

Ten Shekels and a Shirt - Part 4

by Paris Reidhead

Paris Reidhead challenges the motivations behind evangelism, emphasizing that true mission work is for the glory of God rather than humanistic ideals.

Duration: 10:03

Scripture: Psalm 51:17, Isaiah 6:5, Acts 3:19, Romans 3:23, Hebrews 10:31

Topics: "Evangelism", "Repentance"

Description

This sermon delves into the concept of humanism versus Christianity, exploring the motivations behind missions and evangelism. It highlights the shift from a humanistic approach to a God-centered perspective, emphasizing the importance of repentance, conviction of sin, and the revelation of God's holiness in leading sinners to true transformation and salvation.

Transcript

He said, you can't kill those. So one of the boys came in and said, it's all right, Mr. Klein. And he reached down very tenderly and picked them up and put them in a little bag and crimped the top.

And he put each cockroach in and they took them out in the jungle and let them loose. Now here was a man that believed his philosophy, reverence for life. Utterly committed to it.

Utterly consistent. Even when it came to the matter of a cockroach or a microbe. Do you see? This is humanism.

This is consistency. Now I ask you, what is the philosophy of mission? What is the philosophy of evangelism? What is the philosophy of a Christian? If you'll ask me why I went to Africa, I'll tell you I went primarily to improve on the justice of God. I didn't think it was right for anybody to go to hell without a chance to be saved.

And so I went to give poor sinners a chance to go to heaven. Now I hadn't put it in so many words, but if you'll analyze what I've just told you, do you know what it is? It's humanism. That I was simply using the provisions of Jesus Christ as a means to improve upon human conditions of suffering and misery.

And when I got to Africa, I discovered that they weren't poor ignorant little heathen running around in the woods looking for someone to tell them how to go to heaven. That they were monsters of iniquity. They were living in utter and total defiance of far more knowledge of God than I ever dreamed they had.

They deserved hell. Because they utterly refused to walk in the light of their conscience. And the light of the law written upon their heart and the testimony of nature and the truth they knew.

And when I found that out, I assure you, I was so angry with God that one occasion in prayer I told him that it was a mighty little thing he'd done. Sending me out there to reach these people that were waiting to be told how to go to heaven. When I got there I found out they knew about heaven and didn't want to go there.

And that they were loved their sin and wanted to stay in it. I went out there motivated by humanism. I'd seen pictures of lepers.

I'd seen pictures of ulcers. I'd seen pictures of native funerals. And I didn't want my fellow human beings to suffer in hell eternally after such a miserable existence on earth.

But it was there in Africa that God began to tear through the overlay of this humanism. And it was that day in my bedroom with the door locked that I wrestled with God. For I was coming to grips with the fact that the people that I thought were ignorant and wanted to know how to go to heaven and were saying, someone come and teach us, actually didn't want to take time to talk with me or anybody else.

They had no interest in the Bible and no interest in Christ. And they loved their sin and wanted to continue in it. And I was to the place at that time where I felt the whole thing was a sham and a mockery and I'd been sold a bill of goods.

And I wanted to come home. And there alone in my bedroom, as I faced God honestly with what my heart felt, it seemed to me I heard him say, yes, will not the judge of all the earth do right? The heathen are lost. And they're going to go to hell, not because they haven't heard the gospel.

They're going to go to hell because they are sinners who love their sin. And because they deserve hell. But I didn't send you out there for them.

I didn't send you out there for their sake. And I heard as clearly as I've ever heard, though it wasn't with physical voice, but it was the echo of truth of the ages finding its way into an open heart. I heard God say to my heart that day something like this.

I didn't send you to Africa for the sake of the heathen. I sent you to Africa for my sake. They deserve hell, but I love them.

And I endured the agonies of hell for them. I didn't send you out there for them. I sent you out there for me.

Do I not deserve the reward of my suffering? Don't I deserve those for whom I died? And it reversed it all and changed it all and righted it all. And I wasn't any longer working for my cup and ten shekels in a jar, but I was serving the living God. And I was there not for the sake of the heathen.

I was there for the Savior that endured the agonies of hell for the heathen, who didn't deserve it. But he deserved them because he died for them. Do you see? Let me epitomize, let me summarize.

Christianity says the end of all being is the glory of God. Humanism says the end of all being is the happiness of man. And one was born in hell, the deification of man.

And the other was born in heaven, the glorification of God. And one is Levite serving Micah, and the other is a heart that's unworthy serving the living God because of the highest honor in the universe. What about you? Why did you repent? I'd like to see some people repent on biblical terms again.

There was George Whitfield, you know him? He stood on Boston Common speaking to 20,000 people, and he said, You're a monster. Monsters of iniquity deserve hell. And the worst of your crimes is that criminals, though you've been, you haven't had the good grace to see it.

He said if you will not weep for your sins and your crimes against the Holy God, George Whitfield will weep for you. That man would put his head back, and he would sob like a baby. Why? Because they were in danger of hell? No.

But because they were monsters of iniquity that didn't even see their inner care about their crimes. Do you see the difference? Do you see the difference? The difference is here is somebody trembling because he's going to be hurt in hell, and he has no sense of the enormity of his guilt, and no sense of the enormity of his crimes, and no sense of his insult against deity. He's only trembling because his skin is about to be singed.

He's afraid. And I submit to you that whereas fear is this good office work in preparing us for grace, it's no place to stop. The Holy Ghost doesn't stop there.

And that's the reason why no one can savingly receive Christ until they've repented. And no one can repent until they've been convicted. And conviction is the work of the Holy Ghost that helps a sinner to see that he is a criminal before God and deserves all of God's wrath, and if God were to send him to the lowest corner of a devil's hell forever and ten eternities, that he deserves it all and a hundredfold more.

Because he's seen his crimes. He's not been convinced he's caught, but he has seen his crimes. And this is the difference between twentieth-century preaching and the preaching of John Wesley.

Wesley was a preacher of righteousness that exalted the holiness of God. And when he would stand there with the two- to three-hour sermons that he was accustomed to deliver in the open air, and he would exalt the holiness of God and the law of God and the righteousness of God and the justice of God and the wisdom of His requirements and the justice of His wrath and His anger, and then he would turn to sinners and tell them of the enormity of their crimes and their open rebellion and their treason and their anarchy. The power of God would so descend upon the company that on one occasion it is reliably reported that when the people dispersed there were eighteen hundred people lying on the ground utterly unconscious because they'd had a revelation of the holiness of God.

And in the light of that, they'd seen the enormity of their sin. And God had so penetrated their minds and hearts that they had fallen to the ground. It wasn't only in Wesley's day.

It was also in America, New Haven, Connecticut, Yale. A man by the name of John Wesley Redfield had continuous ministry for three years in and around New Haven, culminating in the great meetings in the Yale Ball, the first of the Yale Balls back in the 18th century. And the policemen were accustomed during those days if they saw someone lying on the ground to go up and smell his breath.

Because if he had alcohol in his breath, they'd lock him up. But if he didn't, he had Wesley Redfield's disease. And all you needed to do if anyone had Redfield's disease was just take them into a quiet place and leave them until they came to.

Because if they were drunkards, they did stop drinking. And if they were cruel, they stopped being cruel. And if they were immoral, they gave up their immorality.

If they were thieves, they returned what they had. For as they had seen the holiness of God and seen the enormity of their sin, the Spirit of God had driven them down into unconsciousness because of the weight of their guilt. And somehow in this overspreading of the power of God, sinners repented of their sin and came savingly to Christ.

But there was a difference. It wasn't trying to convince good men that he was in trouble with a bad God. But that it was to convince bad men that they deserved the wrath and anger of a good God.

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