

Monday evening 6 March 2023

Rev Erlo Stegen

**Ministers' Conference 1**

*“So send I you”*

### **SCRIPTURE READING: John 14:6**

*Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life...”*

Let us pray before we continue:

We invite You, Lord Jesus, as You have promised us that there where two or three are together, that You will be in their midst. We pray that You will be in our midst, and touch our hearts through Your holy Word and Your Holy Spirit, so that this service won't be in vain.

Amen

### **INTRODUCTION:**

No other way:

Jesus is our way and our truth and our life. There is no other way that we can create or that can be created by man, apart from this way which is Jesus Christ. In all nations worldwide there is no other way but Him, Jesus, Who brings us to God.

But the truth is that there are many ways that mankind has sought to create. In all nations and in all religions, even in Christendom where people try and create their own way. Even so, there is only one eternal way, which stands for ever, the Lord Jesus Christ.

We all who are disciples of Jesus, must be found on that way of our Lord.

This word that, *“I am the way and the truth and the life,”* I would like to bring together with another verse. Just as Jesus said that He is the truth, and that everything that came from His mouth was the truth, and that He is the life and the way, let us have a look at this word in **Matthew 28** and consider closely what Jesus says about His way. In **Acts 19:8** Paul was

preaching in Ephesus in the synagogue for 3 months. After 3 months some turned away, rose against him and spoke badly about this way.

In olden days they referred to those who belonged to Jesus as “the people of the Way.”

Let us hear what the Word of the Lord says, for some say that times are no longer the same and that things have changed and it is the modern era now – and so it is no longer that Gospel which applies to us.

Let us hear what Jesus Himself said, keeping in mind that Jesus had also said, “*I didn’t come to the world to judge and destroy it, but the word I have spoken to you will judge you on Judgement Day.*” (John 12:47-48)

### **SCRIPTURE READING: Matthew 28:16-20**

*16. Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them.*

*17. And when they saw Him, they worshiped Him, but some doubted.*

*18. Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me.*

*19. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*

*20. teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

16. Jesus was instructing His disciples. I trust that we are disciples of the Lord, as we are preaching the Gospel and are pastors. Jesus had spoken to the eleven disciples (remember that Judas was no longer with them – he had fallen from his position) and told them to go to a mountain in Galilee where He would meet them. He said this, and He said it through some women, telling them to go to the mountain in Galilee where He would meet them.

17. And indeed, when they were at that appointed place, which He had indicated, He showed Himself and revealed Himself to them.

They saw Him. Not that it was their first time. But when they saw Him as He revealed Himself to them, they bowed down and worshipped Him.

## Point 1: DOUBT

17. However, some of them doubted.

That is something painful that amongst those who worship Jesus and bow down to Him, that something bad is found in their midst. Some of the very people who bowed to the Lord, were doubting.

We could ask the question what caused them to doubt:

- Did they doubt that He was the One Who had risen from the dead? No, certainly not.
- Were they doubting that it was Jesus Himself or some spirit or ghost that appeared to them? We can say No, because Jews would not bow down to a mere man or a spirit, only to God.

Now what caused them to doubt?

### Jesus could read people's thoughts:

Often while Jesus was on earth and met with people, like the Pharisees or when Simon invited Him to a feast at his house, Jesus saw their thoughts from afar. In Simon's house there was a girl at His feet where He lay down to eat as they did in those days (as their custom was), lying on His side, His feet away from the table. Simon thought to himself, "If He was really a prophet, wouldn't He know what type of girl this is, that she is a girl of loose morals?" Jesus saw his thoughts and said, "Simon, I was invited by you, but since I have come, you haven't brought Me water to wash My hands or feet. But she doesn't stop washing My feet with her tears and wiping them with her hair. Simon, what brought this about? Simon, the one who has been forgiven much, loves much."

### Godly sorrow over sin brings much love for the Lord:

There are people who speak about love, but it means nothing – it is just on their lips, for they have not repented from their sins in deep godly sorrow and remorse. They have not repented in truth. They never had real godly sorrow, and then they speak about love – they don't know what they are talking about. That is nonsense! Love, love, love – you don't have love if you haven't cried over your sins in deep sorrow, true remorse for your sins.

This girl knew her condition and was conscious of the fact that she was a sinner and that her sins were many. But in meeting the Lord Jesus, she was forgiven, and she loved much. She was no longer criticizing like Simon, but was there washing His feet with her tears and wiping them with her hair.

So, if it says that they bowed at His feet and worshipped Him but some doubted, I have the question: What was it that they doubted?

I would like to take that which Jesus said after that, as Jesus spoke to people when He met with them, having read their thoughts and responding to those thoughts:

### 1.1 They doubted that all power / authority had been given to Him:

Perhaps they doubted what they saw, because Jesus manifested Himself to them as the Almighty, saying, *“All power on heaven and on earth and under the earth, has been given to Me.”* So He revealed Himself to them, no longer as the One hanging on the Tree with wounds in His hands, but as the One to Whom all authority had been given. But there were some who, when they saw Him as the One to Whom all power belonged, they doubted, thinking, “Can it truly, truly be that all power has been given to Him?”

We too are gathered here as Christians, we say we believe in Jesus, but maybe there is something in our hearts which causes us to say, “Is it really possible? Is it really true? It can't be.”

### 1.2 Doubting that certain people can repent:

Example: Praying for Al-Qaeda?

Recently we had some visitors from India where we had been. Some heard their prayers, hearing how they were praying for Al-Qaeda. The one who was listening, thought, “Is it really possible that those people can repent? Should one pray for such people, for that can never happen.”

You see that doubt? As if the Al-Qaeda people are the very worst people.

Maybe you have seen certain conditions here in South Africa which you have noticed that things are going wrong, and where you despair and are afraid and say, “Can God work in this place?”

### 1.3 Doubting that certain things in your own life can change:

Maybe there are things in your own life which trouble you. You try to stop with them, but you can't get rid of or overcome them, and then you think you will have to live with it always, and that you will die with this thing.

#### 1.4 Doubting about South Africa:

We are here in Africa, and some whites don't think that things will ever get right in Africa, as it is so bad. Some say, "Let us rather emigrate. Is it possible that these people can ever get converted?"

There are also some blacks who doubt that white people can truly be saved, so that even their bad temper is got rid of. They can't see that that is possible.

It is possible that a person bows down to Jesus, but there is something in the heart which doesn't please God, where you say, "No, this can never happen. This just can't happen. I have no money, there is no way of going there – it won't come right" – but you worship Him, you call Him, "Lord Jesus," but there is doubt which God notices and sees in your heart.

### **Point 2: BUT ALL POWER HAS BEEN GIVEN TO JESUS**

18. You see the condition of the world today, where some people wonder where this will end, but Jesus in revealing Himself to His disciples as the Almighty, saying, "*All power has been given to Me*" – there is no power in this world which is above His, for His Name is above every other name. All authority is in submission to His authority. Nothing is too difficult for the Lord Jesus – no nation under the sun, no government is above our Lord Jesus Christ, He the Almighty.

### **Point 3: THE REASON TO GO**

19. Jesus said, "*All power has been given to Me – therefore go into all the nations...*"

He didn't say in this word, "Because I died on the Cross, therefore go," or any other reason, but He said, "Go" for only one reason, namely, "*because all power has been given to Me.*"

It is good that we preachers, we who worship Jesus, understand that nothing is beyond His reach, is above Him, Him to Whom all power has been given. Whether it is your husband, wife, children, neighbour – Jesus says, "*All power has been given to Me.*"

### **Point 4: GO AND TEACH THEM TO KEEP:**

19. "*Therefore go and teach them...*"

But He didn't say, "Teach them that they would have head knowledge," but "Go and teach

them to keep.”

He doesn't say to us, “Go and teach people not to steal,” but they steal. But maybe you too are troubled by that. He said, “Teach them to KEEP.”

#### Task of a preacher:

Great is our task, pastors! Woe to us if we don't fulfil our task when Jesus returns, and we appear before the Judgement Throne and it is found that we have not fulfilled our commission for which we have been sent to earth.

Great is the task of being a preacher.

#### Task of a preacher's wife:

You too, pastor's wife, not that you just enjoy the position and are served and respected by other people. No, you too have been commissioned to teach your children, the neighbours' children and other children – not to know, but to keep.

#### **Teach them to KEEP that which He has commanded us:**

##### Teach them to KEEP:

It is one thing to teach a person something so that he knows it, but it is something else that he actually keeps it. Jesus has not commissioned us to just go and open nice schools to teach children, but rather to teach them to keep that which He has commanded us. If we don't succeed in that, we have not yet done the work for which He has sent us, to which He has called us. We have not done the job which He had given us.

If I would ask you, pastor, how many people you have taught to keep – not just that you taught him that he shouldn't commit adultery, but that you actually taught him not to commit adultery.

#### Your children:

It is said that the children of pastors are troublesome. You can't say that you have done your job with your children if you have taught them that they shouldn't smoke or take drugs. You would have finished your job when that person and that child have learnt to keep what you have taught them. (It is not enough to teach regulations, for example that the children know it is wrong to take drugs, but that they actually live that what you have taught them.)

The power of Jesus is sufficient to enable us to teach people to keep. Jesus didn't say in the first place, "Go to India, China, there far away," but start in Jerusalem. So start at home. Teach your children to keep what our Lord commands. Then your neighbours, and then it goes further and further to the uttermost parts of the earth, to all the nations of the world. Till it reaches those nations whose language you do not know, but that you teach them to keep that which Jesus commanded you.

Jesus spoke to His disciples, as some doubted. In our doubt we might think, "Can this really happen? My child's head is so hard. That person is so impossible – a person fighting against the truth to such an extent. This person is too hardened." No, nothing is too difficult for Him, for all power has been given to Him.

**We who preach the Gospel must be found in that power of the Lord Jesus.** Just think if all of us would be such people, people who have Jesus Who is Omnipotent, just think what effect that would be on the world.

Example: Hundred men who fear nothing but sin ...

I think of John Wesley who said, "Give me one hundred men who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and they alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the Kingdom of heaven upon earth."

Just a hundred people – that is what that man said, that man who shook England. He said, "Just give me a hundred." And just imagine if we are a thousand people here from about 30 different nations, if we would be in His power and walk in His authority, wouldn't satan fear and tremble and realize that his end is near?

But I have a question: **Can Jesus reveal His power through you? Or is there something in your life which stops and hinders His power and His working?**

Don't say, "I can't, I am still a child." God can manifest His power even through a child.

Example: Age of repentance

I read something these days in the book called "Leadership", page 55. I felt like I just couldn't believe this. It doesn't sound like the truth to me, but it makes you think.

19 out of every 20 who become Christians, do so before they reach the age of 24.

After 25, it is only 1 in 10,000 that will find the Lord.

After 35, only 1 in 40,000.

After 45, only 1 in 200,000.

It continues, and when it gets to 60 and 70, the statistics just get worse.

When I read it, I thought that I wish this was just lies. Look at how young people are today, and yet they are the nation that needs the Gospel.

But Jesus never fails, and even if a person is 100 years old, He can reach him.

### **Point 5: THEREFORE, GO!**

The whole world is full of heathen, people who don't know God, countless people. But Jesus commissions you and says, "*Go to them and teach them to keep everything which I taught you.*"

#### **Example: Message of freedom didn't arrive**

A certain person called Dr George Sweeting wrote a book and said:

There was a man called John Currier who had been found guilty of murder and sentenced to life in prison, but in 1968 Currier's sentence was terminated and he could go out on parole. He worked on a farm, and life on that farm was hard and very difficult. He was enslaved there, and there was no promise or hope for the future.

Then the owner died, and then there was legislation that this Mr Currier could be released from prison and go home.

After ten years a state parole officer learned about Currier's plight and that he was still working ten years in slavery after he had been given parole. A letter bearing the good news had been sent to him, but that letter never arrived. John never saw the letter, nor was he told anything about it. So John kept doing what he was doing in his slavery.

Sweeting, the man who wrote the book, concluded that story by asking, "If you are in a very difficult situation and a message was sent to you that you have been released, it would be the most important message you have ever received in your life. Would it matter to you if someone sent you an important message, and year

after year the urgent message was never delivered?"

This officer found him and told him that his sentence had been terminated. He was a free man. He had continued working, not knowing that he had been released and set free.

There are countless millions on earth, in difficulty, heading for hell, enslaved – but there is nobody bringing them the message that they can be set free by Jesus Christ, by His power.

Example: Missionary came too late

Here is a story that happened in India:

Close to the coast of India is a big river, the Ganges, a holy river to the Indians. A missionary saw a girl walking into the water of the river carrying a 6 month old baby – first ankle deep, then knee deep, deeper and deeper. The baby was fast asleep. She went in deeper and deeper, till the water was gently lapping at the sleeping baby's feet.

He stood observing, wondering what this girl was doing there. Then in one quick determined movement she threw this baby to his watery death – into that water of the Ganges River which flows to the coast.

She then got out the river, knelt on the river shore, and wept and wept bitterly, beating her breast.

The missionary went to her, knelt next to her and asked her, "What is it, girl, that troubles you so much that you are so heartbroken?"

She said, "Preacher, I have terrible problems at home, and my sins weigh so heavy upon my shoulders and heart. And so I thought I would take my very best, that which is most precious to me, my 6 months old baby, and throw it out into this holy river, the Ganges, as penance."

The missionary's heart broke as well and he felt the pain of it as this girl wept bitterly about the death of her baby.

As she was crying, he then told her the wonderful story of Jesus, "Let me tell you the Good News about Jesus: Jesus loves you. He died for you on the Cross. He is the One Who can forgive you your sins about which you are crying. He can solve your problems at home."

She looked at him for a long time, and then said, "I have never heard that before." Then she spoke through her tears: "WHY COULDN'T YOU HAVE COME 30 MINUTES EARLIER? IF YOU WOULD HAVE COME EARLIER, MY CHILD WOULDN'T HAVE DIED."

Year by year millions die and go to hell, carrying their burden of sin, weighed down by problems, but there is no one to help them. THE MISSIONARY CAME, BUT HE CAME TOO LATE. WHAT ABOUT THOSE COUNTLESS OF MILLIONS, BILLIONS OF PEOPLE WHO ARE DYING, GOING INTO AN ETERNAL DAMNATION, where there is eternal fire, never to be quenched, but they lack a person who can tell them about the Lord Jesus.

Wouldn't that make us guilty before God, if we have no concern for those who are dying and perishing, being destroyed? We don't tell them the truth. We are not found in the authority of God, where we give ourselves to Him and pray and say, "Lord, work in Your power."

I am sad, I have hardly said anything and the time is up.

But I say to you, preacher (male and female), if people are being destroyed and you are not helping them, how will you stand before God?

You might say you don't have money to go to India. Jesus didn't say you need to go there, but start where you are.

Have you surrendered yourself utterly to the Lord Jesus, even your body, saying, "Take me, Lord. Work through me with Your power."

#### Example: Dr Alexander Duff

A certain preacher went from Scotland to India to preach, Doctor Duff. When he was old, and having lived a difficult life in India, he got sick and had to return to Scotland to be helped medically.

Back home his Scottish missionary sending Presbyterian church asked him to speak at their convention. After he had preached, he said, "My friends, here is the world going into destruction. Who will surrender completely to the Lord, saying, 'Lord, take my life, take my body,' and give himself totally to the Lord." Not one person stirred, young or old.

When he invited them saying, "Is there no one who would like to give himself to the Lord Jesus, the Omnipotent, so that He could work through you on earth," they saw him faint and fall.

There was a doctor in the congregation who rushed to his aid, and the moderator of the church also ran to his side and they laid him down. When the doctor had examined him, they said it seemed as if he had a stroke or a heart attack.

After a short time he regained consciousness. He asked, "Doctor, and you, Moderator, where am I?"

They said, "You were preaching in the pulpit and then you fainted."

He asked, "Please take me and return me to the pulpit."

The doctor said, "Certainly not. Don't even try to move."

He said, "I ask you, return me to the pulpit."

The doctor said, "It is too dangerous."

Doctor Duff replied, "Even if it is dangerous, please take me back."

The doctor took him on one side, the moderator on the other side, and they brought him back to the pulpit. He said, "Brothers and sisters, in times gone by when Queen Victoria was still on the throne, there was a war in India, and the queen of England spoke to the nation, asking who of the Englishmen would volunteer as soldiers to go to India. Many, many enrolled and volunteered to go there for the queen's sake – above what they had needed."

Then he continued, "When Queen Victoria requested of her nation who would go to India to fight for Britain, many, many said Yes. But if the Lord Jesus seeks volunteers, calling people saying, '*Go to all the nations,*' is not one found who is willing to do the work Jesus has commissioned him? Even though Jesus has commanded us to go to all the nations, is there no one among you older and younger people?" Doctor Duff wept and said, "I am disappointed that Jesus means nothing to you. I ask you to take me back to India, back to the Ganges River where the sun is blazing down and it is so hot. Since I have had this stroke, you can lie me there next to the river," because that is where so many of the Indians come to seek purification, thinking the water will purify and cleanse them. He said, "I am determined to go back to India and lie next to the river, burnt by the sun, and then tell the Indians who pass by, 'Jesus loves you. Jesus died for you. You can come to

Jesus with your burden of sin.”

Then God touched people. Almost thirty people got up and said, “We surrender fully to Jesus, that His will be done and we go there where He wants us to go.”

They say that from those thirty, there were heroes of the Kingdom of heaven, who spread the Gospel all over the earth, because they heard Jesus saying, “*Whom shall I send? Go into all the world.*”

## **CONCLUSION:**

Tell me, friends, what are you busy with? What are you doing? Just working for money?

What did you understand when the Lord of lords, Jesus, said, “*Go into all the world, and teach the nations to keep everything which I have taught you.*”

This is the Way of Jesus; this is His Truth and His Life. If you are not in this, you don’t have real Life.

Shall we bow and pray:

### **Prayer:**

Lord Jesus, You Who are Lord of lords. You left heaven to come to earth. You became the Son of man, and died for us on the Cross, and rose from the dead and ascended to heaven. You have been given all power in heaven and on earth.

For that reason, You send us to go out to all the nations, into all the world, to make disciples and teach people to keep all that You have taught us.

Help us, not just to be hearers, but to be doers, those who are obedient.

Amen

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