

## BUMP 4: JUST GO!

Numbers 22:21-33

<sup>21</sup> So the next morning Balaam got up, saddled his donkey, and started off with the Moabite officials. <sup>22</sup> But God was angry that Balaam was going, so he sent the angel of the LORD to stand in the road to block his way. As Balaam and two servants were riding along, <sup>23</sup> Balaam's donkey saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand. The donkey bolted off the road into a field, but Balaam beat it and turned it back onto the road. <sup>24</sup> Then the angel of the LORD stood at a place where the road narrowed between two vineyard walls. <sup>25</sup> When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, it tried to squeeze by and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall. So Balaam beat the donkey again. <sup>26</sup> Then the angel of the LORD moved farther down the road and stood in a place too narrow for the donkey to get by at all. <sup>27</sup> This time when the donkey saw the angel, it lay down under Balaam. In a fit of rage Balaam beat the animal again with his staff.

<sup>28</sup> Then the LORD gave the donkey the ability to speak. "What have I done to you that deserves your beating me three times?" it asked Balaam.

<sup>29</sup> "You have made me look like a fool!" Balaam shouted. "If I had a sword with me, I would kill you!"

<sup>30</sup> "But I am the same donkey you have ridden all your life," the donkey answered. "Have I ever done anything like this before?"

"No," Balaam admitted.

<sup>31</sup> Then the LORD opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the roadway with a drawn sword in his hand. Balaam bowed his head and fell face down on the ground before him.

<sup>32</sup> "Why did you beat your donkey those three times?" the angel of the LORD demanded. "Look, I have come to block your way because you are stubbornly resisting me. <sup>33</sup> Three times the donkey saw me and shied away; otherwise, I would certainly have killed you by now and spared the donkey."

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Romans 1:18-25

But God shows his anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people who suppress the truth by their wickedness.<sup>[1]</sup> <sup>19</sup> They know the truth about God because he has made it obvious to them. <sup>20</sup> For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God.

<sup>21</sup> Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn't worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. As a result, their minds became dark and confused. <sup>22</sup> Claiming to be wise, they instead became utter fools. <sup>23</sup> And instead of worshiping the glorious, ever-living God, they worshiped idols made to look like mere people and birds and animals and reptiles.

<sup>24</sup> So God abandoned them to do whatever shameful things their hearts desired. As a result, they did vile and degrading things with each other's bodies. <sup>25</sup> They traded the truth about God for a lie. So they worshiped and served the things God created instead of the Creator himself, who is worthy of eternal praise! Amen.

2 Peter 3: 3-10

Most importantly, I want to remind you that in the last days scoffers will come, mocking the truth and following their own desires. <sup>4</sup> They will say, "What happened to the promise that Jesus is coming again? From before the times of our ancestors, everything has remained the same since the world was first created."

<sup>5</sup> They deliberately forget that God made the heavens long ago by the word of his command, and he brought the earth out from the water and surrounded it with water. <sup>6</sup> Then he used the water to destroy the ancient world with a mighty flood. <sup>7</sup> And by the same word, the present heavens and earth have been stored up for fire. They are being kept for the day of judgment, when ungodly people will be destroyed.

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<sup>8</sup>But you must not forget this one thing, dear friends: A day is like a thousand years to the Lord, and a thousand years is like a day. <sup>9</sup>The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent. <sup>10</sup>But the day of the Lord will come as unexpectedly as a thief. Then the heavens will pass away with a terrible noise, and the very elements themselves will disappear in fire, and the earth and everything on it will be found to deserve judgment.

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With a show of hands answer these questions:

How many of you have done these trust fall exercises?

Is it hard to trust the people catching you?

Would you trust a total stranger to catch you?

Would you trust your church family to catch you?

Finally: Would you trust God to catch you?

My guess is that most of us would trust God to catch us, especially since we're trusting Him for eternal life. I would also guess that non-Christians are just the opposite; they wouldn't trust God to catch them because they don't believe in Him or even that Jesus is the only way to heaven. This morning I want to look at what happens to these people when they take the ultimate fall-----the end of their lives.

This morning I get to close our series on Bump. So instead of starting off with the BIG IDEA this morning, I want to start off with THE BIG QUESTION.

**The Big Q: What ultimately happens to people who have never heard the Gospel?**

Before we dig any deeper check out this video clip. Skinny on evangelism  
Skit guys vid

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Ok that was silly but true. This whole idea of God bumping in to the world through us has become so complicated in church circles, it became **formulaic**.

But those last two clips were what true evangelism looks like.... That's the fancy church word we use for God bumping into others through our lives.

In H2H we often share stories from my friend Greg Stier's life. No Greg and I are not related. We discussed this the first time we met back in 2005. But he quickly pointed out that he was adopted. We became friends and stayed in touch from 2005-till around 2017. When both of our lives were in transition, and we were looking at ministry transitions on the horizon as well. Then we simply lost touch. I'm sure I'll see him again someday as an old comedy group used to say as their sign off, "see ya there or in the air" speaking of seeing each other again someday in Heaven. So here is a story from Greg's life when the question "what about all the people who haven't heard the good news" really struck home with him.

"Every summer Art and I would spend countless hours at Westminster Mall sharing the gospel with other teenagers...because we were on a quest to reach the world for Jesus all by ourselves if we had to!

"...Then one night I saw an interview with the great evangelist Billy Graham who had reached millions with the gospel. Watching this interview surprised me and changed me forever. The reporter asked Billy Graham a question about his ministry's impact on the world. Graham responded that they really hadn't even begun to make a dent...

"That's when the whole idea of multiplication invaded my mind. I calculated that if we could train other youth groups in the area to share their faith effectively, then we would multiply our efforts. And so, as a teenager, I began to equip other teenagers to share the gospel. All of this eventually led to the vision for starting Dare 2 Share. Our mission from day one has been to multiply the impact of the gospel by training teenagers to transform their world. My lifelong dream of raising up an army of teen 'proclaimers' comes true every day. But to be honest, like my hero Billy Graham, we haven't even begun to make a dent.

"Now we are speeding past eight billion people on the planet, a large percentage of whom have never heard and will likely never hear the gospel

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message. What happens to them when they die? This disturbing question racked my hyperactive teenage brain.”

Have you ever wondered about this question?

**What ultimately happens to people who have never heard the Gospel?**

How would you answer it?

If God sent people to hell who never heard the gospel, would that make Him unfair?

One of the toughest issues you’ll ever wrestle with as a Christian goes something like this:

Jesus claimed to be the only way into heaven, and proved it by dying on the cross and coming back from the dead and appearing to over 500 witnesses. Thus, the only way to avoid hell is to trust Christ as your only hope of salvation.

**BUT...** there are billions of people who have no chance to hear the gospel.

**Therefore...** God sends people to hell who had no choice in the matter.

This line of reasoning definitely paints God as unfair, which is why we need to know how to show people that this is not the case.

Let’s look at what the Bible teaches about this, so we can resolve this issue and help others who hold to this view of God.

Earlier we read Romans 1:18-25

Listen to verse 20 again. “For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God.”

This verse puts to rest any idea of God being ‘unfair’ because it tells us in plain terms that God has made Himself known to everyone on the planet.

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In fact, that's the basis for His anger towards mankind, because He basically created the planet as one big advertisement for Himself. Twice Paul uses the phrase 'plain to them', and the word 'plain' here comes from a root word meaning 'shining'.

In other words, there is no dark corner anywhere in the world where the light of God's existence isn't turned on. He makes His invisible nature visible through His creation. That's also the reason Paul informs us that people have no basis for an 'excuse' for not knowing about God.

The word for 'excuse' here comes from a legal term when someone was defending himself or herself when on trial-so God is saying that on Judgment Day, no one will have a defense to offer.

We read another passage from 2 Peter. Let's zero in on verse 9 "The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent."

Even though God has made Himself known to everyone, we are still left with the question of how the gospel gets to everyone. This verse tells us that it is not God's desire for anyone to go to hell, so let's put the two passages together. If an all-powerful God purposely didn't find a way to get the gospel message to those who couldn't get it otherwise, wouldn't that show a desire for them to perish? Yes. So, we know He will.

As well, would the God who loves the world only give people enough revelation to condemn them but not enough to save them? **Of course not!** So, He finds a way to get the gospel to everyone. How? Well, he's **God**, so He could send a missionary or use a talking donkey for all we know (Numbers 22).

When He does get the gospel to them, they are the ones who decide to accept or reject Christ. If they end up in hell, it wasn't because of ignorance; it was clearly because of rebellion.

Now ask yourself:

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After looking at these passages, do you still think there is a reason for some to call God 'unfair?'

Could God simultaneously love the world and hide the gospel from people? Does God actually send people to hell or do they choose to go there on their own?

One of Greg's friends is this cool surfer dude but he's actually from Colorado. He is a recovering drug dealer and user. He gave his life over to Jesus and has now spent the last decade or so desperately trying to tell people about what God has done for us in His Son Jesus Christ. Zane has this whole Zen vibe about him or just comes across plain silly but I'll never forget him sharing a revelation he had one day with us. He said, "Hell is God's last great act of compassion." WOW! Right, doesn't that just blow your mind? Think about that. If someone has spent their entire life denying God, running away from God, or even cursing Him. How terrible would it be to spend all eternity in God's presence. So, God in His mercy gives them what they wanted all their life. Eternal separation from Him, or what we call hell.

Or as Randy Alcorn said in his Book Heaven "The best of life on Earth is a glimpse of Heaven; the worst of life is a glimpse of Hell. For **Christians**, this present life is the closest they will come to Hell. For unbelievers, it is the closest they will come to **Heaven**."

Knowing these truth's about God does two things. First, it shows that you can trust His fairness and love so you don't need to worry about if He really is loving.

And in fact, He loves unsaved people more than we do, so you can trust Him to work things out.

Secondly, one of the primary ways he gets the gospel to people is through other people-like you and me. When we don't do our job in helping fulfill the Great Commission, God has to find another way to get the gospel to the people in our corner of the world. Instead of intellectually stressing over those who haven't heard the gospel, we should be emotionally broken over them and focus on making sure they **do** hear the gospel.

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I know this sharing your faith thing isn't easy and at times it's scary, I get it! But there are so many people out there just waiting for you to open up. But remember it's not in your own power. It's God bumping into the world through you.

Trust the Holy Spirit and His work. Don't put it all on yourself. If people reject the message of the Gospel, they are not rejecting you they are rejecting God. You have fulfilled your calling by simply being loving and sharing the truth.

### **We can't compete with the world!**

Over the years I've taught Youth Seminars and now Pastor Kurt and I do consultation for churches in crisis or looking for pastors or even looking to join us as L.C.M.C. churches. One of the things I keep trying to encourage people with is this phrase; "We can't compete with the world." What do I mean by that?

Too often our churches/our ministries are held captive to programming or tradition. We need to look at our schedules and activities and make sure that they help us to accomplish our mission and vision, and not just run us around or even worse we end up serving them!

Friends we can't out flash the world. They will always have the biggest and newest entertainment or flashy slogan of the week. The "coolest" distraction, the thing you just have to have or be involved in. How many of you have noticed the cell phone advertisements the last few years?

It's not about a phone. It's about a camera that happened to have a phone app on it. As a matter of fact, I dare say for most of you under 50 the phone app is probably the least used app on your pocket computer/camera. But all is not lost, my friends, we have one thing they don't and He's far better than any iPhone. We have Jesus! We need to give them Jesus. We need to share the joy, love, forgiveness and hope for a future that will outlast this world and all its shiny distractions.

Here is the "new reality" we need to understand. Just like the phone has drastically changed over the last several decades, the culture we now live in

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has changed as well, it is now a “**post-Christian**” culture. Going to church isn’t the cultural norm. (It hasn’t been for many years) In years past we would put an ad in the paper, put up a sign outside the church and even recently post on social media. Something to engage our culture and hopefully bring people to the church so we can share the love of Jesus with them.

But my friends times they are a-changing. In today’s culture we need to go and engage with people where they are at. As a matter of fact people who are not regularly engaged with a church are just as open to spiritual matters but they are apprehensive, distrustful or even disillusioned with the church. This new reality calls for us to rethink how we go about connecting with people who are **not here yet!**

### **God’s Truth**

God loves the whole world and does not desire anyone to perish, so He loudly proclaims Himself through nature, and gets them the gospel through natural or supernatural ways.

God is bumping into the world every day. So why not enjoy asking Him to do it through you, more often.