

2 Cor 5:11-21

“Christ’s Ambassador” Part 1

An ambassador is the President's highest-ranking representative to a specific nation or international organization abroad. He or she carries the President’s agenda. Other responsibilities include ensuring the security of their state citizens living in the receiving country, building and maintaining strong diplomatic and economic ties with foreign nations, and administering all the affairs of the embassy. The role of ambassador is critical to the affairs of the United States and the sitting President. As such, it is a very sought-after position. One that carries prestige and garners much respect for those who have the honor of serving in the role. We are Christ’s ambassadors and our effectiveness and faithfulness to the duties and responsibilities of that role are critical to the viability of the kingdom of God here on earth. When the message of Jesus Christ goes forward it is because we carry it forward. If it does not, it is because we have not carried it forward. With this said, I want to highlight six things regarding our role as Christ’s ambassadors. Three today and three next Sunday.

First, this role is to be taken very, very seriously. V11 “¹¹ Because we understand our fearful responsibility to the Lord, we work hard to persuade others. God knows we are sincere, and I hope you know this, too.” What we have been tasked to do is very serious work. Eternity literally hangs in the balance for hundreds maybe even thousands of souls. We must take very seriously the souls that have been assigned to the work of this ministry. Those that are being discipled and those that have yet to be discipled. Church, it is time out for us being afraid or timid

when it comes to sharing the message of the one we represent, Jesus. What kind of ambassador would we be if we did not make a concerted effort to reach everyone we possible could with the glorious message of the gospel? This is very serious work. How serious? Listen, **Matt 25:14-30** ¹⁴“Again, the Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a man going on a long trip. He called together his servants and entrusted his money to them while he was gone. ¹⁵ He gave five bags of silver to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last—dividing it in proportion to their abilities. He then left on his trip. ¹⁶“The servant who received the five bags of silver began to invest the money and earned five more. ¹⁷ The servant with two bags of silver also went to work and earned two more. ¹⁸ But the servant who received the one bag of silver dug a hole in the ground and hid the master’s money. ¹⁹“After a long time their master returned from his trip and called them to give an account of how they had used his money. ²⁰ The servant to whom he had entrusted the five bags of silver came forward with five more and said, ‘Master, you gave me five bags of silver to invest, and I have earned five more.’ ²¹“The master was full of praise. ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together!’ ²²“The servant who had received the two bags of silver came forward and said, ‘Master, you gave me two bags of silver to invest, and I have earned two more.’ ²³“The master said, ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together!’ ²⁴“Then the servant with the one bag of

silver came and said, 'Master, I knew you were a harsh man, harvesting crops you didn't plant and gathering crops you didn't cultivate. ²⁵ I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back.' ²⁶ "But the master replied, 'You wicked and lazy servant! If you knew I harvested crops I didn't plant and gathered crops I didn't cultivate, ²⁷ why didn't you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten some interest on it.' ²⁸ "Then he ordered, 'Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one with the ten bags of silver. ²⁹ To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away. ³⁰ Now throw this useless servant into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Second, as Christ's ambassadors we must be willing to risk our reputations. V13-14a ¹³ "If it seems we are crazy, it is to bring glory to God. And if we are in our right minds, it is for your benefit. ¹⁴ Either way, Christ's love controls us." Paul is saying I do whatever is necessary to get the message across. We must open ourselves up to God's Holy Spirit moving us in direction and ways that make us uncomfortable. Spreading the gospel must take precedent over everything else. It must take precedent over our concern for what people may say or believe about us. It must take precedent over our own comfort. We must be willing to risk everything, to do what is necessary to get the message across. Love will make you do some crazy things.

1 Cor 9:19-23 ¹⁹ "Even though I am a free man with no master, I have become a slave to all people to bring many to Christ. ²⁰ When I was with the Jews, I lived like a Jew to bring the

Jews to Christ. When I was with those who follow the Jewish law, I too lived under that law. Even though I am not subject to the law, I did this so I could bring to Christ those who are under the law. ²¹ When I am with the Gentiles who do not follow the Jewish law, I too live apart from that law so I can bring them to Christ. But I do not ignore the law of God; I obey the law of Christ. ²² When I am with those who are weak, I share their weakness, for I want to bring the weak to Christ. Yes, I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some. ²³ I do everything to spread the Good News and share in its blessings.

Third, as Christ's ambassador we no longer live for self. V14b-15 "Since we believe that Christ died for all, we also believe that we have all died to our old life. ¹⁵ He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them." Have you ever said or heard someone say I live for my family; I live for my children. Everything I do or have done in life is for them. Well, take that same energy and make Jesus Christ the object of that energy. This is what it means to live for him. Christ becomes the primary reason we do what we do. And the energy for such a radical commitment is Christ died and was raised for us. And because he has done this we put aside all things that would draw us away from him, from God. And the cross of Christ and all that it represents becomes our banner.

Matt 16:24 "²⁴ Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me."

Luke 14:25-27, 33 “²⁵ A large crowd was following Jesus. He turned around and said to them, ²⁶ “If you want to be my disciple, you must, by comparison, hate everyone else—your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple. ²⁷ And if you do not carry your own cross and follow me, you cannot be my disciple. ³³ So you cannot become my disciple without giving up everything you own.”

Church this role we all have (if you are a disciple) is very serious business. It requires that we be willing to risk everything and no longer live for ourselves. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.