

A Model of Personal Evangelism

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: John 4

In this chapter, Jesus spoke with a woman at a well in Samaria. As a result of this conversation, she came to know that He was the Messiah (v. 25-26), she told others about Jesus (v. 28-29), and many believed in Him (v. 41-42). We often wonder how to go about doing “personal evangelism.” This chapter provides a model. Jesus’ interaction with this woman gives us insight as to how we might go about teaching the lost today.

Look for Opportunities in Everyday Situations

- Many Christians tend to think of “evangelism” in terms of some big plan/program – nothing wrong with these as long as they do not go beyond what God has authorized (Colossians 3:17)
- But it is often MORE effective when individuals reach out to those they know (family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, etc.) – as we interact with people, opportunities to talk about the gospel could come up at any time; we need to be looking for these opportunities
- Jesus was not traveling to Samaria to evangelize per se – He was going to Galilee and stopped to rest (v. 3-6); while there, He took advantage of this opportunity
- Personal evangelism is not necessarily about setting aside a specific time to evangelize – just do it; look for opportunities as you do the things you normally do; setting aside time is fine, but don’t limit it to that

Be Open to Talking with Anyone

- In the first century, Jews did not have much to do with Samaritans (v. 9) – besides this, Jesus was speaking with a woman, which seemed strange to His disciples (v. 27); despite these things, Jesus spoke with her anyway
- We may refrain from speaking with other people/groups for various reasons – fear, culture, stereotype, etc.; yet we should be willing to talk to anyone regardless of gender, race, background, etc.
- God shows no partiality (Acts 10:34-35) – we should not either; otherwise we may miss opportunities

Direct the Conversation to Spiritual Things

- It is good to be friendly, but being friendly won’t save anyone – only the gospel will (Romans 1:16); so if we are to have success, we must eventually turn our conversation to spiritual things; Jesus did this (v. 13-20)
- We cannot know people’s hearts and lives as Jesus did – but we can say things to spark an interest or provoke them to ask questions about spiritual things; there are many

ways to do this, but we must learn to integrate these topics/phrases into our conversations

Contrast God's Way with Man's Way

- Our society is filled with those who believe that truth is subjective, especially in religion – many believe we cannot say that anyone is wrong in what they believe, teach, or practice; yet we need to destroy arguments of error to lead people to the truth (2 Corinthians 10:5)
- Jesus spoke of how TRUE worshippers serve God (v. 23-24) – contrasted this with the Samaritans' way; we need to point out the difference between God's way and man's way (worship, salvation, church, etc.); in this, speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15)

Point People to Christ

- Jesus did this simply by telling her that He was the Messiah (v. 25-26) – we must lead people to Him
- Salvation is in Christ alone (Acts 4:12) – so we must direct people to Him, not to ourselves (2 Corinthians 4:5)

Conclusion

- Let us remember Jesus' example – learn from Him about how to reach out to others
- We may not always have the response that Jesus did (v. 39-41) – but that is not our responsibility
- We plant the seed and God causes the growth (1 Corinthians 3:6) – even after we are gone (v. 36-38)
- Let us use everyday opportunities and the regular activities of life to try to lead others to the truth