

CHAPTER 11
Dealing with Different
Kinds of People
Part 1

THOSE WHO ARE NOT INTERESTED

Consider a vacuum cleaner salesman who goes door to door trying to demonstrate his product. At the first house the lady says, "Sorry, we are not interested!" A man answers the door at the second house and says, "We already have a good vacuum cleaner, so we are not interested in your product." All day long he gets the same response from people: "Sorry, not interested." Do you think he might begin to get discouraged? Do you think he might want to quit and find another job?

As believers in Jesus Christ, we are not salesmen. We have much to share but nothing to sell. We have a wonderful Saviour to tell others about. We also want to tell them about God's free gift of salvation: "The gift of God is _____ through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23). We are concerned about the people we know that are unsaved. As we try to help them, we find that a great many of them are not interested. We might invite them to come to church, but they are not interested. We might encourage them to read the Bible and we might even give them a tract, but they are not interested. Sometimes even our own family members are not interested. What should we do? Should we get discouraged? Should we quit being a witness for Christ?

Why Are People Not Interested?

Why are people often indifferent and uninterested when it comes to the things of God? Some people are afraid to face up to God and to face up to themselves. They do not want to be confronted with the facts of life (the facts about sin, self and the Saviour). The devil wants people to ignore sin and forget sin, and many people do this quite well (instead of facing up to sin and letting God fix the problem).

A man might have dirt and grease all over his face, but when you hold up a mirror he might say, "No, take that away, I would rather not look!" This is the way many people are spiritually. The Bible is like a mirror. It shows people what they are really like and how sinful and filthy they are on the inside (Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:10-23), and many people would rather not look. They are not interested.

Is Anyone Interested?

People may not be interested in God, but we can be sure that God is interested in them! “For God so loved the W_____ (John 3:16). Does that include everyone? _____ Is God interested and concerned for all men (1 Timothy 2:3-4)? _____ They may not be very interested, but there is a great God in heaven who is!

We need to have the same concern and interest that God has! We need to take a special interest in our unsaved friends. We need to show an interest in the things that interest them. I may not get all excited about butterflies, but if my friend has a butterfly collection, then I need to show a real interest in this (and maybe I'll even learn something!).

They may not be interested in the things of God, but they need to see that I am. I need to show them that I am very interested in the Bible, the church and living the Christian life. If they see someone who claims to be a Christian and who does not even seem interested in living the Christian life, then how can we ever expect them to become interested? Some of your friends might even try to ignore you, but they can't ignore the way you live. They will keep their eyes on you. They may not come to church with you and they may not read the tract that you gave them, **BUT THEY WILL READ YOUR LIFE**: “Ye are our epistle (letter) written in our hearts, known and read of (by) _____ “ (2 Corinthians 3:2).

Yes, we need to keep on being concerned about others, even if they are not very concerned. A doctor might be very concerned about one of his patients who is overweight. He knows that if she could lose some weight she would feel much better and perhaps avoid potential health problems in the future. He suggests a diet that would really help her. But the woman is not interested and she keeps on eating as usual. She feels that what she eats is her own personal business and the doctor has no right to suggest a diet. What should the doctor do? Can you help someone who does not want to be helped? _____ Should the doctor say, “Because she does not care and does not have an interest in losing weight, then I do not care either!” No, the doctor should keep on caring whether the patient does what he says or not.

Just One Little Man

When Jesus was passing through Jericho, was there a large crowd along the road (Luke 19:1-3)? _____ Many people had come to see the Lord (just as crowds of people gather to see a parade). How interested were all these people? Were they really interested in salvation and in facing up to their sins and having the Lord fix their problem and forgive their sins? Or were they just there to watch the parade?

As you read Luke 19:1-10, how many people were really interested? _____ Jesus did not stop and try to talk to every one of these people about salvation. The Lord did not say, “I'll talk to each one and I'll make them interested!” You cannot make a person interested! The Lord Jesus stopped and talked to only one man!

We need to remember that the great mass of people will not be interested. But sometimes there is a Zacchaeus--some person that God wants us to talk to. We need to keep on being faithful witnesses whether people are interested or not.

He Would Have Passed Right By!

In Mark 6:48 we learn of the time when Jesus was walking on the water. The verse says that Jesus would have P_____ them by. He would have walked right by them! It was as if Jesus were saying, "Listen you disciples, it is up to you to pay attention. I'm walking on this water to teach you an important lesson, but if you are not interested, then I will pass you right by!" Of course, they were interested (and even frightened), and Jesus stopped and talked with them (Mark 6:49-50).

We need to keep going and keep on doing what is right whether people are interested or not.

Where Did They All Go?

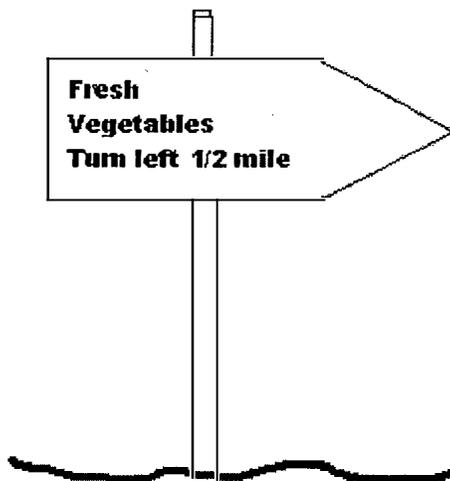
In John chapter 6 we read about the occasion when Jesus fed 5000 men (see John 6:10--this number does not include women and children). These people were very interested in what Jesus could do for them physically (feeding them, healing them, etc.) and they wanted to make him their K_____ (John 6:15,26). When Jesus began to tell them what He could do for them spiritually, they were not very interested at all and they began to leave: "**many** of his disciples _____ and walked _____ with Him" (John 6:66). Though the Lord started with thousands of people, how many interested people did He end up with (John 6:67)? _____ Soon He would lose one more (John 6:70-71)!

Did Jesus get all discouraged and decide to quit and go back to His work as a carpenter because all of these people were uninterested and left Him? _____ If people walked away from Jesus uninterested, should we be surprised if they should walk away from us?

Be A Faithful Signpost and Keep On Pointing!

A witness is someone who points clearly to Christ (see **Chapter 1**). God wants us to be SIGNPOSTS, pointing to His Son, the only Saviour and the only hope of mankind.

Suppose there were a sign along a busy highway which looked like this:



Suppose also that 999 out of every 1000 cars drive right by and are not even interested in stopping for vegetables. Should the sign get all discouraged and say, "I'm going to stop pointing because so few people are interested." No, this sign points faithfully whether people are interested or not.

Keep On Keeping On!

Do not be discouraged by those who are not interested. We need to realize that the great mass of people will not be interested. How many did Jesus say would be saved (Matthew 7:14)?

_____ If the signpost were to expect every car to stop at the vegetable stand, then it would get very discouraged! If the signpost realizes that very few will stop, then it can relax and just keep on doing a good job at pointing! We need to realize that most people are interested in going on vacation, eating, sports, television and many other things, but they are not very interested in God or in God's Word.

1) Don't lose your poise (spiritual posture).

Stand straight and tall as a child of God. Stand firmly on God's Word. Let your light shine before men (Matthew 5:16). Don't be ashamed of the good news (Romans 1:16).

2) Don't lose your position.

We have great victory in Christ (1 Corinthians 15:57). If you are on God's side, YOU ARE A WINNER. You do not have to become a loser just because people are not interested. GOD IS STILL GOD even if people do not believe it and even if people are not interested!

3) Don't lose your peace.

When we have God's peace we have God's power. As I am with my unsaved friends, I can be at peace. I do not have to be discouraged and upset because they are not interested. I can be at peace, remembering that the God who saved me is very much interested in saving them. When I am at peace, then God can work in and through me in a powerful way!

THOSE WHO RIDICULE

What do I do when people make fun of me and ridicule me? Should I dig a hole and try to hide in it? Should I run away? Should I strike back and try to ridicule them or try to punch them in the nose?

Some people are not interested. Others might try to ignore us. But there are some who will try to attack us by making fun. Their weapon is RIDICULE!

The Weapon of Ridicule Used Against the Jews

In Nehemiah chapter 4 we read about the Jews being mocked by their enemies. The Jews had returned to the land of Palestine and under the leadership of Nehemiah they were rebuilding the walls of the city of Jerusalem. The walls of ancient cities were very important for protection. A city with strong walls was safe from the attacks of the enemy.

The enemies of the Jews wanted to discourage the people so that they would give up and stop building the walls. In Nehemiah 4:3 Tobiah used the weapon of ridicule. He said that even if a F_____ were to go up on this wall, he would break it down! In other words, he was saying that

this wall was so poorly built that even a small animal like a fox could break it down! If this wall could not even keep a fox out, then how could it keep a mighty army out?

What was the first thing Nehemiah did after he heard these words of Tobiah (Nehemiah 4:4)?

- a. He got discouraged.
- b. He prayed.
- c. He gave up and told the Jews to stop building the wall.

Did the work continue (Nehemiah 4:6)? _____ Was the work finished (Nehemiah 6:1)? _____
Do you think that the enemies of the Jews were happy about this? _____

The Weapon of Ridicule Against Jesus

The enemies of Jesus mocked Him and made fun of Him. Here are three examples of Jesus being ridiculed: 1) **Luke 22:63-65**; 2) **Luke 23:11**; 3) **Luke 23:35-37**. Did Jesus get all upset when his enemies did these things and said these things to Him? _____ Did He pray for them (Luke 23:34 and see Matthew 5:44)? _____ Did He stay calm in God's calm? When they shouted, did He shout back? _____ When they mocked, did He mock back? _____ Did He keep His spiritual poise (posture) or did He let their words irritate Him?

The weapon of ridicule cannot hurt a believer unless the believer lets it hurt him! REMEMBER, those who are on God's side can never lose! The victory is ours! People can make fun of us and try to make us look like losers, but this does not change the fact that we are winners!

Suppose your team is playing in a championship baseball game. It is a hard fought game, but finally your team gets five runs in the last inning to win by a final score of 9 to 8. On the way home from the game you meet some fans who really wanted the other team to win. They look at you and shout out these words: "You are terrible players! You could not even beat a team of second grade girls! A team of monkeys could probably play better than you! A ninety-year-old grandmother could hit the ball farther than your best hitter!" Does this ridicule change the fact that you are WINNERS? _____ How should you react to these words?

Should we be afraid of people's WORDS (Ezekiel 2:6)? _____ Should we be afraid of people's LOOKS (Ezekiel 2:6)? _____ Should we expect people to think that what we believe is FOOLISH (1 Corinthians 1:18; 2:14)? _____ Should we be willing to be fools for Christ's sake (1 Corinthians 4:10)? _____

Someday the mocking and the ridicule will come to an end. Someday all men will stand before God, and the Bible tells us that GOD IS NOT _____ (Galatians 6:7). Men will reap what they have sown. Those who have sown bitter ridicule will reap God's judgment. Someday all men will realize and understand that God's people are the REAL WINNERS and those who failed to trust Christ are the REAL LOSERS!

READY REFERENCES

*for your
Pocket Testament*

POCKET TESTAMENT LEAGUE
11 TOLLGATE ROAD, LITITZ, PA 17543-7026
(717) 626-1919

MAN'S QUESTIONS—GOD'S ANSWERS

Is There a God?

Gen. 1:1 — Psa. 19:1 — John 1:1

Am I accountable to God?

Rom. 14:12 — Rom. 2:1-5

Does He know all about me?

Heb. 4:13 — Luke 16:15

Does He charge me with sin?

Rom. 3:23 — Rom. 3:10

Will He punish sin?

Rom. 6:23 — Heb. 2:3

Must I perish?

II Pet. 3:9 — John 3:16

How can I escape?

Acts 16:31 — John 3:16

Is He willing to save me?

Luke 19:10 — I Tim. 1:15

Can I be saved now?

II Cor. 6:2 — John 1:12

Can I be saved just as I am?

John 6:37 — Matt. 9:13

Will I be assured of heaven?

John 14:2, 3 — I Thess. 4:17

OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

"NOT NOW — SOME OTHER TIME"

II Cor. 6:2; Heb. 3:15; Prov. 27:1;
Luke 12:19, 20

"I AM TOO GREAT A SINNER"

Luke 19:10; I Tim. 1:15; John 6:37;
Heb. 7:25

"I AM DOING THE BEST I CAN"

Rom. 3:19, 20; Rom. 3:24; Gal. 2:16

"AFRAID I CAN'T HOLD OUT"

Jude 24; 2 Tim. 1:12; Heb. 7:25;
John 10:27-29; I Pet. 1:5; Gal. 2:20

"TOO MANY HYPOCRITES IN CHURCH"

Matt. 23:10; Rom. 14:12; Rom. 2:1-3;
Col. 3:25; John 21:22

"I AM A CHURCH MEMBER"

John 3:3; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8, 9;
2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 1:16; Matt. 7:21-23

"COMMITTED UNPARDONABLE SIN"

John 6:37; Rom. 10:13; 2 Pet. 3:9;
John 6:40, 47

"BELIEVE I AM GOOD ENOUGH"

John 3:3-5; John 3:18; John 8:24;
Rom. 6:23; Rom. 3:22, 23

"GOD WILL NOT CONDEMN
ANYONE"

Luke 13:3; John 3:36; Rom. 2:4, 5;
2 Pet. 2:4, 6, 9; John 3:18

"CANNOT FORGIVE OTHERS"

Mark 11:25, 26; Matt. 6:15; I John 4:20;
Phil. 4:13

"ANOTHER CHANCE AFTER DEATH"

Heb. 9:27; II Cor. 5:10; 2 Cor. 6:2;
Heb. 2:3

"BELIEVE EVERYBODY WILL
BE SAVED"

Mark 16:16; Matt. 25:41, 46;
John 5:28, 29; I Cor. 6:9, 10;
2 Thess. 1:7-9

"CANNOT PAY THE PRICE"

Mark 8:36; Jas. 4:4; I John 2:15-17;
Rom. 12:2; II Cor. 6:17; I Cor. 10:21