



# THE COMPASS

RED HILL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Sermon Series: “Living in the Two Kingdoms”  
(Pentecost 2020)

This Week’s Theme and Scriptural Focus: “Because Jesus Lives—We Live for Jesus!”

This Week’s Mark(s) of Discipleship: **Faithfulness** (I trust in God’s faithfulness, seeking to honor God in words and deeds, particularly through establishing relationships where I can be relied upon).

☐ **Day #1—Monday, October 19<sup>th</sup>. Read: Matthew 10.34-39; Texts Below. —Encounter:** God’s Word and your life—What do you Hear and/or See?

In **John 20**, Jesus said, “*As the Father has sent Me, I am sending you.*” In Acts 20, we read: “*The most important thing is that I complete my mission, the work that the Lord Jesus gave me to tell people the good news about God’s grace.*” Jesus was sent by the Father on a mission to save us.

The Bible says that God made you to love you; you are not an accident. Once you know that God has a purpose for your life, that He wants to keep you with Him forever in eternity, and that He sent Jesus to die for you, this changes everything! And, God expects us to pass His love on—in word and deed. There’s a word for this. It’s the word “*evangelism*” (evangelism). Many people are not comfortable with this word. Many think an *evangelist* is a guy on TV with big hair saying, “Send me your money.” But that’s not what evangelism is at all. Evangelism is just the Greek word for “good news.” That’s what it means. As Christians in our culture, we are to share the good news. We are to pass on to others what we have heard and experienced.

**Acts 1:8:** Jesus tells His disciples (us) that “*You will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and to the ends of the earth.*” Circle the word “witnesses.” What’s a witness? Have you ever been in a courtroom or seen court T.V.? Then you have seen a witness! Notice that Jesus did not say, “You are My defense attorney.” You don’t have to defend God. Jesus did not say, “You are my prosecuting attorney.” Or, “You have to force people to accept Me.” No, Jesus says “I want you to be My witness.” What does a witness do? Witnesses say, “This is what I saw... This is what happened to me...” It’s sharing with others what God has done in your life.

**Consider/Reflect:** “The radical nature of following Jesus may result in conflict and divisions within families. Jesus wants His disciples to strive for eternal life [*not earning eternal life, rather, living a life that reflects an eternal perspective*], even if this means sacrificing earthly benefits. In all honesty, we must confess that we often fail to put Jesus first in our lives, that we do not take up His cross and follow Him. What we fail to do, Jesus did for us. He took up His cross and paid the penalty for the sins of the world. In Him, we have peace. Prayer: “Thank You, Jesus, for bearing my cross on Calvary and making me Your highest priority. Amen.”<sup>1</sup>

☐ **Day #2--Tuesday, October 20<sup>th</sup>. Read: Matthew 10.26-33; Texts Below. —Examine:** The Text and its Context. Some Christians have a difficult time speaking up for Jesus in public. This was true even in Jesus’ day. In John 7.13 we read that, “*Yet for fear of the Jews no one spoke openly of him.*” Do *we* have the courage to speak publicly about Jesus favorably? Even Saint Paul sometimes needed encouragement to be courageous in what he believed. Acts 18 says this: “*One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: ‘Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent.’*” If ever there was a message that we need to hear in today’s culture, it would be God saying to us: “Don’t be afraid; keep on speaking; do not be silent.”

To stand courageously for what you believe, for your convictions, for the truth, when it may not be “politically correct,” you have to know first what the world believes and then know what God says is the truth. What we’re

<sup>1</sup> *Lutheran Study Bible* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2009). [Italics, Pastor Seth].

talking about here is called a *worldview*. Your worldview are the beliefs that you base your life on, the beliefs that you hold that inform your decisions. It is the lens by which you view life. Everybody has a worldview. Christianity is a worldview. The Bible describes this distinctive worldview. We will unpack this later, but for now we will sum up the Biblical worldview this way: God has created all that exists; humankind rebelled against God; God entered human history to redeem and reconcile with humankind, culminating in Jesus Christ. We exist for Him and His glory.

Here is the issue: We are profoundly influenced by the alternative worldviews and the worldviews of others. Most of our cultural worldview we didn't even pick up consciously. Much of our worldview we have picked up not from God's Word, but from the world. We have been influenced by our parents' worldview, our peers' worldview, and our friends' worldview. Every time you read a newspaper article there's a worldview in that article. Today, we will look at two common worldviews that conflict with God's worldview. Tomorrow, we will look at two more.

- **Materialism.**

Materialism is the worldview that what matters most is money or things. Life is all about the acquisition of things. And the way you measure your success is by how much wealth you've got. Jesus has a very opposite opinion. He presents a very different worldview. In Luke chapter 12, Jesus says this: "*A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.*"

In materialism, economics trumps everything else. It determines how I vote. It determines how I act. It determines how I think. Economics determines everything else in my life if I'm a materialist. Because money and "things" matters most.

- **Hedonism.**

Hedonism is the philosophy that whatever *feels good* is good. In materialism, money/things are God. In hedonism, pleasure is God. The whole goal of life is to be happy. The whole goal of life is to have fun, feel good, and be comfortable. Hedonism can be anything. It could involve food. It could involve sex. It could involve sports. It could involve a hobby, alcohol, and/or drugs.

An important point: many of the things we are talking about could be good or bad. Money is not bad; things (depending on what they are) are not bad; feeling good is not bad. The problem is when our money, things, or feelings are the *goal* of life and take the place of God!

God did not put you on this earth for your number one goal to be pleasure for pleasures sake. Pleasure/happiness is a byproduct of living to the glory of God, and fulfilling the purpose you were created for. It's the benefit of a life lived doing the right things. Holiness creates happiness. For example:

**Hebrews 11:25:** "*Moses chose to suffer with God's people rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time.*"

**Galatians 6:8:** "*Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful desires [that's hedonism] will harvest the consequences of decay and death. But those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit.*"

**Consider/Reflect:** If you have watched the news or read the newspaper today, where do you see materialism and/or hedonism in our world?

☐ **Day #3--Wednesday, October 21<sup>st</sup>. Read: Texts Below. —Examine:** The Text and its Context.

Today we consider two more elements of our cultural worldview:

- **Individualism.**

Individualism says what I want comes first. Materialism says money is god; Hedonism says happiness is god; Individualism says, "I'm god." The attitude of this worldview is "this is a dog-eat-dog world. I've got to look out for number one!" It's a "me first" mentality.

Here's the problem and issue; God didn't create you to live for you.

**Proverbs 18:1:** *“It is selfish and stupid to think only of yourself.”* God sent Jesus Christ not just to save us from our sins but also to model how to live.

**Philippians 2:** *“Each of you should look not only to your own interests, [that’s counter culture] but also to the interests of others. [Most people aren’t doing that.] Your attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ.”*

- **Collectivism. (Also called Socialism).**

Socialism is an anti-Christian worldview that says government is god. It basically says government should control everything. The government should be in charge of everything. There’s nothing wrong with government. Government is a good thing. In fact, it was invented by God. God created three institutions: He created the institution of the family, He created the institution of the church, and He created the institution of government. However, what tends to happen is that people who don’t know God make government god. Why? Because they don’t have any higher authority to look to meet their needs so they want the government to meet all their needs. Again, there’s nothing wrong with politics. It’s just not the savior. If you think any politician is going to be your savior, you’re going to be deeply disappointed. No matter who it is.

**Consider/Reflect:** Jesus explained the limited role of government. Matthew 22:21 Jesus said *“Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, but give to God what is God’s.”*

□ **Day #4--Thursday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>. Read: Genesis 1.27-28; Deuteronomy 10.12; John 3.16; Revelation 21.1-8. —Explore:** The background to this text(s).

What is the Biblical worldview? The Bible! I know this sounds simplistic, but there is a lot to this truth. The texts for today sum up God’s design and plan for you and this world. The theologian Albert Mohler describes the God-centered worldview:

God is himself the author of all truth. Christianity is not a set of doctrines in the sense that a mechanic operates with a set of tools. Instead, Christianity is a comprehensive worldview and way of life that grows out of Christian reflection on the Bible and the unfolding plan of God revealed in the unity of the Scriptures. A God-centered worldview brings every issue, question, and cultural concern into submission to all that the Bible reveals and frames all understanding within the ultimate purpose of bringing greater glory to God...The recovery of the Christian mind and the development of a comprehensive Christian worldview will require the deepest theological reflection, the most consecrated application of scholarship, the most sensitive commitment to compassion, and the courage to face all questions without fear...The Christian worldview contributes an understanding of the universe and all it contains that points us far beyond mere materialism and frees us from the intellectual imprisonment of naturalism. Christians understand that the world—including the material world—is dignified by the very fact that God has created it. At the same time, we understand that we are to be stewards of this creation and are not to worship what God has made. We understand that every single human being is made in the image of God and that God is the Lord of life at every stage of human development. We honor the sanctity of human life because we worship the Creator. From the Bible, we draw the essential insight that God takes delight in the ethnic and racial diversity of his human creatures, and so must we.

**Consider/Reflect:** Does your worldview and the Biblical worldview conflict? If so, what needs to change?

□ **Day #5—Friday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Read: Matthew 10.26-33; Texts Below. —Explore:** The Background to this Text. We must engage our culture with the Biblical worldview—standing up for the truth of God’s truth. How can we do this? Expanding on the points from Sunday’s sermon, consider two things:

- Learn the truth.

That’s the first step in building a strong, Biblical worldview, a view of reality. You must learn the truth. Jesus concluded His most famous sermon, the Sermon on the Mount, with a story. He said two guys go out and they build houses. One builds his house on the shaky foundation of sand. The other builds his house on the solid foundation of a rock—solid rock. When the storms come along, the winds blow, the waves rise, and everything crashes in, Jesus said

the one who built his house on the shaky foundation of sand, collapsed. But the one who built his house on the solid foundation of rock, it stood strong!

Jesus makes the point: You're going to either build your life on what Jesus says, on the "solid rock" of God's truth, or you're going to build your life on "the sinking sand" of popular opinion. What other people say. If you build it on sand, it's going to crumble when times get tough. But if you build your life on rock solid truth that never changes, you will stand up under the most difficult circumstances. Again, we will either listen to the WORLD or the WORD

- Concern yourself with God's agenda.

In Matthew 6.33, Jesus said: "*But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*" You can't have two primary concerns. If my number one priority is to make a lot of money, then this is what I will seek and serve. Jesus said you cannot serve both God and money. He didn't say you should not. You can't have two number ones in your life. So, what's going to be your first priority? God says put Me first. Put God number one in your life and you'll see amazing things. God says "I'll take care of all the rest."

Standing Courageously for the truth is not easy. But you will be rewarded for all of eternity for doing the right thing!

Hebrews 10:35: "*Do not lose your courage, because it brings with it a great reward.*" (TEV)

**Consider/Reflect:** How are you learning the truth of God's Word? What is the number one priority in your life? Pray about this today.

☐ **Day #6-Saturday, October 24<sup>th</sup>.** **Read: Matthew 11.28-30; Romans 5.8.** —**Embrace:** God and His guiding you through His Word.

Remember the old "Uncle Sam" poster with Uncle Sam pointing and saying, "Uncle Sam wants you!" Guess what? God wants you! Read that again three times and each time accentuate one of the words: GOD wants me. God WANTS me. God wants ME! Do you believe that? At times in life, it's hard to believe that anyone wants us. Yet this is the message of Jesus: "I want you." You are not beyond Jesus' love, healing, or power. The beginning of any spiritual transformation or discipleship is ACCEPTING this truth. God desires you for His family today. This is the reality of grace. Martin Luther said it this way:

Now we have received from God nothing but love and favor, for Christ has pledged and given us his righteousness and everything else he has; he has poured out upon us all his treasures, which no man can measure and no angel can understand or fathom, for God is a glowing furnace of love, reaching even from the earth to the heavens.<sup>2</sup>

God loves you and wants to transform you. It's because of God's love for you that he wants to see you be renewed, changed, and healed. Christian author and writer, Max Lucado, reminds us of this when he writes, "God accepts us as we are. But He refuses to leave us that way." Now that is something to celebrate!

**Consider/Reflect:** God wants me for His family. Prayer: *God, thank you that you want me. You want to change me and set me free. I turn to you and ask for your love, joy, and presence to begin to change my heart and mind so that I can live for you and be a part of Your family, the church. Thanks for this day! Amen.*

### Questions of This Week's Text:

What does this text teach me about God?

What does this text teach me about myself?

What does this text lead me to do?

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Timothy Lull, Ed. *Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989).