

Why Men Do Not Come to Christ

By Henry Mahan

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...seen this program before know that for the past eight or 10 years I have been writing the Bible class and Sunday school lessons for our congregation and these Sunday school lessons, these Bible class lessons have been put in print. And we have a new book just off the press a few weeks ago. It is the Gospel of John. And I would like for you to have a copy of this book. I will tell you what it is. I took the book of John and wrote Sunday school lessons verse by verse beginning at John 1:1 and going through the last chapter. Every verse is covered in simple plain, easy to understand language. I tried to get the meaning of the verse and convey it to you.

Now, if you would like to have this book, I would like to give them away, but I cannot do it. And we are selling them for three dollars a piece. If you would like to have this gospel of John. There are about 212 pages and every single verse in the book of John is covered, as I said, in plain, simple, easy to understand language. And I believe by the power of God and by the power of the Spirit of God I picked up the meaning of each verse. And I believe you will enjoy it.

Now, if you want the book, write to me and send three dollars and we will get the book in the mail to you right away. Also, let me mention, while we are talking about these books, most of you have already heard about this six volume commentary on the epistles of the New Testament. There are 21 epistles in the New Testament. And I have written Sunday school lessons, Bible class lessons, verse by verse, from the first verse of Romans to the last verse of Jude, 21 epistles in the New Testament. Now, this set in the container is ten dollars. So you remember that. At the close of the broadcast the announcer will give you the address of the church. Make your check out to the church and we will mail you, if you want the commentaries they are ten dollars for the set of six volumes. And if you want the book of John it is three dollars for the single copy of the book of John. You can have as many as you would like to have if you want to buy some for gifts for friends or...we would be happy to send them to you. So let us hear from you if you want these books.

Now, I want you to open your Bibles today to the book of John chapter five, the fifth chapter of John, verse 39 and 49. Now, here is my subject. Here is my subject. It is a question. Why do men not come to Christ? Why do men not come to Jesus Christ? Christ is the light. Men live in darkness. Why won't they come to the light? Christ is the life. And we are dead in trespasses and sin. Why won't men come to him that they might have life? That is what he says in our text. He is speaking to the religious people and he says, "You search the Scriptures. You search the Scriptures. For in them, in the

Scriptures you think you have eternal life. And they are they which testify of me and you will not come to me that you might have eternal life.”

Now why will men not come to Christ if he is the life, if he is the light, if he is the truth, if he is the way, if he is the only mediator between men and God? Why do they not come to Christ?

Well, I can answer that question. And if you will listen carefully to me you will hear the answer. Now, let me relate to you the account of three people who came to Christ. Here are three people who came to Christ and were healed. They were made whole. They were saved. They were delivered. They came to Christ. And I want you to notice, as I am relating to you these stories of these three people who came to Christ, notice what these people had in common. There were several things they had in common, but one particular thing they had in common and it will answer the question why men do not come to Christ.

Now, first of all, in Matthew eight, verse one through three, our Lord came down from the mountain and multitudes of people gathered about him. And when he came down from the mountain the Scripture says in Matthew eight that a leper—and you know something about leprosy in those days, incurable, impossible to heal, deadly, fatal, a rotting, corrupting disease. People just withered away and died. Well, this leper in his uncleanness and in his inability came to Christ and the Scripture says he fell down at his feet and worshipped him and he said, “Lord, Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.”

And our Lord said, “I will. I will. Be thou clean.”

And from that moment he was made whole.

Now, in Matthew nine, as our Lord walked down the streets of a certain city and, again, the multitude followed him everywhere he went there were great crowds of people, multitudes following him. And in that crowd was a little woman who had been ill, seriously ill for 12 long years. The Scripture said she had wasted everything she had. She had gone to this physician and that physician. She had spent everything she had and she was no better, only grew worse. And finally she said, “If I may but touch his clothes, the clothes of Jesus Christ, I will be made whole.” And so she came through the crowd and found her way, probably on her hands and knees because so many people were about him.

And she reached out that quivering, frail, feeble, hand and she touched him. And immediately, the Scripture says, she was made whole.

And our Lord said, “Who touched me?”

And the disciples said, “Well, Lord, many people have touched you. There is a crowd around here and everybody has pushed and shoved and touched you.”

He said, “But somebody, somebody... “ And that is the only name she has in the Scripture. We don’t know her name. We just know her as somebody. Our Lord said, “Somebody touched me. I perceive that power, virtue is gone out of me.”

And the woman, when she knew that she was not hid she stepped forward and she told the Lord everything. And he said, “Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole. God in peace.”

And then when our Lord passed through the city of Jericho—now here is the third one—are you thinking, listening? As our Lord passed through the city of Jericho and the crowd following him again, much noise and commotion. And there was a blind beggar, Bartimaeus, son of Timaeus sitting by the wayside begging, sitting there in his darkness, blind from birth, sitting there in his filth with an old blanket covering him, holding out some sort of cup begging for help as people pass by. And he heard the commotion and he said, “What is it? And someone said to him, “Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.”

And he began to cry out loudly, “Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy upon me. Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.”

And the people tried to quiet him down. They said, “He has got no time for you. Be still. Don’t bother the master. Just keep quiet.”

But the more they tried to keep him quiet the more he hollered, “Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me.”

And the Scripture says Jesus stood still and called for him. And he arose and came to Christ casting away his garment.

And the Lord asked him, he said, “What do you want me to do for you?”

He said, “Lord, that I may see.”

And the Lord said, “I will,” and made him whole immediately.

Now, then, what do all these people have in common as you have heard the stories? And you are familiar with them. You have read them before or heard somebody preach on these stories. Well, what do all these people have in common? What brought them to Christ?

Now our Lord said to these religious folks, “You will not come to me that you might have life. You will not come. How oft would I have gathered you,” he said, “of Jerusalem as a hen doth gather her brood, but you will not.”

Now why? Why won't they? These people did. These people did. They were made whole. They were made clean. One received his sight. One was healed of leprosy and one was healed of a fatal disease, all incurable.

Well, let me give you several things they had in common. I know you have thought of these also, but first of all, all of them—and this is important—all of them had heard of the Lord Jesus Christ. They had some knowledge of who he was. Somebody told them about Christ. That is the importance of this preaching business. That is the importance of this business of preaching the gospel. God had chosen by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. And these people, all three of them, they called his name. Each one of them called him Lord. The leper says, "Lord, if you will you can make me clean." The woman said, "If I can but touch the hem of his garment, I will be made whole." Where did she learn that? Somebody told her that. She heard of Christ. She had some knowledge of who he was. They knew of his power to heal. Someone had told them about the Savior. They heard how he healed others. All of them had heard of Christ.

The Bible says, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. But how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" That is common sense. That is not only scriptural, that is common sense. How can you believe in one of whom you haven't heard? "And how shall they hear without a preacher?"

A man cannot trust an unknown Savior. He cannot rest in an unknown Redeemer. He has got to hear of Christ. Like the eunuch of old said to Philip as he read the Scriptures, he said, "Of whom does the prophet speak, of himself or some other man? Who is he talking about? Tell me about this man, this Savior, this one by whose stripes we are healed."

See what I am saying? They had all heard of Christ.

All right. Secondly, now listen. All of them, what did they have in common? They all came to Christ himself. They came to Christ himself. The leper came to Christ. The woman with the issue came to Christ. Bartimaeus came to Christ. They didn't come to his mother. They came to him. I see no record anywhere in the Scripture of Mary healing or saving or forgiving anybody. Nobody came to her. And then they did not go to the temple. There was no power in the temple. They didn't go to the fount. They didn't go to the sacrifices. They didn't go down front and talk to a disciple. I don't find any of these people looking up the disciples to shake hands with them and talk with them. And they didn't call a counselor to talk to them about Jesus. They came to Christ, directly, personally to Christ. Oh, how important this is.

Our Lord said, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden. I will give you rest."

He said, again, "If any man thirst, let him come to me and out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

Christ is the Savior. Christ is the Redeemer. There is strength and power and healing is in him, not in his messengers, not in his temple, not in his law, not in his ordinances. They came directly to Christ. That is what I urge you to do. Go to Christ.

“I will go to Jesus though my sins hath like a mountain raised and I will say to him, ‘I am a wretch undone without your sovereign grace.’”

And now the third thing that these people had in common, all of them recognized that the power to heal and save was in him, not in them. It was in him.

Listen to the leper. “Lord, if you will, you can make me whole.”

Whose will are we talking about here? His will, the Lord’s will. He doeth according to his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of this earth. Blind Bartimaeus said, “Jesus, thou Son of David, you have mercy on me.” It is not a matter of me letting you have mercy or letting you save me or deciding to let you heal me. It is a plea and a call and a cry directly to the Lord for his will to be done. “Lord, if you will, you can make me whole.”

I hear people talking today, “I believe I will let God save me. I believe I will let God have his way. I believe I will let God have his...work his plan for my life.”

You don’t let God do anything. Where do you ever find God begging any man to let him show mercy to him?

Listen to the publican as he cries in the temple. “God, be merciful to me the sinner. Be merciful to me the sinner.” This is a plea for mercy.

Listen to the thief on the cross. “Lord, I am getting what I deserve.” I am receiving due reward for my deeds. You have done nothing amiss. Will you remember me when you come into your kingdom? That is a plea for mercy. These people all heard of Christ. They came directly to Christ and they knew, as they came to him, that he owed them nothing. He was not obligated to them, that if he healed them it was according to his will, it was in his power. Salvation is of the Lord, not in the hands of men. It is in the hands of God.

Our Lord prayed in John 17, “Father, thou hast given me authority over all flesh that I should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given me.” Christ has the power to heal. He has the power to save. He has the power to show mercy. He has the power to give life. It is in his hands, not in yours or mine.

Now I will show you this. All these people believed Christ. They not only believe he was, that he existed, that he was there, that he was real, but they believed that he had the power to make them whole. They did. The leper said, “Lord, if you will, you can. I know you can. I know you are able.”

See, this is what Abraham believed. Abraham is our pattern of faith. He is the father of the faithful. All who believe are the seed of Abraham. And the Scripture says of Abraham, he believed God that God was able to do all that he promised. Abraham believed God and he believed God's Word.

And these people came to Christ believing, believing. That leper knew, beyond a shadow of a doubt that if the Lord was willing he had the power to make him whole, the power to make him clean. "He is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by him." He is able to do all that he promised, Abraham said. He is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless, unblamable, unreprouvable, holy, justified in his sight. He is able to raise our vile bodies and make them like his own. He is able. And they believed him, not a doubt about his ability or his power to make them whole.

All right. Are you with me? Well, now, here is the most important reason of all. These people had this in common. They all came to Christ. They heard of him. They came to him. They believed that salvation and healing was by his power and in his hands and they genuinely believed it. They didn't doubt him.

Yet what brought them to Christ in the first place? What was there about them that caused them to seek him and to seek his mercy and call upon him and plead for his cleansing and healing? They all needed him. They were all sick. They were all in trouble.

Why did the leper come to Christ? He was a leper. That is why he came to Christ. Why did the woman who was hopelessly ill come to Christ? She was hopelessly ill. That is why she came. Why did the beggar come to Christ? He was blind. They needed Christ. They needed him.

What brings a man to the well? Thirst. What brings a man to the table? Hunger. What brings a man to the doctor? Sickness. What brings a sinner to the Savior? What does? He is a sinner. And only the Savior can make him whole. And therefore, knowing that, realizing that, he comes to Christ.

One day our Lord was having a meal and he was surrounded by publicans and sinners, just folks off the street, just folks like you and me, just sinners. And they were having a meal and standing off somewhere were a bunch of religious people, you know, proud, self righteous, arrogant Pharisees and Sadducees and they began to murmur. And they said "Why..." said to his disciples, they said, "Why does your master eat with people like that? Why does he fellowship with sinners and publicans? Why does he hang around with folks like that?"

And our Lord knew what they said. And with a scathing rebuke I am sure he pointed his finger and he said this, "The well do not need a physician, but they that are sick. You go learn what that means. I am come not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. I am come to call sinners to repentance."

So what is the crowing thing, what is the chief and important reason why these people came to Christ? They needed him. They needed him.

In Luke chapter 9:11 it says, "He healed all that had need of healing." And that is what he is doing today. He is saving all that need saving. He is forgiving all that need forgiveness. He is showing grace to the guilty and mercy to the miserable and salvation to sinners.

I'll answer some questions for you. I know they are on your mind. And I will answer them for you. Do you wonder why our wife or husband or perhaps your children, you wonder why they have no interest in the Savior? Do you wonder why they have no interest in the Bible? Do you wonder why they won't go to church with you? Do you wonder why they won't talk about the gospel with you?

They are not sinners. They have no need.

"Oh," you say, "Preacher, everybody is a sinner."

Ask them. Everybody is a sinner, but everybody doesn't admit it. Everybody doesn't know it. And everybody who knows he is a sinner needs Christ and he is seeking the Lord. That is right. Do you wonder why people on the job...now you work there in the office and on the job down in the plant. You wonder why people will talk about preachers? They will talk about all the preachers. They will name them, tell you who they like best and who they don't like and all this sort of thing. They will talk about church, where you go to church, where I go to church and on and on. They will talk about denominations.

"Well, I am a Baptist."

"I am a Methodist."

"I'm Presbyterian."

They will talk about the millennium. They will talk about the antichrist. They will talk about everything but Jesus Christ and him crucified. Ever wonder why that is? They don't need a crucified Savior. They don't need a lamb. They don't need a sacrifice. They are sinners. They are pretty good people. They are not perfect, you know, they will tell you.

"Yeah, well, I am not perfect. I am no saint, but I am no sinner. I am not a sinner man. Why only sinners need a Savior."

See, Christ came to save sinners. The Bible plainly says he died for the ungodly. He said he came to seek and to save the lost. When the angel announced his birth to Joseph he said, "Call his name Jesus. He will save his people from their sins, sins, sins."

And you wonder why those folks don't talk about Christ and him crucified? They don't have any sins.

See, the leper was a leper and Christ was the only one who could help him. And he came to Christ. The woman with the issue was bleeding to death and no one could stop it but Christ. And the blind man was sitting in darkness and since the beginning no man has ever opened blind eyes, but Christ. So he came to Christ. And you, my friend, and I are born in Adam, sinners, defiled, corrupt, polluted and headed for an eternity without God. And there is only one who can make us clean, make us see, make us hear, make us walk, make us live and that is Jesus Christ.

The Church can't do it. The Baptists can't do it. The law can't do it and your preacher can't do it. And the priest can't do it and Mary can't do it and your denomination can't do it, but Christ can. And if you believe that you would come to Christ.

You wonder why preachers preach about everything in the world but Christ and him crucified. They are not sinners either. You wonder why they spend their time talking about themselves and their pet projects and never preach Christ, never preach the gospel? They don't need him. Do you wonder why churches in the entertainment business instead of the gospel business? They are not sinners. There is not a sinner in the carload. There is not a sinner in the congregation or in the choir. But when you find people who are miserable, naked and blind, when you find people who are sinners, guilty before God, facing a death that is certain and a judgment that is sure and an eternity that is oh so long, they want to hear about Christ. They want to hear about the cross. They want to hear about the blood that was shed. They want to hear about the great physician. They want to hear about him who makes men whole.

Where is the fear of the Lord in this day? Come on, now. Where is it? Men talk like God is their cousin or something. Where is the fear of the Lord, the fear in addressing him or speaking his name or speaking of him? Where is the tear of repentance? Where is the cry of what must I do to be saved?

I hear that all the way through the Bible. "What must I do to be saved?"

I hear people begging folks and pulling them by the arm. Most people are afraid to go to the average church. They are afraid somebody is going to drag them down the aisle. They are afraid somebody is going to embarrass them, somebody is going to come back and shake them and collar them and button hole them and drag them down to an altar. So they won't go to church at all to keep from being embarrassed.

I don't find God's disciples doing that. I don't find preachers in the Bible doing that. I find them preaching Christ and preaching the gospel and I hear the congregation asking the preacher, "Well, sirs, what must I do to be saved? What must I do?"

Where is that crowd today? Where is the crowd the Macedonians? “Come over and help us. Come over, Paul, and help us. Come over and preach to us. Come over and tell us the good news.”

No. We are too busy having singing conventions and taking up money for all these projects and telethons and entertaining sinners on the road to hell. Nobody needs any help because nobody is lost. Nobody is a sinner. A sinner is hard to find, hard to find, scarce as hen’s teeth, a sacred thing. The Holy Ghost has made him so.

Here is your answer. Why do men not come to Christ that they might have life? They think they have already got it. They think they have already got it and they are twice dead and plucked up by the roots. Why don’t they come to Christ for healing? Because they are not sick.

A man takes his first step toward heaven when he realizes he is a sinner. That leper took his first steps towards Christ when he saw what he was, when he saw what he was and realized only Christ could make him whole.

That woman took her first step toward Christ when she realized her...she said, “I spent everything, no better. Nobody can help me, only Christ.” And that brought her to Christ.

And that old blind beggar was sitting there by the wayside all these days and weeks and months since he heard the story of Christ, since he heard the good news of the one who could give sight to the blind. And he said, “If he ever comes my way, if he ever comes my way, oh, if he ever comes my way, I am going to call on him.”

And I will tell you. If you are blind enough and sick enough and corrupt enough—and I know what I am by nature, I know I need Christ. And I will go to Jesus. How about you?

Now, this message is on a cassette tape, “Why Men do not Come to Christ,” along with another message. If you want it, the tape is two dollars. The book is three, John, and the commentary is ten dollars.

Until next week at this same time, God bless you everyone.