

Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? 8-29-10

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I want to greet you in Jesus' name this morning; I'm thankful to be here. This morning let's open our bibles to Acts.

*Acts 9:1 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, 2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. 3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: 4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. 6 And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. 7 And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. 8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. 9 And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.*

Now I want to turn to John 21; this is just after Jesus had given some direction to Peter.

*John 21:15 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. 16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. 19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me. 20 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? 21 Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? 22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.*

I want to bring out a couple of points out of this though we could go a lot of different directions with it. When Paul met the Lord, he fell and he said, "Lord, what would you have me do?" What is it that you want me to do with my life? What do I need to do? And then we want to look at this statement of Peter: "And what shall this man do?" Peter had clear instructions from the Lord and when he was finished he said, 'Lord, what's that man supposed to be doing?' I don't know how many times I've done it but I have done it before, I've read Ephesians 5 for an example and I have seen it happen all my life. When we read in Ephesians 5 where the bible talks about: "Man, love your wives even as Christ loves the Church; wives, submit unto your own husbands as unto the Lord." Whenever the bible talks about the wives, the husband pokes his wife and says, "Listen up!" And when the verse is read about the husband the wife pokes her husband and says, "Listen up!" I've asked congregations after reading this whole portion: "Women, what did this verse just say?" And almost without doubt they'll say, "Husbands, love your wives." Then I ask the men, "Men what did this say?" And they usually say, "Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands." People are so concerned about 'what shall this man do?' that they neglect to hear or come to the Lord and say; "Lord, what would you have me do?"

I appreciated the thought this morning in the children's lesson when Mephibosheth said to David, 'Lord I am but a dead dog.' And when the man slandered him and told David he was trying to be the king and take over; whenever David returned, David already gave this man half the land and half the positions that belonged to Mephibosheth. Mephibosheth said 'I don't care about that; I just want to be your servant.' David said in a Psalm, 'Lord, just let me be a doorkeeper in your house. Let me just be a servant.' Whenever everyone has that attitude, there's hardly any bickering or squabbles anywhere. But when someone begins to be concerned about what others are doing ('What's his job? Why isn't he doing his job the way he's supposed to?'), then problems begin to arise. That's what makes most of the problems. If we were busy about the Lord's business instead of worrying about what everyone else should be doing; if we were faithfully doing whatever we find our hands doing and doing it with all our might, if we each do that, we will have fellowship one with another. But if we go to wondering what everyone else is supposed to be doing and begin to neglect what we are to be doing - which always goes hand in hand - then what we are supposed to be doing goes neglected. How can we have unity in that?

A little story I heard recently: In a factory or office something, I don't remember just exactly where but there was a person working there and everybody gave that person the worst jobs. Whenever some bad job would come up, everybody would say, "Let's make George do that job." So George just went and did the job. Whenever it was time to clean the bathroom, they said, "Let George do

that, give it to George, I don't want to do it, give it to George!" So George just went and did it. It became so common that whenever a bad/unwanted job came up the first thought was, "Give it to George!" and George faithfully just went and did it. Then as time went on, whenever people higher up in the company (management, etc.) needed things done, they too would say, "Give it to George." As the jobs got bigger and bigger and higher and higher and the positions in the company needed someone higher to fill them, management began to say, "Give it to George." He had proven himself in that which was the least.

You may not think anybody knows what you're doing when you do the least, but if you do it long enough pretty soon everyone will know that you are dependable. But if you fight and fuss and say, "I don't want to do that, I did it last week; it's your turn. It's your turn to do that, I don't wanna do it; you do it," whenever it comes time to do something good, do you know who's going to be overlooked? The bell-acher. *Whatsoever your hand findeth to do, do it with all your might.* Forget about what you want to be. Forget about a title. You do what you are supposed to be doing and do it with all your heart. *Lord, what would You have me to do?* With just a handful of people who really got a hold of that and meant it with all their heart, Christianity turned the world upside-down. I believe Peter got a hold of this later. Maybe the Lord let him be blind for a moment so he could put this in the bible and be a lesson to us?

A lot of times we talk about [or expect] the perfect church. Many times people will come and complain and say, "Well what about them! Look at them! They are not doing what they are supposed to be doing!" Maybe the Lord left them there just to see if you'd ignore that and do what *you* need to be doing. Maybe you need to reach out and befriend that person. Maybe when you see somebody not measuring up to what you want them to be, maybe you should draw closer to them and be an example to them instead of separating yourself so far from them. The bible says in Hebrews that Christ was separate from sinners and whenever He was on the cross He was right in between sinners. Right there in the middle of them. People often say Jesus came and He hung out with sinners. That is not what happened, but He went where they were at and He humbled Himself and He spent time with them; not trying to be like them to win them but to show them a different way to try to open their eyes.

I remember the story about the blind man that came to Jesus and He spit and took some mud and put on his eyes and asked him if he saw anything and the man said, "Yes I see men as trees walking." Then Jesus did something else and asked him, "What do you see now?" The man said, "I see everything clearly, as I ought." The purpose of the Gospel, what Paul was taught when he said, "Lord what would Thou have me to do?" and then in the later part of Acts, part of his responsibility was "*to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me;*" was to open our eyes. Love covers iniquity. The bible says in another place, "Love covers a multitude of sins."

Sometimes we see men as only trees walking. God sees the soul that is worth more than all the world combined. Probably one of the most wearisome things to me in preaching and teaching and trying to just do what God has called me to do, is to just sort out people who are looking for truth; coming saying, "Lord what would You have me to do?" Almost everyone we meet comes with an attitude of: What is this man doing? What is this man supposed to be doing? What are you doing? There is so little of the attitude of a servant; what would the Lord have ME to do? We're all concerned about what everybody else is doing. "Lord what would You have me to do?"

It is so difficult sometimes, just over and over and over again, to hear how concerned people are about what everybody else is doing. And if we would just do what we are supposed to be doing, it is amazing what kind of unity there can be. It goes that way in the homes, in the church, at work, and so on. It works so much nicer when everyone wants to take care of what *they* are supposed to be doing. Young people this would be a big blessing in your life if you would just learn what I'm trying to show you this morning; your whole life will be a lot better; not even worrying about theirs or being concerned about the blessing you will be to others but *your own life will go a lot smoother.* Just be happy to be "George."

It's a real blessing to read that even Jesus was just 12 years old and was left in Jerusalem. His family left and got 3 days journey and got to searching for him and couldn't find him; they went back and found Him in the temple teaching the doctors. Just simply being faithful, teaching men about the Lord. Just teaching men about the Lord. They questioned Him and He said, 'Don't you know I'm going to be about My Father's business?' I'm going to be doing My Father's business. What a blessing! Just to be about our Father's business. We're so indoctrinated with the ideas of this denomination or that denomination or doing it this way or having our theology and all those things just so-so. We get so caught up in all those things sometimes that we just forget to be about our Father's business. That is the only purpose in our life. That's the only reason for a church. Just a group who are about their Father's business and they come and have fellowship and communion together. Anything outside of that is wrong and it's no more than a Lion's Club or some other worldly organization. If you'll be about the Father's business and I'll be about the Father's business, we'll have so much unity and fellowship that we could truly love one another and help each other.

May the Lord add His blessings.