**“The Savior Seeking Sinners”**

John 4:1-29,39

(Notes based on the sermon by Pastor Steve Massey, Hayden Bible Church, 3/5/23)

 True religion is God’s people making Christ know to the unsaved. Saved people are sent people, taking the good news of forgiveness in Jesus to our neighbors. (Q1) Do you see yourself this way? Our scripture today shows Jesus giving a “master class” on evangelism. Let’s see what we can pick up and apply.

 Do you regularly seek the lost on your Savior’s behalf? The Samaritans of Jesus’ day were what we would call “those people”. Tremendous religious differences had created tremendous prejudices. Most Jews thought they would avoid defilement if they stayed away from “those people”. Who are “those people” in our day that you tend to avoid? One more thing. If you read 2Kings 17:33 you see that the Samaritans feared Yahweh **and** served other gods. You need look no further than the 10 Commandments to realize that this is heresy. You are not a Christian if you have one foot in each camp.

 Jesus’ encounter with the Samaritan woman gives us 5 principles of reaching the lost:

**Deliberateness/Intentionality**

 We need to move toward “those people” with a Gospel purpose. We need to specifically pray for individuals to have ears to hear the Gospel. We should ask God to give us eyes to see opportunities and words to match those opportunities. Don’t be a hoarder; be a herald of the Gospel! Evangelism is not a church program, but a mission field to the people around you. It’s a lifestyle!

**Selflessness**

 Jesus doesn’t consider convenience, comfort, or even the culture (that said don’t even talk to a Samaritan woman). The Samaritan woman (like many of our neighbors) was blinded by the gods of this world. (Q2) Jesus is not content to just engage in “small talk”; He quickly moves on to talk about eternal life. She may be a tramp and rejected by the others in her village, but that is not her greatest need. Her greatest need is salvation! But when she thought Jesus was getting “preachy”, she started putting up barriers (“How is it that you asked me for a drink?” “Jews hate Samaritans”) Have you run into something similar? (“Whatever you’re offering, I don’t need it.”) A selfless spirit doesn’t take offense at these slights. The message is just too important.

**Persevering Compassion**

 When you get these barriers, don’t get drawn into an argument. Do pray for open doors. In fact, one of the very best things you can do is ask, “Is there anything I can pray for you?” Jesus offered the Samaritan woman “living water”, and He still offers that gift today (Rev. 21:6). Living water gives LIFE! It gives the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, rescuing us from sin’s penalty for all of eternity. So, don’t give up! Your persevering compassion may play out over weeks or months or years… but don’t give up!

 Many, like the Samaritan woman, are still focused on physical needs and earthly comforts. (Q3) Jesus changes the conversation, because His concern is for her soul. When she is confronted with her sin, it gets personal. Jesus intends to take her sin to the cross. He will suffer the wrath of God in her place. At some point, our Gospel conversation must help the listener come to grips with their sin. Isn’t that the truly compassionate thing to do?

**Truthfulness**

 Jesus doesn’t condemn her or shame her, but the woman gets uncomfortable and changes the subject. You’ve run into dodges like that: “The church is full of hypocrites.” “The Bible is full of inconsistencies.” But Jesus cuts to the chase: “I am He.” Don’t be distracted by secondary issues. We are meant to confront and comfort our neighbors with the claims of Jesus.

**Gospel Clarity**

 Have a plan and be clear with scripture. You are talking to a thirsty soul in need of salvation through Jesus. (Q4) The Samaritan woman had her eyes opened, she left her water jug, and went to share the good news of the Christ with others. She knew that Jesus is the all-sufficient One. Her belief was in Christ and Christ alone. She became a bridge over which others would walk to come to faith in Jesus.

 May we be a sending church, to Africa or across the street or across the table. SAVED PEOPLE ARE SENT PEOPLE! (Q5)

**QUESTIONS**:

1. Who is my neighbor?
2. What blinds our neighbors to the truth of the Gospel?
3. Many in our society are focused on good health, happy relationships, and comfort. Paul David Tripp says God is “not first working on your happiness; He’s committed to your holiness.” (New Morning Mercies, Feb. 19) How will this thought impact your prayers for others? Your outreach to others?
4. What do “spiritually thirsty” people look like?
5. What barriers stand between you and those who need to hear the Good News?

**“Jesus Saves”** (Owens)

We have heard the joyful sound:
Jesus saves! Jesus saves!
Spread the tidings all around:
Jesus saves! Jesus saves!
Bear the news to every land,
Climb the mountains, cross the waves;
Onward! ’tis our Lord’s command;
Jesus saves! Jesus saves!