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Personal Evangelism Part 2

“Sir,” the woman said, ‘you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?’ Jesus answered, ‘Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal

life.’ The woman said to him, ‘Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.’ He told her, ‘Go, call your husband and come back.’ ‘I have no husband,’ she replied. Jesus said to her, ‘You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.’

‘Sir,’ the woman said, ‘I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.’

‘Woman,’ Jesus replied, ‘believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.’

The woman said, ‘I know that Messiah (called Christ) is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.’ Then Jesus declared, ‘I, the one speaking to you—I am he.’

Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, ‘What do you want?’ or ‘Why are you talking with her?’ Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, ‘Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?’ They came out of the town and made their way toward him.” John 4:11-30

As Jesus talks to the woman at the well, we are looking closely at things we can use as we share the gospel with others. We are looking at 17 things that Jesus did that are helpful to us in our personal evangelism. We will continue here with part two, and Lord willing, we will finish in the next issue with part three.

John 4:23-24 KJV

But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

We began by noting that Jesus didn't let culture close doors to souls. Jesus was a Jewish man. He was talking to a Samaritan woman. In the culture of that time Jews did not speak to Samaritans. And most often men did not speak to a woman to whom they were not married. But Jesus knew that this woman is a precious soul who needed the gospel. Number two we looked at how Jesus did not let fatigue stop him. We learned that even when we're tired, personal evangelism is so important we need to keep going. We need to be renewed in our spiritual strength and keep doing what is right, sharing our faith with the world. Number three we saw how Jesus started with a normal conversation. Could I please have a cup of water? We talked about how if we begin talking to strangers and start with a Bible quiz, or just begin quoting scriptures, people are going to want to get away from us. They need to feel a little more comfortable with us and build a little more trust before they will listen. Number four we looked at how Jesus chose an appropriate time. Yes, it was just Jesus and this Samaritan woman, but they were in a public place. We should look for an appropriate time to talk to strangers. Number five we looked at how Jesus did not let potentially offensive statements stop him. The woman challenged Jesus, "Why are you asking me for water?" When we study with others, they may say something that is hurtful or offensive and how we react will make all the difference. We cannot wear our feelings on our sleeve. We need to be ready with a soft answer that turns away wrath. Number six we looked at how Jesus offered her something better than what she had. He offered her living water; at the time she didn't know what that meant. Jesus is offering her eternal life. Spiritual life. As we try to share our faith with others, that's what we offer. No one else has been charged by God to offer that to the world except his church. We are the ones to take the gospel to the world. That brings us to number seven.

Number seven. Jesus pointed in the right direction.

Jesus had just introduced her to this idea of living water. That begins an odd conversation leaving this woman a little confused. She doesn't yet know Jesus. He tells her what you're getting out of this well doesn't compare to what I can give you. She begins to say are you claiming that you are better than the one who built this well? That would've been Jacob, many generations ago. So right now she's a little confused and a little defensive, that's understandable. Who are you, and how can you make such a claim? Jesus was trying to turn the conversation from the physical to the spiritual. It is always the right direction to point people toward those things that are spiritual. I'm not saying that we do not care about physical things. We mentioned before that we will be judged by how we help people who need physical things. Those who are hungry and thirsty, poor and naked, sick and in prison. God places a great emphasis on helping those in need. But to what end? If we only talk about physical things, and only help with physical things, are we really giving people what they need? If we will look for them, there are times when the conversation will have an opening to bring up a spiritual point. It may not lead to a Bible study right at the moment; it may not lead to anything more than just a comment or two. But if we are looking for them, and ready for them, we can take advantage of an opening to bring up a spiritual point.

Maybe someone is talking about how terrible this world is. Things are just awful. We could jump in there and start talking about what's wrong with the world. Or we could point them to the answer. Open the Bible and show them God's plan. Show them his mercy and his grace. We need to find ways to turn an earthly, physical conversation into a spiritual point. It may never lead anywhere further than that, but we will never

know if we don't try. Jesus always pointed in the right direction.

Number eight. Jesus did not ignore sin.

There are many times when it's difficult to relate to Jesus. This is one of those times. Jesus had never met this woman before and yet he knows her entire history. We can't know that. Jesus says go call your husband; she says I don't have a husband. And Jesus doesn't have to ask why she doesn't have a husband. He tells her you are right that you don't have a husband, you've had five and the one you're with now is not your husband. Jesus knows that. I don't know that about people. You don't know that about people. It might come up in conversation. You ask a question, and someone has been waiting to tell someone their story, and that's a wonderful thing. But whether we know that or not there is a principle here that we need to know. Jesus did not just give this woman some false hope. He made it clear that there was such a thing as sin, and he began to address that. Jesus knows that we won't get better if we ignore it. Salvation is not just to something; salvation is also from something.

It's a wonderful thing that we get to tell people that we would love for them to be a part of our church family. We would love for them to know Jesus. We would love for them to have the hope of an eternal reward. We like that. That's a wonderful thing. Salvation is also from something. Why do they need to be baptized? Why does a person need to obey the Lord? Because all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Jesus is not afraid to talk about something real personal. It's also a reminder that this is based on God's standard. We read in the Bible what God does not want us to do; we may talk to each other about it not seeming right to us. We might say that we don't know if a loving, forgiving God is going to send anyone to eternal punishment. When we stand before the judgment throne of God, the Bible will be opened. The Bible

will be the standard. Yes, but Rick said that was okay. Rick's opinion on judgment day will not matter. Your opinion on judgment day will not matter. The Bible is the standard. When we take people to the Bible, they begin to see that all have sinned, which means I have sinned, and you have sinned. We have that in common. When we can get people to see that, that is when change begins to happen. When we can open the Scripture and see that we have sinned against God, that will begin to change how we think. It will change how we see the world. It will change how we make decisions. Again, that may not happen right at the moment; sometimes it takes a while. But we cannot ignore the fact that people are saved from sin. Jesus makes that clear to us.

Number nine. Jesus taught about distinctions.

The situation that this Samaritan woman lays out before Jesus is especially important. It's important to her. Our people, the Samaritans, worship on this mountain. That would've been Mount Gerazim. And then she said the Jews don't worship on this mountain, they worship in Jerusalem. The Temple in Jerusalem was on Mount Zion. She's basically asking which mountain is right?

Have you thought about what Jesus might have done if he wasn't perfect? It would've been tempting to say that stuff doesn't matter. Jesus knew he was only months away from going to the cross. He's going to tell her that the time is coming when it isn't going to matter where you worship. Since that time is coming, and it's only going to be months away, let's just not deal with that. But Jesus is perfect. He tells her that the Jews have this one right. You worship what you do not know. We worship what we do know. Salvation is from the Jews. Basically, Jesus tells her that the Jews have this one right. The Jews worship in Jerusalem, and that's where God has ordained worship. Jesus is not doing that to make fun of her or to put her down. But this is where Jesus gives the founda-

tional statement about worship in the New Testament. Jesus says that God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth. We must worship God. They agreed about that. How to do that and where to do that they disagreed. But it is clear that we must worship God. One thing that we need to show people is that God is worthy. The church is not just a club. You're not just coming to be with good people, although church people are the best people I know. There is a must about being a child of God. We must worship him. Then Jesus says we must worship in spirit. When we worship God, we must be reverent. We must be in awe of his Majesty. We must be grateful for his grace and mercy. That's true of when we worship, but that should also be true when we think of God any time.

But then Jesus said, in truth. We must worship God in spirit and in truth. This woman had just laid out a situation about two different ways of worshiping God. Two different locations. Is it Gerizim or is it Jerusalem? It is here that Jesus says there is a truth to worshiping God. It is tempting to think that truth doesn't matter. The details don't matter. If we love God and we're worshiping God that's good enough. That is not what Jesus said, is it? There is a truth to worshiping God. We follow what he wants.

This leads us to some of the reasons that we don't want to talk to people. We know the questions that are coming. Instrumental music comes up, of course. Why is it that every Sunday you do the Lord's supper? We only do it at our church on Christmas and Easter. There is a truth to worshiping God. We cannot be ashamed to say that. It's not what we think; it's what Jesus said. It's not that it's a church of Christ thing; what does the Bible say?

Our elders don't get together to talk about how we could be different than others. Our elders get together to talk about how we can follow what the

Bible says. When we are biblical, that's what makes us different from the world. That's sad but it's true. And it can break our hearts. When we follow the Bible, we become unique, set apart. We must not be ashamed to say that.

Number 10. Jesus identified the Savior.

In verse 25 the woman says that she knows that Messiah is coming, he who is called Christ. When he comes, he will tell us all things. Jesus said, "I who speak to you am he." Jesus teaches us in principle to whom we should always be pointing. In John 12:32 Jesus says, "When I am lifted up, I will draw all people to myself." That is who we are trying to point people toward. That is why we befriend people. That is why we build trust with people. That is why we have relationships with people. We do that to point them to Jesus. We are not spreading the gospel only for personal recognition, so others will see how many people we study the Bible with. Look at how many people have been baptized because of me. We need to know that this is not about us. It's about pointing people to the only one who can offer the hope of heaven. That is all it is about. If we begin to think that we want recognition, we need to do some serious Bible reading. We need to do serious soul-searching. We need to do some serious repenting. We must point people to Jesus. He is the way the truth and the life.

So, how do we do that? Again Jesus gives us the answer. In Luke chapter 10 Jesus is talking to a certain lawyer. The lawyer asks Jesus a question, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" We marvel at Jesus' answer. He doesn't say let me tell you the philosophical answer. He doesn't say that my opinion is. No, no, no! What's written in the law? How do you read it? In today's language what does that mean? It means, "Let's open our Bibles and find out." That's what Jesus did. That's how you and I point people to Jesus now. We point people to Jesus through his word.

Finally, Jesus inspired this new believer to reach more converts.

Don't we love that this woman is so excited that she forgets about the water? She left her water jar and went into the city. She's at the well because she needs water, and suddenly that water doesn't matter so much. When she leaves and goes into the city, she begins to tell everybody. She tells the whole town to come meet a man who told me all I ever did. Could this be the Christ? That is so cool. But to see the best part, we need to look back. Why is she at the well at noon? God tells us it was the middle of the day. Usually people would come for water in the morning when it's cool, or in the evening when it's cool. Not in the heat of the day. She's there because she wants to be there alone. At noon nobody is going to call her names; nobody is going to put her down because of her past.

But now in her excitement, in her Joy, she's not afraid to see people. She's not afraid to talk to people. She's not afraid to invite them.

Let me ask those of us who have been Christians for 20, 30, 50 years. Do we remember what it was like the first couple of months after we obeyed the gospel? In our excitement, we were going to save the entire world, weren't we? There wasn't a person we knew, even if they didn't like us, that we were not going to tell.

Sometimes when we've been Christians for so long, we look at the new Christians and their excitement, and we think, you don't need to tell them that. They don't want to hear it. When instead we need to let them take us by the hand and motivate us to do better. They may show us who is the next one to come to the Lord. I pray that we are growing in our desire to share the gospel and that we are growing in our knowledge of how to do that.

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Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

In a world obsessed with the next best thing, we often seek fulfillment in material possessions, relationships, and personal achievements. Our souls are restless, yearning for deeper satisfaction that can only be found in the Messiah, who offers living water. The story of the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4:1-29 illustrates this truth: we remain blind to our needs until Jesus opens our eyes.

Jesus revealed Himself to the Samaritan woman as the Living Water, a Prophet, and ultimately the Messiah. He showed that only He can fill the void in our hearts, offering lasting peace and joy. Jesus invites us to find our fulfillment in Him, offering a wellspring of life that never runs dry. He is not repelled by our sin but seeks to reconcile us to God, offering forgiveness and new life. As our Savior-King, Jesus transforms our desires and gives us a purpose that transcends earthly pursuits.

When we embrace Jesus as our Messiah, our lives overflow with gratitude and a desire to exalt His name. In Christ, we find a treasure far greater than anything this world can offer, ending our search for the next best thing. Let us rest in the knowledge that in Christ, we have everything we need, and His living water satisfies our deepest longings, empowering us to live a life of purpose and joy.

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But the time is coming—indeed it's here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.”

John 4:23-24



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