

The Great Chase

God wants us to join Him in going after the thing He loves most: People

He is after me and He's after you, from eternity past until this very moment. He is in a passionate pursuit of all we are. *Wow!* What a thought and what a truth. You know the following verse—you've read it countless times and could probably quote it while you're in a coma (well, maybe): "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16, NKJV).

If that is not a picture of God holding nothing back in pursuit of us, then nothing is. Let's consider what it's like to be in God's place for just a few moments:

You fashion a creation, making people in Your likeness. You invest Your life in them, giving them breath so they can share the very essence of life together with You. Then, with the incredible gift of free choice You have given them so they will freely love You, they choose to go their own way and leave You: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way," Isaiah 53:6 says. Then they live life and do the things You never intended them to be or do.

Yet the fact that You are love (1 John 4:8) will not allow them to simply go off to do their *own* thing, which will lead to ultimate eternal destruction often preceded by a lifetime of guilt, shame, sin and misery. So You go after them—every one—in hot pursuit. You have never played hide-and-seek with the world, as You've said in Your Word: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows and proclaims His handiwork. Day after day pours forth speech, and night after night shows forth knowledge" (Ps. 19:1-32, AMP).

Despite what has happened You send Your Son who helped You create the universe. You hope they will listen to Him, but they don't.

The Son makes an unbelievable impact even though He lives on this planet for only a short 33 years. The terms of pursuit are pretty clear—the Son came to “seek and save the lost” (Luke 19:10). It is good to know He is after those who are “lost” (we now call them by other names: “unreached” and “unchurched”). Beyond that, He desires that no one would perish but that all come to experience the life He intended for them (see 2 Pet. 3:9 and John 10:10).

The pursuit takes a different turn before Jesus returns to heaven. Along the way He makes this statement: “As the Father has sent Me, I also send you” (John 20:21, NKJV).

The pursuit multiplied exponentially when God commissioned all Christ-followers without exception to do the same as He did. After all, Jesus said, “He who believes in me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these will he do, because I go to My Father” (John 14:12).

God loves us so much and desires us to connect with Him every day and in every way that He not only sent His Son but also allows us to have a part in “the great pursuit” of a lost creation. It really adds a dimension of meaning to our lives that far exceeds our dreams. It's hard to imagine a Spirit-filled walk with Jesus that does not connect somehow with God's pursuit of our world—the people we know, as well as those we have not yet met.

After all, compassion dictates we pursue, or give of ourselves, our time and our talents, and that we reach out of ourselves into the life of somebody else. God's love is not wrapped up just in us but in Him and others.

The amazing gift He makes available called the baptism in the Holy Spirit is used at the maximum peak of power and

effectiveness when implemented not in believers gathering for the purpose of experiencing manifestations. It was designed for pursuit. For pursuing our neighbors, friends and strangers with the message that brings radical life change—the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is the primary purpose of this amazing gift (see Acts 1:8).

Scripture not only commands us to “pursue” but gives the purposes, principles and practicalities of doing so. The word *go* in any language means just that—*go*! Having a passport, being with foreign people in foreign lands, going overseas on missions trips and so on don’t mean as much as simply reaching out from yourself. Sure, you might feel uncomfortable at first, but that’s a good thing because in the space between “feeling comfortable” and “being uncomfortable” the Holy Spirit has plenty of room to work and stretch you to make you more like Him.

A loving God pursuing a lost and dying world through people like you and me is an incredibly creative way to restore a fallen world. It gets us involved in what is dearest to His heart—people.

How about it? Try pursuing someone for the purpose of seeing Jesus touch their life like He has touched yours. Sound a bit too aggressive? It’s not at all. I like to call it being “compassionately aggressive.”

If we don’t pursue, who will? Someone else? Could be, but chances are they would not be like you. They might be a believer, but they also might be a cultist or even the devil.

So why not you let it be you? Come on—let’s do it!

Now!

Scott Hinkle *is an evangelist and the pastor of Jersey Life*

Church, which he planted in 2009 in Red Bank, N.J.

Most people discover the love of Jesus from a friend. Learn how you can become an effective evangelist at *hinkle..*