

## PERSONAL EVANGELISM

### Youth Bible Study

- **Samaritan Woman & Jesus**
  - John 4:1-30
  - "must needs go" (verse 4)
    - Jesus was prompted to go
    - **Application:**
      - always be listening for Holy Spirit direction
  - "through Samaria" (verse 4)
    - shortest route from Jerusalem to Galilee
    - pious Jews avoided it
    - Samaritans – considered half-breeds (only half Jewish)
    - Samaritans – religious beliefs combined Mosaic Law with various superstitions
    - Samaritans were considered lower than Gentiles
    - **Application:**
      - Prejudices have to be put aside
      - need to cross cultural barriers
      - discuss/consider: how to work with gays/lesbians/transgenders?
      - how to work with homeless (dirty, unkept)?
  - "being wearied" (verse 6)
    - **Application:**
      - don't always feel up to reaching out
      - it might interrupt my schedule
      - I might have to skip eating
  - "disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat" (verse 8)
    - why did **all** His disciples go?
    - would the disciples (with obvious prejudices) hindered what Jesus wanted to do?
    - was this deliberate planning on Jesus' part?
    - was a one-on-one conversation less intimidating?
    - what city did they go to?
    - could they have possibly passed by this woman on the way?
      - **Application:**
        - working with someone might be best one on one
  - "about the sixth hour" (verse 6)
    - noon
  - "there cometh a woman . . . to draw water" (verse 7)
    - not the usual time for women to come to the well
    - woman typically came early in the day and came together in groups
    - what does this possibly say about the woman coming later and alone?
    - was she a social outcast?
      - **Application:**
        - are the social outcasts overlooked?

- may need to go where they are (eat lunch with them)
- "Jesus saith unto her" (verse 7)
  - Jesus initiated the conversation
  - **tradition:** a rabbi did not speak with a woman in public (even his wife, daughter, or sister)
  - some Pharisees were called "the bruised and bleeding Pharisees" because they closed their eyes when they saw a woman in the street and so walked into houses and walls (Barclay Commentary)
    - thought it was a waste of time to try & explain spiritual truths to women
    - Jesus set aside cultural prejudices & showed compassion
    - **Application:**
      - be willing to speak first
      - make eye contact
      - seek opportunity
- "Give me drink" (verse 7)
  - **Quote:** "He is not unaware that the way to gain a soul is often to ask a service of it" (Frederick Godet).
  - Very unusual:
    - for Jesus (a Jew) to speak to her (a Samaritan & a woman)
    - ask for a favor
    - be willing to drink from her cup
      - **Application:**
        - be willing (humble) to ask for help
- "If you knew the gift of God" (verse 10)
  - Jesus worked the subject of God into the conversation
  - Jesus used the simple things of life (him needing a drink of water) to do this
  - He made her curious about the things of God
    - **Application:**
      - Look (and pray) for ways to work God into the conversation
      - try to find something in common
      - everyday situations can be used to turn a conversation to God
        - being undercharged at a store or given too much change
        - forgetting to pay for something
        - "I want to have a clear conscience"
        - show concern, ask questions
      - Live in such a way that it makes people interested
        - "What makes you different?"
        - "Why won't you . . . ?"
- "Give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw" (verse 15)
  - she doesn't understand
    - **Application:**
      - don't expect mature responses
      - use every day words not "Christianese" (words familiar to Christians but not always to those unsaved)

- "call thy husband" (verse 16)
  - Jesus used discernment
  - Jesus knew she wasn't currently married
    - **Application:**
      - listen for Holy Spirit prompting
  - she needed to see her need of a Savior
- "our fathers worshipped in this mountain" (verse 20)
  - she has questions about doctrine
    - truly want to know or avoiding the real issue?
  - where to worship?
    - centuries old debate between Jews & Samaritans
  - who is the Messiah?
  - Jesus doesn't enter into a long doctrinal discussion
    - that is often a distraction
    - **Application:**
      - don't get bogged down by doctrinal differences
      - be careful about arguing politics or even moral issues
      - when arguing – pride is often involved
        - you want to prove you are right & they are wrong
      - 2 Timothy 2:24 "the servant of the Lord must not be quarrelsome" (AMP)
      - **Quote:** "the goal is to win the soul, not win the argument"
  - Jesus didn't completely ignore this
    - **Application (how to answer these types of questions):**
      - "it doesn't matter where I worship as long as I love God, right?"
      - "it doesn't matter what I believe as long as I'm sincere, right?"
      - "correct those who are in opposition with courtesy and gentleness in the hope that God may grant that they will repent" (2 Timothy 2:25 AMP)
- "I that speak unto thee am he" (verse 26)
  - this is the most important issue
  - "But whom say ye that I [Jesus] am?" (Matthew 16:15).
  - **Application:**
    - has the person you are talking to accepted Christ?
    - if the conversation gets off track – bring it back to this point
    - need a relationship with Christ – not good morals or religion
    - **Example:** If a person brings up evolution, you may need to say: "That's an interesting subject, and there are competent scholars on both sides of the issue. Sometime maybe we could discuss it at length. But the question that is far more important than evolution is, 'Who do you think Jesus Christ is?'" (Bible.org)
- "disciples [came], and marveled . . . no man said . . . Why talkest thou with her? (verse 27)
  - reinforcing – if they had been there from the beginning, could they have hindered the conversation between Jesus and the woman?
- "The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city" (verse 28)
  - is it a coincidence that once the disciples appeared, she left?

- left her waterpot – she was clearly touched by what she heard
- "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" (verse 29)
  - she began witnessing immediately
  - didn't know all the doctrine
  - hadn't cleaned up her own life yet
  - didn't fully understand the plan of salvation
    - **Application**
      - the power of a personal testimony
        - tough to argue with
        - can be more persuasive than doctrine
- **Ethiopian Eunuch & Philip**
  - Acts 8:26-40
  - "Arise, and go" (verse 26)
    - divine guidance
    - Philip was VERY busy (verses 5-8)
      - bringing the Gospel to the Samaritans
      - seemed indispensable
      - "isn't there someone else who can do this?"
      - obedient
  - "behold, a man of Ethiopia . . . had come to Jerusalem to worship" (verse 27)
    - "behold" – might this have surprised Philip?
    - rich, successful, important man from another country
  - "was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet" (verse 28)
    - God was setting up the opportunity
    - he might not have found God, but he certainly had some of the Word of God
  - "Go near, and join thyself to this chariot" (verse 29)
    - successful man – could have been intimidating
    - this took boldness on Philip's part
  - "heard him reading" (verse 30)
    - Ethiopian was so interested – didn't wait until he got home
    - encourage people to read the Bible (even unsaved)
    - it was common in the ancient world to read aloud
    - this gave Philip an opening
    - when Philip heard what the Ethiopian was reading
      - confirmation he was doing God's will
      - God had arranged this meeting
      - it was an "open door"
  - "Understandest thou what thou readest" (verse 30)
    - what questions might you use to start a conversation?
    - Ethiopian was reading Isaiah
    - Philip used this passage to explain the plan of salvation
      - in one way or another, the whole Bible points to Jesus
      - explaining who Jesus is & what He has done = the essence of the Gospel

- too many focus on what you must do or must not do
- "What doth hinder me to be baptized" (verse 36)
  - some people accept almost immediately
  - others take time
- The Coptic Christians – greatly persecuted today in Egypt – trace their spiritual heritage back to this Ethiopian official.

## Preparing for Personal Evangelism

### STUDY BIBLE EXAMPLES

- Samaritan Woman
- Ethiopian
- Nicodemus
- Zacchaeus

### Consistent Personal Devotions

#### Bible Study

- study Bible examples of evangelism
- "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).
- study questions of your own
- do not feel that you have to wait until you are proficient in the Bible

#### Daily Reading

- "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15).
- know how to share the plan of salvation
- keep it simple
- remember your own experience
- memorize 1 or 2 key Scriptures
  - John 3:16
  - Romans 5:8

#### Prayer

- ask God for a burden for the lost
- ask specifically for opportunities
- ask for doors with certain people
- ask God to give you compassion & love for the lost

#### Meditate on Scripture

- what do certain verses mean to you?
- memorize – repeat it over & over to yourself
- you are what you think (thankful or critical?)

#### Work on Your Attitude

- **Fear:** change "I can't" to "I can do ALL things through Christ"

- a joyful heart – comes out in your everyday dealings
- the deeper your personal experience, the more you want to share it
  - how is your love for the Lord?
- **discard:** "I would never talk to or . . . ."
  - some people are "unlovely"
  - most people avoid them
- self-consciousness
  - the man who is proud and the man who has an inferiority complex (insecure) have something in common – they both think about themselves a lot!
- prejudices

### Personal Examples

- talk to other Christians about how they have witnessed
- read stories

### Think About

- what questions to start a conversation?
- what questions might come up?
- what questions have I struggled with?

### Create or Look for Opportunities

- pray for opportunities
- live the Gospel – attract attention
  - attitude
  - moral code
  - conduct
    - is there anything in your conduct or conversation that hinders your witness?
- are you different?
  - make eye contact & smile
  - hold doors open for people
  - let people go ahead of you in line
- tracts?
- conversation starters
- Colossians 4:5 "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time."
  - AMP "Conduct yourself with wisdom in your interactions with outsiders (non-believers), make the most of each opportunity [treating it as something precious]."
- a mind (or life) consumed with self (I'm tired, I'm hungry, I'm depressed) will miss opportunities
- might have to inconvenience yourself
  - miss a meal
  - miss something you want to do
- visit sick – nursing homes
  - good practice

**Pray for Discernment**

- there are wrong times
- there are wrong ways
- this is why preparation is important
- harshness & bluntness – probably a turnoff

**Show That You Care**

- initiate conversation
- ask someone out for coffee or lunch
- send cards, texts
- **Quote:** people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care
- learn what interests them
- listen, listen, listen!
  - remember, everyone's favorite topic is themselves
  - listening is almost a lost skill
  - get to know your audience
    - Jesus spoke the law to the lawyers
    - Jesus spoke of fishing to fishermen
    - Jesus spoke of planting & sheep herding to the average people
    - don't speak down to people

**Share**

- Your personal testimony
  - "Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence" (1 Peter 3:15-16).
  - This verse does not say: "You must go to seminary and study systematic theology, church history, apologetics and philosophy. Only then will you be fit to witness." It simply says, "Be prepared to tell people why you have hope—and do it with gentleness and respect." This means explaining how the message of the gospel has intersected your life. (Source: BibleHub.com)
- Favorite Scriptures

**Invite**

- point them to Christ first
- then look for ways to get them to youth group, Bible study, worship services, etc.

**Follow Up**

- pray for this person often
- studies show it takes an average of 7.6 times for an unbeliever to hear the Gospel before he responds favorably toward it
- if you don't know the answer to their questions, study & follow up with them
- keep in contact
- look for opportunities to help (sick, need food, going through a hard time)

**Discuss:** What about the backslider or the discouraged who have quit worship services?

### **Quotable Quotes**

- "The goal is not to win the argument, but to win the soul."
- "Opportunities are often lost because we think we are waiting on God, but He is actually waiting on us."
- "Every Christian is either a missionary or an imposter" (Charles Spurgeon).
- "Being an extrovert isn't essential to EVANGELISM—obedience and love are" (Rebecca M. Pippert)
- People don't care what you know until they know that you care

### **Sources**

- The Enduring Word Commentary
- Bible.org