

THE FOREST HILL NEWS

Published weekly by the Forest Hill church of Christ

Visit our Website at www.foresthillchurch.org

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VISIT US SOON!

Sunday:

Bible Study..... 9:30 A.M.
Morning Worship.....10:30 A.M.
Evening Worship..... 6:00 P.M.

Wednesday:

Bible Study7:00 P.M.

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THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD

Barry M. Grider

[Editor's Note: The Spiritual Sword Lectureship, under the capable direction of Gary McDade, is being conducted this week. The study of the Gospel of John is very rich and rewarding. It was the editor's privilege to write about Jesus Christ our Savior.]

Introduction

And he said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world (John 4:42).

The context of the above passage is very interesting. In John four, the Bible student gets an up close view of Jesus Christ, the personal evangelist. Speaking of Jesus, the text declares, "And he must needs go through Samaria" (John 4:4). Why go through Samaria? After all, because of long standing prejudice, "respectable" Jews would not dare enter Samaritan territory. Yet Jesus went there because a soul needed to be saved. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16). He came "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). While Jesus died for the world, he tasted death for every man (Heb. 2:9). Paul stated, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). Had you and I been the only one in need of salvation, Jesus would have had to die on our behalf, and he would have gladly done so. His sacrifice was indeed personal.

Notice the Savior went to the lost one. He did not wait for her to come to him.

Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat) (John 4:5-8).

Here pictured is a woman Jesus desires to help because of her deep spiritual need. Yet, he first gives the woman opportunity to help him. If we are interested in souls, we will take the time necessary to get to know a person and we will look for common interests. Jesus, no doubt, was thirsty. Can you not hear the Lord commenting to the woman about his need for water and that he knew the water she would draw would be so refreshing?

Jesus approached the woman indirectly. Since every person is different, every person who needs the gospel must be approached differently. Some may re-

spond positively to the gospel by members of the church very bluntly letting them know that outside of Christ they are lost. Others may initially be ready to study God's word through a Bible Correspondence Course. While others you simply must take time to get to know them.

Next, Jesus stirred the woman's curiosity.

Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life (John 4:9-14).

Here Jesus is taking the woman to a deeper spiritual understanding, though she does not realize it. Similarly, Jesus had done the same thing with Nicodemus in the previous chapter. Nicodemus was confused about being born again and Jesus explained what he meant. The Lord desired the woman to investigate further, and she did. "The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw" (v.15). Now that he has her attention, he begins his discussion of the spiritual. As it was said of Charles Haddon Spurgeon, he was tickling the oyster so that he could put the knife in.

Jesus saith unto her, Go call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly (John 4:16-18).

Now Jesus, the master evangelist, has done what every soul winner seeks to do. He brings the

woman face to face with her sin. Like so many, however, the woman tries to change the subject.

The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship (John 4:19-20).

Have you ever been trying to persuade a person to be baptized, and as you concentrated on the fundamentals, the prospective convert desires to study Revelation and wants to talk about a thousand year reign? Jesus answered the woman, but kept pressing his point.

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he (John 4:21-26).

What is the goal of personal evangelism? The goal is to make Jesus and his will known. Jesus did not just enjoy a good conversation with the woman; he made clear to her that he was the Messiah. How did she respond? "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" (v.29). Having demonstrated how to accomplish personal evangelism, Jesus said to his disciples,

Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest (John 4:34,35).

Since the evangelized refused to be silent, the woman convinced others to come see and hear for themselves. They were convinced. Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world (v.42).

(To be continued next week)

WHERE'S YOUR HEAD?!

Matthew Martin

Ah, the memories of one of my parents slapping me across my head when I did something ignorant, and having them say "Where's your head, boy?" What they meant was, "Where is your mind?" After all, my *head* was right in front of them, my *mind*... that's a different story. Often my mind was off in dream land, not paying any attention to matters at hand.

Here we are, at Forest Hill, with these great facilities and these comfortable pews, it's easy to get distracted during worship. I was sitting in the pew Sunday morning waiting for the service to start, when I thought to myself "*I better sit up straight, in case the camera hits me.*" Then something else hit me. A proverbial slap to my cranium that got me thinking: Why am I worried about the cameras?

Yes, we should be excited about our services being recorded for GBN. But lets not get too concerned about the "lights, camera, action" that is going on behind us. It is easy to say, "I need to *look like* I'm paying attention, because I might be seen on TV." It is easy, but it is not the right attitude.

Let's not forget, that even before the cameras were looking down on us, there was Someone else looking down on us as well (and I don't mean the sound crew in the balcony). Obviously, I'm referring to the One whom we sing about in the song "There's an eye watching you."

Jesus condemned those who prayed hypocritically. He said:

And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. (Matt. 6:5)

What was their reward? They were seen of men. They wanted people to say, "Oh, look how pious he is. He must be a great spiritual man." Hypocrisy! He did not have a spiritual bone in his body. His only concern was how he looked to other *people*, not how he looked to *God*.

When it comes to worship in God's house, let's make sure we remember what our reason for paying attention is. Not to be seen of men. But because God demands worship to be correct, not just correct doctrinally, but correct in attitude as well: "God is Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship in **spirit** (attitude) and in **truth** (doctrine)" (John 4:24).

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