

Evangelism Tips from John 4

by Wayne Goff

Brother Dempsey Collins preached a lesson on John 4 and gave several tips on how to be more evangelistically-minded. I would like to share some of his points with you, while making some of my own comments.

- **Take time for the individual, John 4:5-7.** Though Jesus was tired and thirsty from His journey, He took time to discuss spiritual values with an individual -- a Samaritan woman. This was contrary to normal behavior for a Jewish man of that day, but Jesus came to seek and save the lost.

While Jesus often spoke to large multitudes, He also often made time for individuals. Everyone was important to Jesus. John records several of these in his gospel account: Nicodemus (Jn. 3), the blind man (Jn. 9), Lazarus (Jn. 11), etc. This is a great lesson for us. Jesus' entourage often included the downcast of society, people who were despised by men, but loved and accepted by Jesus. If you and I are to be Jesus' disciples, we must not close the door to any honest seeker of truth and salvation. Keep your eyes open for the individual.

- **Make opportunities out of ordinary circumstances, John 4:7-15.** Jesus was thirsty, and asked for a simple drink of water. In doing so, He took advantage of the opportunity to teach a woman about the importance of "living water" (v. 10). He told her, "Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water, springing up into everlasting life" (v. 14).

Look for opportunities to share a bit of the Good News with people at the gas station, the grocery store, the dry cleaners, the bank, etc. With a little bit of creativity, you can at least *introduce* the Gospel to those whom you meet briefly.

- **Make it your goal to find a spiritual opening, John 4:10.** Jesus turned a simple request for water into a discussion about eternal life. So whether you are talking about the weather, politics, or even sports, there is usually a quick way to point God or His Word out to those who might not see it. For example, when talking about weather, you might remind another that God is the Creator and Sustainer of this world in which we live. God gives us rain and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness (Acts 14:17). This might take some forethought and practice, but one could become quite good at it over time.
- **Offer others the hope of the Gospel, John 4:14.** Jesus offered the Samaritan woman the opportunity for eternal life! This is certainly something that everyone needs, and needs to talk about! Eternity is long, hell is hot, and heaven is too beautiful to miss. Salvation is the "gift" of God (Rom. 6:23), and we need to be telling others about that great hope!
- **Start where the people are in their lives, John 4:15.** When Paul was at Thessalonica, he found a noble group of people who searched the Scriptures habitually (Acts 17). So he appealed to them from the Scriptures. But when he arrived at Athens and had the opportunity to speak to a group of idolatrous philosophers, he spoke to them of the One, True God (Acts 17)! You have to find out where the person to whom you are speaking is in their spiritual lives, and begin there. It will not be the same point for everyone.
- **Every creature concept, John 4:9.** Jesus commanded the apostles to go preach the gospel to "every creature" (Mk. 16:15). They spread the Gospel to the whole world in their generation (Col. 1:23)! Everyone was a *prospect*, nobody was a *suspect*. Jesus *sought out* those whom He wished to save, and we must follow in His steps.

When you go fishing, beloved, don't forget to throw your bait into the water! You won't catch anything until you do.

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