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Series: Evangelism Series

TWO CRUCIAL QUALITIES OF EVERY REDEPTIVE PERSON

(Luke 10:1-3)

Luke 10:1-3-----After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go. ² Then He said to them, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. ³ Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves.

Kathy Lang's first day on the job was met with angry stares, bitterness, and harsh words. "I hate you!" one girl shouted. "I love you," Kathy replied. So it goes when your workplace is a prison, a place Kathy never thought she'd be. But God clearly had other plans.

A veteran surgical nurse for over 25 years, Kathy was looking for a new job. An agency that staffs nurses offered her a position at a prison. Without hesitation, Kathy replied emphatically, "No!"

A few days later in the car, she was listening to a song when she was startled by the lyrics: "I was in prison, and I rotted there; I'd prayed that you'd come."

Over the next ten days she was bombarded with prison references everywhere she turned. On the TV and the radio—prison news. Her devotion book had references to prison. Kathy finally relinquished: "Okay, God, I get it!"

When she arrived home, she called the agency, but the job had been filled. Undaunted, she visited a local youth detention facility to inquire if they needed a nurse, only to learn there was a hiring freeze. For the next four months she kept calling agencies to inquire. And she prayed.

One night, Kathy and her daughter Jessica were driving home from the store. As they passed the prison at exactly 9:00 p.m., she and Jessica prayed, asking the Lord to open the door if it was truly his will for Kathy to work there. She promised to never stop praying for those girls.

Exactly 12 hours later, at precisely 9:00 the next morning, the agency called to offer her that job. ...

[Over time, as Kathy worked in the clinic,] she had the idea to give every girl a Bible.

At the end of each appointment [Kathy had with a female prisoner], she offered the girl the ERV (Easy-to-Read version) of the Bible, briefly explaining how to use it. Their responses to her were mixed between joy and refusal.

Kathy's heart ached for these girls, most of whom were from difficult backgrounds with little hope for change. Some had lived on the streets for a long time before being incarcerated. One girl told Kathy that her family never paid for anything—they just stole it. Not only was this girl serving time for theft, but so were her parents ...

After [Kathy] gave out the first batch of 200 Bibles, her dream was to do more. She contacted various prison chaplains and was able to give out more than 6,000 Bibles in four years. ...

Kathy's goal is to see a Bible in the hand of every prisoner. And she has kept her promise to God—she never stops praying for them.

Kathy's guiding verse for her mission with these troubled youth comes from Isaiah 9:2: "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned."

Kathy Lang is what we would call "a redemptive person." Last week, I spoke to you on the topic of "Becoming a Redemptive Person." A redemptive person is a person who rescues others—who helps others helps others find freedom and forgiveness of sins through Christ.

And last week, I shared four ingredients that all of us need if we're to become redemptive people. But the truth of the matter is that I left out two more ingredients. In fact, they may be the most important ingredients of them all.

And those crucial ingredients are the ones I would like to speak to you about this morning for just a few minutes.

Title: Two Crucial Qualities of Every Redemptive Person

(Prayer)

Allow me to share with you a hypothetical story.

One time in a typical American church, the congregation thought it would be great to invite the Lord Jesus Christ to a Sunday worship service and to be interviewed by the pastor.

Lo and behold, the Lord accepted their invitation and told them He would be there the following Sunday morning. The congregation and the pastor were ecstatic!

That Sunday morning, the Pastor Gene and the Lord sat together on the platform and the interview began.

"Lord, greetings on behalf of all the membership here at "The Church of the Immaculate Perception." We're delighted you're with us!

"Always good to be with my people, Gene."

"A couple of questions, Lord. First, is it true that you are omniscient?"

"Yes, Gene, I know everything."

“Is it also true that you have commissioned us to reach the world?”

“Absolutely. You’re my witnesses---my ambassadors---my ‘fishers of men.’”

“Is it fair to say that we become the channels through which you touch the lives of people?”

“Oh, yes! When love is felt, the message is heard. For example, Paul ‘made himself a servant, to win as many as possible.’ He loved, cared, preached, and suffered to see the lost find me.”

“So, you work in and through us. In a very real sense, we become your arms, legs, mouth, and heart. People are moved toward the Cross as we flow into their lives to love, serve, and communicate the gospel.”

“Exactly. You are all lights in this dark world and it’s your [job] to reach out and touch [the lives of others]. Of course, [I am] with you [always].”

"Lord, these folks in the audience will be going out from here as the service ends. As I understand it, they’re supposed to represent you in offices, schools, parking lots, stores, and neighborhoods all over town. Is that correct?"

“Yes, Gene.”

“You, of course, already know whether you will have significant, redemptive contact through the arms, legs, mouths, and hearts of these, your people. You already know what’s going to happen this week.”

"That's right."

"Are you looking forward to your week?"

“Well..., no. No, I’m not.”

[Now at this point, a gasp whips through the congregation. The startled listeners snap awake to see tears coursing down the cheeks of their Master.]

Head down, speech laced with sorrow, Jesus continues: “No, I’ll have no significant, redemptive contact this week through the lives of these people. **They’re going out expecting nothing, and that’s what they’ll get. They have no vision and they have no prayer.**”

And at this point **the Lord disappears before their very eyes.**

When I was in Bible college, the president of the college quoted the following saying quite often in chapel: **“If you think you can’t, you’re right!”** In other words, if you go out expecting nothing, you’ll hit it every time.

It is extremely interesting to me that the very first words that our Lord actually says to the 70 have to do with vision and prayer. He wanted to them to **see** something (i.e., to see what He saw). And He wanted them to **do** something (to pray like He prayed).

Before they were sent out by the Lord on their mission, they needed to see their mission through God's eyes. And so Jesus tells the 70:

"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest" (Luke 10:2).

First, we need to see that God truly can use us in His own special way in reaching others, and, second, we need to see that we can seek Him in prayer. **The harvest is great...therefore, pray!** Before the 70 were launched on their mission, they needed to see the mission through God's eyes, and to bathe their work for Him in prayer!

Redemptive people...

1. **Look upward to their Almighty God with vision and in prayer**

The point here is this: since the harvest is great and the laborers are few rejection is inevitable, but we can believe that as we obey, He will use us to bring people to Him.

Jesus told the 70 a little later that they might need to shake some dust off their feet if people rejected them, but that wasn't to stop them. The harvest was great so they were to go---believing God and seeking Him in prayer!

The great missionary, William Carrey said:

"Attempt great things for God. Expect great things from God!"

Let's all get some God-sized dreams, get on our knees and pray, and then go!

2. **Look inward regarding the abilities He has given to each one of us**

Point---Since the harvest is great and the laborers are few, do what He has gifted you to do but be ready to give an answer.

Recent examples---making brownies, mowing lawn, repairing cars, listening, helping... Kathy Lang showed Christ love by handing our Bibles as she healed broken bodies.

3. **Look outward to a lost world to see how they can rescue the perishing**

***Point**---Since the harvest is great and the laborers are few we must constantly be on the lookout for ways we can be Jesus to those around us.*

One time I was driving **down the road in Garland** I saw a row of church members with signboards on street---“I am the light of the world.” (That’s OK, I guess...) But when people drove by, did they really see any light? **They saw the word “light” but they didn’t see THE LIGHT.**”

In Matt 5:16, when Jesus said: “Let your light so shine before men that they see your **good works** and glorify your Father in heaven,” I don’t think He meant “wear signboards.” He obviously meant: “Do GOOD WORKS!”

Folks, the fields are white. A little boy looked at what God had given to Him one day and Jesus used his lunch to feed 1000’s of people and to see the power of Jesus as well.

What has God given you to use? Will you spend your lives only feeding yourselves or will you begin to feed others through God’s love?

When you look **upward** and see how great He is and you begin to dream God-sized dreams and pray God-sized prayers.

When you look **inward** you consider how He has wired you and you put your talents to work in being a blessing to others.

When you look **outward**, you see the greatness of the harvest and pray for God to work through you and your Christian brothers and sisters in reaching the world!

Folks, does Jesus leave our church each Sunday and say, “They’re going out expecting nothing and that’s what they’ll get--they have no vision”?