

The Link

Unredeemable?

Is there anyone too far from God's reach?

A mass killer, Ted Bundy, was convicted of over thirty sadistic murders. His last heinous act was with a twelve year old girl that he raped and killed. Dr. James Dobson had an interview with Bundy hours before his execution asking him about his last murder: Bundy responded:

I can't really talk about that right now. It's too painful. I would like to be able to convey to you what that experience is like, but I won't be able to talk about that. I can't begin to understand the pain that the parents of these children and young women that I have harmed felt and I can't begin to understand the pain that the parents of these children and young women that I have harmed feel. And I can't restore much to them, if anything. I won't pretend to, and I don't even expect them to forgive me. I'm not asking for it. That kind of forgiveness is of God; if they have it, they have it, and if they don't, maybe they'll find it someday. (Internet quote from web site: "Trusting or Tripping")

Can God save anyone regardless of their sin? Before the execution, Ted Bundy asked God for forgiveness accepting Christ as His Lord and Savior. Yet, many believe that he was not truly converted and is in hell. It is interesting (and sad) how anyone can be "judge and jury" and decree the final eternal state of another person. I am reminded of the great Apostle Paul, who held the cloaks for those who were murdering Christians. An untold number went to their grave at the hands of this religious zealot. Though Paul had the blood of numerous saints on his hands, He was not out of reach of God's merciful, saving, forgiving grace.

Another person that I recall from scriptures that God snatched from eternal destruction was a Samaritan woman drawing water from Jacob's well as described in John chapter four (4). Though her issues were somewhat different (both cultural and moral), yet her eternal dilemma was like that of Ted Bundy, Paul and the entire world. She needed a Savior. The woman had three strikes against her that prohibited "self-righteous" religious leaders to speak with her: **1)** She was a woman. Rabbinical Pharisees would avoid speaking to a woman in public. They were sometimes called "bruised and bleeding" Pharisees. When approaching a woman, they would shut their eyes when passing her invariably running into a pole, tree or another person. The Rabbi sometimes ended up with bruises and abrasions. Jesus, also labeled as a Jewish Rabbi by His followers, crossed the cultural line by talking with this woman at the well. **2)** The second strike against her was her heritage. She was a Samaritan (half breed—half Jew and half Assyrian). In 722 BC, the Northern Kingdom of Israel (10 of the 12 tribes of Israel) fell to the invading Assyrian army. Jews hated Samaritans because they eventually mixed with the Assyrians as well as other cultures, thereby losing their pure Jewish heritage. **3)** Another strike against the woman was the fact that she was divorced five times and now living with a man. Jesus did something that was seen by onlookers as horrendous in that He initiated a conversation with societal trash! A true Rabbi would see this woman as UNREDEEMABLE much like a Ted Bundy who they believed was beyond the reach of God's grace. Unfortunately, religious leaders in biblical times were blinded to their own prejudice hateful sinful hearts. In fact, it would not be long when religious "self-righteous zealots" instigate and sanction the killing of Jesus (crucifixion).

Religious people saw this Samaritan woman as worthless and unredeemable. Yet, Jesus Christ looked beyond culture & her sin to rescue her from eternal destruction. In other words, He did not condemn her, but embraced her while at the same time not "sweeping" her sin under the rug. The Messiah helped the Samaritan to understand her sinful condition helping her to see that there is a better way (see Gal. 6:1ff). She was set free! In fact, one proof of her redemption was a heart overflowing with the love of Christ that spilled over onto her lips. She could not be silent about her life changing experience. The redeemed woman was spiritually driven to declare her testimony with those she knew. "Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is it?" (vs 29). Jesus did not condemn her but helped her realize that she was lost in need of a Savior. He pointed her to the ONLY way to true life—He pointed her to Himself who is "the way, the truth and the life" (Matt. 6:33). **FACT: No one is too far from His redeeming reach!**

After witnessing to the Samaritan woman, the disciples returned from securing the evening meal. Jesus said to his disciples, "Behold (LISTEN) I say to you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest" (vs. 35). There are millions of people who are drowning in their sin and we who understand God's grace and mercy have the life giving message that can pull them from darkness to the LIGHT. I pray that 2020 will be the year that all Spirit filled believers will step out of their comfort zone to declare to family, friends, neighbors and work associates that there is a Redeemer who desires to give them true life. **The labors are few and the harvest is white for harvest. Therefore GO!**

Rick

Many of our Widows Need Your Help



WIDOWS: The scriptures are very clear that we should help widows in distress (James 1:27). The widow pictured left has softening of her bones due to age and a lack of calcium. Consequently, she has a broken hip. She needs pain meds, calcium supplements, a wheelchair, additional doctor appointments, etc. The cost is difficult to determine exactly: **\$275 to \$325.**

HELP IS NEEDED: MLI is the “link” from USA donors to nationals and ministry projects. Below are “some” current needs.

- Motorcycle (insurance & tags) for our teacher **\$1500**
- Monthly support for teacher Paul-**\$100.**
- **NEW TEACHER:** Monthly support for teacher to start new school in Tanzania—Kinasa-**\$100**

- **THOMAS KUNYA:** The one who keeps our funds and distributes them has been a VERY great asset to our mission in Uganda. He is building a house that is up to the ring beam. However, he is needing **\$2750** to put a roof on the structure to protect the mud fired bricks from the rains. The rains continue to soak the land.
- **DEAF SCHOOL LAND:** Herbert stated that three to four acres have been made available for the school to purchase. Though MLI does not have funds to build a school, purchasing the land is the first major step toward that goal. **The cost is about \$4800** which includes legal fees. Please join us in prayer to secure this property. Due to the fact that the land is priced extremely well, it will not last long.
- **WIDOW PROJECT SUPPORT:** Our Itukulu widows **milling project** is bricked half way (pictured below) and latrine is dug. Due to the rainy season, we must get the building under roof as soon as possible. **Any gift appreciated.**
- **DR SAM CHOLI:** Sam, a medical worker and friend of MLI, needs your help to fence in his compound so he can raise chickens for an income and to keep thieves from stealing. Dr. Sam kindly request **\$1650** to make this project a reality.
- **OTHER IMPORTANT NEEDS:** The **Medical Fund** is constantly being used. **Any amount is appreciated.** Also, please keep the **Street Kids Fund** coming. **Any amount is appreciated.** Monthly salaries for several **staff members \$50** and two pastors at **\$70** (Pastor Emma and Pastor Wasawa). Thank you!
- **OTHER MLI PROJECTS:** Uganda Office needs to replace **phone system** (four phone set) **\$60; 2-laptops used.** ZACK (Street Boy): **Zack** wants to start a business cutting grass. He desires to be productive. It will cost about **\$775** to purchase equipment, string, gas can, glasses and petrol. Our staff will oversee his work and help him save and succeed. **Shelia,** MLI Receptionist, is going to school on the weekends. The fees per term is **\$125.** Ugandan **Pastor Willy** needs a printer for his school. Team can transport it in February—**\$90.**



Staff Christmas Party: Each Christmas the staff meets for a time of reflection, fellowship, good food and a monetary gift. God has blessed MLI with dedicated men and women of God.

Moses (pictured right), a MLI street boy, has started a business. Several times MLI tried to educate Moses, but he was unable to control his "street" temper. We also had him in vocational school multiple times to be trained as a mechanic, but his temper kept getting in the way. MLI has given Moses funds to begin a business selling shoes. He is actually making a profit! Your prayers and financial gifts make miracles like this happen.



February 1-14, 2020 to UGANDA: MLI has purchased tickets for our team to Uganda. Each trip is different and filled with exciting opportunities to express Christ's love for the African people. Is it too late to signup? No! As long as we can obtain an airline ticket, all is well. MLI just had another late comer signup for the trip! If you notify MLI of your interest, we may be able to get you on the same flight schedule with the team. Email MLI for additional info—thelinkoffice@gmail.com

June 4-18 (1st wave of volunteers) & 13-26 Trips to Uganda: Catawba Valley Baptist Church is leading the way with a sizable team signed up to travel to Uganda in 2020. We have a few tickets still available, so connect with our office soon. Much is planned for this trip. It will be a life changing experience

NOTICE: January is a continuation of MLI's cell phone collection. Please ask your friends, Bible study class, church, and family to donate their old cell phone to Mission Link. Also needed are laptops, tablets, electronic keyboard, and cameras. Thank you for helping!



Thirty dollars (\$30) a month brings great happiness to an our African Widow! Will you prayerfully consider adopting this dear widow?



Jennipher Gwandaye: Jennipher is 52 years old and has six (6) children. Her husband died from Alcoholism in 2003. I thank God for care and support from MLI with stoves, soap, medical assistance, etc. I was worried before, but now my joy is recovered, and I thank God for Mission Link. My greatest challenge is school fees for my children. Jennipher fellowships at Peace House Church.

GENERAL WIDOW'S FUND

This fund helps support the many widows in Itukulu who do not have a sponsor. The needs in this village is great as many are peasant farmers. **Any amount given** will bless our widows. Thank you so much!