

Operation SOS "Save Our Souls"

I. SOS

- A. ...---... Save our ship, save our souls.
- B. Titanic, it's shipbuilders regarded it as "unsinkable." But on April 14th, 1912 she did sink; 712 people survived and 1496 perished. One of those who drowned was a preacher by the name of John Harper.
- C. At a Bible conference held in the city of Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, a man rose and gave the following testimony: "Four years ago, when I left England on board the *Titanic* I was a careless, godless sinner. I was in this condition on the night when the terrible catastrophe took place. Very soon, with hundreds more, I found myself struggling in the cold, dark waters of the Atlantic. I caught hold of something and clung to it for dear life. The wail of awful distress from the perishing all around was ringing in my ears, when there floated near by me a man who, too, seemed to be clinging to something. He called to me: 'Is your soul saved?' I replied: 'No, it is not.' 'Then,' said he, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' We drifted apart for a few minutes, then we seemed to be driven together once more. 'Is your soul saved?' again he cried out. 'I fear it is not,' I replied. 'Then if you will but believe on the Lord Jesus Christ your soul shall be saved,' was his further message of intense appeal to me. But again we were separated by the rolling currents. I heard him call out this message to others as they sank beneath the waters into eternity. There and then, with two miles of water beneath me, in my desperation I cried unto Christ to save me. I believed upon Him and I was saved. In a few minutes I heard this man of God say: 'I'm going down, I'm going down' then: 'No, no, I'm going up.' That man was John Harper. I am John Harper's last convert"
- D. April 14th significant in my life. April 14, 1984 I gave my life to Christ. My ship wasn't sinking but I realized....I was lost.
- E. "If you died today would you go to heaven or hell?"

II. God's wish list

- A. How many believe that God just wishes that you to be happy?
- B. In 3 John 1,2 He wishes that you would prosper and be in health even as your soul prospers.
- C. Apostle Paul would have a hard time with that theology. It's not all about us, but it's all about the Lord and saving as many as possible before it's too late.

- D. **2 Corinthians 11:24** From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. **25** Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; **26** in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; **27** in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness-- **28** besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.
- E. 2 Peter 3:9 ASV "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
- F. Jesus in Luke 13 was asked if the people that Pilate killed were worse sinners than the other Galileans? Or what about the 18 that were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them, were they worse sinners than others. He said in verse 5, I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish."
- F. Rev. 3:**15** I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could **wish** you were cold or hot. **16** So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth
- G. Lukewarm, comfortable, not concerned about anyone or anything except your own personal happiness.
- H. Before someone can be saved that have to come to the awareness that they are lost.
- I. I think there are a lot of people in the church that have just added Jesus to their life like they add a spare tire to their car.
- J. Make Jesus my savior, so I don't go to hell. So my life will be better. So I have some fire insurance.
- K. The problem is that He needs to be savior and Lord. Master.
- L. Unless you repent, you will likewise perish. Repent/change, turn and go a different direction.
- M. Are you saved? There should be a change in your life. You should have a different master. You should be following someone else. There should be fruit in your life.
- N. Robert Morris testimony.
- O. Maybe you signed up under false pretenses. Maybe you didn't understand the part about your sinful life taking you to a place called hell which is described in Math. 13:42 "furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

- P. Ray Comfort shares a story about a stewardess giving parachutes to two different men. One—this will make your flight better. Other—at 25,000 feet we are going we will have to exit the plane.
- Q. Does God want you to be happy. I guess it all depends on your perspective.
- R. After two years in prison **Acts 26:1** Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You are permitted to speak for yourself." So Paul stretched out his hand and answered for himself: **2** "I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because today I shall answer for myself before you concerning all the things of which I am accused by the Jews.
- S. Paul was happy he got a chance to share his testimony. To possible lead someone to Christ. To tell how Jesus saved him.
- T. He was a debtor to Christ, he owed him his life. Do we live like we owe Christ our life? Do we live like Heaven is for real? Do we live like God's not dead?
- U. Luke 19:10 "for the Son of Man has come to **seek and to save** that which was lost."

III. Talk about the lost

- A. The apostle Paul goes on in acts 26 to tell his testimony of how there was a bright light and they were all knocked to the ground and heard, "Saul, Saul why are you persecuting me?" Vs **15** So I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. **16** But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. **17** I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, **18 to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God**, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.' **19** "Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, **20** but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance.
- B. L-Loss of sight (vs 18) open their eyes.
- C. **2 Corinthians 4:4 ESV** In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

- D. 1st we pray that our eyes be open to see the harvest, that it is white and ripe to harvest. 2nd we need to pray that their eyes be open. We need to declare that in the midst of their darkness, "let there be light."
- E. 2 Corinthians 4: **5** For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. **6** For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.
- F. O-offer hope.
- G. Colossians 1:27 "Christ in you, the hope of glory."
- H. The one thing that I think is common among the lost, is the fact that they have no peace.
- I. **Isaiah 57: 20** But the wicked are like the tossing sea; for it cannot be quiet, and its waters toss up mire and dirt. **21** There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked."
- J. In Proverbs and Psalms there dozens of verses were it compares the righteous and the wicked.
- K. Proverbs 10:28 The hope of the **righteous** brings joy, but the expectation of the **wicked** will perish.
- L. Proverbs 11:31 if the **righteous** is repaid on earth, how much more the **wicked** and the sinner!
- M. You are either really saved and there is a change in your life. Or you are a sinner, you are wicked and you will have no peace.
- N. Black or white. Saved or lost. Righteous or wicked. Heaven or hell. Your either a saint or an ain't.
- O. The ladies that do the jail ministry were sharing how the women they minister have nothing. They have lost their families, their children. They have lost everything and have no hope.
- P. They offer them hope. That there is a God that loves them. That they still have a purpose no matter how long they are locked up. That God can restore what the enemy has stolen.
- Q. When your unsaved friend or family member gets the bad report from the doctor. You can give them hope that there is a God that can heal. There is a God that can do miracles.
- R. When someone is a prisoner to drugs or alcohol, you can tell them about the great deliverer and His name is Jesus.
- S. Don't just tell them about the love of God. Show them.
- T. S-serve them
- U. The word ministry in the Greek means "to serve"

- V. **Mark 10:45** For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."
- W. Minister to them. Serve them. Help them. Random acts of kindness. People has so many needs. Find a need and meet it.
- X. I was at the church this week trying to get a message about evangelism, soul winning for the month of September. I had to run an errand, so I figured I take a drive and get inspired.
- Y. Man with gas can..... The man running toward me
- Z. If you ask God, He will give you an opportunity.

IV. T-Tell them

- A. Romans 10: **13** (NLT)For "Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." **14** But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? **15** And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is what the Scriptures mean when they say, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"
- B. You can pray for them, You can love them, You can offer them hope, you can serve them but at some point you need to tell them.
- C. Isaiah 52: **7** How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news of peace and salvation, the news that the God of Israel reigns!
- D. To be truthful, I've lost some of my first love. Going to the highways and byways and sharing the good news.
- E. God has a way of rewarding me when I'm faithful, Reminding me when I'm distracted and resuscitating me when I'm dead.
- F. In the early 90's at the height of the youth ministry days. Nights of prayer, weekends of street ministry. Daily being aware of the lost and trying to share and witness.
(Momentum)
- G. My feet were blessed. Literally. I was randomly given new shoes. One of our youth worked at Dillards and I was given a new pair of Reebok Pumps. Hightop basketball shoe
- H. ****Picture****
- I. Dominique Wilkins wore a pair in 1989 and Dee Brown won the 1991 All Star dunk competition wearing a pair of pumps and before his most crowd pleasing dunk he would stop and inflate the internal bladder and the crowd would go wild.
- J. God rewards obedience, He is a good father and knows how to motivate and encourage.

- K. When I give extra to missionaries or people in need. I get the amount back almost immediately. Jay Threadgill.
- L. God's armor. Ephesians 6:15 (ESV) and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace
- M. You need to be ready wherever God moves you to share the good news.
- N. The apostle Paul probably had an evangelistic plan. But do you realize that much of Paul's witness of Christ was given in circumstances that he did not plan.
- O. Imprisonment will interrupt your evangelistic strategy, but it will not interrupt God's evangelistic strategy.
- P. God wants his people who wear the shoes of readiness to move with the gospel. And once we are moving with a heart for lost people, there will be many interruptions and surprises—but none of them without evangelistic purpose.
- Q. That day I ran an errand was to the mall to get vitamins. In and out. (maybe stop and smell the pretzels). There is the guy running at me basically saying, "save me, save me. SOS
- V. Satan's only power over us is deception
 - A. The power of Satan is broken by the power of truth.
 - B. Part of the armor of God is the belt of truth and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God.
 - C. Sometimes people have to realize that they are in darkness, that they are lost.
 - D. Ray Comfort says that 10 commandments are like 10 great cannons that need to be pointed right at us.
 - E. #1 you shall have no other Gods before me. (TV) #2 You shall not make for yourself any graven image. That means that we make a god to suit ourselves, either with our hands or our mind. My god doesn't mind a little white lie or a fib here and there.
 - F. #3 You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. Have you ever taken God's name in vain—instead of using a four-letter word to express disgust, you've used His name? Hitler's name wasn't despised enough to use as a curse word. If you have used His holy name in that manner, you are a blasphemer and will not enter the Kingdom of God.
 - G. #4 Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.
 - H. #5 Honor your father and your mother
 - I. #6 You shall not commit murder. Jesus warned that if we get angry without cause we are in danger of judgment. If we hate our brother, God calls us a murderer.

- J. #7 You shall not commit adultery. Jesus said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust after her has committed adultery already with her in his heart."
- K. The day will come when you have to face His Law, and we are told that the impure, fornicators (those who have sex before marriage) and adulterers will not enter the Kingdom of God
- L. #8 You shall not steal. Have you ever taken something that belonged to someone else regardless of its value. Theif..
- M. #9 You shall not bear false witness. Have you ever told a lie, then you are a liar.
- N. #10 You shall not covet. Have you desired anything that belongs to someone else. The covetous will not inherit the kingdom of God.
- O. Who can say that you are not guilty of breaking any of these commandments. James 2:10 NKJV For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.
- P. A little girl was once watching a sheep eat grass and thought how white it looked against the green background. But when it began to snow she thought, "That sheep now looks *dirty* against the white snow!" It was the same sheep, but with a different background.
- Q. When we compare ourselves to man's standard we look pretty clean, but when we compare ourselves to the pure snow-white righteousness of God's standard-His Law, we can see ourselves in truth, that we are unclean in His sight. That Law is the holy standard by which humanity will be judged on Judgment Day.
- R. One problem with the doctrine, Once saved always saved. Is when your not saved in the first place. When you thought that that fire insurance prayer gets you a ticket to heaven but there has been no change in your life.

VI. Titanic

- A. On the deck of the Titanic there were no video camera, tape recorders, cell phones to record but there were 700 survivors that have given us details.
- B. Before the accident John Harper was seen on the deck of the ship sharing Christ with one of the passengers.
- C. Once the warnings rang out, Harper wasted no time in getting his daughter, Nana, to an upper deck caption with instructions to get her to a lifeboat. She was one of the survivors and returned to Scotland and married a minister.

- D. He continued to minister by urging the women, children and unsaved to go the lifeboats. Feeling it was a waste for believers who already possessed the gift of eternal life to take up precious space on crowded life boats. He didn't even consider trying to find himself a place on one.
- E. That unselfish behavior was sharply contrasted with many of the panicking passengers, rich and poor. An American banker managed to get a pet dog on one of the boats. Colonel John Astor had to be stopped when he attempted to get on one of the boats ahead of the women.
- F. One man disguised himself as a women in his desperate quest for survival.
- G. Not only did John Harper make no attempt to get into the lifeboats, he even gave his own life jacket to another man.
- H. When the huge ship slid into the cold ocean waters, Harpers ministry did not cease. Without a life jacket, thrashing around in the freezing waters, he continued to urge men and women to come to Christ. The survivors nearly all reported the terrible roar that consisted of the combined screams of the perishing. But John had more important thing to do than scream. As he struggled in the cruel freezing waters he continued calling men and women to Jesus Christ.

Close:

How many want God to open our eyes to the harvest?

How many want more of a heart to win the lost?

How many here are not sure if you died you'd go to heaven?