“Lost people matter to God. He wants them found.”

Note Luke 19:10; 2 Peter 3:9; Matthew 28:18-20

...our natural inclination (in everything) is to be inward, not outward-focused.

1. Why is Becoming and Remaining Outward-Focused So Difficult?

Being outward focused is challenging because:

A. We can get absorbed in church activities and programs (note John 4:1-2; 3:22-23) – same thing easily happens to us – so much great, fun ministry to do with friends in our church and we can lose connections with people apart from Jesus.

B. We get distracted by daily life (note John 4:8, 27, 31-32, 34) – we, too, can easily be preoccupied by the frenetic pace of our daily lives...and not even notice the spiritually parched...people all around us.

C. Of our personal “filters” through which we look at people (note John 4:4, 9, 27) – it’s very difficult to be outward-focused when we want to avoid or don’t even notice the “Samaritans” in our lives.

D. Because our priorities are not always in sync with Jesus’ priorities (note John 4:34-35) – what fed the heart of Jesus was not what was in the disciples’ picnic basket, but fulfilling the Father’s mission (note John 3:16-17).

2. Jesus Modeled What it Means to be Outward-Focused

- John 4:4 – He understood that “divine appointments” are a much more regular part of life than we are conscious of.
- John 4:7,9, 27 – He was willing to cross socio-economic, cultural, and racial barriers...
- John 4:6 – He could’ve...let His physical necessities dictate His actions...
- John 4:7, 9-11 – He started the conversation at a level she could relate to.
- John 4:13-15 – He was willing to introduce spiritual truth into the conversation.
- John 4:16-18 – He was willing to gently talk about sin. He got her attention about both her need and His authority to address that need without publically embarrassing her or denigrating her (note John 4:19).

3. Being Outward-Focused has a Multiplying Effect (note John 4:28-30)
A seemingly isolated conversation between Jesus and the least likely and least influential person...had a profoundly large impact (note John 4:39-42).

Riverside Church is “built to go”:

Will I be a “4G” follower of Jesus through Riverside Church’s Christmas outreach opportunities?

Use the connection card to tell us about a commitment you made today, and then share with Pastor Tom, someone on ministry staff, or a friend with you about the spiritual commitment you have made today!