

The Mind of Christ - Lesson 35

October 30, 2019

We're in the next section, and this section is recorded in all four gospels.

Matthew 4:12

When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he withdrew to Galilee.

Mark 1:14

After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God.

Luke 3:19-20

But when John rebuked Herod the tetrarch because of his marriage to Herodias, his brother's wife, and all the other evil things he had done,²⁰ Herod added this to them all: He locked John up in prison. It is surprising how that is said, "... of all the wicked things Herod had done, he added this, also, to them all. Then he locked John up in prison."

Luke 4:14

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside.

John 4:1-4

Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John—² although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples.³ So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee. Now he *had* to go through Samaria.

I have a note in mine, back in Luke that one of the verses that is kind of out of order in the text. A. T. Robertson puts verse 14 in this chronological sequence. Essentially, we have this transition period from John the baptist declining, being arrested, put in prison, Jesus' ministry picking up, and Jesus begins to be more popular. Then He migrates back to Galilee. That's what this section is about.

Jesus' withdrawal from Judea to Galilee was brought about by two changes: First of all was John's arrest; and secondly, because Jesus became more popular. These are the two things that seemed to prompt this decision to go back to Galilee.

These two reasons go hand-in-hand. As the influence of the Kingdom of God increased, sin is being exposed. It's interesting because Jesus had just talked about "everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed" in **John 3:20**. We actually see that in real time in the movement of Jesus ... in what is going on.

We have Herod's sin being exposed, and many times, even in the Old Testament, the sins of the leaders were just simply an illustration of the sins of all the people. They say, "As the King goes, so goes the rest of the people." So when *their* sins are exposed, it has a way of exposing everybody's sin to one degree or another.

From the top down, more and more people (especially among the rank and the file) are being changed to give allegiance to God. As more people are making this decision to come back to God ... this is kind of a deadly combination. This threatens the ‘power base’ of kings, of religions, of leaders and their individual power bases! The religious leaders had their power base and the kings had their power base. They weren’t all necessarily the same as the religious leaders didn’t depend on Rome that much, however the kings did depend on Rome. But ***all of that is being threatened by Jesus*** and His increase in popularity. We are seeing the ramping up of the opposition to stop the movement which is advancing the Kingdom of God. So with John in prison, Jesus retreats to the hill country of Galilee.

I ask the question, “What is Jesus thinking?” What is Jesus thinking as he goes, because there has to be thought behind every decision. So I ask the question: Jesus is making a change here. Why is it, at this time, that He is going back to Galilee? All of this is in play.

Mark gives us two facts. Mark says that John the baptist was ‘taken into custody’ and that ‘Jesus came to Galilee preaching the gospel of God’. These are two facts at this period of time.

The word ‘*custody*’ here means ‘delivered’. In this case, John had no choice. He was ‘delivered over’. Later, Jesus would be ‘handed over’, but His was voluntary. No one **took** His life, He handed it over. Jesus kept on preaching the gospel just in another location. He didn’t stop what He was doing; He just changed locations.

Later on in Jesus’ ministry, He’s not nearly as willing to retreat, or strategically pull back for a while, and go somewhere else. At a certain point in His ministry, He could care less; He’s going to Jerusalem. He’s going right into the heat of the battle. We will see later Jesus’ profound reaction, especially at John’s death. He did not stop His mission to preach the gospel; He just moved to a different location. Again, what might I do if one of my best friends, a man that I considered to be the greatest person on the face of the earth, had been locked up in a prison? What might I do, particularly ***if*** I were Jesus and had the power to get him out? But Jesus didn’t go...we have no indication that He went to visit John or to do anything about that. He simply went to Galilee and kept on preaching.

Matthew says the same thing but leaving out what Jesus ***did*** in Galilee. Jesus ***departed***...to go backwards...to withdraw. There is no inherent negative connotation to this retreat. Jesus is not in “retreat”; but it’s more of a tactical move at this point.

Luke gives more detail. He reveals who was behind the ‘taking into custody’; it’s Herod the Tetrarch.

What brought the ire of Herod was John’s denunciation of his adulterous relationship with his brother’s wife, Herodias...including other wicked things he had done; the ***last*** one being locking up John in prison. All of this is testimony of Jesus’ words in **John 3:19-20**; ***men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil***. Evil does not accept reproof well. Evil does not like to be ***reproved***; to test; to convict; to detect something; to lay bare; to expose; to rebuke; to discipline or to chastise. Evil doesn’t like to be called into question. We see that as a type of personification when we find that expression in each one of us.

Each of us has to own whatever evil is within us. Usually, the evil that is within us doesn't like to be chastised. It doesn't like to be called. Usually, our first reaction is to someone pointing out something is to find convenient ways to *not* accept it, to fight back or kick back on it. And I think that that's a discipline in a Christian's life, when people train themselves, or allow the Holy Spirit to train them, to be accepting of rebuke. That's not one we talk about. I don't know if I've ever preached a sermon on, "How do you learn to accept rebuke graciously and thankfully?" Have you ever been glad someone loved you enough to rebuke you? You have to overcome a lot inside of you to graciously accept the rebuke and be thankful someone did that.

This word is used in **John 3:20** about deeds being exposed. It is used in **Matthew 18:15**, "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you." Private rebuke is the first step if you see a brother sinning against you. You go and rebuke him privately. **Hebrews 12:5** says,

"My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline,
and do not lose heart when he rebukes you,
⁶ **because the Lord disciplines the one he loves,**
and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son."

I had a conversation with someone today and they want me to have a little session for a family issue about how two children can go and confront a parent about a systemic attitude they have that is muddying the waters in the family. They're trying to find out how can they do that without things blowing up and turning into something ugly?

Two weeks ago there were three people who needed to come together and work some things out. So I encouraged them to do that. The three of them did and the reports back from them were "refreshing". That's what we talked about Sunday... they felt refreshed. They had worked it out, had come to an understanding, they repented where they needed to repent, they were forgiven and offered forgiveness where needed, and it all turned out wonderfully. And it has opened a door for an even greater work for God among those three people.

There is a lot of work to be done in the Kingdom of God to keep relationships healthy. But in this case, with Herod and his wife Herodias, they were not accepting the reproof very well.

Hebrews 12:6 says that it's an act of love. **2 Timothy 3:16** talks about the function of Scripture, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, **rebuking, correcting** and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ *so that* the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

Herod, as will be noted later, has taken his brother's wife, creating a political and a moral scandal in Israel. John the baptist takes it on, and is locked up. This only added to Herod's sin. Did Jesus approve of John doing this? Do you think Jesus approved of John *taking on Herod and creating this situation* that Jesus had to respond to by going to Galilee? **Matthew 11** is going to answer that question.

Luke 4:14 makes two significant facts about Jesus' return to Galilee. The first fact was that Jesus came "*in the power of the spirit.*" The second fact was that "*news about Jesus spread*" throughout all the surrounding regions. One of the things I have come to the conclusion of, and I am only a little ways into my study of the Holy Spirit, so I am making my way in the Old Testament; but one of the things I have come to the conclusion of, (and this may not seem to be like one of those 'aha' moments), but it's gelling; it is **where the Spirit of God is... something happens**. There is always something that happens where the Spirit of God is; and it's a wide range of things that can happen...and I am seeing happen where the Spirit of God is. The Spirit of God comes upon someone; or the Spirit of God is *in* someone, or *fills* someone, or in this case where Jesus goes to Galilee in the *power of the Spirit*, something happens.

Just think of Pentecost. When the spirit came down; something happened. Here, in a very parallel situation, Jesus goes in the power of the Spirit and then the good news about Jesus spreads throughout the surrounding region. He begins to reach more and more people.

So John the baptist told us that the Father gave Jesus the Spirit without measure. We studied that in **John 3:34**. And Jesus will soon read **Isaiah 61** which declares that the Spirit of God is upon me. The Spirit of God, we know, in some way, in a *demonstrative* way, came upon Jesus at His baptism. I dare say that He had the Spirit **before** He was baptized. I don't think he was devoid of the Spirit of God before He was baptized. I think it came upon Him in an anointing, demonstrative way *at that point*; but I don't believe that that means He didn't have the Spirit *before* that point. Just think, "How was He conceived in the first place?" It was by the power of the Holy Spirit. I mean, it's in His DNA. It's who He is. So, when He reads **Isaiah 61** and **Luke 4**, he says *the Spirit of God is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor*, I don't think He is telling them that it's coming on Him right then. I think he's telling them that it's already on Him; He's the anointed One; He is the Christ; He was the Christ at the time He was born. The word **Christ** means "anointed One".

So His goings and comings were not motivated and powered by mere human choice but had Divine purpose and power. The word "Power" is from the word *dunamas*, often associated with the Spirit. And that's one of the reasons why when you see the Spirit, you see something happen...because the Spirit is associated with power. He was coming home 'different' than when He had left.

To what extent was Jesus aware of the influence of the Spirit in His life? Now I ask the question, and I would tend to think after studying all this, that Jesus was intimately aware of every turn of the Spirit's influence in His life. But I ask the question because the 'counter' to it is, "how aware am I in the influence of the Spirit in my life?" And if I can honestly say, "I am not always aware ... I wouldn't like to give a 'percentage' to it; but if I'm not always aware of the Spirit, it helps me to understand how different I am than Jesus is because I think He was intimately, constantly, aware of the Spirits' influence in His life.

In **Luke 4:37** the King James Version says that Jesus "fame" spread. The Nestles text, a Greek text of the New Testament says that a 'rumor' went forth. The word is "Echos" (ηχος). So, did his fame spread, or did a rumor go forth? It's not always the same thing. **Fame** sounds positive, but **rumor** doesn't sound as positive.

With John the baptist in jail and Jesus coming back to Galilee, surely the populace was ablaze with talk. They were talking. His fame spread; a rumor went forth. In marketplaces, in Synagogues, people huddled and gave their ‘take’ on the current events. And remember, the current events of Jesus’ coming back to Galilee were intimately bound up in their king ***being accused of an incestuous relationship***; an adulterous relationship, and locking up one of the most popular prophets or preachers of the time.

I mean, I don’t know what you would compare that to...Maybe if Billy Graham had been locked up for telling one of the presidents that he shouldn’t be living like that...and the President had him locked up in a prison for doing it ... do you think that would cause a little bit of ***talk*** in the land? Here is someone nearly as popular or becoming as popular as John coming back into Galilee to preach too! **I** think there would be a whole lot of headlines coming out of that story.

Was there going to be a political and moral showdown? Would Jesus get involved with Herod? Would the Romans be drawn in? Surely the Zealots were stirred up by the news. Now think about how the different parts of the population respond to these same set of events. If you are a Zealot and you are trying to overthrow the Roman government, you’re already pretty hot-tempered and want to get into something, you see a political opportunity here. Remember, ***the Herods were in bed with the Romans***. They are one of the reasons that the people are under the rule of the Romans...***the Romans are paying off the Herods***. From Herod the Great and now his sons, the Zealots could see a real opportunity here to rouse up the people and say, “Look what these folks are doing. They are taking one of your prophets!”

This word is used in **Matthew 9:26** “pheme” or (φημη) 5345 fame or rumor. This was when Jesus raised the Synagogue official’s daughter from death. It says “***His fame spread throughout the region***” after he raised this girl from the dead. Jesus was becoming ***more famous***, but *not necessarily more well-known*. That’s the contrast here. People can become more ***famous*** without becoming more well-known. But Jesus wasn’t trying to become more ***famous***. He wanted people to **know** Him in the same way He knew them. That was the essence of eternal life; to **know** Him. So Jesus wasn’t getting all excited by fame; by popularity, because that didn’t mean anything. Fame wasn’t important because it didn’t lead to the end He came to establish; for them to ***know*** Him. His goal was not fame in a popular sense but intimacy with each person. There’s a huge difference between the two.

So, how did this worldly recognition being front-page news affect Jesus’ thinking? Even though He knew He didn’t come to become famous, in the way that many think of fame; but when you begin to become famous, how does it affect you? Well, we had experience with that in this country. The experience is ‘watch people who get famous’. Usually when they get famous, they get rich. And watch how it often changes them...what it does to them. It goes to their heads.

So here’s Jesus. He’s getting famous. He may not be getting rich yet but He is getting famous. So, how did that affect His thinking? As a man, here was another pressure on Him to respond to public interests. In our day and age, people would want to interview you; get your autograph, they’d want to get close to you and touch you, and praise can lead to pride.

Did Jesus like being famous? Did he dislike it? I don't know. He'll ask in **Matthew 16:13** when He is alone with His apostles, what are people saying about me? Why did He ask that question? Was He asking for some kind of 'review' like where you might try to find out how famous you really are? "What are people saying about me?" ¹³ **When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"** There are two ways you can take that.

But Jesus' focus here is not pride but wanting to know if the people were "getting it". Are the people getting it? I know I'm becoming famous; I know they're listening to Me; I know the crowds are getting bigger ... but are they "**getting it**"?

Right now, we're in a political season, and I would imagine every candidate out there who has a rally, or a town-hall meeting, or whatever, would be very disappointed if there were only two people who showed up. They're looking for the big crowds. They're looking for the energy. But even with all that; do the people **get the message** that they're trying to get across? Do they actually understand it? Do they actually "buy it"? Could they answer questions about, "What is this person's plan for this or this person's plan for that?" Or are they just getting caught up in the frenzy of the moment?

I have been to two of these events. I did go there. Marco Rubio came to Bradenton once. It was a small "whistle-stop" kind of deal and I got to see him. And Dennis Randall from 43rd said a prayer during that gathering. There were probably 50 or 60 people there. One of the candidates in 2016 came to town and I saw her here. I guess I "didn't get it" because I don't remember who she was.

So the outside pressures on people can be great. Jesus had to deal with it as we do. He was no politician or celebrity. He was a man on a mission. The most serious ever undertaking to rescue people from the coming wrath. But you have to try to put yourself in his shoes. I mean, I am not going to be any kind of rock star when I go to the Dominican Republic, for sure. But when you have, even 400 people in the crowd and you're one of the keynote speakers, and they're listening very intently to understand what you're talking about, and they might even be ready to have a public argument or debate with you when you're finished, which often happens in Haitian culture, there is some kind of pressure because you know there is a lot at stake here. Not only at stake, but a lot of these people are looking at you thinking, "Who's this guy from the United States coming here to teach us; and are we going to come away with anything of value"? You have to really make sure you understand what you are there for and what you are trying to get across.

Sue: Talking about Jesus and His fame, and the pressure of people, I can remember the stories about him and the Apostles getting in the boat to get away; and even the crowds running ahead of him; there must have been a lot of times when He couldn't get a good night's sleep or eat, but one thing He always did that impressed me so much was He '**took**' time; He '**made**' time to get away for prayer and to be with His Father. He knew that was where His strength came from

Rod: That's right. And that's a good point. In all of that, He knew what and where His real purpose was.

Macy: I think of Him with compassion because I've been in situations where I know that sometimes, when you are in swarms of people, sometimes you can't even breathe. It can be mind-boggling ... just get me out of here.

Rod: You can feel smothered by all of that and what is in people's minds ... who knows?

Let's look at **John 4:1-4**.

“Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John—² although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples.³ So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.”

This also shows the transition back to Galilee. Jesus rise in population was accompanied by baptisms. In **John 4:1** NASB says, “Therefore when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John² (although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were),³ He left Judea and went away again into Galilee.” Now think about verse 1; that statement. Therefore, when *the Lord knew* that the Pharisees had **heard** that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John... Think about that...*therefore the Lord knew*. The question comes to mind, is “**the Lord**” here, the **Father**? I think it could grammatically be correct to say it was Jesus, but, to me it's strange, to say here that “the Lord” refers to Jesus. It seems more natural for me, to say **the Father, the Lord, or God** knew that the Pharisees *heard* that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (although He, Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were).

The back story that could be is, the Father, up here, is looking over all of the situations; the twists and the turns, and He understands the implications of John being in prison, the rising popularity of Jesus. Does He call the play from up there? It's like many times, on the field, the quarterback is not calling the play; it's being called from the booth. He has a little ear-piece in his ear; they're doing the signs on the side-line for the plays. This, to me, offers the possibility that there are points in time that God, the Father, may be 'sending into play' if you will, where He says to Jesus, “Time to go to Galilee. You need to get out of this region, get out of Judea and go back to Galilee”

Now, again, I just throw that out as a possibility because it depends, a little bit in this text, on how you take the word “**Lord**”. Is it the Father or is it the Son? The word “Lord” is the word kurios, (κυριος) can mean Jesus, God, Lord, master or king; one with supreme authority. It's a term of respect and authority applied to human and divine; the context determines the meaning. I can't be sure, but I don't think Jesus has been referred to as Lord up to this point, and I'm taking all of this in chronological sequence. So chronologically speaking, I don't think Jesus has been referred to as Lord up to this point. So it would be unusual for the **apostle John** to interject the word “Lord” at this point since it's not a term that He has been referred to yet.

It appears that the word Lord refers to the Father. This would show the attention God the Father is giving to Jesus' ministry. The Father notices the Pharisees had taken note of Jesus' baptizing more disciples than John, but why would they care, and why would God keep up such detail? Were the Pharisees having discussions even at that point, that God overheard and knew that they were ‘up to something’ ... they're cooking up some mischief against Jesus so let's get Him out of here. Let's send Him up to Galilee for a little while.

God knew what was in man. He knows that the Pharisees have much to lose if the people follow Jesus. And He knows that they will be one of the sources of opposition. They cared about Jesus' activities because Jesus was becoming popular and gaining influence. They were probably happy when John the baptist was neutralized and in prison, but now here comes one even more popular than John, right in his footsteps. It had to have had the Pharisees thinking, "I thought we were going to get a break here. I thought people would start coming back and listening to **us**. It's like going over here to this church in the wilderness, and once the preacher in the church in the wilderness got arrested, we thought that they'd come back to "our" church. But now we have another guy and he's as popular, **or more**, than John the baptist in the wilderness and everybody's going to **His** church now. So we have to get rid of **him** so all of them will come back to our church. (That may be a little over-simplification of all this, but that's the way men think.) The text does not specifically say, but it's implied, that the father communicated with the Son and told Him to "get out of Dodge" so to speak.

Sue: It's like when God told Joseph to go to Egypt ...

Rod: That right. This is not uncharacteristic of God to intervene and say, "Okay, you need to do this". I have that in my notes about Joseph going down to Egypt.

Sandy: Maybe it's because of the idea of three-in-one, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I've always had the impression that they were of one mind, and each one knows what the other is thinking at all times.

Rod: Well, that's an interesting question and I am not going to be able to unravel that but there is at least one case in point where Jesus was asked when He was coming back again and He didn't know – only the Father knows; the Son doesn't know. How all that might possibly work...I don't know. My inclination is when Jesus emptied Himself of His divinity and came down, that He limited Himself in different ways. **Phil. 2:6-8** ⁶ Who, being in very nature[a] God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷ rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature[b] of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

Just becoming a man limited Him in some ways. Here is where that thinking leads. If we say that they were one 'in thought', why wouldn't they be one in every other aspect of divinity like being omnipresent – being everywhere at once? But Jesus limited Himself to being in one place at a time, at least until after His resurrection. He was walking through doors then, but ... So, it's not unreasonable to think that if Jesus would limit himself to not being omnipresent, He could limit Himself to not be omniscient and not knowing everything because He's establishing a dependency on His Father; that He's trying to show to us part of that dependency is seeking the Father's will. Again, all the dynamics of all that; when you get down into the weeds of all that and how it works, we don't have a clue.

Remember, also, Jesus had the encounter in the Temple with the merchandisers. He also had Nicodemas, a Pharisee, come to Him, and He had told His mother that His time had not yet come. There are a lot of indicators of different things that are happening around here.

So, a storm was building, and Jesus needed more time to appoint and train His apostles and to fulfill all that was written about Him.

John, the Apostle, also wrote (not John the baptist talking here like we've seen recently), but John the Apostle also notes that Jesus did not actually **do** the baptizing Himself. Well, why not? John the baptist has said that Jesus would be the one to baptize with the Spirit and with fire. But why would Jesus not baptize people in water?

I have no clear explanation but it seems deliberate. Later, Paul seemed happy that he had not personally baptized the many of the Corinthians. **1 Corinthians 1:14-16** says, “I thank God that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵ so no one can say that you were baptized in my name. ¹⁶ (Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I don't remember if I baptized anyone else.). In this case, it was partially because he did not want them to have an over-attachment to **Him** because he was the one who actually baptized them. Paul felt that it was irrelevant “who” baptized them. They shouldn't give him extra allegiance just because he put them under the water.

Could Jesus have had a similar thought in the sense that, “I don't want you to attach yourself to me just because I am the one physically baptizing you in water.” That baptism is important, but the **future** baptism that I am going to baptize you with is the one that is **more important** – **that's** the baptism of the Holy Spirit. That one will be much more important than me baptizing you in water. Again, I'm just trying to get into the mind of Christ.

Perhaps Jesus wanted to distinguish between a **cult-like following** which is **fleshly**, and a **heart-felt repentance** that is based on a **faith-centered following**. Certainly, people could get caught up in the revival excitement of the moment and make shallow commitments ... and they did. We see that in the ministry of people where they do make **shallow** commitments and they don't follow through.

But in John, it **also** says that He **had** to pass through Samaria, not because it was the only route, but perhaps the Father had arranged an appointment. And again, that gives some credence to the idea of God arranging appointments. It was traditional for the Jews to **not** pass through Samaria to get to Galilee; they would go around it. But, it says, He **had** to pass through Samaria. Well, why did He have to, unless He was being directed by the Father to do so, or He had in his own mind an **advance notice** of this special appointment with the woman at the well that comes later in this chapter?

There are little indicators here that there are events that are being orchestrated. I think Peter alludes to that in **Acts 2:22-24**.

“Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. ²³ This man was handed over to you by **God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge**; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. ²⁴ But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.”

Peter says this was all because of the predetermined plan of God.

Sue: It seems to me like Jesus would have *had* to know about the woman coming to the well; otherwise He wouldn't have been sitting right there by the well and sent his apostles off to make provisions for food... He had to know.

Rod: Well, there certainly was, and if he didn't know, there were a lot of coincidences and a lot of things all came together for that talk to happen or God was arranging providentially for it.

Macy: I'm thinking of your statement about Jesus having to limit Himself of some things. We are limited, I think, of how God orchestrates in our lives. Often times we don't realize what He is doing and we have that general thought, "I need to go 'here or there' but we don't always know what's to come. We just kind of have a direction. I wonder if it wasn't more like that. Maybe it wasn't that he had to, but He trusted the Father enough to think 'this is where You want me to go and I'll figure it out when I get there.

Rod: Remember, He is *being led* by the Spirit of God, so all of that is included in this. And one of the things I'm picking up on in my study of the Holy Spirit is that there were a lot of people who the Holy Spirit came upon who were *not necessarily good folks* but they were *used* by God in different ways. It's interesting that one of those was Balaam Num. 22-24. The Spirit of God was on Balaam who is condemned harshly in Scripture in Revelation. Balaam was *not* a good guy. We see that with different people in the Bible that God used, the Spirit of God came upon them, and they had lots of issues, but God allowed that Spirit to drive them to do certain things in His scheme of things that worked for the good of all of mankind to eventually bring Jesus into the world through all these events.

So, here is Jesus, obviously very in touch with the Spirit and being aware of 'how do you know?' I almost think that some people are more naturally intuitive when it comes to 'life in general'. Others are like you have to hit them over the head with a 2 by 4 before they can figure out what is going on. But other people are very intuitive about people, or this or that. I think that Jesus was very intuitive; I think He was very 'plugged into' the Holy Spirit and the guiding and leading of the Holy Spirit.

We don't know how it came together that He said, "I'm going this route" to Galilee; I have to go through Samaria. And I wonder if the Apostles had a conversation with Him saying, "Really? Do we have to go through Samaria?" And that *may* have been a teachable moment for Jesus to say, "Yes. We do." How He explained it to them, I don't have a clue. But it *could* have been a teachable moment to say, "Yes, we have to go through there. You will understand this when we're finished." And they didn't know that they were going to be spending two or three days in Samaria. They *thought* they were just passing through. But they ended up going to Sychar and spending a few days there teaching people.

Anne: It's good that Jesus sent them off, because they would have interfered with this encounter – the way they would shoo away the kids; they definitely would have shooed her away.

Rod: The original encounter ... they may have. Yes. That might not have worked out too well if they were controlling His agenda.

Sue: Isn't it true, like in the Old Testament, we decide who's worthy of the Bible, of being disciplined? I think that is such a grave mistake on all our hearts. It's just like when Jonah didn't think Nineveh was worthy enough to hear the message of God.

Rod: Yes. That's why the "Strategically Focused Outreach" has to be inclusive. Anything that is strategic needs some 'inside intel' that we don't necessarily have. The Holy Spirit has the inside intel on people, and He knows who's searching. He knows where people's hearts are. He has the ability to connect people who know the truth with people who need to hear the truth. So, if we don't believe that, and think we're totally on our own and the pressure is on us to win the person to Christ, we *are* totally on our own.

In a book I read a long time ago, "The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church" by Roland Allen. It was a book that changed my life because I had never really thought about the role of the Spirit in the expansion of the kingdom. He wrote several books but this was His main book. The whole premise was that *we* go in to foreign places, *we* set up elaborate systems of missions and denominations with rules and regulations, and *we* are going to this and that and we wonder why we win so few people to the gospel. He says we are not comfortable in just spontaneous expansion of the kingdom.

Now that doesn't mean that we don't plan and we don't do certain things to plan, but we need to be light on our feet on the ground. So, when we went to the Dominican Republic, actually when we were on our way to Haiti last year I said, "We need to go into the Dominican Republic". And they made some preparations, we got there, and I thought it was a total disaster. We taught some people, but I didn't see success. I thought, "We need more going on than this". I felt I had just spent 5 or 6 days in the Dominican Republic and I this is all we are going to do. Little did I know that **God** was going to use *that* experience to turn this year's experience into *ten times more* people that we are going to be able to meet with and talk to than we had last time. So, instead of *forty* or *fifty* people, we're going to meet with four *hundred* people this time. So I just need to get out of the way here and let Him **do** all that.

Carole: I remember when you came back and not saying much about it. You said it was good to be there and then were shocked when week after week you were telling us about more and more people being baptised from that one visit.

Rod: Yes, exactly. And it has exploded since then.

Sue: Doesn't it say that "my word will not come back to me void"? (**Isaiah 55:11**)

Rod: Well, that's true, but sometimes it takes a while for it to come back and you don't see the evidence of what you have done or the fruit of your labor. But this should end up being an exciting time. It's putting more pressure on us because we have to raise more money to do this, because it's growing so fast but God will supply our needs.