



## THIS AINT VEGAS #2

“What happens here doesn’t stay here”  
Rev. Dr. Jeremy Mahood  
October 23, 2016

### THE NO GUILT GUIDE FOR WITNESSING

By George Sweeney

John Courier, in 1949, was found guilty of murder and sentenced to prison. He was later transferred to a work farm near Nashville Tennessee. In 1968 John Courier’s sentence was terminated. There was a letter bearing the good news sent to him at this farm but he never saw it, never received it and was never told anything about it. Life on the farm was hard work, hard labour, he was sentenced to it. Even when the farmer died and others took his place Courier never knew his sentence was terminated. 10 years went by when finally a state parole officer learned about Courier’s plight. He told him his sentence had been terminated 10 years earlier and that he was a free man. In this book Sweeney writes... “Would it matter to you in if someone sent you an important message, the most important message of your life and year after year the message was never delivered?”  
... WOULD IT BOTHER YOU?

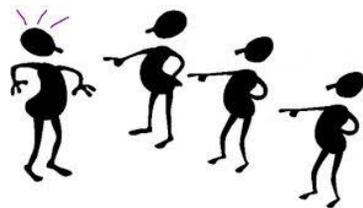
We have the greatest message to share a message of hope, redemption and salvation. Somehow we must get this message out. “This Ain’t Vegas!”, the message of the gospel, was meant to be shared not hoarded.

1. READ Matthew 9:35-38 (NIV)
  - a. In verse 37 who does the harvest represent and what does Jesus say about the harvest?
  - b. What is Jesus' problem in this verse?
  - c. Is the problem with the harvest itself?
  - d. Who is the problem with?
  - e. What happens when a farmer fails to bring in the harvest in time?
2. Discuss the following statement. What do you think it means?  
“THE PROBLEM IS THE MESSAGE IS ON THE INSIDE  
AND IT NEEDS TO GET ON THE OUTSIDE”.  
Do you think this problem exists today? Why or why not?
3. In Matthew 9:38, what does Jesus ask them to do?
  - a. Why do you think Jesus tells them to ask in prayer for workers to bring in the harvest? (See Ephesians 6:12)
4. Do you think there is a spiritual battle taking place for the lives of men, women and children? If so can you explain what you are seeing in society that would support your answer?
5. In verse 36 of Matthew 9, what was Jesus' attitude towards people?

6. What do you think compassion would look like, or feel like, when you look at the people around you?
7. What do you think this statement means? "WHEN I PRAY I BEGIN TO SEE THE WORLD THROUGH THE EYES OF A DOCTOR RATHER THAN A JUDGE"
8. How do you think seeing the world through the eyes of Jesus' compassion could change how you feel about the people around you?
9. Discuss this statement: "IT'S HARD TO MINISTER TO PEOPLE AROUND YOU WHOSE WOUNDS YOU DO NOT FEEL."
10. In Matthew 9:36 what did Jesus see when he looked at the people?
  - a. What do you think he meant when he said people were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd (NIV)?
  - b. What does this mean in modern language?
  - c. How you view people will guide how you interact with them, in terms of the gospel. How do you view people? Are they a problem an annoyance an intrusion or do you just ignore them? Do you judge them? Does your heart break for them? Do you see people as problems or do you see their potential as children of God? Do you see them the way they are now or do you see them the way Jesus created them? Where you are today on this issue and where would you like to be?
11. READ Luke 9:57-62
  - a. In your own words summarise the scripture you have just read.
  - b. What do you think is its main point?
  - c. In what ways could you link this story to our discussion on sharing the gospel?
12. READ Isaiah 6:1-8
  - a. This is a very dramatic example of being called by God. How does Isaiah respond to God's call?
  - b. What are some of the excuses we make up to try and avoid this call to share the gospel?

13. READ The Story of Four People:

"There were four people named, Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job that had to be done, and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about it because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought that Anybody could do it but Nobody didn't realise that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done".



In what ways could this story represent our lives as Christians?

14. If we have been born of the Spirit of God we each have a story that we can share. The following exercise is designed to help you see how easy it is to be ready to share your story should the opportunity arise.

**NOTE: If you have yet to make a commitment of your life to Christ, listen to the stories as they are being told. If you feel God calling you, ask your small group to pray with you...and then write out your story below.**

FIRST:

1. Think of one word that describes what you were like before you gave your life to Christ: \_\_\_\_\_
2. One word of how or where you gave your life to Christ: \_\_\_\_\_
3. One word since you became a Christian \_\_\_\_\_

SECOND: Expand your story and add some phrases or explanations

THIRD: take turns sharing your story with your small group.

As we have been commanded to 'ask' the Lord for workers for the harvest, perhaps your prayer this week is to ask God to make YOU more aware of the people around you and their need for Christ and to help you be more aware of opportunities to share your story.

Please make the focus of your small group prayer time on asking God to prepare you and make you aware of the need for people to come to know Christ.

Perhaps you could make teams of two (or two couples) to encourage each other this week, praying for each other and telling each other your experiences of sharing the gospel.