



A NEW HUMANITY: WEEK 1

How many of you are excited for The Chosen season 3? For the first two seasons of The Chosen, our Church did a series that coincided with the show. They even released a Daily Devotional that we went through as a Church. I'm very excited for season 3, especially because they are going to be releasing the first two episodes in theaters! How many of you would go watch the premier of season 3 in theaters? Season 3 premieres on November 18, and while it doesn't perfectly coincide with the start of our new series (starting today), I believe it will be very complementary to everything we have been talking about, and will talk about in our new series. So watch The Chosen season 3 along with our weekend messages.

As I said, I am so excited because today we are kicking off a brand new series that is really a followup to the last. Last week we concluded our series, The Un-preached Gospel, where we talked about the central idea of Jesus' message, which surprisingly gets overlooked most of the time. We, as modern Christians, have made Jesus' gospel out to be a message of salvation but when you look at Jesus' life, ministry, and teachings, you see one theme emerge time and time again. Jesus came to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom.

In our last series, we defined exactly what the Bible means when it refers to God's 'Kingdom'. It isn't referring first and foremost to a people or a place but to God's reign. "Your Kingdom come, and Your will be done," means we want to see God's reign cover the earth as it is in heaven. We also learned about the mysterious nature of God's Kingdom. It isn't something that comes with a lot of fanfare and spectacle. In fact, it's very much like a mustard seed, which can be overlooked and appear seemingly insignificant. Many people will reject the Kingdom in this life but to those who discover it, it will be a priceless treasure. And the value of the Kingdom isn't just in some future promise but in the reality of knowing Jesus today. It isn't about the destination but the journey with Jesus in our everyday lives. This journey will require us to live differently than before and from those around us. God requires those in His Kingdom to be righteous. But this isn't a righteousness that comes from us, but rather, His Spirit working in us and transforming us from the inside out. In order to truly walk this out we need to count the cost and die to ourselves daily – not to work for our salvation but to work out our salvation, which we have through faith in the Son of God. This is the good news Jesus came to proclaim – the gospel of the Kingdom, and it is the good news we continue to proclaim until the day of His return.

OG DISCUSSION QUESTION: *What were the most significant things God highlighted to you in our last series?*

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Now before we move on, I want to acknowledge that this was not an easy series so congratulations for sticking with it! We didn't call it, *The Un-preached Gospel* for nothing! Most Sundays we want to hear about a Jesus who came to save us so that we can go to heaven someday. Until then we'll just live our comfortable lives since the gospel doesn't really require anything of us. But no! You guys stuck with it even though it was challenging and some of you really wrestled with it. You're still here. Turn to your neighbor and say, "I'm still here!" Turn to your other neighbor (your second choice) and say, "I'm ready for more!"

Before we dive in, can I tell you about the week I've been having? Let me tell you, being an interim senior pastor is a total trip! You guys should definitely try it sometime. Last weekend, after second service, two sisters in the Church said they had a word for Jalee and I. But this wasn't one of those, "Thus sayeth the Lord" situations ok, (we get those too and this wasn't that). They were very humble. They asked that Uncle Wayne Miyasato from the prayer team be there as well as Pastor Lori for confirmation.

They said, "While your Dad was praying over you we totally felt the Spirit and started crying." They said, "We saw your head being anointed with oil and God saying, 'I'm going to bring vision and it's going to be specific.'" What they didn't know was that just the night before I was telling Jalee how I felt like, stepping into this role, I needed vision and not just something general but specific! They said God's going to speak to you very specifically about the vision of this Church. As they're saying this, my son Judah comes walking up with his craft from Sunday school. Jalee says, "Judah, tell Daddy what you learned in Children's Ark today." And he shows me his craft. It's David kneeling down and his head being anointed with oil. He said, "We learned about anointing with oil today."

That same night that I spoke to Jalee about vision, I told her that I felt lead to sit with a number of Pastors whom I look up to and admire. These are Pastors whom I have relationship with and I wanted to ask them to pray and speak into my life. I said, "I feel the Lord leading me to sit with Clint Chinen (Inspire Church), Jared Yamaguchi (Hope Chapel Mililani), and Brandon Ahu (Metro Christian Church)." These are guys who I've done ministry with for years but they are ahead of me in ministry and a couple of them just became lead pastors within the past year so I wanted to talk to them. I hadn't reached out to any of them. I just told Jalee I felt like I needed to. Then this past Tuesday, as I'm dropping off my daughter to school, I feel a tap on my shoulder. It's Pastor Clint from Inspire Church. He says, what are you doing after this? Let's go get coffee.

Long story short, he begins to share about how he believes all of our Churches are going to rise up in our unique calling and that he sees a powerful mantle on New Hope Central Oahu for deep transformation and discipleship. Other churches may be anointed for evangelism or outreach but we have always been a transformation Church. We're not after a big Church, we're after big people. This has always been my Dad's heart and the DNA of our Church and it was so conformational to hear Pastor Clint affirm what God has been doing for over twenty years in our Church. So God is speaking very specifically about the vision He has given our

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Church. We are a people who pursue what is real and authentic. If it's not a God thing, we don't want it. Everything we do makes way for God to show up because when He encounters His people they are transformed into His likeness. This is who we have always been and who we will continue to be. And I believe God is taking us to another glory!

A New Humanity

Today we are kicking off a brand new series called, *A New Humanity*. Jesus came to proclaim that the Kingdom of God was at hand. He preached everywhere about what His Kingdom was like and how to enter in. But it is difficult for us as 21st century readers to comprehend just how radical Jesus' teachings were to those who were there. He wasn't just calling them to a new religion or a new philosophy. He was showing them a new way to be human.

Collision Course

How many of you have ever visited a country where people drove on the opposite side of the road? How many of you have ever tried to drive in one of those countries? The steering wheel is on the other side and everything is flipped! This is how radical Jesus's teaching were. They were completely flipped from what the world was used to. Try to imagine if, today in service, I said, "From this day on, all of us here are going to drive on the opposite side of the road. As soon as you leave Church today, everyone drive on the other side of the road. We belong to a new Kingdom now and this is how you are to drive." What do you think would happen as soon as service was out and we all started to drive? Collisions. This is how radical Jesus' teaching were. He told His followers, "You are no longer of this world. You live according a new reality – a new Kingdom. You are to be a new humanity." And His teachings were so upside down from the ways of this world it lead to collisions.

And Jesus warns us, "Be careful if everything is going well for you and nobody is mad at you, and life is easy because I'm on a collision course with the dark kingdoms of this world and if you're with Me, and you live like Me, expect collisions. You won't have to go looking for them but they will happen."

OG DISCUSSION QUESTION: How have you experienced a collision in this life because of your faith?

Throughout this series we are going to look at the greatest sermon ever told – the sermon on the mount. In this collection of teachings, Jesus shows us how to be truly human. A word of warning: Jesus is going to tick every one of us off. He's going to be getting into our business. He's going to confront us on areas of anger and the little courtroom we hold in our head when people offend us. Timely? Relevant? Oh, I think so. He's going to show us what it means to be truly human in the area of relationships and sexual purity. Also, when Jesus says, "Let your 'yes' be 'yes'", He's calling us out on the way we project ourselves to those around us and He's calling us back to authenticity. And finally, we'll conclude with His most radical teaching of all, the command to love our enemies. Look around. Ever since the fall, people have made an absolute mess of our world. We don't know what it means to be human. Jesus does, and He's going to show us who we were created to be.



First Collision

So Jesus came to establish God's Kingdom upon the earth. But God's Kingdom and the kingdom of this world are on a collision course. And the first major showdown between Jesus and the devil takes place at the very start of Jesus' ministry. In a lot of ways, it is this initial collision that sets the tone for the rest of Jesus' ministry. At the end of Matthew 3, we read about the baptism of Jesus.

16 "As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on Him. 17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is My Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased,"

(Matthew 3:16-17).

Before Jesus begins His ministry, He is baptized and God opens the heavens, the Spirit descends upon Jesus, and God says, "This is My Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased." Now, we don't have time to get into the fact that Jesus hasn't even begun His ministry and is already fully loved and accepted by the Father. He's not working for God's love, He's working out of God's love. Does that sound familiar? God already loves you and calls you His child before You do a thing for Him. But look at the very next verse.

"Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil,"

(Matthew 4:1).

God! I thought You said You loved Me! I thought You were pleased with Me! Why am I going through this!

Testing

Now, most of our Bibles will have the translation "to tempt" or "be tempted," but a better understanding is, this is a 'test'.

The word is **πειράζω**, *peirazō* - *to try, make trial of, test: for the purpose of ascertaining one's quality, or what one thinks, or how one will behave himself*

Let me ask you. Are tests generally fun? Not really. Tests are often challenging, they are difficult, and they're stressful. Are tests meant to teach? Not really. Tests are designed to reveal what you know. They reveal the truth of who you are.

OG DISCUSSION QUESTION: *Think of a test you have gone through recently. What do you think God was trying to produce or reveal?*

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This past week I had the distinct pleasure of meeting with Mr. Mark Sugimoto who is the head of Hanalani Schools. He said, "Mark, what I tell our teachers is that the boys and girls in our school are not the only students in the classroom. God is teaching us as well." He said, "God creates an I.E.P. for each of us." Those of you in education know that an I.E.P. is an Individual Education Plan. He said, "God has an individual education plan for every single one of us, tailored to our unique experiences and learning styles. He has learner objectives for us, He will put us in difficult situations to teach us lessons and help us to grow, and then He will assess to see if we got it." Then he said, "And do you know what happens if we don't pass the test? He has to teach us the lesson again."

So tests reveal if we have it. This test will reveal the true nature of who Jesus is.

Test One

² *"After fasting forty days and forty nights, He was hungry. ³ The tempter came to Him and said, 'If You are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread,' (Matthew 4:2-3).*

What's happening here? We read, just verses ago, that God pronounced Jesus as His Son, Whom He loves, and in Whom He is well pleased. Did we not just read that a few verses ago? Look at Satan's strategy. "If you are the Son of God..." Notice what He's doing? He's testing Jesus' identity. He's saying, "You really believe what God says about You? You think He's pleased with You? You think He loves You? Look at You! You're dying out here in the wilderness. You haven't eaten in 40 days because the Spirit lead You here. Would a good and loving God really do that to You? Would God really allow His beloved Son to suffer like this?"

How many of you can remember another time when the tempter tried to make God's children question His goodness? That's right, Genesis 3. "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" Sounds like He's holding out on you. Doesn't sound very loving to me." One of Satan's greatest tricks is to get you to question God's goodness and what He says about you. "You call yourself a Christian? Look at your life! Look at your situation. You think God loves you? You think you're His child? Would a loving God let this happen to you?" Did Adam and Eve pass the test? No. But Jesus is here to reboot humanity's story. He's showing us a new way to be human.

⁴ *"Jesus answered, 'It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God,'"* (Matthew 4:4).

The key word here is 'alone'. Man does not live on bread alone. In other words, Jesus is not denying that we need bread to survive. Food is key to our survival. But how many of us know, you can have everything you need to survive and not truly live? Jesus is saying, there is so much more to life than mere survival. We are made in the image of God, we need love and connection. We need a Word from our Creator. Jesus is saying, physical survival isn't what is most important in life. I am so much more than My circumstances. My life has so much more meaning beyond what I have or don't have. In fact, My identity in the Father is more real to Me



than my physical circumstances. His Word and what He says about Me has far greater value than what I'm going through. Do you believe that?

OG DISCUSSION QUESTION: *Was there a time in your life when you doubted God because of your circumstances? What does Jesus' response teach us about those seasons?*

Test Two

⁵ *"Then the devil took Him to the holy city and had Him stand on the highest point of the temple. ⁶ "If You are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written:*

"He will command His angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone," (Matthew 4:5-6).

"If You are the Son of God..." Satan is still attacking His identity but this time he quotes scripture to Jesus. The enemy will try to make you question God's provision and he'll also try to make you question God's presence. Maybe God was with you then but where is he now? God has abandoned you. The devil is saying, prove God is with You. Throw Yourself down to see if God shows up.

⁷ *"Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test,'" (Matthew 4:7).*

Here, Jesus is quoting Deuteronomy 6:16, which says, *"Do not put the Lord your God to the test as you did at Massah."* Let's quickly recap the story. Jesus, as a boy, came up out of Egypt (Matthew 2:13-15), He has just passed through the Jordan River and has just spent 40 days in the wilderness. Out of Egypt, passed through the Jordan, 40 days in the wilderness. Sound like another story we know? Matthew is trying to show us that where Israel failed, where Adam and Eve failed, where each of us fail, Jesus is victorious. Jesus is referring to the time when the Israelites tested God in the wilderness.

⁷ *"And he called the place Massah and Meribah because the Israelites quarreled and because they tested the Lord saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?" (Exodus 17:7)*

That's what the devil is trying to get Jesus to do – Test God by questioning if God is there or not. Do we question God's love when times get tough? Do we question God's presence when the road gets rough? This was not a question that Jesus needed answered. He knew that testing God puts Him in our service, not the other way around. He trusted that God was with Him even in the valley of the shadow of death. Listen to what Moses says to the Israelites,

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¹ *"Be careful to follow every command I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase and may enter and possess the land the Lord promised on oath to your ancestors. ² Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. ³ He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. ⁴ Your clothes did not wear out and your feet did not swell during these forty years. ⁵ Know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so the Lord your God disciplines you,"* (Deuteronomy 8:1-5).

Where Adam and Eve, and Israel, and all of humanity fell short, Jesus was victorious.

Test Three

⁸ *"Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹ "All this I will give You," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me,"* (Matthew 4:8-9).

The devil knows why Jesus has come. He is here to establish God's kingdom. He is here to redeem humanity. But the path Jesus is currently walking will lead to an even greater collision down the road – the cross. The devil is saying, "I know why You've come. But why suffer? Why die? Simply bow to me and I will give You what You've come for." He'll do this again by the way. Fast forward to the end of Jesus' ministry. Jesus' identity has been revealed to His disciples and now He begins to tell them about how He must suffer and die on the cross. And Peter rebukes Him saying, "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!" In other words, "You're the Messiah! You don't die! You conquer, You rule, You don't suffer!" And what is Jesus' response?

²³ *"Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns,"* (Matthew 16:23).

¹⁰ *"Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only,'"* (Matthew 4:10).

Conclusion

Jesus did not come to establish His Kingdom the way people had always ushered in kingdoms. He did not come as a conquering king but as a suffering servant. He came as a selfless and loving Savior. And He is inviting us into this new kingdom – a new humanity. He is inviting you to come and discover who you were created to be. And if Jesus faced these tests, so will we. Are you able to recognize the voice of the tempter when it comes? When he tempts you to test God's presence and promises, "You think God loves you? Would a loving God allow this?" Just remember Jesus. Jesus showed us how to pass the test. And when you hear the voice of the tempter whispering in your ear, just say, (and pardon my French) "Devil you get the hell out of here."