



SHARING
JESUS
{without *freaking out*}

Proverbs 11:30

New American Standard Bible

The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who is wise wins souls.

#1 TAKE THE INITIATIVE! #2 OFFER GOD'S MERCY!
#3 IDENTIFY SPIRITUAL NEEDS. JN. 4:9-10

- It would be wonderful if unsaved people eagerly came to you with their questions about salvation and eternal life, but that's not likely to happen very often, *if ever*.
- Instead, you will need to *initiate* the majority of the evangelistic opportunities in your life. You'll need to look for ways to steer conversations with spiritually uninformed and indifferent people back to God's eternal truth. ***You have to give them a reason to listen and care about what you're saying.***
- We're looking at a powerful example of that in a familiar story from the life of Christ. The fourth chapter of John describes Jesus' interaction with the **SAMARITAN WOMAN** at the well. We already saw how He took the initiative in starting the conversation, in spite of all the traditional and religious barriers that stood between them. The simple act of asking the woman for a drink was shocking in that culture, and in just a few short words Jesus had her full attention.

- But as we'll see today, it wasn't enough just to get the conversation going—Christ immediately *steers their discussion* to her ***SPIRITUAL NEEDS***.
- The Samaritan woman was already reeling from His shocking request for a drink. John recounts her incredulity at the situation:
- Therefore, the Samaritan woman said to Him, ***“How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?” (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)*** **10**, ***Jesus answered and said to her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.”*** ([John 4:9-10](#))
- Christ's request for a drink caught the woman off guard, but it also created a ***point of contact*** between them. Everyone can relate to physical thirst and the need for water. **Jesus simply used those basic human experiences to kick start a discussion about her spiritual need.**

- And to illustrate her desperate need, He uses a familiar but potent **analogy: “water.”** Not only was it the point of contact for their interaction, but it was also an apt illustration of her spiritual need—one with Old Testament foundations. **(Jer. 17:13)** describes how Israel had **“forsaken the fountain of living water, even the Lord.”** Speaking about the lovingkindness of the Lord in **(Psa. 36:9)**, David says, **“For with you is the fountain of life.”** **(Isa. 12:3)** talks about the redeemed **“joyously draw[ing] water from the springs of salvation.”**
- The conversation with the Samaritan woman wasn’t the **only** time Christ referred to Himself as the source of living water. In **(Jn. 6:35)** He says, **“I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.”** Just a chapter later in **(Jn. 7:37)**, Jesus told the crowd in Jerusalem, **“If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink.”**

- Water is precious and vital for life, and in the world of the New Testament it was not easy to come by. But Christ wasn't offering to quench anyone's physical thirst. ***He had their spiritual needs in mind***, and the analogy of water made it clear how strong those needs were.
- That's really the ***essence of evangelism***. **You locate a common point of reference or interest and begin a conversation, anticipating how you can direct that conversation toward eternal matters.** Regardless of the topic or the venue, even the most casual conversations can have an eternal purpose. **It's our job to keep watch for opportunities to inject God's truth into everyday discussions, just as Christ did with the Samaritan woman.**
- In this case, Christ took the initiative to start a conversation, then immediately turned the tables on the woman, **identifying her as the one in need of the kind of water only He could supply.** He's addressing a need she's unaware she has and **making a divine offer of unsolicited *mercy*** to fulfill that need.

#1 TAKE THE INITIATIVE! #2 OFFER GOD'S MERCY! #3 IDENTIFY SPIRITUAL NEEDS.

#4 CONFRONT SIN JN. 4:16-18

- One of the main problems with weak evangelistic methods is the risk of leading people to **FALSE CONVERSIONS**. Many sinners are thrilled to learn that **“God has a wonderful plan”** for their lives and are eager to tap into all the blessings that entails. It stands to reason **if you evangelize solely on the basis of God's gifts, everybody will sign up.**
- But there is a significant difference between simply wanting the *benefits* of believing in Christ and *actually turning to Him for salvation in biblical faith and repentance*. **FALSE ASSURANCE** of faith is a **deadly spiritual danger**. **CONFIDENCE** in a shallow belief actually *hardens* a person to the truth of **God's Word**. We have a responsibility to lost men and women *to preach the gospel* thoroughly and accurately, and *to steer them away from empty professions of faith* and *shallow biblical understanding*.

- Often the **KEY** to breaking through the fog of false faith is **CONFRONTING SIN**. Until a person understands the **depth** and **weight** of his **sin**, he **can't fully appreciate his need for a Savior**. In fact, it's usually not until a person learns to see his sin the way God sees it that he is able to truly repent and believe.
- That was the case for the **SAMARITAN WOMAN** at the well in **John 4**. In verse 15, she seems ready to receive the benefits of the living water Jesus mercifully offered her. But Christ knew the true state of her heart and the sin she harbored. He graciously yet directly exposed her sin with a simple, abrupt command:
- He said to her, ***“Go, call your husband and come here.” 17, The woman answered and said, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You have correctly said, ‘I have no husband’; 18, for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly.”*** (John 4:16-18)

- ***Samaritans*** practiced a distorted, corrupted version of ***Judaism***. But they did accept the **PENTATEUCH**, so this woman would have been aware of God's commandment against adultery (**Ex. 20:14**) and that the penalty for adulterers was **DEATH**. Moreover, she would have inherently known she was living a sinful lifestyle (**Rom. 2:14-15**). And as we've previously discussed, her pattern of **immorality** had made her an outcast within her own community.
- But it's not until she sees her sin in relation to the merciful blessings of God that she begins to understand its **full weight**. And it's here that the nature and content of their conversation radically shifts. There's no more talk of **mercy, satisfaction, and blessing**. This initially indifferent, ignorant, careless sinner has had her wretched immorality laid bare, and **she must be brought to conviction and repentance over her condition before she can enjoy the living water Christ has offered.**

• It's wonderful to present to the sinner all the glories of the gospel—all the soul-satisfying blessings of an eternity in the intimate presence of God. But it's not enough to stop there. If all you do is spill out the tremendous benefits of knowing God and then ask for a response, you're likely to lead him to a false conversion, deceiving him about the true nature of his heart.

• ***IT'S CRITICAL TO BRING THE SINNER FACE TO FACE WITH THE GUILT OF HIS SIN***—to lead him to measure himself against the holy law of God and feel the weight of divine judgment on his corrupt life. ***HOW ELSE WILL HE EVER COME TO TRUE REPENTANCE AND FAITH?***

