

Jesus Unfiltered

Session 11: How You Can Easily Tell Anyone About Jesus

Unedited Transcript

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Good morning, men. So for the first time ever that I can remember, we are not going to have a shout out this morning because Kimberly is on vacation. So that's the way it worked out. So we're going to continue in this series, Jesus Unfiltered, this morning. We're going to take another look at the woman at the well this morning. The title of the message today is How You Can Easily Tell Anyone About Jesus.

So it's interesting, I went to bed not really having a sense of passion about what I wanted to talk to you about this morning. So I have this one page outline, I've told you about this many times, that I use each week to make sure that I am on track in preparing a grace-based application-oriented Bible study for you. And the very first bullet on here, after I pick a text, the very first bullet on this worksheet says, "Probe until I find the passion in the text: What truth stirs me so deeply that I feel compelled to tell others about it immediately?" Well, I didn't have that last night when I went to bed.

And it's interesting because that's happened several times here in the last few weeks. But the Holy Spirit has always been trustworthy for all of us, but I have experienced the trustworthiness of the Holy Spirit to always deliver. Now, sometimes the message really resonates with me and sometimes it really resonates with you. But sometimes it doesn't. But that doesn't mean it wasn't the message that the Holy Spirit wanted to have delivered that day.

So I come to this message this morning finally feeling like I have something that I am so passionate about that I feel compelled to tell you about it immediately. Now, when I became a Christian, I was so in despair that you'd have had to jack me up to bury me six feet. I was so far under the ground, it was terrible. There is a verse in Proverbs 13 that says, "Hope deferred makes the heart sick." That was me. Hope deferred makes the heart sick. "But a longing fulfilled is a tree of life." And when that longing was fulfilled, when finally I understood that there was a savior ... Reinhold Niebuhr, a very famous theologian who wrote a book on the nature and destiny of man. He wrote the authoritative theological text on the doctrine of man.

And Niebuhr, he's the one that wrote the serenity prayer too, all of you in recovery know the serenity prayer, "God grant me the serenity to," whatever it is. But Niebuhr ... Okay, God grant me the serenity to change the things that I can, the courage to ... God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. Yay! Because I am in recovery too.

Niebuhr said this, he said, "In cultures where a Messiah is not expected, people are not asking any questions for which Jesus is the answer." But you and I know that we need help. We need hope. We have hope deferred. It makes our heart sick. We need someone to come and save us. And when I finally

... Jesus also said, he said, "When someone has a small debt forgiven, they have a small amount of gratitude. But when they have a huge debt forgiven, they have a big gratitude." And I had such a big debt, and I didn't even know there was a savior. But when I finally understood that there was someone who could save me from myself, I was just so overwhelmed. It was crazy. It was crazy.

And so I was like the biggest convert enthusiast, evangelist there ever was. I just could not believe what had happened to me. I could not believe that I could be in such despair for most of my life ... I quit high school. The despair was overwhelming. I'm in the Army, I'm driving to and from the post, and I'm weeping because I'm so depressed because life makes no sense. I even then tried going to church in the city where I was, but it was a church where the gospel was not preached and the Bible was not believed.

And so I remember going ... None of this was in what I was planning to say, by the way. But I remember going into the office of the pastor, the priest, of that church, and sitting down. And I had sunglasses on because my eyes were so red, I was embarrassed for him to see how much I had been crying my eyes out, sobbing my sorry eyes out, my hope deferred eyes out. And I went in there to see if I could find God. And I didn't.

He had a little twinkle in his eye and he said, "Well Pat, we all go through hard times like this but you're gonna get through this." And I didn't. And I just felt like I was getting buried deeper and deeper, not six feet under, but 16 feet under. I just felt like the mountain ... I was not only down in the valley, but the mountain had collapsed on top of me. And so when I didn't find God, but when God found me, when he entered my life, I just went crazy. It's just like this sentence here at the top of my outline, "What truth stirs me so deeply that I feel compelled to tell others about it immediately?"

And so I just basically, I went crazy. I was the nut. I became the nut you all tried to avoid. I would take ... I just started inviting all my friends to lunch. That was my ammo. I took every one of my friends to lunch, every single one of them. I said, "You're not going to believe what happened to me. Let me tell you what happened to me. You're not going to believe it." And then a lot of them said, "Wow. Nothing like that's ever happened to me." And they could identify with the hope deferred because I was telling them, "Hey, here's how I was. Here's something that happened to me. And here's how I feel now about it." And they said, "Well, I want to feel that way too."

And so I had gone through a little course that taught me how to just read a little booklet, a little campus crusade booklet. So I would just read them the booklet. And then I'd just, there were a couple questions, I'd just ask them the questions and just read them the questions. And then I'd say, "Do you want to become a follower of Jesus too?" And most of the time they said yes. And so we had a little revival among my friends. It was amazing. This Bible study in many ways came out of that because then we needed to start having places to ... We needed to have a place to talk about what do we do next. Now, what do we do? Now, what do we do?

And so I want to take you back to a story this morning where something very similar to that is happening. How You Can Easily Tell Anyone About Jesus is the title of the topic. If you would, turn again to chapter four, but we're going to start at verse 27. And the first thing is something so compelling that you can't keep it in. I can't help every time I ... Generational I guess, "Can't keep it in, gotta let it out," Cat Stevens song. Something so compelling you can't keep it in. Can't keep it in.

SOMETHING SO COMPELLING YOU CAN'T KEEP IT IN

So let's take a look and see what is happening here. So the conclusion of the conversation that Jesus has had with this woman was in verse 25, the woman had said, "I know that Messiah called Christ is coming." In cultures where a Messiah is not expected, people are not asking any questions for which Jesus is the answer. But in cultures where a Messiah is expected, people are asking questions. And so she said, "I know that Messiah called Christ is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

Then Jesus declared, "I who speak to you am He." Oh, my goodness. Oh, my goodness. And so then the disciples in verse 27 return. They're surprised to find him talking with a woman. If you were here last week, you recall she's a three striker. She's a Samaritan, so ethnically like an Irish Catholic in New York at the turn of the 20th century, just so many people didn't like. A low life, a Samaritan. And she was a woman. And we talked a little bit about that. And she was an immoral woman. She had some five husbands, living with a guy that wasn't her husband at the time. And so just then, the disciples returned and they were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?" Then leaving her water jar, the woman went back to town.

So it's interesting, this woman had come from the city to the well, and now she's going back a different person. She's going back a transformed person. Transformed by what? She's been transformed by an encounter with Jesus, or let's just say maybe perhaps it's a better thing to say she's in the process of being transformed by the person of Jesus. Think about the city, a city where hope has been deferred, a city where the people are looked down upon. It's a community, an ethnic community that's looked down upon.

And so you have this city that's just going along and not knowing that anything is going to be different in the future. And you have a woman who's going out to get water in the middle day probably because she doesn't want to be around the other women because they're already ... She's already among a look-down-upon people and she's a look-down-upon person among a look-down-upon people and she probably doesn't want to have anymore ridicule or embarrassment or shame. So she goes out in the middle of the day to get water.

And up until that moment in history, hope has been deferred. And then she has this encounter with the Savior of the world, the visible image of the invisible God, the radiance of God's glory, the exact representation of the Father's being, all the fullness of the God head in bodily form. And she has this incredible encounter, this exchange, with the creator who is at the side of the Father, the one who actually is the creator, the one who did the work of creating the cosmos, hurled the cosmos into existence, set the boundaries of the oceans to the shore, who regulates the rising and the setting of the sun, and the ebb and the flow of tides. And she talks to Him. And He talks to her.

And He says, "I who speak to you am He." And now look what it says, "Then leaving her jar." Of course, she left her jar. It doesn't say she ran. It just says she went back in the town. But you can imagine the difference in what's going on inside of her as she is coming out versus going back in. Coming out hope deferred with a heart sick, going back in a longing fulfilled, the tree of life. And she's had something so compelling happen to her that she can't keep it in. And she goes back and look at what happens.

She said to the people, "Come see a man who told me everything I ever did." And then because she has an incredible emotional intelligence, she doesn't say, "There's a man that told me everything I ever did. You need to know him." She has high emotional intelligence. She said, "Could this be the Christ? Could this be the Messiah that we've been looking for? Could this be the one? Come see a man that told me everything I ever did." She invites them and, "Could this be the Christ? Could this be the Christ?"

And because ... And we'll get to a little bit more why they did this. But they came out of the town and made their way toward him. They came out of the town and made their way toward him. Something has happened to her and she knew it was the real thing. We live on a lake. We have a lot of osprey on our lake. About once every 10 years, an eagle comes by. But every time I see an osprey flying around on the lake, I say, "Is that an eagle? Is that an eagle?" Let me tell you, once an eagle shows up, you don't have to say, "Is that an eagle?" You never have to wonder if an eagle is an eagle. You know it is an eagle.

Rob took me fishing a couple weeks ago at the Rodman Dam and we had a two-hour long, or maybe it was a four-hour long, eagle show. It was amazing. I couldn't wait to tell you about it. I couldn't wait to tell you about it. And that's what happens when we have an encounter with the visible image of the invisible God. And that's the Big Idea today. **I'm going to explode unless I can talk about what just happened.** You see it with this woman. She's going to explode if she can't talk about what just happened. She leaves her jar. She rushes back in to town, a town where hope has been deferred.

Can you imagine ... You probably can, but just picture how dull and how monotonous and how hopeless it probably felt to live in this community of look-down-upon people. She rushes back into the city. And because of her enthusiasm, because of her enthusiasm, because she felt like she was going to explode, she couldn't wait to tell ... Because of that enthusiasm, they went. They went with her. It says, "They came out of the town and they made their way toward Jesus."

THE FIRST CITY-WIDE CRUSADE

And there's a little excursus in here, which I think we'll come back to next week. But drop down to verse 39. And what we see take place here is the first city-wide crusade. It's an extraordinary thing. We're very early in the life of Jesus here. We know that He has invited some of the 12 to become disciples, some individual conversion stories. But what we have here is the first city-wide crusade. And what has happened is that He's helped one person be transformed and that person is so compelled to talk to others about it that she becomes like the advance man for the crusade. She's the crusade director. She's the one who's doing all this ... She's the evangelist advance person for this crusade.

Verse 39, "Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony," because she was so excited about what had happened to her, and she's telling them, "Could this be the Christ? This man told me everything about myself, about my past. He told me everything about myself. Could this be the Christ?" I think it's also appropriate to tell you that some scholars do think that in this Greek word here, could this be the Christ in this ... That there may have been still some reservation on the part of the woman, and there probably was. If you had this encounter with God and you didn't think it was going to happen, and you were kind of surprised, it might take it a while for it to fully sink in to you. I know it took a while for it to sink in to me really.

So when I came to Christ, I prayed the prayer. Finally, Howard Ball, some of you may remember that name, finally one day, some of the guys said, "Hey, Morley keeps coming to these events and praying to receive Jesus. Can you sit down and explain it to him?" I'd probably been to 10 events and I kept praying to receive Jesus. And he explained it to me. He said, "You only have to do ... You only have to receive the gift once." I said, "Oh, okay. Well, that's fine." And then I was off to the races.

So that's probably a little bit what's going on here. But anyway, she still is so overwhelmed with what's going on, she can't keep it in. And so because of her testimony, it says, "Many believed. Many believed."

Verse 40, "So when the Samaritans came to him," in other words when they went to the stadium where the crusade was being held, about to be held, they urged him to stay with them. And he stayed two days. "And because of his words, many more became believers." And so the title here, How You Can Easily Tell Anyone About Jesus, you can do what she did. You can just say, "This man, here's what he's told me about myself. Could he be the Messiah?" And/or you can take them to the crusade. You can take them to your church. You can take them to this Bible study. You can take them somewhere where they can be brought into contact with him.

It says ... What does it say? What does it say? What does it say? It says, "And because of his words, many more became believers." We talk about his words. We're not talking about with a little twinkle in her eye, "Oh, everybody goes through things like this. You'll be okay." Oh, come on. We talk about his words. And so she told her story. They came out. Many believed because of her words, many more believed when they were brought into contact with the words of Jesus. And by the way, when you bring people into this place or into a place where the Bible is taught, the word of God is taught, Jesus is the word of God. He is here.

You from time to time must ... You wouldn't come back if you didn't. You must experience that sense of the presence of the Almighty. You have to experience it, or you wouldn't come back. I'm going to explode unless I can talk about what just happened. All right, so finally, how can we make our stories more compelling.

HOW CAN WE MAKE OUR STORIES MORE COMPELLING.

All right, so this is where it gets tricky. This is where it gets tricky. Because I want to give you some tactics. But I will have failed you completely if you think it's about tactics. It is not principally something that you do, telling others about Jesus. It's not principally something that you do. That would make it about performance. It's principally ... And honestly, it's not even principally because you love those people, although you do. You care about these people. But it's not even principally that they really need this new product that you've discovered. It's principally about you sensing the overwhelming degree with which Jesus loves you and has transformed your life, and you know that he can do that for others. It's principally about a response to what he has done in your life.

It's a radical transformation and you just can't keep it in. You gotta let it out. You feel it. You feel it. You gotta talk about it. And so with that is the caveat ... Let's talk about some tactics right here from the text. So the first thing we see from her, "Come see a man that told me everything I ever did." Personal transparency. Tactic number one is personal transparency. You can tell people about your doctrine and your theology and what you know and how many people will be converted by that. Good luck with that. Or you can tell them what Jesus has done in your life, what you were like before Jesus.

Hope deferred makes the heart sick. I was sick of heart. I had what Kierkegaard said, "The sickness unto death." That was me. And then I had this encounter with, you called him Jesus, but now I call him the visible image of the invisible God. I used to call him Messiah or Lord, and he is, but now I say, "I have seen the Father because I have seen Jesus. I know, I don't just think about God, I have seen God. I know who he is." And as a result, this is what's happening. What's happening? What's happening? What's happening? I'm going to explode unless I can talk to you about what's just happened. So personal transparency, tactic number one.

And then number two tactic is asking God to give us a love for the lost. That's a tactic. It's just asking ... You don't care about lost people? I get it. There are a lot of really crummy people out there. I was in the gym, I may have even told you this one because this is too good. I can't believe it. If I haven't told you this one before, it was an error not to tell it to you sooner. I was in the gym one day, and there was this big, giant, burly, hairy guy, a monster really, a beast. Yeah, he was a beast, just like you.

And so he'd been over there curling 45-pound dumbbells. 25-pound curls, something like that. Looking like he's got plastic dumbbells in his hands. And he's got this scowl on his face. He's a mean dude. You can tell he's a mean dude. You can tell he's a mean dude because there's nobody within 25 feet of him. And he walks over and we converge on the weight rack at about the time I'm putting back my five-pound dumbbells. And he takes those two 45s, and the slots are marked with the weights, and he puts the two 45s where the two 20s are supposed to go.

And then he looks up and our eyes meet. And he gives me that look. He's just daring me, "I just dare you to say a spittin' word about what just happened." So I didn't. What a jerk! And he's walking away. And I'm just overwhelmed. I don't know where it comes from. Yeah, I do know where it comes from, but it doesn't come from me. I'm just overwhelmed with a love, a compassion, for this guy. I just see so much pain in this guy that I'd like to have on my side if I ever got in a fight on the street.

And I just feel such a love for him. So just pray for ... And I pray for that all the time. Pray for it. Tactic number two .. Number one, personal transparency. Tactic number two, just asking for a love for the lost. This woman, think about it, she left her jar behind her and she had such a love for the love for the people in her city, she couldn't wait to get back to tell them what had just happened. And we're running out of time, so let me give you one more.

Have a good question in your hip pocket. Have a good question in your hip pocket. Look at what she did. She said, "He told me everything I've ever done. Could this be the Christ?" That's a great question. You could tell people what happened to you and say, "This is what happened to me. Could this be true? Could this be the Christ?" Or the question I like to ask, I call it the golden question, "Where are you on your spiritual journey today?" Because what truth stirs me so deeply that I feel compelled to tell others about it immediately. Because when you have had a genuine encounter with Jesus, then you're going to feel like this, the Big Idea, **"I'm going to explode unless I can talk about what just happened."**

So I hope that's where you are right now. And if you don't feel that way, then guess what? You might just want to consider spending some more time with Jesus. I told you all that I am ... And this is the last thing. I told you all that I'm reading through, some of you were here to hear it, I'm reading through the gospels once a month. I got the idea from Don. He's been doing that for a long time. I was reading through the Bible cover to cover every year. This year, I'm not doing that. I'm reading the gospels 12 times, 89 chapters.

And I wrote in the margin here, "I'm really getting to know Jesus." I'm really getting to know Jesus. So either you're going to feel like you're going to explode unless you can talk about what's happened to you or I just would encourage you just to really get to know Jesus more so that you feel this compelling desire. What is it? Something so compelling that you can't keep it in. Let's pray.

Our dearest Father, Lord. Thank you so much for giving us Jesus. Jesus, it's hard to understand, Lord, that you are the Father and the Father is you and how does that work. Help us to fully grasp more of the

depth of the gospel today through your words here, through your words here. And let us feel so gripped by the truth of what you have done for us that all the hope deferred that's made our hearts sick has now become a tree of life.

And Lord, for all the hopeless things that happened to us, even though we are in Christ day by day, return our thoughts to the splendor of your gospel. And then let this be the day in which we rejoice and are glad in it because we know that you are saving us. We ask this in Jesus' name, Amen.