

[00:00:00.570] - Speaker 1

Unfortunately, this transcript does not start at 0:00. The first 56 seconds are missing... I assume it began with the reading of the scripture so I am inserting it here:

John 4:27-42

English Standard Version

²⁷ Just then his disciples came back. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you seek?" or, "Why are you talking with her?" ²⁸ So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, ²⁹ "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?" ³⁰ They went out of the town and were coming to him.

³¹ Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." ³² But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." ³³ So the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought him something to eat?" ³⁴ Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work. ³⁵ Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, then comes the harvest'? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. ³⁶ Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. ³⁷ For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' ³⁸ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."

³⁹ Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me all that I ever did." ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. ⁴¹ And many more believed because of his word. ⁴² They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world."

There is still a bit missing...

The first time they heard the word was in the phrase television evangelists. That's the first time they heard of it. And of course, therefore, it was immediately associated with the very well-publicized hypocrisy of a

couple of these men. And then maybe some people who were reading about it in the papers decided to turn the dial and listen to some folks who have that same name. It wouldn't be that hard to find people working under that name of evangelist who are very judgmental and very self-aggrandizing.

[00:00:36.730] - Speaker 1

And then, a little more research reveals and disturbs many thoughtful persons when they discover that many, many Christians themselves do evangelism. And evangelism means, in the mind, I think, of the average person, it means to come to someone and try to convert them. Try to get them to leave their own religion or abandon their own personal belief systems and convert to the Christian system. And of course, I think the average thoughtful person finds that terribly narrow minded. And it's so common to hear this sort of comment.

[00:01:13.670] - Speaker 1

A person may say, "You know, Christianity is fine. I don't agree with all of it. Your religion is fine except for this one thing that I object to, and that is that you try to convert people to your religion. That's narrow minded, that's bigoted. It's unfair.

[00:01:27.970] - Speaker 1

Apart from that, it's fine. Just that one thing is the thing that bothers me." Sounds reasonable and sounds balanced, but it really is not.

[00:01:40.030] - Speaker 1

To change that one thing is to change everything. It's like saying, "Well, you know, I like everything about ice cream, I like everything about ice cream except the fact that it's frozen." Now, if you take away the frozenness, you've got something, it's pudding or it's dessert or it's something, you got something, but it's not ice cream anymore. Jesus Christ clearly does and demands in this passage again and again and again that we do this one little thing.

[00:02:15.370] - Speaker 1

Jesus calls it harvesting. Jesus, it's very clear that the whole purpose of the passage is to talk about that. Jesus has brought a woman to faith. She is bringing other people to faith. It says, literally, they have become believers.

[00:02:29.700] - Speaker 1

And Jesus actually chastises his disciples for not having the same heart for this that he does. He calls this harvesting. And he says, until you know the joy of harvesting, you don't know what it means to live a

satisfying life. I have a meat, you know not of, it's to do this work. There are several places in the Bible, here's one of them where the joy of Christianity is intrinsically linked to mission.

[00:03:05.130] - Speaker 1

We have got to deal with this issue. The word evangelism is a sticky issue for people who are observing Christianity and for people who are participating in Christianity. And right here we see harvesting is a major issue. You can't understand Christianity without it. You can't enter Christianity without it.

[00:03:23.800] - Speaker 1

A Christianity that doesn't have conversion and evangelism as part of it is something, but it's not Christianity. Ice cream without freezing is something, but it's not ice cream. Harvesting, so what is it? And I would like to point out just three things from the text. Jesus is teaching us that harvesting happens because of truth.

[00:03:50.390] - Speaker 1

And secondly, harvesting happens because of love. And thirdly, harvesting happens because of friendship. Or harvesting is friendship. Three things. Harvesting happens because of truth.

[00:04:01.540] - Speaker 1

It happens because of love. And harvesting, essentially, is friendship. Now, let's look at those three things, and then we'll know something about this meat that Jesus talks about. And I dare say all, most everybody in this room is famished, or at least undernourished, because we're not eating the meat that Jesus eats, and that meat is to do this work. All right, first of all, Jesus teaches here that harvesting happens because of truth.

[00:04:32.560] - Speaker 1

It's a matter of truth. Actually, what we're talking about is the mandate for harvesting. Jesus Christ is confronted by his disciples who come back and find him talking to a woman. I'll get back to that. But as you might know, for a man, for a Jewish man to be talking to a woman in public was considered very, very disrespectful, unrespectable, not the thing to do.

[00:04:57.230] - Speaker 1

And so, when they start to get on his case, he turns around and he says, you don't get it, do you? I'm doing the work of harvesting. I'm harvesting to eternal life. Now, if you want to see what he's doing, look and see what he's done to the woman. What has he done with her?

[00:05:14.860] - Speaker 1

We see that he's actually done two things. First of all, he has talked to her about her sin. She has accepted his assessment of her life and of her flaws, because she runs off and she says, "Watch this, here's a man who's told me everything I ever did." Now, she thinks that's wonderful, but you remember what he said if you were with us the last couple of weeks.

[00:05:37.610] - Speaker 1

What is it that he talked to her about? He talked to her about her multiple sexual partners. Instead of being repulsed by that, she has accepted it. And that's the first part. He has brought her to see his assessment of her life, her need.

[00:05:51.120] - Speaker 1

He's talked to her about her need, her need. And then secondly, he also has confronted her with himself. He says, I'm the provision for your need. Again, we looked at that last week. But what Jesus has said, in short, is he says, "I am the way to the Father, not the Temple in Jerusalem, not the Temple in Samaria, not any other way.

[00:06:12.250] - Speaker 1

I'm the way inside. I'm the way to have access to the Father, I am he," he says. And when she sees that, she runs, she runs off, and she's saying two things, see? She's saying on the one hand, "come see a man who told me everything I ever did."

[00:06:28.060] - Speaker 1

And secondly, "is this the Christ?" I see my need and I see that my need has been provided for. So, what is harvesting? It's confronting someone with their need for Christ, then confronting them with the provision of Christ, all in order to bring them into eternal life. That's what Jesus says. Now listen, Christianity has always been, and it has to be evangelistic.

[00:06:57.820] - Speaker 1

I'm not going to back away from that word, at least only partially. See, the word evangelist means literally the gospel, or it literally means good news. What is good news? Good news is news. That's good.

[00:07:13.800] - Speaker 1

Listen, first of all, news, something is news only if you're ignorant of it. The idea of good news means you assume that the person is ignorant of a part of reality that they need to know in order to have power. Ignorance is weakness. If I'm giving news to somebody, that means I'm assuming they're in an ignorant

condition, at least ignorant about this part of reality, and they need this news in order to get power. There are all sorts of examples from one extreme to the other.

[00:07:46.120] - Speaker 1

If I'm ignorant of where the Iraqi forces are, my US forces are at a disadvantage. If I'm ignorant of the fact that I actually have the smarts and the grades to get into a particular grad school, if I'm ignorant of that fact, I'm at a disadvantage. See, if I am ignorant of the behavior of the stock market, I don't know whether buy or sell. News brings power. Ignorance is weakness.

[00:08:12.770] - Speaker 1

And the idea of good news means, I assume, that the people out there are ignorant of some part of reality that in order for them to move out of weakness into strength, they need to receive my information. They need the truth. Good news, of course, means not just that this is news, but this is news that brings joy. This is news that brings that lifts sorrow, lifts anxiety. Yes, I will marry you.

[00:08:38.870] - Speaker 1

That's news. But it's not just news. It's good news. The cancer is in remission. That's just not news.

[00:08:45.100] - Speaker 1

But it's good news. Now, I want you to consider this. Anybody who has the truth of any kind in any part of reality must do good-newsing, because evangelism is just good-newsing. Here's a group of scientists, and they have decided that most of the treatments for multiple sclerosis, after many years of research, they say most of the treatments for MS are not only ineffective, but they're bad for you. And they come out with an article and they say, our research has shown that these things are bad for you and that this particular approach that we are now giving is much better for you.

[00:09:26.330] - Speaker 1

So, what they do, they publish it in the New England Journal of Medicine. And what are they doing? They're saying, "stop these things, don't do these things, do these things."

[00:09:36.680] - Speaker 1

Why? We have discovered some truth. We have discovered part of reality that unless you know what it is, you are going to be at a disadvantage. Now, is that narrow minded? They're trying to convert you.

[00:09:50.880] - Speaker 1

Is that narrow minded? Of course not. Now, let me ask you this is it narrow minded for people who say, our religion has shown us some reality, and we come to you and we say you need to convert. Now, is that narrow minded? I said plenty of people say everything is fine about Christianity, but don't try to convert people.

[00:10:14.470] - Speaker 1

"Well," you say, "is it narrow minded for a group of doctors to say, you're taking poison, don't take it?"
"Well, someone says, "religious truth is not true in the same way." And there, you see what you've done? You see what you've done there, you have redefined the normal understanding of truth, and you have a right to do it, but you are not, now, listen carefully,

[00:10:39.890] - Speaker 1

you are not actually, you are not simply criticizing evangelism, you are saying it's impossible for any religion to be true. There is no way for religion to be true. There's no way for any kind of religion to be true. Now, see, it's all right for you to do that.

[00:10:57.190] - Speaker 1

You have a right to do that, but I want you to realize the implications. Are you willing to live with the implications? Are you willing to live with the consequences? You can't just criticize evangelism if you say religion is fine, but just don't do evangelism. Don't try to convert people.

[00:11:12.140] - Speaker 1

You're not just criticizing evangelism, you're criticizing, you're saying it's impossible for any religion to be true, or anyone to know which religion is true. If you say that, all right, but live with the consequences, know what you're doing. Do you think racism is wrong?

[00:11:31.710] - Speaker 1

I didn't say, do you think racism is wrong for you? Or I didn't say, do you think racism is something that just makes you unhappy? Do you think racism is wrong? Wrong for everybody, wrong no matter what people believe, wrong, no matter what people's feelings are, then you're trying to convert people to it. You're saying racism is wrong for you.

[00:11:52.680] - Speaker 1

No matter what you say. You're taking a moral truth, a real truth, and you're trying to convert people to it. Friends, if you're going to do that, then you cannot be upset with Christians for trying to convert people to their religion. If you say evangelism is wrong, you've undercut your very ability to ever call anyone to repent of any kind of sin at all. You can say, racism isn't good for me, and I don't think it's good for you.

[00:12:17.950] - Speaker 1

But after all, I can't tell you I can't convert you. I can't tell you I can't impose my values on you. To change evangelism is to change the heart of what religious truth is. To say, we can't evangelize if there's a truth, if there's any kind of truth at all, there's got to be harvesting. Christian friends, some of you never open your mouths about what you believe.

[00:12:44.610] - Speaker 1

I wish you would, because I hope you didn't get into Christianity because it's exciting though it is. I hope you didn't get into Christianity because it's relevant, though it is. Hope you didn't get into Christianity because it's dynamic and transforming though it is. I hope you got into Christianity because it's true. And you see, friends, if it's not true, then it can't be transforming and dynamic and relevant.

[00:13:07.610] - Speaker 1

And if it is true, you have to do good-newsing. Anybody who's got the truth does good-newsing. Anybody who knows that this medicine is poison gets into the New England Journal of Medicine, says, stop taking it.

[00:13:20.140] - Speaker 1

And if you don't do it, then you obviously don't believe what you think is true. You don't believe your research is true.

[00:13:27.570] - Speaker 1

If there's truth, there's got to be good-newsing. People on the outside of Christianity cannot object because to object is actually not to just object to a good-newsing, but to object to the very possibility of religious truth. Secondly, the second thing we learn here is not just that harvesting is necessary if there's truth, because of truth, harvesting is necessary because of love. And here we get into the issue of the motive of harvesting. A lot of people believe that if you are going to try to convert someone to your religion, you must feel superior to them.

[00:14:05.230] - Speaker 1

One of the reasons that people get very upset with the idea of missionaries, very upset with the idea of evangelism, very upset with the idea of converting people is they say you must feel that you're better than other people to do that. I've had people say to me, well, I guess I'm a Christian, but who am I to tell someone else to change their religions? Who do I think I am? That sounds very humble, but what you're doing is you're saying anybody else who ever tries to convince someone or persuade someone of the

truth of Christianity, you're taking a superior stance, a stance of superiority. I don't think that's true, though I must say that's possible.

[00:14:41.840] - Speaker 1

Of course, it's possible. And I dare say most of you or many of you have actually experienced unbelievably obnoxious or alienating efforts to evangelize you. But that's not at all what the scripture says is the guiding motivation. It doesn't need to be. In fact, it mustn't be.

[00:15:02.450] - Speaker 1

What was the motivation that moved the woman? We read that this woman leaves her pots, leaves her water pots and goes running into the city and starts saying two things, "there's a man out there that can tell you who you really are. He told me everything I ever did. There's a man up there who can tell you who you are, and there's a man up there who actually is the Christ." See, that's the two parts.

[00:15:28.090] - Speaker 1

You might say the bad news and the good news of the gospel. You are more wicked and evil than you ever dared believe. And you are more loved and valued and accepted than you ever dared hope. She has the gospel. So, she goes running on down and she's bringing people back to see Jesus.

[00:15:43.290] - Speaker 1

What's her motivation? "Well," somebody says, "superiority." Listen, this woman was essentially the town loose woman. Everybody knew who she was. She didn't have a sense of superiority.

[00:15:56.680] - Speaker 1

She probably had the lowest self-image possible. And I doubt very much she suddenly felt better than everybody else. Well, somebody did. Did Jesus tell her to go? No, there's no command.

[00:16:06.710] - Speaker 1

This good-newsing that she's doing was not commanded. This good-newsing that she was doing was not the result of superiority, what is the result of, someone says, "well, she's enamored with Christ. She's grateful to Christ. That's why she's doing it."

[00:16:20.110] - Speaker 1

But if she was just grateful to Christ, she'd stay near him. Why did she leave? Want to hear a theory? The love of Christ is driving her.

[00:16:33.550] - Speaker 1

If you go to work and you get the most incredible cosmic affirmation, how does it affect the way you treat other people? Let's just imagine going to work and someone says, the guy you work for comes. Thou art the greatest lawyer who has ever worked for this firm. Enter thou into the joy of partnership. Someone says, you go in and say, you are the best salesman that has ever worked for us.

[00:17:02.740] - Speaker 1

Take a \$300,000 bonus. Or you go in and somebody says, you are the best counselor who has ever counseled for this center. We are being besieged. We are being overwhelmed with thousands of letters from people saying that your wise and loving counsel has transformed their lives. We want you to start writing books.

[00:17:22.820] - Speaker 1

We want to pay you lots of money just so you can tell us how it's done. You are the best counselor anyone's ever seen. Now, what happens if you go to work and you get that kind of affirmation, that kind of verdict passed on you? That kind of incredible affection and praise? Now, most of us say, I don't know because that's never happened to me.

[00:17:43.770] - Speaker 1

But you know something like it, don't you? What happens? There is actually a need to affirm other people. You get very generous. You get very complimentary. You tip big that day.

[00:17:57.710] - Speaker 1

Of course you do. You get tremendously generous. You turn around, you come home and you hug and you kiss anybody around. You become generous. You become affirming.

[00:18:08.810] - Speaker 1

What happens when you don't just believe in Christianity in the general way but what happens when you actually meet Jesus face to face? What happens when the gospel sinks in? What happens when you're converted? What's happening is you're getting an affirmation far more cosmic than any of those examples I just gave you. Because that's the day in which you meet Jesus and he says, come in, my love. I've bore all the blame

[00:18:34.080] - Speaker 1

so enter into my family. Eat at my table. Come under my wings. Open yourself and receive my strong love. Take upon yourself my strong name.

[00:18:46.490] - Speaker 1

The name that gives access to unimaginable riches and privileges. I mean, look, it's wonderful to have somebody say, you're the best counselor we've ever seen. You're the best lawyer we've ever seen. You're the best salesman we've ever seen. You know how affirming that would be?

[00:19:03.810] - Speaker 1

That's nothing compared to meeting Jesus and having him say, you are my beloved child, and you I'm well pleased. And anybody who's actually met him like that, anybody who's really converted, in other words, instantly and immediately is pressed to become affirming. They get like Peter. You get very generous. But remember when Peter was at the gate and the beggar handed up, asked him for money?

[00:19:31.050] - Speaker 1

Remember what Peter did? He said, Gold and silver have I none, but what I have, I give you. And what do you have? Jesus Christ. Come see a man.

[00:19:40.800] - Speaker 1

He told me everything I ever did. Could this be the one for you? Friends, when you feel loved and affirmed down to the socks, down to your pinkies, you have to do good-newsing. If there's any bit of the love of Christ in you, you have to do it. No superiority.

[00:20:01.460] - Speaker 1

Have any of you heard how the gospel came to Korea? In 1866? There was a ship called the General Sherman, by the way, that was going to go to Korea. And that was an incredibly dangerous thing to do because at that time, Korea was absolutely closed to outsiders. And foreigners who were to come to Korea were to be instantly put to death.

[00:20:24.560] - Speaker 1

He had a bunch of adventurers who wanted to do it and they were going to go to Korea and they were going to go on the ship and sail up the Thai Tong River to Pyongyang. A man got onto that ship. He had a fight to get onto that ship. The other men didn't want him on the ship. His name was Robert J.

[00:20:44.180] - Speaker 1

Thomas. And Robert J. Thomas was a Welsh missionary to China. And he had discovered from talking to some Koreans in China that most educated Koreans could read Chinese very easily. And he began to develop a passion to take the gospel to Korea.

[00:21:04.590] - Speaker 1

He wanted desperately to take Chinese Bibles to Korea. And he's prayed for years until he found this ship that was stupid enough and fullhearted enough to try to go to Korea. He got himself on board. Basically, what happened was this. They went up the river.

[00:21:18.970] - Speaker 1

The Koreans were hostile. At one point, when they got close to the city, the Koreans lined up both sides of the river with flint locks and just started shooting at the ship. Well, the ship wasn't damaged by that, but they waited and they tried to find a way to land and they couldn't. So, they saw they couldn't land. By the time they decided to leave and try to go back out the river.

[00:21:41.090] - Speaker 1

The river had gone down and they got stuck in the rapids. And as they got stuck, they continued to fight with the Koreans on land. The Koreans sent out little boats full of bonfires and eventually got the General Sherman to catch on fire. At that point, the foreigners on the boat realized that the jig was up. And all they did was they got every one of their swords and every one of their knives and all their guns, and they put them on them.

[00:22:08.200] - Speaker 1

And they jumped into the water. And they waited ashore, trying to slash and shoot and fight their way somehow out. Not one of them survived because the Koreans lined up on the shore and did exactly what they should have done to such bloodthirsty people. And what they did was they beat them and clubbed them and shot them until they were dead. However, the Koreans remember that there was one guy that acted very strangely.

[00:22:31.890] - Speaker 1

He didn't have any weapons with him and he didn't come out slashing and shooting. Instead, he came to shore with his arm full of books, strange books. And he started throwing the books to the people as they shot him. And then as he moved in a little closer he thrust the books into the hands of the people as they clubbed him and stabbed him until he was dead.

[00:22:57.610] - Speaker 1

That was Mr. Thomas. Those were Chinese Bibles. 30 years later, one of the first the first missionaries first came because Korea opened up. A man named Sam Moffatt, a Presbyterian missionary began to preach the word.

[00:23:10.810] - Speaker 1

And one of the very first converts one of the very first men who came to one of his classes for new converts had an old Chinese Bible and his father had picked it up on a very bloody riverbank 30 years before. Now, let me ask you something.

[00:23:29.250] - Speaker 1

What in the world moved Robert Thomas to do that?

[00:23:35.670] - Speaker 1

Superiority? Listen, friends, you don't love the people you feel superior to. You hate them and you never die for them. Why would he do such a thing? What's going on here?

[00:23:50.570] - Speaker 1

We're told by Paul the love of Christ constrains us. And therefore, those of us who live, Paul says henceforth do not live for themselves but they live for the one who died for them and rose. The love of Christ constrains you. Now, listen, I know that there's an abstract question that can bother us. And that abstract question goes like this how in the world can you believe in a religion that says that all these good people that never heard of Christ are lost?

[00:24:23.170] - Speaker 1

Now, that it's a tough abstract question, but let's get concrete. Let's ask the people that the Thomases, the missionaries of the world died to bring the gospel to first to Europe, then to Africa, then to India and to Asia. Ask the people. Ask the people who are now Christians because people like that were willing to die. Ask them, and you hear one say, well, I was in a low caste and I hated myself till I discovered that I could be adopted into the royal family of Jesus Christ himself.

[00:24:56.270] - Speaker 1

My life has never been the same. Or here's someone else who says, I used to take my little girl babies and throw them into the river thinking they were worthless till I discovered that every human being is made in the image of God and has infinite dignity and value. My life has never been the same since I became a Christian. Or here's somebody else who says, remember we talked about him a couple of weeks ago? He says, "Every night I drank myself silly and I slept with prostitutes because I hungered for eternal life.

[00:25:22.300] - Speaker 1

And now I've met the one who is eternal life." You ask those people, was it worth it for the Thomases of the world to die to bring you the gospel? And what do they say? Was Thomas wrong? Listen, it's a tough question.

[00:25:40.090] - Speaker 1

What about all the people that never heard about Jesus Christ? Are they lost? All I can tell you is this my father when I was a little kid, I knew my father was a decent man. Every so often, he did things I didn't understand, but that didn't mean when he was doing something I didn't understand. And when he sat down and said to me, honey, you're not old enough for me to explain this to you.

[00:26:01.110] - Speaker 1

Now, just trust me. This is the way it's got to be. I didn't let that one doubt overthrow the millions of pieces of evidence that had already proved to me that my father was a decent and loving man. And you cannot say because of this one area that's difficult that somehow, therefore I cannot embrace the goodness and wonderful love of the Heavenly Father. Are the people?

[00:26:26.410] - Speaker 1

What about the people who never heard? I don't know. But what about the people who almost never heard? They're very happy that you died to bring them the gospel. And they're the ones that would say, please don't let an abstraction make you feel that you can't convert.

[00:26:40.500] - Speaker 1

I'm so glad that you did. Don't you see? Today the gospel is spreading at four times the population. It's growing at four times the speed of the population in Korea. There are strong, strong churches up and down the Tai Tong River.

[00:26:54.590] - Speaker 1

And there's one right there called the Thomas Memorial Chapel. Thomas Memorial Chapel. It's a church in honor of just one guy who obviously didn't have a sense of superiority, but who loved. My dear friends, if you're believers, you've got something that it's worth dying to give to other people. And I doubt very much that any of you are really being called to be beaten and clubbed for it.

[00:27:22.910] - Speaker 1

Probably just smirked at. If Jesus Christ is who he said he is, then for you to keep your particular faith private is not courteous, it's cruel. The last thing, just the last thing. What's the method? One of the reasons that a lot of people hate harvesting is because they've seen alienating and hostile methods.

[00:27:49.680] - Speaker 1

If you look here, you'll see what Jesus Christ has done is he's taken a woman and made her his friend. The reason that the Disciples are so amazed at what he is doing is that a Jewish man was not supposed to speak to a woman in public, b a Jew isn't supposed to speak and fraternize with Samaritans anyway because those two racial groups hated each other. And c she was a notorious loose woman. The notorious town prostitute. And for all these reasons, what in the world was he doing talking to her?

[00:28:21.710] - Speaker 1

Jesus Christ shows that ultimately the gospel is radical friendship. He gets by the sex-bias, he gets by the race bias. He reaches out without condemnation and radical friendship to somebody whose life is completely wrong and he's friendly. Listen, you will be as good at harvesting as you are at friendship, and vice versa. Or I'll put it this way, a friend is someone who gives their friend what they need.

[00:28:53.530] - Speaker 1

And that's all harvesting is. You got to be careful about this. You never, listen, you do not become someone's friend in order to change them. Oh, no.

[00:29:04.510] - Speaker 1

You change them in order to be their friend. You hear that? You don't love somebody in order to get them to do what you want. You urge that they convert in order to love them. Love is the mean, is not the means, it's the end.

[00:29:20.450] - Speaker 1

And therefore, what harvesting is, is simply coming and saying, let me tell you what my heart says. Let me tell you what I think you need. Let me tell you the part of reality I think you're cut off from. Ultimately, harvesting is friendship. Real harvesting is friendship.

[00:29:34.620] - Speaker 1

And real friendship has got to be harvesting. Now, listen, let me just close this way. Jesus says, I have a meat that you know not of. A lot of us are dying because of a lack of mission. For many of you, your biggest mission in life is to make enough money so you can just pay next month's rent and keep your lifestyle where you want it to be.

[00:29:58.580] - Speaker 1

And as a result, I believe that many of our souls are shriveling up because they were built for something much more noble and much more heroic than that. What is it that Jesus Christ lives for? What is this

meat, he says, that gives him this joy that you know not of? He says, I live to see people transformed through the touch of the gospel. Institutions transformed, families transformed, neighborhoods transformed, countries transformed, cultures transformed.

[00:30:24.810] - Speaker 1

Battered psyches transformed. He says, that's what gives me my purpose. Most of us do not have anything like that, nothing like that. He's got meat we

[00:30:36.270] - Speaker 1

know not of. And I think it's about time for us to admit it. I was in a restaurant the other day, and there was a 42 year old guy talking with a 31 year old guy, and they were talking about the music, and it was an old Joan Baez thing. And the 31 year old guy says, yeah, the 31 year old guy was a bartender. And he was saying to the customer, I got a brother about your age.

[00:30:58.160] - Speaker 1

Whatever happened to you guys? You were supposed to change the world. Whatever happened to you guys? You were going to overthrow the establishment. Whatever happened to you guys?

[00:31:06.480] - Speaker 1

And he looked at him and he says that the bartender says, you sold out. And the 42 year-old says, yeah, that's right. You see, when I was a kid, we used to sing, "if I had a hammer, I'd hammer out danger, I'd hammer out warning." There was a time in which everybody thought it would be possible to change the world, make it into a transformed place of love and of justice. And the only people that can think about that anymore, with any reality and with any integrity are Christians.

[00:31:35.470] - Speaker 1

We're the only radicals left. We're the only ones that can be radical with any kind of intellectual integrity, because we know it's possible. Because we know what is not just possible. We know that it's inevitable. Are you living for this?

[00:31:51.090] - Speaker 1

Do you have this meat? Jesus says, I have this meat. This is my meat and my drink. I eat it, I sleep it, I walk it. My dear friends, if you're on the outside looking in, you have to understand that a Christianity that doesn't demand conversion is something, but it's not Christianity.

[00:32:11.530] - Speaker 1

And if you're on the inside looking out, I just ask you this, are you eating this meat? Do you have this joy? Do you have this sense of mission? Let's pray. Our Father, as we go to the table, help us to remember that you have told us that we are to eat and drink the bread and the cup and declare your death until you come, Lord Jesus.

[00:32:37.810] - Speaker 1

And therefore, even as we take up the cup and the bread, what we are saying is we want to be your witnesses. We want to like the woman, we want to bring people to you because of truth and because of love. Father, we ask that now as we come to the table, you would cleanse us and strengthen us so that we would know what it means to eat that meat, the meat of the ones who do your Father's, do the Father's will and finish his work.

[00:33:03.900] - Speaker 1

And now we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.