



Christian Report

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A Call to Duty: He Set His Face

*“When the days drew near for him to be taken up, **he set his face to go to Jerusalem.**” (Luke 9:51 ESV) (Emphasis mine)*

In this passage, Luke records our Savior’s dedication to His assigned mission, to suffer and die for the sins of God’s people. Other translations use the phrase “Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem” or “he was determined to go to Jerusalem”. Luke 19:51 speaks of Jesus being “taken up”, in reference to his ascension. Christ’s suffering and death is also in view can be seen in the words of the “suffering servant” through the prophet Isaiah:

*“But the Lord GOD helps me;
therefore I have not been disgraced;*

*therefore **I have set my face like a flint,**
and I know that I shall not be put to shame.”*
(Isaiah 50:7 ESV) (Emphasis mine)

Jesus was a “man on a mission”, who, knowing exactly what awaited him in Jerusalem, “set His face like flint” to carry out that mission. He did not shirk the duty for which he had been sent. I ask you, which of us, if we knew what Jesus knew, would steel our wills in obedience, knowing we would be arrested, scourged, and crucified although completely innocent of any wrongdoing?



You might think that a silly question, but is it? I offer to you that it is most certainly not a frivolous question, but one that is asked in all seriousness.

While it goes without saying that no believer has ever been given a mission that comes anywhere close to the Savior’s, and that no believer is innocent of sin, there is for every believer a singular “call to duty” that bears certain similarities. Furthermore, it is Jesus himself who issued the call with a few words spoken to his followers after his resurrection. The account is found in John, Chapter 20:

*“On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, ‘Peace be with you.’ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. **As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.**’” (John 20:19-21 ESV)*

That there are similarities between the duty laid upon Christ by his Father and the duty Christ has in turn given us who bear His Name is revealed in verse 21, highlighted above:

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“As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.”

John Gill (1697-1771) expressed quite well both the duty and the similarities:

“Christ's mission of his disciples supposes power in him, honor done to them, authority put upon them, qualifications given them, and hence success attended them; what they were sent to do, was to preach the Gospel, convert sinners, build up saints, plant churches, and administer ordinances. The pattern of their mission, is the mission of Christ by his Father, which was into this world, to do his will, preach the Gospel, work miracles, and obtain eternal redemption for his people; and which mission does not suppose inferiority in his divine person, nor change of place, but harmony and agreement between the Father and Son: the likeness of these missions lies in these things; their authority is both divine; they are both sent into the same place, the world; and in much the same condition, mean, despicable, hated and persecuted; and in part for the same end, to preach the Gospel, and work miracles, for the confirmation of it; but not to obtain redemption, that being a work done solely by Christ; in which he has no partner, and to whom the glory must be only ascribed.”



Note that while all believers don't plant churches, administer ordinances, or perform miracles, there are two things that every believer can, and **ought**, to be about – **preaching the gospel and building up saints**.

Why I do say that all believers are called to preach the gospel and build up saints? Aren't evangelism and discipleship the responsibilities of particularly gifted and specially trained individuals “called” the ministry?

I'm glad you asked! In answer, I offer the following.

First of all note that Jesus, in our John 20 scenario, was speaking to a group of his followers assembled behind locked doors. We are not told, as in other places in the New Testament, that Jesus was addressing his closest disciples. We also know from New Testament accounts of his ministry, passion and crucifixion that the

chosen twelve were not his only followers. Therefore, the group behind locked doors consisted of his closest disciples and others who followed him. By extension, the words of Jesus here also pertain to his followers today. Jesus was not just stating a fact, he was establishing a pattern.

We can also observe the “evangelical” pattern as early as the calling of the first disciples:

“One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (which

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means Christ). He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, 'You are Simon the son of John. You shall be called Cephas' (which means Peter).

The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, 'Follow me.' Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, 'We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.' (John 1:40-45 ESV)

Here we have Andrew, after hearing John preach, finding his brother Simon and taking him to see Jesus. The next day we see Jesus himself finding Philip, who in turn found Nathaniel. Introducing others to the Messiah who has saved us from our sins should be our natural response to having been introduced to him and having trusted in him for our salvation.

While the pattern established by Jesus is most significant, there is another **"As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you."** aspect we must consider - the environment into which we are sent.



We are sent into a world that is as hostile to the gospel as it was in Jesus' day; to a people whose minds are just as set against God and who by nature cannot see or understand the message we bring (See Rom 8:7 & 2 Cor 4:4) We are **promised** persecution and hatred (John 15:18-19), assuming of course that we never waver from the Biblical gospel – the one that addresses our sin and the need to repent and be-

lieve.

The first disciples accepted the call of Jesus, as did Paul, Silas and many others throughout the history of the church. And they have been, and are, persecuted for their faith and stance for the gospel, to this day.

Here in America we know nothing of real persecution. Nevertheless some are now asking 'when', not 'if' it is coming, given what we have



seen over the past couple of decades that has been rapidly escalating in recent days.

Nevertheless, Jesus' words to his followers still stand and will stand until he comes back to claim his bride and judge the earth.

"As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you."

Good Christian, you who call yourself a 'soldier' of the cross, what will you do with the call to duty? We have only two options my friend – go AWOL (absent without leave), in other words desert, or heed the call and like our Savior, the suffering servant, **set our faces like flint to the task!**



SGM Daniel Cartwright, USA (Ret.) is a 28-year veteran of the U.S. Army Special Forces and long-time member of Christian Military Fellowship. Dan is a Local Rep at Ft. Carson. He currently serves as Chairman of the CMF Board of Directors.

Military Trauma Healing

CMF's trauma healing program continues to offer hope and restoration to active-duty military, veterans, and their families. Through a Christ-centered approach, participants engage in a 12-week course designed to help them process and heal from trauma.

With the rising concern of military-related suicides, our program is committed to addressing this crisis head-on. Many veterans and service members struggling with trauma feel isolated and hopeless, leading them to consider destructive behavior or worse as a solution. Our mission is to intervene before it reaches that point. By providing practical coping strategies and a supportive, faith-based community, we empower participants to rediscover purpose and hope through Christ.

This program provides a safe space for individuals to explore spiritual, emotional, and psychological wounds. By addressing trauma holistically, we see remarkable transformations as participants learn practical coping strategies, experience community support, and find renewed purpose through faith in Christ. We are blessed to witness the profound impact it is having on the lives of those we serve.

Upcoming Trauma Healing Sessions:

March:

Ft. Cavazos—Start Date TBD

Gulf Coast Region—Start Date TBD

Please let us know if we can start a trauma recovery group in your area.

TAPS: In Memoriam

It is always with great sadness to us remaining here on earth to learn of the passing of our beloved friends and co-laborers in the Kingdom. Yet we rejoice as they have been promoted to their great reward, for as it is written "...no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him..." (1 Cor 2:9). Indeed, what is sorrow for us is not sorrow for them, and their homecoming is precious in the eyes of our Heavenly Father (Ps 116:15).

We often hear about the passing of our members far after the fact, so please bear with us when our announcements are not timely. Please also forgive us for not announcing the passing of one of your loved ones as this is a new feature of the Christian Report. Please call or send an email letting us know if we can inform our membership of the passing of your loved one.

Mrs. Nancy Flynn — January 4, 2025. Nancy Flynn became a military wife at the tender age of 18 when she married Robert Flynn, Board Member, CIO and former CEO of Christian Military Fellowship. Alongside Bob, Nancy served the military and veteran community for decades, never losing her enthusiasm for Jesus and service to the military. She has suffered serious illness in the last few years, and in His mercy, the LORD called her home. Nancy is survived by her loving husband, Bob, and their sons Robert and Jason. A private family service will be held in celebration of Nancy's life.

"He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

CHRISTIAN MILITARY FELLOWSHIP

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Encouraging Men and Women in the United States Armed Forces, and their families, to love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christian Military Fellowship is a long-time recipient of Ministry Watch's "Shining Light" Ministries. To become a MinistryWatch "Shining Light," a ministry must have earned a 5-star rating on MinistryWatch's 5-star financial efficiency scale. Further, those ministries on this list have a Transparency Grade of "A." That's MinistryWatch's highest transparency grade. Few ministries meet these strict criteria.

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