

A Voice

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John 1:19–23 (NKJV) “Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, ‘Who are you?’²⁰ He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, ‘I am not the Christ.’²¹ And they asked him, ‘What then? Are you Elijah?’ He said, ‘I am not.’ ‘Are you the Prophet?’ And he answered, ‘No.’²² Then they said to him, ‘Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?’²³ He said: ‘I am “The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Make straight the way of the LORD,’” as the prophet Isaiah said.”

Recently in prayer I heard the Lord say to my heart, “I am looking for a voice and a vessel.” God is looking for a people who will be His voice and His vessel in the earth. I want to draw our attention to what it means to be a voice for God. Our culture is obsessed with human voices. People go to extreme measures to have their voices heard. There is currently an American reality television show called “The Voice” that seeks to find the greatest singing voices. Singer Whitney Houston who recently died was known as “the voice” because of her incredible voice. In a world full of voices, people are searching to find a voice that stands out among all others.

A voice is used to communicate a message. Corporations will pay top dollar to find the perfect “voice” to advertise their product. There are many voices advertising their message to passers by. Paul said that there are many voices in our world and none of them are without meaning (1 Corinthians 14:10). Every voice seeks to communicate his or her own message. The question is, “Who will be a voice for God?”

Jesus said that John the Baptist was “a prophet” and “more than a prophet” (Matthew 11:9). A prophet is a chosen vessel to communicate God’s message in the earth. When people asked John who he was, his only reply was, “I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness.” John knew he was simply God’s messenger. John was determined to keep the focus on God’s message rather than on him, the messenger.

How different this is in the church world today! Too many distort their role as God’s messenger to make a name for themselves in ministry. Too many are on an ego trip. They believe their role of messenger is about them rather than about God’s message and the people to whom they are sent. As a result, many personality cults have formed whereby people fall in love with the messenger regardless of their message.

John never allowed his role as messenger to eclipse the message he was sent to deliver. When his ministry as God’s messenger was waning as Christ came on the scene, he did not launch a growth campaign to rebuild his ministry. John was a servant, not an opportunist. When other people drew attention to the growing popularity of Jesus’ ministry, John said, “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30). John proved to be a faithful voice for God. He did his job. It was time to let Jesus take center stage.

While not everyone will fill the office of a prophet, God has called each of us as believers to speak His message to others. Like John, God wants us to be a voice for Him. A messenger does not devise his own message. We do not pay postmen to write letters and put them in our mailboxes. No. A postman is paid to faithfully safeguard and deliver someone else’s message to us. If we are going to be a voice for God, we need to make sure we are committed to safeguarding and delivering His message rather than our own. His message is found in His word, the Bible. God has not called us to be innovative with His message. He requires us to be faithful. We are forbidden by God to add to or take away from His word. Our role is to faithfully deliver the message of God’s word to the lost. When the messenger is committed to keep the focus on the

message of God, people will hear the God of the message. People will hear “the Voice” behind the voice. God is the Voice behind our voice.

As God’s voice, we must be sure to accurately communicate God’s message. What is the message God has sent us to deliver? It is the message of the Gospel that includes the message of the Cross and of His kingdom.

The message of the Cross is the good news of God’s provision and offer of reconciliation and salvation through the death, burial, and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ. Paul was one of the most intelligent and educated men that the church has ever known. Yet he did not allow his education and training to drift him off course from God’s message. He said that he “determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.” (1 Corinthians 2:2). The more we know the more we are tempted to tell what we know. If we are going to be a true voice for God we must faithfully insure that the message of the Gospel remains our lifetime message. We must aggressively deny ourselves the unauthorized license to “write our own letters to put in people’s mailboxes.” We are called to deliver God’s message.

What about the “other” truths found in God’s word? Although the word of God addresses many things, it is very clear that *every* truth of God’s word is rooted and grounded in the message of the Cross. False doctrine begins where the Cross is forgotten. We must seek to teach and proclaim every truth of God’s word in view of the Cross. If our message drifts out from under the shadow of the Cross, then we will cease to be a voice for God no matter how sincere and profound we become. The message of the Cross is the wisdom and power of God (1 Corinthians 1:24); it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes (Romans 1:16).

Being a voice for God means being a voice for reconciliation between God and man. It involves telling the lost that Jesus paid the substitutionary price to pay for the debt of their sins. We must tell them that although the offer of salvation is free, it did not come cheap and it does not come without obligation. It means telling them that the first condition of the Gospel is “repent.” (Mark 1:15) We must tell them that God requires that they repent or turn away from their former lifestyle of sin in order to be reconciled with Him. I am convinced that many false converts have been produced simply because the message of repentance has been ignored.

We must also tell the lost that another condition of reconciliation is that they believe the Gospel. Believing the Gospel means being convinced from the heart that Jesus Christ is God’s only begotten Son, who came to this earth in human flesh, who died for our sins, rose from the dead, and is our only means of salvation (John 3:16; Romans 10:9-10).

We must tell them that being reconciled to God involves a public profession of their faith before other believers in the church. Water baptism is the New Testament ordinance given by Jesus to express our commitment and profession of faith in Him before others. We must emphasize the importance of obeying the Lord’s command to be baptized in water.

The Cross is the means of being reconciled to God and entering His kingdom. Becoming a voice for God means telling others that the Gospel includes not only being reconciled to God in salvation but also living a new life under the rule and reign of Jesus Christ every day. Living under the rule and reign of Jesus involves loving Him more than anything and anyone else, submitting to Him, obeying Him, learning from Him, making disciples of others, going to the lost on His behalf, and being His voice. God is looking for someone to be His voice. Are you willing to be a voice for God?

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