

In search of...

Truth & Right

Volume 10 Issue 7

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Jesus & Evangelism

Jesus not only preached to masses of people throughout His ministry here on earth, but He also knew the importance of teaching the individual. In seeing Him as the perfect example of evangelism, notice several lessons from Him in His contact with a Samaritan woman and other Samaritans from Sychar in John 4. First, Jesus showed compassion. In leaving Judea for Galilee, the text reads that "he must needs go through Samaria" (John 4:4).

Since many of the Jews traveling from Judea to Galilee circumvented Samaria on the eastern road through Jericho, Christ's need to travel through Samaria was spiritual and not geographical. When Jesus confronted the Samaritan woman after

sending His disciples for food, she was perplexed that He would have dealings with her because of her race and gender. Christ's contact with a hated race was enough to impress her with His compassion. If I am to follow His example of evangelism (cf. 1 Cor. 11:1), then I must be compassionate to others.

Second, Jesus introduced the gospel with the gift and the giver (John 4:10, 14). We are living in a world of sin. People do not need a "watered-down" gospel. Rather, the world needs to hear about the gift and the giver (Rom. 6:23). The gospel we are commanded to teach should involve both, and any other gospel is accursed (Gal. 1:8). Thus, if I am to follow the example of Jesus in

evangelism, then I must introduce the gospel with both the gift (salvation) and the giver (Jesus).

Third, Jesus was interested in all souls, and He looked for more opportunities to share the gospel. After she inquired about receiving everlasting life, Jesus asked her to call her husband. Certainly, He already had in mind the opportunity to prove His deity, but He was not only interested in her soul, but the souls of her family as well. Later, the Samaritan woman brought many from Sychar to see Jesus, who then believed in Him (John 4:39). We should open our eyes and look for opportunities to spread the gospel to as many as we can. We must be interested in all souls!

Fourth, Jesus taught her properly the truth. He corrected her concept of worship (John 4:19-24), not giving her any idea that she was worshipping properly. He did not commend her sincerity. To be more precise, he said, "Ye worship ye know not what" (John 4:22) and then taught her the proper method of worship according to both spirit and truth (John 4:24). Sometimes, teaching the gospel in an

evangelistic manner requires some tearing down before building (cf. Jer. 1:10). We cannot overlook the need to deal with false doctrines; we must teach people properly the truth, for only it can save (cf. John 8:32).

Fifth, Jesus continually realized the importance of soul winning (John 4:35). Although the disciples questioned His involvement with this woman and tried to urge Him to eat, He was interested in the harvesting of souls. What more of a purpose statement do we need as Christians? Evangelism ought to be as much a part of our lives as breathing air! To follow the example of our Lord in evangelism, we ought never to let down in looking for opportunities, realizing its great importance.

Sixth, Jesus understood the concept of preparation in soul winning. Many of the Samaritans believed in Him from this account (John 4:39-42). A short time later, Philip would come to Samaria and baptize many of them (Acts 8:12). Possibly, some of the Samaritans that heard Philip remembered the day they heard Jesus. Many times, we get discouraged in soul winning

because we cannot see the immediate fruits of our labor. However, just because we do not see immediate success does not mean that we have not been successful in preparing the soil for another to reap the harvest. For us to follow the example of Christ in evangelism, we ought to rejoice when others can build upon the work we have done in teaching the gospel. We ought to be patient when we do not see an immediate harvest. We ought to be selfless, occupied in our task and willing to rejoice when others reap the harvest.

Seventh, Jesus knew the correct way to teach was exclusively from the word of God (John 4:42). When we teach the world, not with creeds or doctrines, but from the holy word of God, then God will add many saved souls to His kingdom.

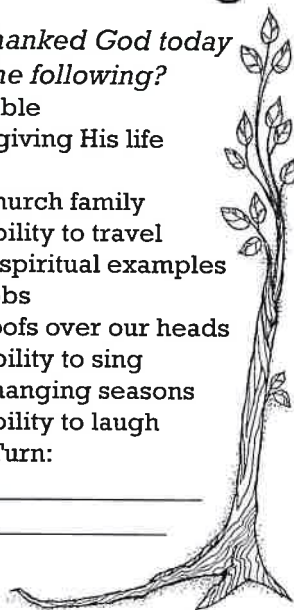
Therefore, let us all apply these wonderful principles of evangelism from the example of the greatest soul-winner, and thereby gain more success in our endeavors!

Sam Willcutt

dear God,
thanks for this
beautiful life
and forgive me if
i dont love it
enough.

*Have you thanked God today
for any of the following?*

- The Bible
- Jesus giving His life for us
- Our church family
- The ability to travel
- Good spiritual examples
- Our jobs
- The roofs over our heads
- The ability to sing
- The changing seasons
- The ability to laugh
- Your Turn:



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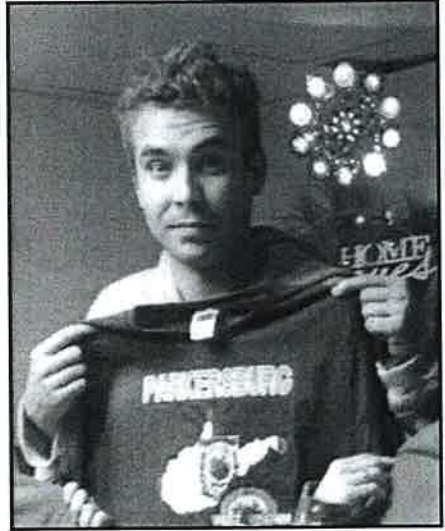


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Christian Q&A

Continued from last month...

We attended Winding Road church of Christ in Parkersburg, WV that Sunday night and after that, until we moved. There, church became an extension of the family based community I was a part of on a daily basis. You see my childhood was spent living on the family farm. We raised cows, sheep, had horses, dogs, barn cats. The earth was our playground. We caught salamanders, got way too dirty too many times, and had way more freedom than kids do today. From that freedom, we got bumps, scars (one under my chin if you would like to see it), and we made good and bad mistakes. We saw birth. We learned death. We saw the world working in perfect order without any man controlling it. My Grandma Sams' and Great-Grandma O'Dell's houses sat atop our hill and there we were exposed to an older woman (Grandma Sams) doing everything she could follow God's will and an old woman (Great-Grandma O'Dell) who really studied her Bible or went to church. I saw a woman in my Grandma, though she had lost her husband and her son at a very early age, who was always happy and worked for others without giving a second thought, and I saw another woman in my Great-Grandma, though she was always kind to me because I was born on her birthday, was living an unsatisfied and remorseful life. Great-Grandma couldn't move very well at this time, and she had a lot of time to sit and think about her life, and even as a child, you could tell their was a lot of pain in her memories, a lot of regret. I learned from everyone, be they a member of church or not. The people who surround us impact us more than we ever know. In my Grandma I saw a woman who I wanted my life to emulate, and in my Great-Grandma, I saw a woman whose life I did not want mine to become, even if she did live to be well over 100. I knew I would rather have as many good years as God was going to grant me then to live 100 years not appreciate the daily blessings God provided me.



At Winding Road, I got to worship with not only my mom and dad, sisters, and Grandma, but I was also fortunate enough to worship with my cousins and my aunt and uncle, which I thought was so great. To this day, I can see why it is hard for people who were not raised in the church to leave their family's belief, even when the scriptures clearly state a practice contrary to God's will that their family's congregation is practicing. I am not saying that it is right. I am just saying it is harder than people give it credit for. I could see that if I attended a church surrounded with a large part of my family for my entire life why it would be so difficult to see an error if they taught it, because as children, we don't think our families can do wrong, and sadly, that sometimes bleeds into adulthood. The examples I got from my limited time spent at Winding Road weren't innumerable, because they were things and people I had been learning from my whole life. It is easy to take advantage of something you have always had in your life and you believe you will always have. The lessons I learned there I am still learning as I grow older. Never take people for granted, and never take the time you have with them for granted either. One thing you can't replicate in life is moments, so why throw them away so carelessly?

Next month, part three!