

Hear Him Gladly

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

There are so many illustrations throughout the Word of God of how the Lord poured out His heart to the common people. Of course, God so loved the world—the *whole* world. And, yes, He did die for the sins of the whole world. But in terms of communication, Jesus Christ was always looking for that common person with a humble and open heart to share His Word with.

Do you see why He used this method? It is because the common people would hear Him gladly. They accepted what Jesus said, for He spoke as one having authority.

It is interesting to me that the people who argued and battled Jesus with religious rhetoric were the people who thought they were something. The Pharisees and Sadducees and the scribes, the “upper crust” of the religious crowd challenged everything He did and said. But those who knew they were nothing opened their ears and their hearts and received what Jesus had to

say.

I will never forget how one visiting preacher gave a great testimony of how he was delivered from being a somebody, became a nobody, and was gloriously saved from what he called "the top of the social manure heap." He was very wealthy and owned many things, but he did not have eternal life. "But then I was bathed in the Blood of the Lamb," he said. The night he spoke at our church, the people heard and responded gladly to the message of the Gospel.

God is looking for those people who are common in their own eyes, but who can be very rich with the Lord. This booklet will show how those who hear Him gladly are transformed through eternal life.

Chapter One

OUR LEARNING SHOULD
LEAD TO LOVE

“And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:

“And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

“And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

“And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he:

“And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices” (Mark 12:29-33).

God never gives us strength for anything but to love God. In a symbolic illustration, the original language brings out that in Greece, in ancient times, a father would instruct his children to use all their strength to build up the land and to take care of the family. The children were taught these principles at a very young age, and they were trained to give all of their strength to their father, who was the head of the home. In correlation, this means that we are to pour out every bit of our strength into loving God. All the energy we have is for this purpose: to love Jesus Christ and to serve Him in all that we do.

I was thinking of the people who do not love God with all of their understanding. With everything we understand in life, we are to love God. The purpose of an education, with each subject and every aspect of discipline and study, is that we would learn to love Him with that knowledge. If you are studying biology, for example, you are learning about how well God's creation works. You may learn about photosynthesis, the chemical process that causes the grass to be green; or you might learn about mitosis, the process by which cells divide and form a new life. No matter how simple or complex, the purpose of knowing these things is ultimately to

love the One who made the earth.

Many go to college to become schoolteachers. Some Christian schoolteachers learn to teach, but Spirit-filled schoolteachers learn to love God with what they learn. While teaching is their occupation, serving Jesus Christ is their vocation.

If you work in a factory, learn to see God in the thing that you are doing at the factory. Do your job with all your strength. Love God with what you are doing with your hands. God asks us to love Him with all of our hearts. The heart speaks of the center of our existence with all of our understanding. Everything we know about life is to be used to love God. No subject should be detached from loving God. Our quest for knowledge must be motivated by the quality of life that is in the Lord Jesus Christ. He fulfills all of our knowledge with His presence and His wisdom through His science of learning.

Presenting Your Offering

“If the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people; then let him bring for his sin, which he hath sinned, a young bullock without blemish unto the LORD for a sin offering....”

“And if any one of the common people sin through ignorance, while he doeth somewhat against any of the commandments of the LORD concerning things which ought not to be done, and be guilty;

“Or if his sin, which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge: then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned” (Leviticus 4:3, 27-28).

Notice what these verses tell us. When a priest sinned, a bullock had to be offered. This was an expensive and precious animal in those days. These animals were worth more than any animal in the whole camp. It was the most expensive offering you could offer to God. If a ruler sinned, he had to bring a male goat for his sin offering. That was the second most costly animal.

If, however, a common person sinned, he had a choice to bring either a female goat or a female lamb. These were animals everyone in the camp was to have, and they were inexpensive compared to the offerings made by the priests and the rulers. If anyone lacked one of those animals, he could offer another animal because God made special provisions for the com-

mon people. For this reason, the common people heard Jesus gladly. Though He was rich, yet He became poor, that through His poverty we might become rich (2 Corinthians 8:9).

Throughout my ministry, I have been involved with all classes of people. And I'll tell you, the common folks are the ones who listen to the messages. Which people love to pray? The common folks. Who are the ones who go out and witness? The common folks. Those who are common by the world's standards are the ones who hear Him gladly.

Chapter Two

GOD USES THE HUMBLE

“And the LORD said unto Gideon, the people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me....”

“So he brought down the people unto the water: and the LORD said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with His tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise everyone that boweth down upon his knees to drink.

“And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water” (Judges 7:2, 5-6).

Of Gideon’s three hundred, most of them were common people, including many from the poorest tribe in Israel. Thirty-two thousand were

in Israel's army to start with. But God tested the soldiers at the water. Most of them charged after the water, paying no attention to the potential oncoming enemy army. Yet, the three hundred stayed alert. They were more concerned about the enemy than they were about the water. God said to Gideon, "These are the ones I want. They are people who can stand the test."

Receive the Water of the Word

The water refers to the Word and the Holy Spirit. The test speaks of what God brings through the Word and the Holy Spirit upon everyone who fights the good fight of faith. Those who are more concerned about what they can get instead being prepared to face the enemy cannot be used in God's army to bring revival.

God uses common folk who hear Him gladly.

Nehemiah heard about the state of Jerusalem's walls and said, "We've got to rebuild the wall." You know who helped him build? The common people. The only ones who helped Nehemiah build were the common folks. He could not get any help from the wealthy Israelites.

To the Pharisees and scribes, Jesus was too

common. They rejected Him. “He’s just a carpenter’s son from Nazareth. How can He be the Messiah?” When Jesus went to the Cross, just four common people remained with Him—three women and one disciple. I can picture Him looking down at Calvary, saying to Himself, “The common folks are still with Me. They heard Me gladly. They didn’t have the sham and the pretense and the wickedness of a superficial pseudo-culture.”

Real Culture, Real Life

Culture? That is only worth something when people are right with God and living clean in the power of the Spirit. Everything else is mere pretense.

A truly cultured person is like the woman who doesn’t have much, but she loves God, keeps her house, and lives clean, the best that she knows how. She serves God and keeps the ball rolling in her home, doing all she can to raise her children to be the Abraham Lincolns or the John Wesleys or the Amy Carmichaels or even the George Washingtons of today—to be like men and women who were common people who had character with God, and who made a lasting impact on the world.

Chapter Three

JESUS IDENTIFIES WITH US

“And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons; the one for the burnt offering, and the other for a sin offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her, and she shall be clean” (Leviticus 12:8).

Of all the families He could have been born into when he came into the world, Jesus Christ was born to Mary and Joseph, a carpenter. When they brought Jesus to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord in His dedication ceremony, all they could afford to offer were pigeons and turtledoves (Luke 2:24).

They could not afford a lamb, so they brought what they could—pigeons or turtledoves, probably caught right in their backyard. And there was Jesus Christ, in that little body, and Mary, a little, humble, sweet mother, holding God Almighty and offering all she could give at that

time. "Lord, I don't have much, but I offer these pigeons to You for this dedication."

From the start, Jesus Christ identified Himself with the poor of this world. He was born into the poorest type of family in the world at that time, a family that could only offer turtle-doves and pigeons.

When Philip told Nathaniel that he had found the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph, Nathaniel responded by asking, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46).

Nazareth was on the "wrong side of the tracks" as far as people in Israel were concerned. It was slum area, and that is where He grew up. That is the town He identified Himself with. The Word of God makes it clear that later on, His own community rejected Him (Matthew 13:53-58). Jesus identified Himself with poverty, with ignorance, with slum areas; He identified Himself with the common people and therefore they heard Him gladly.

He did not try to be politically correct to be accepted by certain groups. He identified with the common folks. The disciples whom Jesus chose were all recognized as "ignorant and unlearned men" (Acts 4:13). I can just hear some of

the people of the day criticizing Peter as he spoke. I am sure there were some who didn't appreciate that Peter was chosen to be the first preacher at Pentecost. I am glad that Peter got to do that. God could have used a brilliant, educated man like the apostle Paul. And his time would come. But the first sermon delivered in the power the Holy Spirit came from Peter.

Those Who Are Forgiven Much, Love Much

Think of the harlot who fell at Jesus' feet in the house of Simon the Pharisee, in Luke 7:36-50. She probably traveled three or four miles on foot, during a gloomy and dark time in Palestine. She had been living in sin, but she was tired of it.

She was just a common girl, a common prostitute, who started weeping on Jesus' feet and then wiped His feet with her hair.

Within Simon, a very religious man outwardly, the questions welled up. "What is Jesus doing? This is just a common woman of the street. She has no social value. Why is he letting her do that?"

Yet, Jesus loved her, and she heard Him gladly when He said, "Your sins are forgiven. Go in peace."

I was also thinking of Mary Magdalene, another woman of the street. Delivered from eight demons, she came from the worst part of town. When she got saved, she followed Jesus all the way to the Cross. She was also among the first at the tomb. She had to find her Master.

She heard Him gladly and was overjoyed when He called out to her, "Mary." At that moment, Mary Magdalene realized that her Master was alive.

Jesus Christ is alive. He is seated on His throne in heaven, at the right hand of the Father. the Holy Spirit is communicating to our hearts even today.

Hear Him gladly and rejoice.

CONCLUSION

I was thinking of all the times we go out witnessing and the different people we encounter. When we finally meet someone who is simply honest, sincere, original, and sweet, it is such a blessing. These are the so-called common people and they are the ones who hear Him gladly. They listen and receive the Truth.

Lazarus and his sisters, Mary and Martha, were simple, uneducated people; yet, this is where Jesus abode at different times. A little, humble home was where Jesus liked to stay during His time on earth. He loved it there because He could have fellowship in honesty and sincerity and love.

When Lazarus died, Jesus wept (John 11). He saw how much His plan affected His friends. Mary and Martha were so hurt, but He allowed that death to happen for their benefit. He allowed it so that they and all the common people could see that Jesus Christ is the Resurrection

and the life.

Oh, I pray God will keep me common, keep me humble, so that I will hear Him gladly. Do you know what stops a revival of God? It is stopped when humble, common people get proud and start thinking that they are something they are not.

When a congregation is filled with common folks, a church made up of humble servants of God, He visits. In His presence, we can fellowship very transparently. Our communication with God and with each other becomes very loving as we develop and enjoy sweet, sweet relationships, all because of people who will hear Him gladly.