



THE
GOSPEL
INVITATION

WHY PUBLICLY INVITING
PEOPLE TO RECEIVE CHRIST
STILL MATTERS

O. S. HAWKINS
MATT QUEEN

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

THOMAS NELSON

The Gospel Invitation

© 2023 Dr. O. S. Hawkins and Matt Queen

Published in Nashville, Tennessee, by Thomas Nelson. Thomas Nelson is a registered trademark of HarperCollins Christian Publishing, Inc.

Thomas Nelson titles may be purchased in bulk for educational, business, fundraising, or sales promotional use. For information, please e-mail SpecialMarkets@ThomasNelson.com.

ISBN 978-0-310-14193-8 (softcover)

ISBN 978-0-310-14214-0 (audiobook)

ISBN 978-0-310-14194-5 (ebook)

Names: Hawkins, O. S., author. | Queen, Matt, author.

Title: The gospel invitation : why publicly inviting people to receive Christ still matters / O. S. Hawkins, Matt Queen.

Description: Nashville : Thomas Nelson, 2023.

Identifiers: LCCN 2022052926 (print) | LCCN 2022052927 (ebook) | ISBN 9780310141938 (paperback) | ISBN 9780310141945 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Evangelistic invitations. | Evangelistic work.

Classification: LCC BV3793 .H385 2023 (print) | LCC BV3793 (ebook) | DDC 269/2--dc23/eng/20230126

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2022052926>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2022052927>

Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®). Copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked NASB are taken from the New American Standard Bible®.

Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission (www.Lockman.org).

Scripture quotations marked NKJV are taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Any internet addresses, phone numbers, or company or product information printed in this book are offered as a resource and are not intended in any way to be or to imply an endorsement by Thomas Nelson, nor does Thomas Nelson vouch for the existence, content, or services of these sites, phone numbers, companies, or products beyond the life of this book.

All rights reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, scanning, or other—except for brief quotations in critical reviews or articles, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Cover design: Tammy Johnson

Cover art: © Marylia / Shutterstock

Interior design: Sara Colley

Printed in the United States of America

23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 /TRM/ 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

EXERCISE ONE: A GUIDE TO PRAY FOR UNBELIEVERS WHO WILL HEAR YOUR SERMON

In order to make prayerful preparations for unbelievers who will hear the next sermon you will preach, do the following:

- a. List the names of unbelievers that you expect will come and hear you preach your sermon. The people you identify in order to compose this list of names might include the following: unregenerate church members; regularly attending unbelieving guests; the unbelieving children and students of church members; those whom you and your congregants have personally evangelized over the last week; people you and your congregants have personally invited to attend the church; and unsaved family members and friends who may attend a baptism, a holiday celebration (e.g., Easter and Christmas), or a special recognition/performance of members of your church (e.g., graduation acknowledgment, Vacation Bible School celebration, children’s or student’s musical, etc.).

- b. Write the name of each unbeliever after the specific strongholds mentioned earlier—*pride, presumption, and/or procrastination*—that the Word and the Spirit must overcome in them so that they may repent and believe.

PRIDE: _____

PRESUMPTION: _____

PROCRASTINATION: _____

- c. List the names of believers in your church and assign each of them one of the unbelievers' names. Ask them to pray for the salvation of the person they were assigned throughout the week and during the service. Use the material from chapter 3 to instruct them how to pray for the destruction of their assigned unbeliever's stronghold, so that he or she may repent and believe in Christ.

- d. List the names of other believers in your church whom you can mobilize to pray during the service(s) in which you preach. Ask them to pray for the salvation of unbelievers not named in this exercise, those who will also hear the gospel and be asked to respond in repentance and faith.

EXERCISE TWO: EXAMPLES OF HOW TO CRAFT THE INVITATION OF YOUR SERMON

Utilize the four steps outlined in chapter 3 when preparing how you will articulate your sermon's exhortation. Example texts (e.g., Ps 1:1–6; Mark 10:17–22; Eph 2:1–9) have been selected to illustrate how to apply these four steps when crafting your invitation:

Step One: Classify which of the three categorical genres—*Poem*, *Story*, or *Letter*—best describes the passage of Scripture you will preach.

Example Texts

Psalm 1:1–6

Poem Genre

Mark 10:17–22

Story Genre

Ephesians 2:1–9

Letter Genre

Step Two: Identify specific ways or cues that the textual idea of the Scripture passage you will preach relates to the gospel.

Poem Genre Example (Psalm 1:1–6)

THE GOSPEL PROVIDES:	OUR SIN AND WICKEDNESS:
blessing (v. 1)	prevents blessing (v. 4a)
stability (v. 3)	produces instability (v. 5)
prosperous living (v. 3d)	results in perishing (v. 6b)

Story Genre Example (Mark 10:17–22)

In reply to the young man, Jesus answers the most important question that could ever be asked: “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” (v. 17).

Letter Genre Example (Ephesians 2:1–9)

GRACE THROUGH FAITH:	OUR TRESPASSES, TRANSGRESSIONS, AND SINS:
makes us alive (v. 5b)	make us dead (vv. 1, 5a)
saves us (vv. 5c, 8)	enslave us (v. 2)
raises us (vv. 6–7)	debase us (v. 3)

Step Three: Using the gospel cues identified in *Step Two*, locate and articulate the spiritual needs and/or spiritual problems present in the passage of Scripture you will preach, which only the gospel can solve.

Poem Genre Example (Psalm 1:1–6)

The spiritual needs and/or spiritual problems in this passage that relate to unbelievers include:

- a. needing God’s blessing (v. 1);
- b. needing freedom from sinful company (v. 1);
- c. needing stability (vv. 3–4);
- d. needing a prosperous life—that is, abundant life/life to the full (v. 3d);
- e. needing access to God and the righteous (v. 5); and
- f. needing to be rescued from perishing (v. 6b).

Story Genre Example (Mark 10:17–22)

The spiritual needs and/or spiritual problems in this passage that relate to unbelievers include:

- a. a desire for eternal life (v. 17d);
- b. a failure to confess Jesus as God (vv. 17c–18, 20a);
- c. a commitment to moral living without revering God (vv. 19–20b); and
- d. a sinful fidelity to possessions over God (vv. 21–22).

Letter Genre Example (Ephesians 2:1–9)

The spiritual needs and/or spiritual problems in this passage that relate to unbelievers include:

- a. walking in the path of disobedience and in the company of the disobedient (vv. 2–3);
- b. indulging in the desires of the flesh and the mind (v. 3b);
- c. being condemned under the wrath of God (v. 3c);
- d. working for one’s own salvation (v. 9); and
- e. needing God’s mercy, great love, and kindness (vv. 4, 7).

Step Four: Contextualize the spiritual needs and/or spiritual problems identified in *Step Three* into *profile descriptions* of unbelievers who will hear you preach this passage of Scripture. Then compose specific *gospel exhortations* by which you or a decision encourager can instruct them how to become baptized, obedient disciples of Jesus Christ. Utilize as many key words as you can from the passage in your articulation of the *profile description* and the *gospel exhortation*.

Poem Genre Example (Psalm 1:1–6)

- a. **PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF THOSE IN NEED OF GOD’S BLESSING:** Some of you here today stand in need of God’s blessing. You feel as if God is against you at every turn. Your life is restless and without peace.

GOSPEL EXHORTATION: At this very moment God’s blessing and His peace are available to you, if you will only repent of your sins and place your faith in Jesus Christ. I invite you to receive Him now!

- b. **PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF THOSE NEEDING TO BREAK AWAY FROM SINFUL COMPANY:** Some of you have been running with the wrong crowd. They have brought you nothing but pain and problems; you keep giving, and they just keep taking. You have been longing for a relationship with someone who will build you up instead of tearing you down.

GOSPEL EXHORTATION: I would like to introduce you to Someone who will never let you down. He will neither

leave you nor forsake you. He is Someone who needs nothing from you, but you need everything from Him. His name is Jesus, and you must receive Him by faith today!

- c. **PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF THOSE WHO NEED STABILITY:** Someone here today may feel as if his or her life is falling apart. Every time you try and stand on your own two feet, you get knocked right back down; you just cannot get a foothold in life. You feel that the winds of life are blowing against you so hard that you just cannot move in the right direction.

GOSPEL EXHORTATION: Right now God offers you the stability you so desperately desire. In order to receive it, you must turn away from your sins and place your complete trust in Jesus Christ to forgive you and plant your feet on solid ground.

- d. **PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF THOSE IN NEED OF A PROSPEROUS LIFE:** Does it seem that everything you do is wrong? You give life your best effort, but you neither prosper nor flourish. Does anyone here feel as though life is empty—just a great big void? Has the devil just continued to steal, kill, and destroy any chance of hope you thought you had?

GOSPEL EXHORTATION: Today, you must change your way of thinking and realize that despite your best efforts, you cannot please God. However, Jesus died, was buried, and was raised from the dead in order to offer you full and abundant life. He alone pleases God—and if you will place your faith in Him, He will give you life in the here and now, as well as life in the hereafter.

- c. **PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF THOSE NEEDING ACCESS TO GOD AND THE RIGHTEOUS:** Does someone here feel cut off from God? Do you sense the love of God when you are around His children and long for what they have?

GOSPEL EXHORTATION: God is not far from you. He is here, this very moment, and He bids you to turn to Him. Right now, you can be the recipient of His love by becoming His child through a personal relationship with His Son, Jesus Christ.

- f. **PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF THOSE NEEDING TO BE RESCUED FROM PERISHING:** Some of you in this room are on a road to ruin. If you were to die right now, you know your sin would cause you to perish forever in hell. Today, you realize that God’s Word provides for you a way to escape the impending torment that awaits you.

GOSPEL EXHORTATION: Today, I call you to change your way of living. Turn from your sin and to the Savior. Receive Him through repentance and faith right now.

Story Genre Example (Mark 10:17–22)

- a. **PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF THOSE WHO DESIRE OR HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT ETERNAL LIFE:** Someone in our midst today has been thinking about life after death. You have been searching and asking, “What can I do to have assurance about life after death?”

GOSPEL EXHORTATION: Just as He did with this young man in our text, Jesus offers you eternal life. In order to receive Him, you must decide to follow Him now. Will

you come today and speak with someone so you will know how to follow Jesus?

- b. **PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF THOSE WHO HAVE NOT GENUINELY CONFESSED JESUS AS THEIR LORD:** Has someone here today realized that when you prayed to ask Jesus into your heart at a younger age, that you only went through the motions and did not sincerely mean it? Have you been putting your faith in that prayer all this time instead of believing in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation?

GOSPEL EXHORTATION: Today, you can receive Christ by faith by calling on His name. The Bible tells us, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Rom 10:13). Won’t you come speak with one of the encouragers here at the front or at the welcome center at the end of the service and learn how to confess Jesus as your Lord by believing in Him?

- c. **PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF THOSE WHO VALUE LIVING A MORAL LIFE ABOVE REVERING GOD:** A number of you today have been trying to please God by keeping the Ten Commandments and being a good person. However, this encounter between Jesus and the young man has caused you to realize that your attempts to satisfy God in this way fail miserably. In fact, they offend Him. Any attempt to appease God apart from completely trusting in the only One who has ever pleased the Father—Jesus Christ—communicates to God that His Son’s death, burial, and resurrection for your sins is not sufficient to save you.

GOSPEL EXHORTATION: Will you stop trusting in yourself and the things that you have done, and place your complete trust in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation?

- d. **PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF THOSE WHO VALUE THEIR POSSESSIONS OVER GOD:** What is standing between you and God? Do you have control over your possessions, or do they control you?

GOSPEL EXHORTATION: Today, Jesus calls you to lay aside those things that you value more than Him and follow Him. I invite you to speak with an encourager today, who can assist you in surrendering the things that stand between you and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Letter Genre Example (Ephesians 2:1–9)

- a. **PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF THOSE WHO WALK IN THE PATH OF DISOBEDIENCE AND IN THE COMPANY OF THE DISOBEDIENT:** Who among us here today finds themselves on the highway to destruction? You know you are going in the wrong direction, but today's Scripture has awakened you to the fact that you need to exit this path quickly. You have been walking in the power of the Evil One instead of being directed by God's Holy Spirit.

GOSPEL EXHORTATION: Today, Christ offers you a way of escape from the path upon which you find yourself. He offers you freedom from the grip of the devil if you will turn away from the path you're on and place your complete trust in Him to save you.

- b. **PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF THOSE WHO INDULGE IN THE DESIRES OF THE FLESH AND THE MIND:** Some of

you today continually indulge and yield to your fleshly impulses. You know it's wrong, but you feel as though you just cannot stop. Your body and mind are engaging in activities that betray the purpose for which God gave them to you.

GOSPEL EXHORTATION: Right now, Jesus calls you to break free from the influence that your primal desires have over your body and mind. He freely offers you a renewed heart to control these desires. Will you invite Him to take residence in your heart today as Lord of your life?

- c. **PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF THOSE CONDEMNED UNDER THE WRATH OF GOD:** I am convinced that some of you today sense God's anger and wrath against you and your sin. You feel embarrassed for what you've done, and the guilt and shame of your sin are overwhelming you right now. Perhaps you are questioning if you can escape God's righteous gaze that seems to penetrate right through you.

GOSPEL EXHORTATION: Jesus Christ, who was fully God and fully man, hung upon the cross to absorb God's wrath and anger against your sins. He was buried, and then He was raised from the dead on the third day so that today when God looks at you, He sees Jesus's righteousness and not your unrighteousness. Will you receive Christ by faith right now?

- d. **PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF THOSE WHO ATTEMPT TO WORK FOR THEIR OWN SALVATION:** Many religious people have convinced themselves that they can earn their own salvation by doing good things and refraining from doing bad things. Trying to please God on this basis

can be tiring. It also leads to frustration because you are constantly weighing your good works against your bad ones. However, your bad will always outweigh your good, and the only way for you to gain salvation is to abandon those deceptive scales and turn to the dependable Savior.

GOSPEL EXHORTATION: If you were to save yourself, then you would certainly take credit for it. However, salvation by God's free gift of grace through faith is not of works, so you and I are unable to brag about it. Only Jesus's work on the cross can save sinners—so, will you trust in Him today?

- e. **PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF THOSE IN NEED OF GOD'S MERCY, GREAT LOVE, AND KINDNESS:** Someone under the sound of my voice likely stands in need of God's mercy, love, and kindness. You realize you are under deep conviction for every sinful thing you have ever done, and you deeply desire God's goodness to replace the shame and guilt you feel.

GOSPEL EXHORTATION: As we have seen in our text, God's mercy is abundant, and He loves us greatly. Today, the kindness of the Savior is extended freely to you. Will you receive God's mercy, love, and kindness today through faith in Christ alone?

APPENDIX 1

CRAFTING THE PUBLIC GOSPEL INVITATION WORKSHEET

Step One: Classify which of the three categorical genres—*Poem*, *Story*, or *Letter*—best describes the passage of Scripture you will preach.

SELECTED TEXT: _____

GENRE CLASSIFICATION: _____

Step Two: Identify specific ways or cues that the textual idea of the Scripture passage you will preach relates to the gospel.

How Does the Textual Idea Connect with the Gospel?

Step Three: Using the gospel cues identified in *Step Two*, locate and articulate the spiritual needs and/or spiritual problems present in the passage of Scripture you will preach, which only the gospel can solve.

The spiritual needs and/or spiritual problems in this passage that relate to unbelievers include:

_____ (vv. ____).

Step Four: Contextualize the spiritual needs and/or spiritual problems identified in *Step Three* into *profile descriptions* of unbelievers who will hear you preach this passage of Scripture. Then compose specific *gospel exhortations* by which you or a decision encourager can instruct them how to become baptized, obedient disciples of Jesus Christ. Utilize as many key words as you can from the passage in your articulation of the *profile description* and the *gospel exhortation*.

A. PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF _____:

GOSPEL EXHORTATION:

B. PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF _____:

GOSPEL EXHORTATION:

C. PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF _____:

GOSPEL EXHORTATION:

D. PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF _____:

GOSPEL EXHORTATION:

E. PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF _____:

GOSPEL EXHORTATION:

E. PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF _____:

GOSPEL EXHORTATION:

G. PROFILE DESCRIPTION OF _____:

GOSPEL EXHORTATION:

APPENDIX 2

AN EXAMPLE OF A PUBLIC GOSPEL APPEAL

THE PRIMARY INTENT OF THE PUBLIC APPEAL IS TO GIVE THOSE who hear the gospel—that is, Jesus’s death, burial, and resurrection for their sins—an opportunity to repent of their sins and believe in Christ alone for their salvation, in order that they can become His baptized, obedient disciples. The appeal encourages each inquirer to respond positively and speak with a trained decision encourager in the “welcome center” immediately following the public appeal. Once the message concludes and the transition to the appeal is made, the scene is set. The congregation remains seated with bowed heads, and the pastor initiates the appeal.

The following script is a word-by-word example of a public appeal that O. S. Hawkins might have preached on any given Sunday, as he did weekly in both the First Baptist Church of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and the First Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas:

In just a moment I am going to ask you to do something that is going to take courage. I am going to ask you to leave your seat, step into the aisle, make your way to the front, and join

me here for a prayer. Many of you are going to come to be included in this prayer this morning. Some of you have never opened your heart's door to receive the free gift of eternal life, Jesus Christ, as your very own personal Savior. You have a divine appointment with Him this morning, and you are not here by accident.

Perhaps you sense God's Spirit knocking at the door of your heart, but quite honestly, you just don't know what you would say if you were to respond and join me here at the front. I have good news for you. You do not have to worry about what to say. By your coming you will be saying, "I am going to go God's way today!" When you get here, I am going to lead us all in a word of prayer. We have some Bible study material to give you to help you, and if you come as an inquirer we want the privilege of leading you to faith in the Lord Jesus. Your trusting in Him alone this morning means that God will forgive you of all your sin and make it just as if it never had happened. It also means that Christ Himself will take up residence in your life and never leave you. It means He will give you a place in heaven and a heavenly time on the way. So, in just a moment, I am going to ask you to come and receive this free gift.

There are others of you here this morning who have already opened your hearts to Christ; perhaps this week, last week, last month, or whenever. But you have never stood for Him publicly, openly, or unashamedly. In just a moment, I am going to ask you to join the others who are coming. By your coming to be included in this prayer, you will be saying, "I am making a public pledge of my life to Jesus Christ." There is something about this pledge that will help seal it in your life. After all, our Lord never called anyone to follow Him outside of a public context. At the seaside He called the fishermen to follow Him in front of all their business

associates and friends. In Jericho He called Zacchaeus to follow Him in front of the huge crowd lining the street. So there is just something about publicly standing for Christ that helps seal the personal decision that has already been made in our hearts. In fact, Jesus said, “So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven” (Matt 10:32). How can you expect to stand for Christ in the marketplaces of the world, which are so hostile to Him, if you will not stand for Him by walking down a carpeted aisle of an air-conditioned church in front of a lot of Christians who will rejoice with you in your decision? Therefore, in a moment when others come I am going to ask you to lead the way to this altar.

Still others of you are here who are Christians but not active in a local church in our city. Perhaps you have just moved here. You have moved everything you have—your furniture, your family, and even your pets. Everything, that is, except your church membership. In a moment I am going to ask you to join the others in coming, and by doing so you will be saying, “I am going to come out of the shadows today and put on the uniform of church membership and serve Christ in and through this local expression of His body.” You have been eating your spiritual food here for some time. You have been thinking about joining our team. You have even been planning on it and praying about it. The only thing left is to do it right now. By your coming to join us this morning and being included in this prayer, you will also be serving as an escort for many here who personally need to know Jesus Christ.

There are yet others of you here this morning with a friend who needs to know Jesus. Perhaps the Spirit of God would have you reach out and take that friend by the hand and say, “Let’s go God’s way this morning. I’ll go with you. Let’s go together!” Many people in the Bible did this very thing.

Andrew found Peter, took him by the hand, and brought him to Jesus. Philip brought Nathanael. And on and on the church has grown. You can be confident that if the Spirit is leading you to encourage your friend, He is dealing with his heart at the same time. He leads a Philip to the Gaza desert because He is working on the heart of an Ethiopian and wants Philip to take him by the hand and bring him to Jesus. He leads a Peter to Caesarea because He is simultaneously working on the heart of a Cornelius. So, take your friend by the hand this morning and say, “Let’s go together. I’ll go with you.” Bring your friend to Jesus. You will be so glad you did.

Some of you are here this morning and are honest enough to say, “Preacher, I don’t know what I need. But my life has no purpose, peace, or direction.” That something which you’ve been searching for to fill the void of life can be found this morning in Someone, and His sweet name is the Lord Jesus. I am going to ask you to join the others in coming to be included in this prayer. Don’t worry about what to say when you get here. By your coming as an inquirer you will be saying, “I want to go God’s way today and trust in Him.” Thus, when you come, “Your sins He’ll wash away, your night He’ll turn to day, your life . . . He’ll make it over anew.” He has a brand-new life for you and a brand-new beginning!

Whatever the decision may be in your heart—to know Christ personally, to pledge your life publicly to Him, to unite with our fellowship and join our team, to bring a friend to Jesus, or simply to come in honest inquiry—I am going to ask you to leave your seat, make your way to the front, and join me here. By your coming you are saying, “I am going God’s way today.” Don’t wait for anyone else. If you feel the slightest tugging at your heartstrings, it is the Spirit of God. Many are going to come, and it is the right thing to do. You lead the way, right now!

At this point in the public appeal, the congregation remains seated in a spirit of prayer while men and women, along with boys and girls, respond to the appeal. Times often occur when, as the Spirit directs, the appeal is generally extended in one of the following ways using the Word of God:

The Bible says, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts” (Heb 3:7–8, 15; 4:7). I am speaking finally and fleetingly to those of you here who “hear his voice” in your heart. You will know it if this happens. It is as if He is knocking at your heart’s door and pulling at your heartstrings. Every time He calls and you refuse, your heart gets a little harder. In fact, the word the Bible uses to describe this is “callous” (Eph 4:19). If you have had a callus on your hands or feet, you are aware that you can stick a pin in it and never feel it. Continually refusing Christ’s call has the same effect on your heart. A time may come when, even though He is still calling, you no longer will hear Him. That is why this hour is urgent. If you perceive the slightest feeling in your heart that God is calling you to Himself, come now. Yes, “today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your heart.”

The Bible says, “Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near” (Isa 55:6). He is waiting for you this morning. He is very near your heart. Yes, Jesus is passing by your heart this very moment. Some of you are closer to coming to Him than you have been in a lifetime. You may never be this close again. Seize the moment. He will meet you like the father met his prodigal son, with open arms, no pointed fingers, or clenched fists—just wide-open arms which say, “Come.”

The Bible says, “The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God” (Rom 8:16). Perhaps you are uncertain of your eternal destiny. Bow your head

and ask yourself this question: “Am I saved?” Does the Holy Spirit bear witness with your spirit? The Bible also says, “For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God” (v. 14). What is the Holy Spirit leading you to do this morning? Think about it.

If you are without Christ, what do you think He is leading you to do? He will not lead you to walk out those back doors in rejection or neglect. If you have placed your trust in Him but never let anyone know it, what do you suppose He is leading you to do right now? To walk out and continue being a secret disciple? Or to join us at this altar in an open pledge of your life to the One who stood for you in life, through death, and to life again?

If you are not active in a local church, what do you suppose Jesus is leading you to do? Soldiers in the United States Army are not just a part of a worldwide endeavor; they are assigned to a local base where they are accountable and are given assignments of service. The same holds true in God’s army; He assigns us to local bases, and perhaps He is assigning you here today.

If you are with a friend who needs to know Jesus, what do you suppose Jesus is leading you to do? Encourage your friend toward Christ or walk out without a word?

Yes, those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons (and daughters) of God. God, the Holy Spirit, is leading you this morning to the Lord Jesus Christ, and by your coming to join these many others already here, you will be indicating you are going God’s way today. And it is the right thing to do. I will meet you as you come.