

# The Lakeview Lamp

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” - Psalm 119:105

January 7, 2007

## *Converting the Unconvertible*

Ron Mosby

Whoever would think that a 300 pound gorilla of a man, guilty of murder, serving time in a maximum security prison, would be a prospect for baptism into Christ? But, such was the case in Nashville, Tennessee, on August 29, 1997, when Peter Bondurant made the good confession and was baptized into the Lord Jesus Christ. Such a person would not likely be on anyone's immediate personal work list. Now, through the efforts of this one man, there is hope for his twin brother (who is on death's row) and other inmates to hear the gospel and have opportunity to respond to heaven's call.

Jesus, on more than one occasion, was successful in *converting the unconvertible*. He reached individuals we probably would judge to be a waste of time since their circumstances would be such that they would be unlikely prospects for conversion. Let us look briefly at three such occasions during the personal ministry of our Lord.

First, there was the Samaritan woman Jesus met at Jacob's well in a city of Samaria called Sychar, as recorded in **John 4:5-30**. His disciples had gone into the city to buy meat, having left the Lord to rest by the well. The reader will note that Jesus was *alone* with the woman He was trying to reach. He already knew that she was living with her fifth husband as well as considered by the Jews to be a half-breed Samaritan. Yet Jesus sought to establish a relationship with the woman by asking her for a drink of water. Later into the interview Christ told her what she needed to hear about her marriages (:16-18) but that was not His opening remarks like it might have been had we been conducting the interview. The reader will also note that Jesus did not judge the woman but through her was able to preach the message of salvation to a whole city.

Secondly, let us look at the woman taken in adultery as recorded in **John 8:1-11**. Obviously she was guilty as charged, yet the Lord did not engage her in conversation until He had finished writing in the sand and until all her accusers had left – being convicted by their own consciences as the King James translation reads in **verse 9**. Again, Jesus did not judge the woman but pointed out to her what she needed to hear (:11) and moved on giving her every opportunity to redeem herself and to get her life back on track.

Thirdly, let us look at Zacchaeus as recorded in **Luke 19:1-10**. Here was a man who not only was a tax collector, burdened no doubt with the notorious reputation of being an extortionist, but the record says he was a *chief* tax collector which would make him even more suspect. Again, Jesus immediately sought to establish a relationship with Zacchaeus by going home with him. He got him away from the crowd in order to bring out the best in the man without embarrassing him in the presence of his peers.

Conclusion. Can we not see a pattern here? There were at least three things that Jesus did that we would do well to emulate. 1. He first of all established some kind of rapport with the person He was trying to reach. He felt no need to show off his skills in the presence of His disciples by what He wanted finally to get across to the person He was endeavoring to persuade. 2. He was careful to get the person away from the crowd so as not to embarrass them in the presence of their peers. Many times we may call out a person's pride when we confront them before an audience and lose any further opportunity to reach them. Jesus got the person alone

one on one and was able to bring out the best in each one of them. 3. He did not judge the persons he confronted but did what He came to do, and that was to seek and to save that which was lost (**Luke 19:11**). *“For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved”* (**John 3:17**).

We sometimes are too quick to judge one another as if the power were in us and not in the gospel message we preach (**Romans 1:16**). James forbids us to judge one another in this fashion (**4:11-12**). We need to busy ourselves spreading the word and treating people like Jesus did and stop passing judgment on who we think is worthy to hear the glad tidings. We might be shocked and pleasantly surprised when we apply the methods of Jesus and see souls converted we might have judged to be unconvertible.



Preacher's point – As we begin a new year and consider various resolutions, may we all resolve to be more evangelistic. Do you know people whom you have been considering “unconvertible,” and as a result have not even attempted to share the good news of the gospel with them? Don't you think it's time to let them prove how convertible or unconvertible they really are? Resolve now to find an opportunity to speak to them about their soul and their Savior.

*“O come, let us sing for joy to the Lord, let us shout joyfully to the rock of our salvation.”* – **Psalm 95:1**

# **Family News**

**Sydney Elizabeth Bansemmer**, Jill and Eric's baby, remains at Vanderbilt. She is doing very, very well.

**Sandra Boyd** had surgery (heel spur) on Thursday. She has a cast on and probably will be at home for a while.

**Bonnie Sue Brown** has been and is sick.

**Mary Burnett** is doing fair.

**Betty Chapman** had major surgery four weeks ago. She is not doing very well and is unable to eat well. Her address:

107 Sumner Meadows Ln. Hendersonville TN 37075

**Connie Cobern** still has pneumonia, but has improved some. However, another health problem has developed in the past week.

**Dorothy Davis**, Troy's grandmother, passed away this past Wednesday. She was 83 years old. Her funeral was yesterday.

**Metty Fain** is in Room B2, 215 Highland Circle Dr, Portland TN 37148.

**Elmo Ferrell's** sister in law passed away Friday. The funeral is today.

**Barry Fultz** is scheduled for major surgery (4 - 6 hours) this Wednesday morning. He and Sarah leave for MN tom. Barry has 3 appts on Tuesday. There is potentially a second surgery on Friday. They expect to return home on Jan. 20<sup>th</sup>. You can keep up with his progress and send encouraging messages to them at: [caringbridge.org/visit/nathanandsandlyn](http://caringbridge.org/visit/nathanandsandlyn)

**Sandra Hunt** is not better and may be a little worse.

**Fran Pickens** is back home with Connie.

**Laura Reed** fell on Tuesday and broke her arm.

**Georgia Taylor** no longer has a roommate. For now, this is better.

**Ame White** had a bad week with arthritis pain.

**Robert Wray** continues to have dizzy spells daily.

*New Reports:* **Sandro Corazza** (Italy).

*Out of town, traveling, or visiting:* **Bansemers.**

## **Lakeview church of Christ**

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*"Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks" (1 Thes 5:16-18).*