What Business Are We In?

Matt. 16:21-23

I. Introduction.

A. Eastern Airlines Flight 401 was bound for Florida December 29, 1972, and had more than 200 people on board.

1. During the flight a small light (front wheel landing gear) was out. The flight engineer saw it and began asking questions. Since everything else was okay, he decided it must be the bulb was burned out. So he set about to replace it.

2. Having some trouble he asked the co-pilot to help him. The pilot cancelled the landing, rose the plane to 2000 feet, and began circling around until they resolved the problem. The two working together were unable to get the bulb changed, so the pilot put the plane in auto-pilot and came to help. Each of them had their own idea about how to fix the problem and an anxious discussion grew in their midst. They just had to fix that bulb.

3. Meanwhile, the plane was descending. The focus of the crew was on an inexpensive bulb, while a very expensive plane and 200 people crashed into the ground destroying all.

B. Peter, too, had this problem of being off-track.

1. Matt. 16:21-23, "*From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.*"

2. Wouldn't you hate to be called "Satan" by the Son of God?

3. But Peter's focus was selfish and misplaced.

a) As Jesus was explaining what was to be done to Him and the role of His disciples, Peter had trouble accepting this plan.

b) Peter, in essence, said, "No, Lord! This cannot be. You're to be our King; this cannot happen to you!."

c) That is why Jesus rebuked him; because Peter was not accepting what the Lord had said.

C. 2 Tim. 2:4, "*No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.*"

1. When the army of an enemy is approaching the faithful soldiers must be ready to fight. A soldier cannot say, "I've got something else I have to do, I've got a crop to harvest"

2. His job at that time is to fight to save his country. If everyone had that attitude there would be no crops to harvest or anyone to harvest if there was.

D. What Business Are We In?

1. We have our Marching Orders from Christ: This is our business!

a) Matt. 28:19-20, "*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*"

1) Jesus said: Go; teach all nations; and baptize them. This is His commandment to us. We cannot change His orders to our own satisfaction.

b) Mark 16:15-16, "*And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*"

1) Many people today react just like Peter did in the beginning. They say, "We won't baptize; that is a work of man, not God". Jesus commanded baptism so it is not a work of man, but a work of God.

II. Reasons to evangelize.

A. To Follow Christ's Example.

1. Matt. 3:13-17, "*Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for <u>thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.</u> Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*"

2. Luke 19:10, "*Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?*"

   a) Jesus had the power to control His own destiny.

3. John 3:16-17, "*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*"

4. 1 Tim. 1:15, "*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.*"

5. John 20:21, "*Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.*"

   a) Jesus sent us into the world to save others.

6. Jesus dealt with people personally.

   a) Nicodemus. John 3:3, "*... Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*"

      1) Unless people are baptized they are not in the Kingdom of God.

   b) Woman at the Well. John 4:25-26, "*The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.*"

      1) This woman knew of the prophecies in the Old Testament of the coming of the Messiah; Jesus declared that He is the Messiah. We should listen to Him.

7. God had only one son and He was a preacher and teacher.

III. Why evangelize? To Meet the World's Need.

A. There are some people who think everyone is going to be saved.

1. Is this true? Is this what the Lord said?

2. Matt. 7:13-14, "*Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*"

B. Hell is not a popular subject in America today, but we cannot escape its reality — ignoring it will not make it go away!

1. Jesus spoke often of hell and warned people of the danger of going there.

2. Someone may suggest it is not loving to speak of hell, but love warns of dangers — what is unloving is to know of a danger and remain silent about it!

3. Rev. 20:15, "*And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*"

C. Jesus wept over Jerusalem, because the people would not accept him.

1. Matt. 23:37-38, "*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.*"

D. Paul agonized over Athens.

1. Acts 17:16, "*Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.*"

E. People without God are harassed, helpless, downcast and distressed. They are without hope and utterly lost in sin.

F. Sin ravages our country, city and our homes. It tears apart homes and lives and makes life utterly ugly. <u>The blood of Jesus and the gospel is our only solution!</u>

1. Acts 2:40, "*And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.*"

2. Gal. 1:4, "*Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:*"

G. We should never hope for anyone to have some tragedy in life.

1. Loss of a limb, eye.
2. Loss of a job.
3. Loss of a house.
4. Loss of a loved one.

H. We grieve and expend energy helping others in these conditions, but spending an eternity in hell is worse than all these things.

IV. To Fulfill Our Inner Compulsions.

A. Many people don't like others preaching to them of the gospel of Christ. They say, "Just leave me alone!"

B. When the Sanhedrin commanded the apostles to quit preaching the name of Jesus, they said:

1. Acts 4:19-20, "*But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.*"

2. It's like a woman who received an engagement ring; it is hard to be silent.

3. It's like a young couple expecting a baby; it is hard to be silent.

4. The gospel is good news that we should want to share.

C. 2 Cor. 5:14-15, "*For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.*"

1. We don't want to die an eternal death; and we shouldn't want to let others fall into that same state; we should <u>want</u> to save them.

D. Rom. 1:14-16, "*I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For <u>I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ:</u> for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*"

1. The Apostle Paul said:
   a) I am under obligation.
   b) I am eager.
   c) I am not ashamed.

E. Acts 20:24, "*But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to <u>testify the gospel of the grace of God.</u>*"

1. People say they only preach the grace of God that Jesus died for them; that this is God's great gift for them. That is true, but that is not all of God's grace to man. The word of God, called the Bible, is also a gift and part of His grace. It is His instruction to us how to obtain our salvation through obedience to His word. The Bible is to gospel of His grace.

V. We are to evangelize to make Disciples.

A. God not only wants us to teach and reach out, He wants disciples.

1. Disciples are people who follow Jesus and are interested in training others to do the same.

2. Are you a disciple? A mature, responsible, reproducing follower!

3. If you had a friend who wanted to become a Christian, could you teach him?

B. 2 Tim. 2:2, "*And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*"

VI. Conclusion.

A. Can Jesus count on you?

B. Will the generations coming on know the truth? Will our children follow Jesus?

C. Will our neighbors know we love the Lord and serve Him?

D. Will you have time for the Lord?

E. Will you go to heaven when you die?

F. Hear, Faith, Repentance, Confession, Baptism.