

Intentional Jesus

March 12, 2017

I told you last week that the next few weeks I wanted to take you on a journey toward the cross. You already know me so you know that I am not traditional in my thought process. That's ok though...that's just how I roll.

I am reading in Luke's gospel and when Luke is beginning his writings he is describing Jesus and He write this: Luke 3:21-23

²¹ When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened ²² and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

²³ Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph,

Don't you just love that? He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph,

Luke was opening a door into an insight that we know but others didn't know. Jesus was not Joseph's biological son, Jesus was God's son. Jesus' lineage while 100% human was also 100% divine. Our articles of faith state it this way: 2. We believe in Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Triune Godhead; that He was eternally one with the Father; that He became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and was born of the Virgin Mary, so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say the Godhead and manhood, are thus united in one Person very God and very man, the God-man.

Jesus would have been 30 years old at this time...the time of His baptism. From just shortly after his birth until now, we only see one reference to him. Regardless of that, I can say with confidence that every moment of Jesus's life was intentional. It had a purpose. It had a path. This is what we read when he was 12: Every year Jesus' parents went up to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover and when they were on their way home, they thought Jesus was with relatives by he wasn't and they searched for Him all the way back to Jerusalem and after three days found him in the temple: ⁴⁸ When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you."

⁴⁹ "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"

Had to! What was that? What drew Him to "His Father's house?"

In John 4 we read of how Jesus "had to" go through Samaria.... No, it wasn't the only way, there was something He had to do. You remember the story. The woman who met Him at the well and came face to face with the Messiah.

You remember when Jesus was ministering to the crowds and then He said to His disciples. Let's go to the other side and on the way was that furious storm which Jesus rebuked and calmed and on the other side was the demoniac whom Jesus set free.

Let me give you a hint as to where I am going with this....divine appointments...Intentional living. He left the crowds for one messed up man.

Do you remember when Jesus asked His disciples who people thought He was and then asked them, "What about You? Who do you say that I am?" and Peter said, You are the Christ....

After that scene, the very next verse says, "From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he **must go** to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he **must be killed** and on the third day be raised to life.

And the Bible tells us that **Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.**

At the table with Judas....He told Judas, "What you are about to do, do quickly"

There was a purpose and Jesus' life was following a path of purpose. I do not have time to give you every instance where it is evident from scripture that Jesus was living with a purpose in mind.

When he met Judas in the garden and at the word of Jesus the whole regiment fell down... and Jesus told Peter... don't you know that I could have called 10,000 angels ...He had the power and the authority but He lived for one thing.

Even on the cross the vinegar that was offered Him was so that scripture would be fulfilled.

Jesus whole life was lived with a purpose and goal set before Him. He says in John 17: **Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. 2 For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. 3 Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. 4 I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me**

to do. 5 And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

Jesus lived His whole life on a mission with intention... to the point where He said, "Even the words I speak are not my words but the words of the Father...What He tells me to say is what I say,"

Now if I were to tell you that all your life leads to a moment in time when you die, you would not be very impressed. But truthfully isn't that reality. Everything you do in life will not be as important as where you stand when you die.

If Don treated me with the utmost kindness and love all of the years we are married until the last one...the last one he made fun of me...called me a fat slob...said he never loved me and blatantly ran after other women, would all the other years make up for the last?

Where you stand with Christ when you die will make the difference as to where you will spend eternity. Now, all the others matter! All the things that have happened in our lives matter. But....how you die will validate how you lived.

All the miracles of Jesus have substance ...all the interactions He had with sinners...everything else comes together because of His death and resurrection.

I need to ask some personal questions today....very personal. Does your life have a purpose? Are you convinced that where you are heading is the right direction? Are you living out your mission? If not, it's like a homeless person living in their car...Might make a great shelter, but it's not the purpose for which it was intended.

The Bible says, by their fruit you will know them.

What fruit do you see in your life? That convicts me. I have been at this church for 11 years....what fruit do you see in my life? I hope that some of you have found Jesus because of our ministry. I hope that your walk and relationship with Jesus is stronger because of my pastorate at this church, but truthfully, I have a deep longing in me to take more people to heaven with me. I can't look back over this last year and point to one person that I have led to the Lord. Can you? I know we don't drag people down the aisle and yell on street corners that unless you repent you are going to hell, but do they see enough of Jesus and His love in our lives that they want what we have? We used to sing a little ditty in Sunday school,

*"I will make you fishers of men
Fishers of men
Fishers of men
I will make you fishers of men if you follow me."*

How long's it been since you've been fishing?

When is the last time you have invited anyone to church? Do you even want to or are you ashamed of who we are?

In one of Jesus' parables, He tells of a tree that was not producing fruit. This is what we read:

6 Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. 7 So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?'

8 "'Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. 9 If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.'"

I love second chances.

Thomas A. Edison was working on a crazy contraption called a "light bulb" and it took a whole team of men 24 straight hours to put just one together. The story goes that when Edison was finished with one light bulb, he gave it to a young boy helper, who nervously carried it up the stairs. Step by step he cautiously watched his hands, obviously frightened of dropping such a priceless piece of work. You've probably guessed what happened by now; the poor young fellow dropped the bulb at the top of the stairs. It took the entire team of men twenty-four more hours to make another bulb. Finally, tired and ready for a break, Edison was ready to have his bulb carried up the stairs. He gave it to the same young boy who dropped the first one. That's true forgiveness.

That's God.

I've blown it so many times that I don't deserve another chance.

And yet...He calls us, He equips us...He puts people like you and Me in front of each other... He brings a child like Xander or Lyric or a young man like Haden and says, "here, He's priceless to mewill you nurture him... Will you give him the good news.

All the way to the cross....Jesus, even knowing what was before Him...Walked resolutely. Scorned.... Mocked...loved ...hated... called insane....arrested as a blasphemer...No matter what came His way...the good and the bad...His eyes never left the Father.

And then when it came to His last moments on earth, His instructions were: You're going to be filled with the Holy Spirit and with power...

Why?

"You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth."

How you doing on your mission?

Let's do this....let's dig around it...Let's fertilize it...Let's see what we can do for God.

I want more. Do you?