

Three things to focus on in these end times.



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All scriptures are NKJV unless noted otherwise.

KEY WORDS: *LAST DAYS, end time, Christ's return, prayer, pray, love your enemies, honor the king, make disciples, teach, priest, groaning, elect, elect of God.*

Summary: *With Christ's return possibly within 10-15 years (or so we hope), here are three points to focus on as we redeem the time we each have left. I covered some of these in the last sermon, but this message especially hits the 3rd point of discipling others to Christ. No more being secret disciples. Sure, these points appear basic – but are we doing them?*

Good day everyone, and I thank you for this opportunity to speak to you in your homes. Looking forward to us all being able to gather together again someday. *And then, for all eternity, there will be no keeping us apart. God speed that day.*

Welcome to God's holy, set-apart, sacred sabbath day when we come into the presence of God in worship, and remember his covenant with us.

A lot happened in 2020 – *all around the world. It's left many of God's people a little dazed. The highest number of **hurricanes** in one year ever, **wildfires** all over the west and Australia and other countries, **riots** - looting-burning- and killing in our cities, then add a very contested **election**, then **Covid19** that has now morphed new strains and may not end soon... and some of you lost jobs, kids out of school, lost money, and it's been ugly. And now we're told it could get uglier.*

The years just before our Messiah returns will be very, very ugly. I'm not being pessimistic... just reminding you of what scripture clearly says. How do we get ready for that? We'll talk about it today.

Our Messiah said we won't know the day or the hour when He will return, but he also said to look for the signs like leaves and buds on a fig tree – and know the time is nigh. On your own, read **Matthew 24:32-33**.

Most of us surely feel we're in the final decade - or two – and for any and all of us, our lives individually could be near “the end” or “last days” with a stroke, heart attack, cancer, or accident. So we must be ready to meet our Lord.

The very end of days is called “the day of God’s wrath” – many times.

We're told also that:

- **God’s children should know** how close things are and not be caught off guard – if we're awake, watching. **1 Thessalonians 5:1-6**
- **... the coming day of wrath is not for God’s children.**
1 Thessalonians 5:9
“For God did not appoint US to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

God’s children at the very end time seem to be split between those who are zealous for God – like a Phinehas or like Christ himself is – and then there are those who are sleepy, lukewarm, and self-contented. Those who are zealous and faithful he indicates they will be spared from the hour of trouble coming upon the earth (Rev 3:10). Those who are lukewarm have to have their spiritual values (their “gold”) refined in the fiery furnace during the Great Tribulation (Revelation 3:14-22, especially v. 18). I want to be among those who are spared the most severe times.

So today I'm going to focus on three things that could help us in these end times. There are many things to focus on, but I picked three.

But first, let me ask you: how special are you, as one of God’s elect children, to God? How vital are you in God’s eyes?

I hope we remember the whole world counts on us to be active with our God. All creation GROANS for the coming of Christ and our redemption.

Romans 8:22-23 CJB

“We know that until now, **the whole creation has been groaning** as with the pains of childbirth;

23 and not only it, but *WE ourselves*, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, *groan inwardly as WE continue **waiting eagerly to be made sons*** — that is, to have our whole **bodies redeemed and set free.**”

If it weren't for you and the elect, no flesh saved alive at the extremely dangerous end times.

Matthew 24:22 NKJV

*And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; **but for THE ELECT'S SAKE those days will be shortened.***”

What's your name? Because of YOU – Almighty God shortens the time and saves human life alive. Mankind's future doesn't look so good, but because of you, this will end very well.

So with these end time events going on, I want to remind us of **3 main points, 3 goals I think are so urgent on God's elect right now. These are not suggestions from Christ. They are his clearly stated desires for us.**

1. Pray like never before, more often, more fervently, constantly, like your life – and whole world-- depends on it, because it does.

We all know this, but DID you pray today before services? Did you pray yesterday and each day before that? David and Daniel are reported to have prayed at least 3x a day (Daniel 6:10,13; Psalm 55:17). DO we pray every single day – even several times? We really should be praying more, more consistently, more often, longer and with more urgency – than ever before.

WHY is prayer – prayer that connects – so vital to us:

- Jesus said unless we are **abiding in him, we can do nothing (John 15:5)**, but if we abide in him, we will bear much fruit. Paul says we can do all things through Christ – through abiding in him (**Philippians 4:13**).

If we're not praying a LOT – a mean a LOT – in these coming years, where will the strength, the fruit come from? Without the abiding connection, we can do NOTHING spiritually. Nothing. Let that sink in.

Prayer is our lifeline. We have the ability, an open door to come before our Creator, the Highest and before our Savior at any **time, 24/7, day or night** to be filled with their spirit and strength and holy presence. Are we joyfully and boldly using that open door?

All we have to say is “Father, Father in heaven...” and we have his attention.

Plus, as a child of God, frankly **our Father and our Savior *enjoy you*** coming before them to speak with them – as any wonderful Abba, or grandpa, enjoys a phone call from his children or grandkids.

So all through the Bible, we’re enjoined to pray. So many verses.

1 Peter 4:7

“But **the end of all things** is at hand; **therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers.**”

Yeshua gave a parable in Luke 18:1-8 that we should be like the persistent widow, who – even when we don’t receive the answer we want, as fast as we want, to keep coming. *Notice what Jesus told us to be doing:*

Luke 18:1

Then He spoke a parable to them, that **men *always ought to pray* and not lose heart...**

Yeshua spoke these words right after Luke 17, which is all about the very last hours and days before Christ returns.

When what we’re praying for doesn’t happen, we can lose heart. Don’t do it. Keep praying anyway – with THANKSGIVING – that’s “the secret sauce” that helps so much. Thankfulness makes the terrible times we go through become bearable! (Philippians 4:6-7).

Worship and sing as you pray. Mix up what you do as you pray. Over and over in Revelation, at least 6-7x, it says the highest beings under God in heaven **fell on their faces to worship** in God’s presence. Good example for us!

Revelation 7:11

“**ALL the angels** stood around the throne and **the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces** before the throne and worshiped God.”

Revelation 4:9-11 says the 24 elders around God’s throne actually fall down before him and cast their crowns to him. This concept of falling down with faces to the ground – is found all through Revelation – like **Rev 5:8,14; 11:16; 19:4** and more. There are also numerous Old Testament references to people worshiping with their faces on the ground. That is not something we like or tend to do in our western cultures.

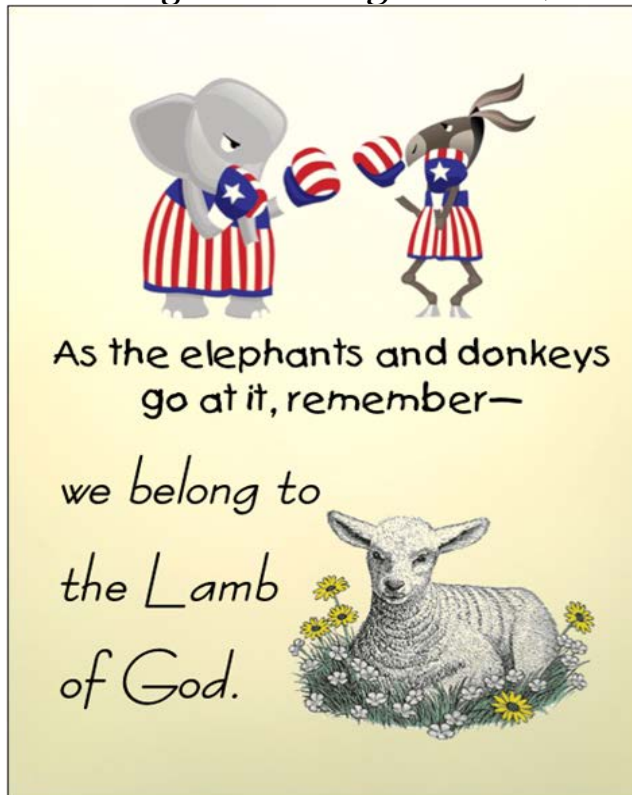
Do WE pray that way, EVER? Face on the ground, or smashed into the carpet? DO we? The word “Worship” in Greek and Hebrew carry that meaning of deep bowing.

Sometimes I'll bring in **worship music** during prayer time - - and play it for my Father. Then pray some more. Do different things. Keep it interesting. But pray as never before. Pray always (1 Thessalonians 5:17) – regularly, a lot.

Besides sleep and work, where do we spend our time? And if we are in right relationship with our Maker, praying should be a JOY, something we relish, look forward to doing – not because we “have to” but because we want to. We enjoy our wonderful father and know that he enjoys his children coming and talking to him too.

Do you spend more time with Facebook than prayer? We do what's most important to us and most urgent. Prayer has to become a huge daily priority and joy – more than time spent watching the news, for example. Sometimes I just stop and shut up and ask God to speak to me, as I pray. And then I wait. Often nothing comes... but sometimes I get very strong feelings and thoughts.

And some of us, *myself included for a time*, got so wrapped up with this last election and what was happening in our country – or maybe you did in your country – that we forgot we *belong to Christ*, not a political party!



If people reviewed your Facebook posts, would people feel you belong to the Lamb of God – or that you belong to the Republican party or Democrat Party?

You and I were bought and paid for and redeemed by the blood of the son of God. That's where our loyalties should be 100%.

Prayer should also regularly include being counted worthy to escape the times coming, described as the worst time the world has ever seen, as God's wrath is poured out.

It's going to be a worse time even than Peter or Paul, or Isaiah or the early believers ever experienced. In the end time, on top of persecution, God's wrath is being poured out full blast on the earth. All the earthquakes, tsunamis, fires, hurricanes... earthquakes so powerful that they will level mountains and make islands disappear. No one else in history will have experienced this combination of fearsome events.

Daniel 12:1

"At that time Michael shall stand up,
The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people;
And there shall be a time of trouble,
Such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time.
And at that time your people shall be delivered,
***Everyone who is found written in the book.*"**

It will be so bad – that God will spare those whom He knows are zealous and who would never deny Messiah, no matter what. In Luke 21:34-35 the Christ says don't get distracted by anything. Then...

Luke 21:36

" Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to ESCAPE all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

Rev. 12 and Rev 3:10 certainly also indicate there could be safety provided for God's faithful, fervent children.

If you do find yourself going through the Great Tribulation someday, then die for him, with honor and dignity. Remember he died for you and me. We must be willing to die for him if that's his will. It will be your greatest honor if you do – and you will dine with him in the Kingdom.

So point 1 – pray like your life and the whole world depend on you praying. Pray much more, longer, and more frequent times with God. Certainly, EVERY single day. I suspect many of us are letting that really SLIP.

2. Another awfully hard command to obey: LOVE your ENEMIES. LOVE those who hate you. Honor everyone.

It's easier to understand loving God, your children, your neighbor, or one another – but to love our enemies...? Really?

Much of this text is not in the newer translations by the way.

Matthew 5:43-46

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'

But I say to you, LOVE your enemies, *bles*s those who *curse* you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,

WHY?

45 THAT you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?"

When we do good things for bad people, or those who hate us, then we're proving we are just like our Heavenly Father.

You see, God is love. And if we are filled with God's presence, we will be love as well. Yes, even to the good or the bad, just like our Father does.

Genuinely loving, being kind to, praying for and doing good to – those attacking us is impossible without God's help. We won't be able to do this without prayer first and being filled with God's mind and spirit.

But God's Son, our King and Master says – “Prove you are a child of God by showing love even to those who try to hurt, punish and kill you, like WE –Father and I – have done.” He's saying, “Be like us – Loving, patient; still doing good things even for bad people, for we know people are people – just weak dust.”

I'm not there yet. **But who is the one hurting you most, attacking you most? LOVE that person. Forgive that person from the heart. Forgiving and loving go together. Which leaders in government do you not love? We're told to love everyone, to love our neighbors as ourselves.**

Jesus used a parable of the **Good Samaritan (Luke 10)** – a despised group of people – to illustrate that “neighbor” could be anyone and everyone – even people we would normally despise. Love them anyway. (More on the video)

This unnatural but godly love could become the basis for God being able to count us worthy of escaping the very worst times coming. He knows if people jail us, we’ll love them anyway. If they hurt or our family, we’ll love them anyway. If they bring us to court, we trust God on what to say – and love those people anyway. If they kill us, we love them anyway.

So because of all that, God knows we won’t need to be tested further by the worst time ever that’s coming – and so counts us worthy to escape.

Let’s read a couple more commands that are linked to this concept -- that I’m convinced many of us, including me, have a hard time keeping and then we’ll talk about all of them together:

Here’s another one perhaps we’re not keeping:

1 Peter 2:17

“HONOR ALL. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.”

This was NERO.... (video has stories of his cruelty, burning Christians for his parties, etc.) **The “king” was Nero** who used to pour hot pitch on Christians, alive -and burn them as lights for his garden parties, as they screamed in pain. Honor the king - - anyway. SO almost impossible to imagine – this same king Nero who had Paul beheaded. Pray for him with thanksgiving – anyway.

So whoever is “king” or president – Trump or Biden or whoever – honor them.

Paul concurred --- let’s read 1 Tim 2 carefully...

1 Timothy 2:1-2

“Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, **prayers**, intercessions, and **giving of thanks be made for ALL men, for kings and ALL who are in authority**, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.”

Loving someone does not mean we condone or love or honor what they DO. It does not. It does not mean we have to keep silent. We should speak up – but with respect and honor, and no name calling or disrespect.

So Peter tells us to honor him anyway. This honoring our leaders means **no more name calling** against them on our Facebook pages. This means

repenting of calling them “morons” or “idiots”, if any of you have done so. This means changing the way so many believers have been acting.

On Facebook I see too many believers going on rants against President Biden or in the past some called Trump various names. That’s not honoring “the king”. We’re supposed to pray for our leaders, for “all in authority” with giving of thanks. Ask God to help you obey him in this area from the heart.

This kind of love is unimaginable and unbelievable and impossible – without God’s spirit – when they’re doing things you and I feel are hurting our country. But we ask God to help our prayers and thanksgiving be genuine. And do it. **Philippians 4:13** – but we can do all things through Christ. **Luke 1:37** also says nothing will be impossible with God, so if God is in us, we can do this command.

Can you pray for President Biden with thanksgiving? You should be! We’re told to do so (1 Tim. 2:1-2). So are you going to obey? Honestly, I find this hard to do, with any leader, as they are all so human, like you and me, so full of faults like you and me. Pray and give thanks anyway. Let’s obey God on this.

GOD is the one who puts people into office, right? (Romans 13:1-3)

Again—do we just read the Bible – or do we OBEY the commands from God? This obedience will mean we could even be dying for those who hate us, who rule over us... but we love them anyway, just like Abba did, when he sent his son to die for us --- when? – while we were yet sinners and ungodly. Willing to die for them and love them. VERY hard commands, but if we’re obedient to God, we’ll obey. We’ll become more and more like God in these very areas.

Romans 5:8

“But God demonstrates **His own LOVE** toward us, in that **while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**”

It also says in verse 6 that he “died for the ungodly” (**Romans 6:6**) – *before* we repented – God’s son died for us! WE have to be like God. People full of his love. People who love others before they change, before they repent.

WE have to be so filled with that love that WE would do the same and it pushes out any resentment and hate we have.

So that’s **the example set by the Son of God** – on the cross, being killed, in excruciating pain, being reviled and taunted – “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.” (**Luke 23:34**).

And that **was Stephen's example** as he was dying while being stoned, "Lord, don't charge them with this sin".

Acts 7:60

Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "**Lord, do not charge them with this sin.**" And when he had said this, he fell asleep".

Wow. How? Because he had God's love – even for those hurting and killing him. We need to be doing this now, so we're proven by the time the worst of times starts.

Are WE, each of us, *going to obey* this command to love, pray for, do good for, and honor ALL in authority – and every human being?

It doesn't mean you condone what they say or do. It doesn't mean you have to hang out with evil doers – but, Jesus' friends and people he ate with – included people considered the worst of humanity in his day (Luke 15:1-2).

So we have our work cut out, if we're going to obey, if we're going to be considered the true elect counted worthy to escape the things about to come.

Now to point 3 – the final point. A lot was said about loving enemies – why? So we can DO this next point, #3.

3: Spread the good news. SHARE what God Most High has shared with you. OPEN UP about your greatest joy – the joy we have coming into God's presence and being part of his household. Help make disciples of all people. This was a command also.

Help people come to Christ, help them come to see the Kingdom, come to the knowledge of the truth. This is more than DOCTRINE – it's bringing people to personally meet Christ in their hearts. And you want to share it with everyone, even your enemies, whom you now love.

Christ won't come until the whole world has received the good news. In Matthew 24, Jesus gave many signs of the end of the age – wars and rumors of wars, famines, epidemics, false prophets... but we've *always* had those throughout time. **But what has NEVER happened before is this:**

Matthew 24:12-14

“And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and THEN the end will come.”

I asked Carole if the gospel has been preached throughout the whole world yet. She said, “If it had already been ... the end would be here already, right, and Christ would have come by now.” (Matthew 24:14). So the answer is no.

There are whole nations where if you own a Bible, you and your whole family could die. I believe preaching the gospel to the whole world has yet to happen. You may wish to **subscribe to “Voice of the Martyrs”** and pray for these wonderful people who don’t give up on trusting God, though it has meant torture and death to so many. That will come to America too.

Why do we pray for those not like us as 1 Timothy 2 said? Because Paul goes on to say in 1 Timothy 2:3-4 – that we do it because God would LOVE to have every single person be saved! And so we get involved in that process.

If we really understood what a great pearl of great price we’ve been offered, and what a great ETERNAL future we have as first fruits – we’d want to share this with as many people as we can if we really love people. Everyone.

I sense many of you are resisting this as you hear this. Some of you have never done this and are resisting doing it now. I pray you listen...

Jesus told his disciples what? That they were to go out to all the world and make disciples of all nations. Teach them. Disciple them.

Matthew 28:19-20

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

Jesus said share this with everyone. “To the end of the age” – that’s US, not just the original disciples. Are we doing that? Have you **discipled anyone? I know a lady who- when she came to her new sabbath-keeping church saw her friend there. She was appalled that her friend had never shared all this with her.**

If you had your roots in one of the old sabbath-keeping Church of God groups – WWCG or even other break-offs – so many of them indoctrinated us that we should NOT be trying to evangelize because, we were told:

- It's no use, they said – God has to call them first as John 6:44 says.
- You're not a preacher – that's the preacher's job, you were told.
- You don't want to cram religion down anyone's throats.
- They'll get "their opportunity" in the Millennium and then the 2nd resurrection so there's no need to try to convert them now.

So wrong. So many of us didn't share the good news with anyone, thus not obeying our Master's command to make disciples of all nations.

Do you want to be involved in the "Work of God"? What IS "the work" -- according to Jesus?

John 6:28-29

Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"

29 Jesus answered and said to them, "THIS is the work of God, *that you believe in Him whom He sent.*"

The "work of God" or "God's work" can vary at different times in history, but ultimately it is leading people to know their Savior. If we really understood that, we'd be doing everything we could to *share* the joy we feel, in appropriate ways, about being in Christ and in God's plan through him.

Here's what the early Jerusalem believers did:

Acts 8:1-4

Now Saul was consenting to his death.

At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and *they were all scattered* throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, **except the apostles.**

2 And devout men carried Stephen to his burial and made great lamentation over him. [Yes, it's OK to weep at a funeral.]

3 **As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.**

4 **Therefore those who were scattered *went everywhere preaching the word.***

Remember those who were scattered, according to the end of verse 1, **were NOT the apostles, but regular brethren**. And – v 4 – what were they doing? Preaching the word! Or if you prefer, “SHARING” their joy. They couldn’t keep it all inside.

Even though they had already lost their homes, belongings, their jobs and more – they still spoke about Jesus and their joy was contagious. Would we have? They did! Because sharing this was greater than anything else.

So many of us get so occupied with doctrine – that we miss the whole point: Yeshua, the Messiah. I teach and believe doctrine too, but *before* I speak of the sabbath, the holydays, overcoming, pork, pagan holidays – long before all that, I will share about Yeshua.

How and why could they do this?

- Because they realized they also were PRIESTS of God, a royal priesthood. Priests talk about God and his word. It’s their job. YOU are a priest too, whether you're a man or woman. See 1 Peter 2:9; Exodus 19:5-6.

Priests love to share God’s way. Priests pray with people – or offer to – if they’re sick or hurting. Priests love showing the way to God.

- They **share** all about God **because of their LOVE for people** – even enemies – and want *them* to be spirit-filled too! So LOVE causes us to not be able to contain the joy of our calling!

No more being secret disciples.

But many with COG backgrounds were forbidden even from getting together in groups of 2-3-10 unless a minister was present, even though Jesus said “where 2-3 are gathered in my name, I will be there.” (**Matthew 18:20**). So we didn’t share our joy, our excitement with neighbors, friends, people at work - because we were discouraged from doing so, in too many cases.

I’m talking more about *sharing* what we’ve been given – especially when asked, but don’t even wait to be asked... SHARE IT! See **1 Peter 3:15**.

Philip in Acts 8, just a deacon, *not* an ordained minister, went to Samaria of all places and shared the gospel, did mighty wonders, baptized a lot of people ... though he didn’t lay hands on them. (**Acts 8:5-9**).

Isaiah 55:10

“So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth;
It shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.”

Remember it was the brethren, not the ministers/apostles, scattered from Jerusalem in Acts 8:4 , who went everywhere preaching the word. And that bore fruit. Don't worry if nothing seems to happen when you share about Christ and the kingdom.

Philip baptized but did not lay hands for receiving the holy spirit as that is, according to every scripture in the Bible, a function of the ordained ministry.

So Peter and John went down later to lay hands on and to have them receive the Holy Spirit (**Acts 8:14-17**). Laying on hands to receive the Spirit – in every verse I could find – was something done by ministers, or by GOD directly as in the case of Cornelius' family in Acts 10.

If Philip the deacon could have laid on hands for God's spirit, he would have. But he didn't. He called on the Jerusalem ministers to do it. See also **Acts 19:6**. Also ministers are the ones who lay on hands for special functions and ordination – as in **Acts 6:6; Acts 13:3**.

But watch how the early church brethren – not the apostles at first – scattered the seed of the Word and it produced fruit!

Acts 11:19-21

“Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, **preaching the word** to no one but the Jews only.

20 But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, **spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus.**

21 And the hand of the Lord was with them, ***and a great number believed and turned to the Lord.***”

Hellenists, Gentiles, Greek converts – not just Jews – were being called and taught! By whom? The ministers? No – by regular brethren. So God used regular members to start calling Gentiles. This was great news, and this was after Peter's experience with Cornelius already in Acts 10. So Paul and Barnabas taught them for 1 year and Antioch became a vibrant center of new believers.

MY POINT though is – Everything we've just read happened because we are praying a lot, happened because we love people – even our enemies; so the early believers came out of the **Believer Closet – and openly preached – or shared -- Christ and the Word of God. Acts 8:4. No more being just “secret followers of Christ” or “secret disciples”.**

Would YOU have talked about Jesus if YOU had just been thrust out of your city, your country, your home – because of believing in Jesus? Would WE? They did. They openly declared their KING, their Savior. They came **out of their Christian closet** so to speak– no more **being secret disciples**. Are you a secret disciple? *Do your friends, neighbors and work associates know you to be a firm believer in Jesus the Christ?* You're either one or the other.

You know what I don't see in the early church? I don't see them standing around wondering if God had called those they were speaking to or not! They just talked to everyone they could. I don't see them saying “it's not my job. I'm not a minister”.

So command #3 – “come out of the closet of being a follower of Jesus the Messiah”. Share! Let people know – without being offensive – of course.

(In the video I used the word “preaching” and I wish I had said “sharing”. Though maybe you're not a preacher or teacher, do be willing to share.)

Did you realize you and I may have a role in hastening the coming of the Lord? Peter says our conduct could hurry Christ's coming along if we do this.

2 Peter 3:11-12

“Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, **12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God**, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?”

Our own best sermon we can “preach” is a life that is changing, becoming more and more like Christ.

Remember, what ONE thing – of several - has to happen before the end comes – one thing that has never happened before? The gospel has to be preached in all the world. You have a hand in that!

Paul took every opportunity to talk about Yeshua/Jesus – and God's kingdom – when shackled to a soldier, or whatever!

Philippians 1:12-14

“But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out **for the furtherance of the gospel**,
13 so that it has become evident to the **whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ**;
14 and **most of the BRETHREN** in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, ***are much more bold to speak the word without fear.***”

Who got bold about preaching the word of God? *It wasn't the ministers. It was "most of the brethren" (v 14)* who became confident to speak the word.

Philippians 4:22

“All the saints greet you, but especially **those who are of Caesar's household.**”

Imagine that! Some were being converted even from Caesar's household!

If we really love people, we will want them to know about the truth, about a true relationship with Christ and our love for him, and for the kingdom. We would want them to be a part of all that too. And as we share our love for God and Jesus, and God's kingdom – we'll be hastening the coming I believe.

I do share with my neighbors and friends about our Savior, about healing, about what's coming.

God's word that you're sowing won't come back empty. We read that earlier. Remember MANY will come out of the Great Tribulation (**Rev 7:8-14**); people willing to DIE for the true God. Could it be that those millions die for Christ's name because believers like you and me and others were willing to share the good news about Christ? They may not seem receptive right now, but perhaps you'll have a part in the Great Innumerable Multitude confessing Christ.

GREAT Innumerable Multitude: Some who will hear this truth, this SEED being cast their way – will be a great, great number of people who aren't responding right now, but will repent during the Great Tribulation, and openly declare the Messiah – and will die for it. They see that as such an honor. I speak of the Great Innumerable multitude. (**Read Revelation 7:8-14**)

STORY OF THE GROWTH IN a church in Canada

Pray about this. If you've never disciplined others, it might be tough at first. But pray for God's love to overflow out of you and your JOY in the Messiah to be evident. The mouth speaks whatever is overflowing from our hearts, remember.

I had a friend who used to wear a cap that said simply "John 3:16". He said his golf buddies wouldn't swear when he wore that cap. And many asked him about it, before he said a word.

If people at work wonder why you don't work on Saturdays –be clear.
Story of Mike S. Long trip back to Portland, OR from New Orleans convention. I didn't wonder if God was opening his mind... I prayed silently and we talked for 4 hours, using his Bible. Mike is now a sabbath keeper, with his wife and daughters. In fact Mike now has helped disciple dozens more.

If they wonder where you go at Feast time – don't say "vacation" or "it's our annual get-away". Tell them, "I'm going to go worship my King, Jesus the Christ" (**Zechariah 14:16**). Then if they want more details, you say more. We go to learn to fear and obey him, to rejoice before him- yes, but we go to worship.

Back in late 70's early 1980's, about 40 years ago, I was serving in NE Canada. I was just a very young man at that time. The area I was sent to was a very poor province. They had no TV broadcasts from our church, no PT Magazine newsstand program, no outreach going on – and the church for the previous 3-4 years had not grown at all.

So I started talking to them about how letting their lives being changed be the best message, the best sermon they can deliver about how Jesus changes us and how we must come to know him and our Father. And I urged them to open up about their faith, their beliefs, about the Messiah – and our church.

People **began opening up**. Maybe a better way than saying "preaching". They just opened up – about Christ, the sabbath, their beliefs, and started inviting people to church. They talked to their brothers, sisters, cousins, nephews, neighbors, people at work – everywhere.

Another man, ex-Mountie, had a family and I asked him why he came by himself, and he said his wife was not interested. I asked if he had invited her. So he prayed about it first – then asked her if she'd like to come and she jumped at the chance and said "of course." Asked why she didn't say so before, she said to him: "Because you never invited me."

A woman was attending who had 2 sisters who weren't coming. I asked her to share her beliefs. One sister was so impressed with how much her sister had changed; she was now sweeter, nicer – “I want what you do for me what you did for my sister...”. I said, “I just pointed her to Christ and doing what the Bible says...”. It wasn't long before her two sisters started attending, one with a couple kids.

One man in NE part of province – wanted his wife anointed for some health issue. She was healed. The 2nd time I went up, when I arrived, there were 18 people there wanting to hear more about the Bible and the true God.

I find it telling that in the Bible we read who whole households coming to the living God. Cornelius and his whole family were baptized (Acts 10). The jailer and his whole family were converted. Joshua said, “As for me and my house, we will serve YHVH.” God LIKES working with whole families.

So in 3 years, the attendance doubled from just 150 total to 300.

Let's wrap up... Our time is short. Let's be maximizing our time practicing a life we've been shown.

1 – Let's be praying as never before, with worship, even face on the ground from time to time... Praying we be counted worthy to escape.

Be praying God's kingdom come soon. Praying for God's mercies on our nation even. We now will spend much more time in prayer than in watching the news, or watching/reading conspiracy theories, or time on Facebook and other distractions.

Pray always. Jesus: “men ought always to pray and not lose heart”.

2 – Let's actually practice love, grace and giving honor to even our worst enemies. No name calling, no disrespectful rants on Facebook. Even in our discussions with one another.

3. Let's COME OUT of the Christian Closet. SHARE with others what God has shared with you! Help spread the good news all around the world. OPEN up about your faith.

Pray for and support those who are reaching out. And you reach out. BE HASTENING the coming of the Lord.

May our God bless you all... and may our Messiah come soon to Father's glory.