



SHARING  
**JESUS**  
{without *freaking out*}

# Proverbs 11:30

New American Standard Bible

The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who is wise wins souls.

PRICIPLES  
FOR  
BIBLICAL  
*EVENGELISM*  
FOUND IN  
JOHN 4, “THE  
WOMAN AT  
THE WELL.”

1. TAKE THE *INITIATIVE!* JN. 4:6-9
2. OFFER GOD’S *MERCY!* JN. 4:10-14
3. *IDENTIFY* SPIRITUAL NEEDS! JN. 4:9-10
4. *CONFRONT* SIN JN! 4:16-18
5. *REJECT* FALSE WORSHIP! JN. 4:19-24
6. *REVEAL* CHRIST! JN. 4:25-26

# THAT CAN'T SAVE!

• *Just as I am, without one plea  
But that Thy blood was shed for me,  
And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come! I come!*

• This stanza, penned by **CHARLOTTE ELLIOT** in the nineteenth century, has probably been used as background for the evangelistic invitation more than any other hymn in history. The thought those words convey is a glorious biblical reality: sinners may come to Christ just as they are—solely on the basis of repentant faith—and He will save them. The Lord's own wonderful promise is in **(John 3:16):** *“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life”* Later He added, *“The one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out”* **(John 6:37).**

- The erosion of the gospel in our day has given this truth an insidious twist. The language of the modern message sounds vaguely similar to **“Just as I Am,”** but the difference in meaning is profound. Sinners today hear not only that Christ will receive them as they are, but also that He will let them **STAY THAT WAY!** Many erroneously believe they can come to Christ, receive absolution and immortality, then walk away to continue living life as they please, even choosing **“TO LEAVE GOD OUT AND LIVE ACCORDING TO THE OLD NATURE.”**
- Some years ago, leaders of an international Christian youth organization asked a prominent Pastor to preview a training film they produced. The subject was **evangelism**, and the film instructed youth workers not to tell unsaved young people they must obey Christ, give Him their hearts, surrender their lives, repent of their sins, submit to His lordship, or follow Him. Telling the unsaved they must do those things confuses the gospel message, the film said. It advocated giving only the objective facts about Jesus’ death (making no mention of the resurrection) and pressing on them the need to believe. **The film concluded that the sum total of saving faith is understanding and accepting the facts of the gospel.**

- At a conference where a well-known Bible teacher brought a message on **salvation**. He suggested that telling unsaved people they must surrender to Christ is the same as **preaching works**. He defined salvation as the **unconditional gift of everlasting life given to people who believe the facts about Christ, whether they choose to obey Him or not**. One of his main points was that salvation may or may not alter a **PERSON'S BEHAVIOR**. Transformed conduct is certainly desirable, he said, but even if no change in lifestyle occurs, the one who has believed the facts of the gospel can rest in the certainty of heaven.
- Many approach Christ on these terms. Thinking He **will not confront their sin**, they respond eagerly—but with no sense of the severity of their guilt before God, and with no desire to be freed from sin's bondage. They have been deceived by a **CORRUPTED GOSPEL**. They have been told that faith alone will save them, but they neither understand nor **possess real faith**. The **“faith”** they are relying on is only **intellectual** acquiescence to a set of facts. **IT WILL NOT SAVE**.

## ETERNAL LIFE FROM *DEAD* FAITH?

- Not all faith is *redemptive*. (Jam. 2:14–17) says *faith without works is dead and cannot save*. James describes spurious faith as pure hypocrisy (Jam. 2:16), mere cognitive assent (Jam. 2:19), devoid of any *verifying* works (Jam. 2:17–18)—no different from the *demons' belief* (Jam. 2:19). Obviously, **THERE IS MORE** to saving faith than merely conceding a set of facts. *Faith without works is useless* (Jam. 2:20).
- Yet some in contemporary evangelicalism refuse to allow for any kind of relationship between *faith* and *works*. With this limitation, they are forced to receive virtually any profession of faith as the real thing. At least one writer explicitly stated that dead faith *can* save. Amazingly, one popular interpretation of **James 2** teaches that dead faith is actually *proof* of salvation. **ZANE HODGES** argues that “the presence of a dead faith shows that this faith was once alive” — and therefore dead faith is salvific. But that is skewed logic, it's **BAD THEOLOGY**. **“DEAD FAITH”** doesn't necessitate faith that was once alive any more than (**Eph. 2:1**) (**“You were dead in your trespasses and sins”**) implies that individual sinners were once spiritually alive.

- Others admit the inefficacy of “faith” that is no more than a barren, academic recognition of the truth, but balk at defining faith in terms that imply submission or commitment of one’s life. In fact, it is ***commonly believed*** that **“the message of faith plus commitment of life . . . cannot be the gospel.”** The typical idea of faith relegates it to a momentary act that takes place in the mind, a decision to believe the facts of the gospel—**“nothing more than a response to a divine initiative.”**
- Herein lies the fallacy of today’s popular approach to evangelism. The gospel appeal is tacked on to a wholly inadequate explanation of what it means **to believe**. The modern definition of faith ***eliminates*** repentance, erases the moral significance of believing; it obviates the work of God in the sinner’s heart; it makes an ongoing trust in the Lord optional. Far from championing the truth that human works have no place in salvation, modern ***easy-believism*** has made faith itself a ***wholly human work***, a fragile, temporary attribute that may or may not endure.

- But it is not a biblical view of faith to say one may have it at the moment of salvation and never need to have it again. **PAUL'S** words in **(2 Tim. 2:12)** speak powerfully to this issue: ***“If we endure, we will also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He also will deny us.”*** **ENDURANCE** is the mark of those who will reign with Christ in His kingdom. Clearly, **enduring** is a characteristic of true believers, while **disloyalty** and **defection** reveal a heart of **UNBELIEF**. Those who deny Christ, He will deny. Paul goes on to say, ***“If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself”*** **(2 Tim. 2:13)**. Thus, God's faithfulness is a blessed comfort to loyal, abiding believers but a frightening warning to false professors.

- **SAVING FAITH IS NEVER MOMENTARY.** It is continuously demonstrated in the lives of those who place their trust in Christ. We can come to Him just as we are, **BUT THOSE WHO TRULY BELIEVE CANNOT REMAIN UNCHANGED.**