

The Saviour of the World - John 4:27-42





John Paton (1842-1907)

Mr. Dickson, you are advanced in years now, and your own prospect is soon to be laid in the grave, there to be eaten by worms; I confess to you, that if I can but live and die serving and honoring the Lord Jesus, it will make no difference to me whether I am eaten by Cannibals or by worms; and in the Great Day my Resurrection body will rise as fair as yours in the likeness of our risen Redeemer.

Then in a moment, altogether unexpectedly, she died on March third. To crown my sorrows, and complete my loneliness, the dear baby-boy, whom we had named after her father, Peter Robert Robson, was taken from me after one week's sickness, on the 20th of March. Let those who have ever passed through any similar darkness as of midnight feel for me; as for all others, it would be more than vain to try to paint my sorrows!

One morning at daybreak I found my house surrounded by armed men, and a chief intimated that they had assembled to take my life. Seeing that I was entirely in their hands, I knelt down and gave myself away body and soul to the Lord Jesus, for what seemed the last time on earth. Rising, I went out to them, and began calmly talking about their unkind treatment of me and contrasting it with all my conduct towards them.... At last some of the Chiefs, who had attended the Worship, rose and said, "Our conduct has been bad; but now we will fight for you, and kill all those who hate you."

My heart rose up to the Lord Jesus; I saw Him watching all the scene. My peace came back to me like a wave from God. I realized that I was immortal till my Master's work with me was done. The assurance came to me, as if a voice out of Heaven had spoken, that not a musket would be fired to wound us, not a club prevail to strike us, not a spear leave the hand in which it was held vibrating to be thrown, not an arrow leave the bow, or a killing stone the fingers, without the permission of Jesus Christ, whose is all power in Heaven and on Earth. He rules all Nature, animate and inanimate, and restrains even the Savage of the South Seas.

“O my children, love your Heavenly Father, tell Him in faith and prayer all your needs, and He will supply your wants so far as it shall be for your good and His glory”

“Without that abiding consciousness of the presence and power of my dear Lord and Savior, nothing else in all the world could have preserved me from losing my reason and perishing miserably.”

I climbed into the tree and was left there alone in the bush. The hours I spent there live all before me as if it were but of yesterday. I heard the frequent discharging of muskets, and the yells of the Savages. Yet I sat there among the branches, as safe as in the arms of Jesus. Never, in all my sorrows, did my Lord draw nearer to me, and speak more soothingly in my soul, than when the moonlight flickered among those chestnut leaves, and the night air played on my throbbing brow, as I told all my heart to Jesus. Alone, yet not alone! If it be to glorify my God, I will not grudge to spend many nights alone in such a tree, to feel again my Savior's spiritual presence, to enjoy His consoling fellowship.

If thus thrown back upon your own soul, alone, all alone, in the midnight, in the bush, in the very embrace of death itself, have you a Friend that will not fail you then?

Not Evangelistic?

1. Christians have no sense of urgency to reach lost people.
2. Many Christians and church members do not befriend and spend time with lost persons.
3. Many Christians and church members are lazy and apathetic.
4. We are more known for what we are against than what we are for.
5. Our churches have an ineffective evangelistic strategy of “you come” rather than “we go.”

Not Evangelistic?

6. Many church members think that evangelism is the role of the pastor and paid staff.
7. Church membership today is more about getting my needs met rather than reaching the lost.
8. Church members are in a retreat mode as culture becomes more worldly and unbiblical.
9. Many church members don't really believe that Christ is the only way of salvation.
10. Our churches are no longer houses of prayer equipped to reach the lost.

Not Evangelistic?

11. Churches have lost their focus on making disciples who will thus be equipped and motivated to reach the lost.
12. Christians do not want to share the truth of the gospel for fear they will offend others. Political correctness is too commonplace even among Christians.
13. Most churches have unregenerate members who have not received Christ themselves.
14. Some churches have theological systems that do not encourage evangelism.
15. Our churches have too many activities; they are too busy to do the things that really matter.

“Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

John 4:13,14



Jesus Reveals the Priority of His Life - 4:31-34

- Jesus was concerned about the woman's spiritual well-being above all else



“Some of you good people, who do nothing except go to public meetings, the Bible readings, and prophetic conferences, and other forms of spiritual dissipation, would be a good deal better Christians if you would look after the poor and needy around you. If you would just tuck up your sleeves for work, and go and tell the Gospel to dying men, you would find your spiritual health mightily restored, for very much of the sickness of Christians comes through their having nothing to do.

All feeding and no working makes men spiritual dyspeptics. Be idle, careless, with nothing to live for, nothing to care for, no sinner to pray for, no backslider to lead back to the cross, no trembler to encourage, no little child to tell of a Savior, no grey-headed man to enlighten in the things of God, no object, in fact, to live for; and who wonders if you begin to groan, and to murmur, and to look within, until you are ready to die of despair?”

–Charles Spurgeon

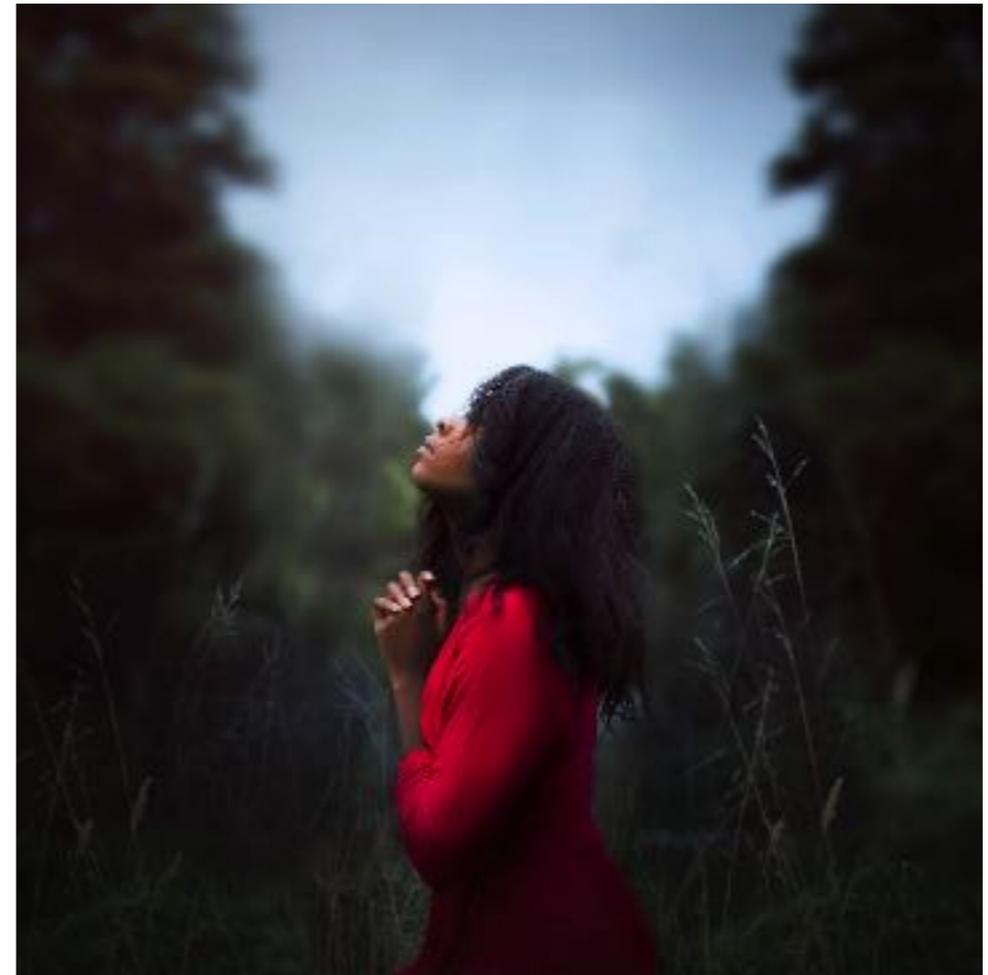
Jesus Reveals the Urgency of Our Mission - 4:35-38

- White - clothing worn by the Samaritans who are coming to see him
- A spiritual harvest does not require a “four-month” period of waiting



Jesus Reveals the Necessity of Personal Trust - 4:39-42

- Philip went to Samaria to preach (Acts 8)
- To be truly saved you just be able to testify to a personal experience of Jesus
- Jesus crossed boundaries - Saviour of the world



Don't Complicate Sharing the Good News

- Network evangelism = intentionally living the gospel in the everyday rhythms of life among the people who are part of your current web of relationships



Social networks are the basic mechanism through which conversion takes place... . Most conversions are not produced by professional missionaries conveying a new message, but by rank-and-file members who share their faith with their friends and relatives... . The principle that conversions spread through social networks is quite consistent with the fact that the earliest followers of Jesus shared many family ties and long-standing associations.”

–Rodney Stark

Who's in Your Networks?

- Familial network
- Geographical network
- Vocational network
- Recreational network
- Commercial network



The Gospel and Our Networks

- Pray for them
- Invite them
- Serve them
- Give resources to them
- Share the gospel with them



One Conversation at a Time

