, no one but yourself to be responsible to or for.

As someone said, "Trust in yourself and you are doomed to disappointment; trust in your friends and they will die and leave you; trust in your money and you may have it all taken from you; trust in reputation and someone's slanderous tongue will blast it to pieces; but trust in God and you are never to be confounded in this world or the next!"

Jesus came because of the love of God for each one of us. He knew that we could not be whole without building our lives on it and living our lives build around it! He knew we would be like hollow people without a home if we didn't have the love of God within our hearts. Do you have it? Have you believed his message? Have you received this gift? It is the free gift of God for you today. When God comes calling, WHERE ARE YOU?

END 1<sup>st</sup> Draft,( 1700 words, cut 200)

