

Come and See a Man Who Told Me Everything,
Could This Be Saviour of the World?

Jesus and the Samaritan woman

David Watson, who was an Anglican priest, evangelist and author, who sadly died in 1984, wrote,

“At university I studied philosophy and soon discovered the truth that a metaphysician is a blind man in a dark room looking for a black cat that isn’t there.” Many people feel as hopeless as that about their search for God.

A social worker visited a sick boy in the streets of Lagos and found some books on his table near his bed. They were – a Bible, the book of Common Prayer, the Koran, a copy of the Watch Tower, a book by Karl Marx, and another with a title How to Stop Worrying.

Man's long search for God can be a very confusing business. But Christianity is not about man groping blindly for God, but about God seeking for individuals, because he loves them and wants to know and love him.

Malcolm Muggeridge was an English journalist and satirist. Muggeridge was attracted to communism and went to live in the Soviet Union in the 1930s, and the experience turned him into an anti-communist.

During World War II, he worked for the British government as a soldier and a spy, first in East Africa for two years and then in Paris. In the aftermath of the war, he converted to Christianity and helped to bring Mother Teresa to popular attention in the West. He said, “I've never wanted a God or feared a God or felt under any necessity to invent one. Fortunately, I've been driven to the conclusion that God wants me.”

God wants me!

She is a lonely woman who arrives at the well, in the hottest part of the day, to fetch water, and there she meets a stranger who turns out to be Jesus. Jesus is tired and thirsty. She is a Samaritan woman and Jesus is a Jew who should have no relationship with this woman. But Jesus reaches out to her, and asks for a drink of water; this initiates a conversation around living water, and Jesus begins to have an open conversation with her about her life; this conversation sparks something deep in her life, so much so, that she leaves her water jar, and she returns to her village to tell her

neighbours, “Come see a man who told me everything...” She discovered the grace of God.

The Water Jar

We are told that “She left her water jar with Jesus”, what an amazing little detail that the apostle John adds to this chance meeting.

Why did John add this little detail into his story?

The water jar symbolised her past life, it's what she would have done every day, it was her purpose in life, she was the one who collected water for her family.

She came to the well, alone and now she is not alone, she has discovered a peace in her life. Today, she has no need for the water jar and leaving it behind symbolised that she had left behind her former life, her sins, failings, she left them with Jesus.

This is the second time that John speaks about water jars. You remember the first, only a few chapters earlier, at the wedding feast in Cana where they ran out of wine.

What did Jesus say to his disciples? *Go and fill the water jars.* His first miracle and Jesus was able to transform the ordinary into the extra ordinary and now again a water jar, and this time he transforms the woman from something ordinary into extraordinary – his spirit filled her life. She now has living water,

She received living water, and so in return, she blesses Jesus with the water that she drew from the well!

How can we bless Jesus today? What can we give to him? What can we leave with him?

Our worship? Our Service? Our love? Our money?

Did she leave it because she was in a hurry to get back home, undoubtedly, like the two men on the Emmaus Road, after meeting with Jesus, they raced back to Jerusalem, to tell the disciples that they had walked with the risen Christ.

Did she leave it because her mind was taken up with a higher purpose, now that she had met someone who told her everything?

Probably... her head was now lifted, and she had much to praise God for.

When we leave here today, can we leave behind our water jars?

Which represent our concerns for this life, our sins, our doubts, our failings and our fears. You're welcome to leave them here in Cadder Church for Jesus is here to receive them. He wants to take your water jars from you and fill you with living water.

She rushed back to her own people, with good news to share with them.

She becomes the first evangelist in John's gospel.

Come and See – The first evangelist

And her message is simple, “Come and see a man...”

She had found treasure and so wants to share it. Luke 15 v9. She is like the old woman in Jesus' parable who had lost a gold coin and she searched the house for it and when she found it, she called her friends and neighbours together and said, “Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.”

She begins her crusade at home, in her home village.

Missionary work begins at home; Africa and India may be attractive, but how great is the need amongst our own folks here in Scotland, Glasgow, Bishopbriggs, Cadder Parish, our own street and our homes. If we are in Christ, we are all called to be missionaries. We can learn from Jehovah's Witnesses in this, that they are not timid in sharing their faith. We have a faith to share, for we are in relationship with the living God.

Yet, how challenging it is to witness to those closest to us, don't they see our mistakes and failings? Don't they see our dark side? Don't they see us first thing in the morning and last thing at night?

Yet when Christ enters our lives, they will also see our light and see Christ in us and that is what we want to show them.

This woman was amazed at his knowledge, she said. He told her all things... her life flashed before her as Jesus shared with her her story.

It was like watching a video, Jesus was able to tell her about marriage by marriage. God knows everything about us, we cannot hide our past from God, he sees it all. He knows our story, all the twists and turns, highs and low.

We might want to run and hide from God, like Adam and Eve, cover up our failings, but there is no hiding from God, “Come see a man who told me

everything I ever did”, she said. She was liberated, freed from her past, forgiven, cleansed, she was a new creation.

So, she invites her neighbours to come and see, not to watch a show, not to be entertained, but to also encounter the all-knowing, all-seeing God.

That’s my task on a Sunday morning – to help us all see Jesus a little bit better.

God working with Clay Jars

It is interesting to note how God can work through the unlikeliest of people. Earlier on the day, this woman was ostracised by her own people, sent to fetch water, alone in the hottest part of the day, a sinner, she had five husbands and living now in sin; now they are listening to every word she has to say. I'm delighted that God chose this poor woman to be his first evangelist. God chooses weak vessels, pots of clay, to do his work and ministry. “But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us”. 2 Cor 4 v7

God can start a great fire of revival through one person; the revival in Lewis in 1949-52, was started by a couple of old sisters gathered to pray for their island. God can use the unlikeliest of people to do his work and to start a great ministry.

Let us not be discouraged when the numbers are lower than they were in 1960's. God is still at work, it's his church and perhaps he is waiting for you, to fall on your knees in prayer and pray for revival.

He can use us all to spread the Gospel. He can use us to fill this church till it's brimming over. Just as he told the disciples to fill the water jars to the brim and he turned the water into wine. God tells us to prepare, to do our part and believe that he is able to a great work.

Notice that she was not a trained speaker, nor a scholar, nor a rabbi, nor a minister, she was an ordinary sinful woman who had been touched by the grace of Jesus. She was a clay pot.

An encouragement for us all, to be apostles for Jesus, to be evangelists, and you don't need a degree or college certificate, all you need is a heart that has been touched by Jesus, for this lady could now go out and share what

God had for her, “come see a man that has opened up my world, who has touched my life, who brought me grace and peace”.

She doesn't immediately say, come and see the Messiah, no... it is come and see this man and make up your own mind about him, and I think that is important for us also, to lay that before people, come and see a man, come and make your own assessment of Christ.

In the words of Matthew Henry, the great preacher and theologian of a past century, “This woman became an Apostle” it's amazing that the first Apostle was actually a Samaritan woman!

Come and See - Invitation

This is a message for the Church today, a message, that we are all capable of sharing the good news of Jesus, “Come and see...” An invitation may be all that some people need...an invitation to come to church...come and see. People may just be waiting for your invitation.

When was the last time we invited someone to church?

For many people today, the church is an alien place...most of us here have been brought up in the church, but for those who are not familiar with churches, they might see the church as a place only for a select few...only for the righteous...Think how hard it is to enter a church for the first time. Where do I sit, what will people think, who will speak to me, do I need to take money, am I good enough, what time is the service, and the list can be endless...the devil has fun in inventing ways for people not to come to the Church.

In the age that we're living in, it's a miracle when someone new comes to Church!

People need an invitation, people need encouraged, it's OK, the minister hasn't got three heads, he's actually quite friendly; just like this woman did for her community, come and see, and I'll take you to meet him..

Who could I invite this week, who could you invite?

Then when they meet him and hear him, they want him to stay longer.

They urge him to stay for a few days, just like the two men on the Emmaus Road who urged Jesus to stay for a few extra days. What a blessing to have Jesus stay in your life; you don't need to urge him to stay or linger, he wants

to come and stay in your heart for ever. But you must invite him. David Livingstone once said, "Jesus is a gentleman of honour."

Jesus will never force his way, he must be invited.

But when you do, what a blessing to know his grace and peace.

Because of his words many more became believers.

Friends, the importance of the words of Jesus. If we want Jesus to stay in our hearts, we must dwell upon his words, we must sit at his feet and listen to his teachings, we must meditate and study his words. Because of his words, many more became believers...many more and there is the secret of a growing church, a church that puts the words of Jesus first and foremost, a church that is not ashamed to own our Lord, a church that fervently believes that the Word did become flesh and dwell among us. The word is powerful, it is a two-edged sword; the Word of God is like air to birds and water to fish; we cannot live spiritually without the words of Jesus. Get down that old Bible and open it up and receive again its treasure and you'll be like the lady who found her gold coin.

Notice how their faith grew.

They grew in their understanding of who Jesus was.

Saviour of the World

Upon the testimony of the woman, they believed him to be a prophet. But after meeting him and listening to him, they came to the conclusion that this is the Saviour of the World.

What a claim. They believed him not to just be the Saviour of the Jews or the Saviour of the Samaritans, in fact he was the Saviour of the whole world. "We know that this man really is the Saviour of the World", they said. So, their faith grew in certainty.

This was the seed of the Gospel, first sown in Samaria. A seed that was to take root after the death and resurrection of Jesus; but Jesus first planted the gospel in Samaria and after his resurrection, he instructed the disciples to take the Gospel out to Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria.

This woman, when she met Jesus she saw him as a thirsty man, then as a Jew, then as a Rabbi, afterwards a prophet, last of all the Messiah. Who is Jesus to you?

There is a legend, which is worth telling because it contains an important truth.

The Devil held a passing out parade at the evil spiritual academy for his first year apprentices. During the course of the day, he questioned three of his evil spirits. To the first he said, "When you get out into the world, what are you going to say to people?"

"Oh", the evil spirit said, "I shall tell them that there is no God".

"That's no use" said the Devil. "Creation tells people that there is a God. Not many people will believe you".

Then he said to the second one, "And what are you going to tell people?"

"I shall say that there is not going to be a judgement."

"That's not much use either" said the Devil, "conscience tells them about judgement. Not many will believe you".

The third evil spirit said, "I shall tell them that there is a God and that there is a judgement to come but I shall add, that there is no hurry!"

"Excellent..." said the Devil, "many will believe you".

I believe that the Devil does try to persuade people that there is no hurry about turning to God, or putting things right in the world, whereas the truth is that time is running out fast, and the right time to respond to God's voice is always now – as soon as we hear it.

For the lady in our story, Jesus may never pass that away again, Psalm 95v8, "Today if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts" and if you hear and want to respond, but need some help, come and see me, come and share. That's what I'm here for.