

The Glory of the One and Only

Jesus' Glory in His Rescuing of the Lost!

John 4:1-45

Dave Gibson, November 3, 2019

It is so great to be with your friends!

- As of April 2nd this year I have retired but I am not very good at it. Retirement is exhausting. However, it agrees with me to be sure.
- I am grateful to be a small part of this series on the Book of John.
- As Pastor Jeff said in the very first message of this series, “This Gospel will change your life.” To which I say, “Amen!”
- Pastor Jeff talked about the profound effect of the Gospel of John on his own life and on the life of his friend Chris.
- Most of you do not know that I came to faith through a study of the Gospel of John. **Story:** The handwritten Bible study on the Book of John—as I studied in my bedroom all alone in Tucson, AZ when I was 19 years old. Everything changed for the better!
- Remember John’s theme in John 20: 30, 31: “Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this Book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.”
- **READ:** [John 4:1-45](#).
- **PRAY**

Listen! This statement: “I could never do evangelism!” is a bitter lie, and Satan told you!

This is a lie that I believed for almost 20 years. I was too scared and I didn’t know what to say and I was focused on my own self-image and I had decided that God would never use me in evangelism. I only shared Christ twice in my first 20 years as a believer—and both of those two were basically thrust upon me.

Satan tells you and me this lie because he doesn’t want us to share Christ; and he doesn’t want people to get saved; and he doesn’t want us to obey God; and he doesn’t want us to be fulfilled in ministry; and he doesn’t want us to have the joy of being on the front row when someone comes to faith in Christ—and leaves the kingdom of darkness and enters the kingdom of light.

The lie is this: You cannot share Christ. And if I was a betting man I would bet that 90% of American believers have bought this lie hook, line, and sinker.

The truth is this: You can do evangelism, and you can do it really, really well, and you can see people come to faith in Christ, and you can do it without having a heart attack.

The truth is: Talking to lost people about Jesus is a ton easier than you might think.

Transition: Today I am going to invite you on a journey, one I took myself, out of the lie and into the truth that you can do evangelism. I am going to show you from John 4 what is involved and I am going to finish today by giving you some trade secrets of evangelism—the stuff that professionals know that make it flatly easy to do evangelism.

- To which you say, “You’ve gotten pretty bold Gibson now that we aren’t signing your paychecks!” Yes I have!
- All joking aside friends, you have a pivotal choice ahead of you today: “Will I believe Satan or will I believe God?” Satan told us we can’t share Christ because it is just too scary. God said you should share Christ which means that you can do it because God never mocks us by telling us to do things we cannot do.
- Sorry to be so frontal about this friend, but that is the bottom line.

Here is the essence of John 4—just the essence but not the dozens of layers of meaning and truth and subtleties in this event.

- John is walking us through the many reasons to see the glory of God in Jesus Christ. Here in John 4 is another outpouring of God’s glory through Jesus Christ.

The Event: A cross-cultural Evangelist shows up in a bad part of town and invites a broken woman to faith in Himself.

- **The Setting:** either noon or 6 PM at a water well in Samaria, outside of the town Sychar, which supplies water to the town of Sychar—30 miles due North of Jerusalem.
- **The Samaritans:**
 - **Origin:** The Samaritans were descendants of 2 groups: (1) The remnant of native Israelites who were not deported after the fall of the Northern Kingdom in 722 B.C.; (2)

Foreign colonists brought in from Babylonia and Media by the Assyrian conquerors to settle the land with inhabitants who would be loyal to Assyria. There was theological opposition between the Samaritans and the Jews because the former refused to worship in Jerusalem. After the exile the Samaritans put obstacles in the way of the Jewish restoration of Jerusalem, and in the 2nd century B.C. the Samaritans helped the Syrians in their wars against the Jews. In 128 B.C. the Jewish high priest retaliated and burned the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim.¹

- **Beliefs and Practices:** Essentially a Jewish faith with a couple of major exceptions. They were the true line of the Jewish people and the other Jews did not have the lineage. Everyone should worship at their temple in Mount Gerizim (30 miles due North of Jerusalem) rather than at the temple in Jerusalem.
- **Relationship with the Jews:** despised and hostile. A self-respecting Jew would have absolutely nothing to do with a Samaritan woman.

Transition: So here is the interaction between Jesus and this Samaritan woman:

The Lost Person: A woman who was broken, hurting, ostracized, and utterly lost.

- **She was a Samaritan:** as we have already said she was a second class citizen because of her theological beliefs and her religious practices.
- **She was a woman:** In many ways a second class citizen in her culture just because of her gender. She has probably been abused or used or discarded more than once.
- **She was immoral:** She has had 6 men and not even married to the most recent one. Her relational life is a mess.
- **She was ostracized:** apparently coming to the well alone because others despised and abused her. She is the person who eats her school lunch alone, suffers name calling, and gets rocks thrown at her just for walking by.
- **She was broken:** her life was not going the way anyone would want their life to go. It was full of broken promises and broken spirits and broken hopes and broken beliefs and broken behavior and a broken heart.
- **She was in pain:** every kind of brokenness leads to pain. This is a hurting woman.
- **She was hungry for meaning and fulfillment and value and respect:** Though she was shocked by it, she engaged in the conversation with Jesus and she reflected on the things He said to her.

¹ Biblical Studies Press. (2006). *The NET Bible First Edition Notes* (Jn 4:4). Biblical Studies Press.

- **She was self-medicating with relationships or sex or longing for love:** I don't feel good so I will have a drink or I will have a smoke or I will have a joint or I will have a bowl of ice cream or I will have a shopping trip or I will have a look at pornography or I will have a _____ . It is a prescription I write for myself to give myself a boost of dopamine and feel a little better for a little while.
- **She was hiding:** diverting, or attempting to divert, Jesus from the issues of her life. We are all good at this because we shudder to have the light shine on the dark areas of our lives. She, and we, imitate Adam and Eve and we hide in the garden.
- **She was responsive to Jesus:** she not only talked to Him for some time but she also considered the things He was saying and in the end she became a believer in Jesus. Despite the very miserable condition of her life she responded in faith to Jesus. And for her, and all of us, responding in faith to Jesus changes everything!
- **She was concerned for the wellbeing of others:** inviting them to meet Jesus. "Come and see a Man Who told me everything I had ever done." As an ostracized person her natural response would probably be to lash out at others and wish for their demise. She did not! She found the Messiah and she said to others, "Come and see for yourselves!"
- **She is lost:** she is lost spiritually and relationally and emotionally and theologically—until she encounters Jesus!
- **Application:** Jesus is not pushed away from broken people, in fact He actually specializes in broken people, and so should we.

Transition: So far we have the town of Sychar and a lost and broken woman and...

The Evangelist: A Man , capital M, Who was tired, compassionate, truthful, and engaging.

- **Tired:** we usually don't like to engage people when we are tired. Usually our main interest at that point is just resting and people who are around us or want a piece of our time are a terrible nuisance. Jesus pushed through the fatigue because a spiritual opportunity dropped right in front of Him. Hebrews 12:2 says that Jesus pushed through the excruciating cross for the joy set before Him. He kept His eyes on the joy of rescued people and pushed through physical fatigue and agony.
- **Jesus the Messiah:** The Christ, the Anointed One. The Son of God Who existed as God from eternity past. The Second Person of the Trinity. The One who would save His people from their sins. The Suffering Servant Who would pay for our sins. The Passover Lamb Who would die in our place as our Substitute. Jesus, Savior of the world. Fully God and fully Man.
 - **Ills:** Ever walk into an electronics store and ask for some technical help with something and get a person who knows less than you about it. Finally, the person admits that they

- have no idea and they call a senior co-worker and she comes over and listens to the problem and takes the phone out of your hand and punches and swipes and resets and magically makes it work again?
- This woman walked up to the well spiritually thirsty and bankrupt and she did not encounter a freshly minted rabbi who had no idea how to help her. She walked up to the well and encountered the Messiah!!! He will be able to get to the bottom of your need!!!
 - **Compassionate:** simply put, the lives of people mattered to Jesus and they mattered deeply. Every person He encountered received help from Him. Everyone! Some rejected the help but He extended help to everyone He encountered.
 - He assess the person's need and then gave what He had: healing, resurrection, forgiveness, food, truth, affirmation, confrontation, deliverance from demons, direction, rebuke, or something meaningful to do with their lives.
 - Please see this: Jesus did not encounter one person whom He did not care about.
 - He wept over the death of Lazarus. He wept over the people of Israel. He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. He felt compassion for the rich young ruler. His heart went out to a bleeding woman and demon possessed people and a man whose daughter was dying and a man who was paralyzed and a man whose hand was withered and on and on and on.
 - **Engagement without condemnation:** Jesus spoke to the woman with truth and clarity but without condescension. Jesus is the source of grace, not the source of condemnation.
 - Grace is God extending to us favor that we desperately need but do not deserve.
 - John 1:14 says Jesus was, and is, full of grace and truth.
 - Hebrews 4:16 says that when we come into God's presence we come to the throne of grace.
 - Romans 16:20 says the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
 - Jesus engages her and us with grace rather than condemnation.
 - App: Should I engage others with condemnation or with grace?
 - **Truthful and straightforward:** Grace and compassion require that we be truthful people. Grace and compassion are not the same as nice. Nice is being as gentle and sweet and non-confrontive to a person as you can possibly be, even if that requires you to lie or withhold the truth. Nice is habitual "go along to get along." In that sense Jesus was not nice. He was

compassionate and He was truthful and He was kind and He was safe and He was non-condemning. But He was not nice.

- **Directed her to Himself instead of to religion or geographical arguments:** Jesus understood clearly that this woman needed faith in Him and not an extended teaching on the proper place to worship. He turned the conversation to Himself and away from religious opinions.
 - **App:** One of the key skills of effective evangelists is to stay centered on the Gospel and the claims of Christ and refuse to be drawn into the endless debates about words and traditions and places and times.
- **The Source of living water:** Everyone is thirsty—physically and spiritually. If you don't have clean drinking water you will die. If you don't have clean spiritual water you will die. Every lost person you know is drinking from a poisoned spiritual well. They are drinking in things that are not true and that will result in eternal suffering if they are not rescued.
 - **App:** The most visually put together lost person in the world is in a crisis and in desperate need. By the time you have lived as long as me you have encountered some supremely put together lost people. They are drinking very clean physical water and very tainted spiritual water. Don't mistake put together for good.
- **The Source of deliverance from sin, death, punishment, brokenness, and self-medicating:** "There is salvation in no one else. For there is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved." Acts 4:12
- **Focused on the Father's will:** "My food is to do the will of Him Who sent Me, and to accomplish His work."
 - **What is the Father's will?** The Great Commandment and the Great Commission.
 - **1 Timothy 2:4.** "God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.
 - **Jesus was on task!!**
 - **Ills:** the 8th grade typing teacher who shook my chair and put me on task.
 - **App:** Through His Word Jesus is putting us on task, as He was on task.

Transition: So, at the risk of insulting your intelligence, let me say again, "Talking to lost people about Jesus is a ton easier than you might think."

- **Ills:** Watching a professional install my new garage door opener. His one hour vs my 14 hours. He knew all the trade secrets.

The Trade Secrets: Evangelism made Easy or The Stuff Professionals Know.

I am not implying that there is not some work for you to do. There is. But it is work which you are fully capable of doing and work that doesn't take as long as you think and work that is not as hard as you think.

You do not need the spiritual gift of evangelism to have the responsibility of evangelism.

You do not need the spiritual gift of evangelism to be really, really good at evangelism.

You can be really, really good at this and enjoy sharing Christ a great deal and Satan is the one who told you that you cannot do it.

Here are the most important trade secrets to becoming a successful evangelist:

#1 Be clear about what successful evangelism is: “Share Christ clearly, invite the person to trust Christ, and leave the results to God.” Larry Moyer Successful evangelism is not when a person trusts Christ.

#2 Learn the Gospel. The Gospel is words. You cannot share the Gospel without using words. Learn the Gospel and get it down cold. Get it down pat and clear.

- Bad News, Good News, Invitation
- One verse evangelism with Romans 6:23
- Three circles evangelism with brokenness, perfect world, and Christ.

Here is one example of a clear Gospel presentation:

- **Bad News:** We are all sinners. Romans 3:23

- **Bad News:** The penalty of sin is death or separation from God. Romans 6:23

- **Good News:** Jesus paid the penalty for our sin by suffering in our place on the cross. Romans 5:8

- **Good News:** You and I can be forgiven and saved by putting our trust in Jesus Christ for forgiveness. Ephesians 2:8, 9

- **Invitation:** Is there anything keeping you from trusting Christ right now?

- Hebrews 9 makes it clear that each of us will stand before God at the threshold of eternity and we will answer a question before God something like this:
 - “Why should I forgive your sin and let you live in my heaven?”

 - You and I can give any answer we want. “I gave money to an orphanage, I am better than the people in prison, my good works outweigh my bad works, I got baptized, I”

 - I have been rehearsing my answer for almost 50 years: “God You should forgive my sin because Jesus already paid for it and I am putting all my trust in Him and His sacrifice on my behalf.”

 - If God says to me, “And what else Dave?” I am going to say, “I have nothing else. Jesus is my Plan A and I have no Plan B.”

- Let me be clear about something friends. There are three basic categories of answers that people will give as they stand on the threshold of eternity:
 - **First Category: Works.** The cross was unnecessary. God was foolish to kill His Son.

 - **Second Category: Works plus Jesus.** The cross was inadequate. Nice try Jesus but I finished up what was lacking.

 - **Third Category: Jesus alone.** The cross was necessary and critical and essential and adequate—there was no other way!

- **Question:** What category are you in? *Please, please, please do not stand before God at the threshold of eternity and put your hope in works or in works plus Jesus. You will regret that for eternity. Additionally, the decision to trust Christ is one that we must each make before we die.*

- Substitution is the central issue of the Gospel. Jesus died for us. He went up on the cross in our place and suffered and died and paid for our sins. He had none of His own. He was and is our Substitute.

- Trust in the Substitute and His atonement on the cross is the core issue.
 - “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” John 3:16

 - “He made Him Who knew no sin to become sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” 2 Cor 5:21

 - “God demonstrated His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8

#3 Learn how to turn a conversation to spiritual things.

- “I see your shoes are brown. That reminds me that the cross of Christ was brown. Has anyone every explained what Jesus did for you on the cross?”

- “You saved?!?” (With my back turned toward him.)

- Your story, my story, God’s story.

- Is there anything I can pray for you for right now? Pray. Would you say that you are near to God or far from God? Could I take 3 minutes right now and draw a picture to show you how to be near to God? (Three circles.)

#4 Pray! Pray for opportunities and for boldness and for clarity and for prepared people.

- We are not called to argue with combative people.
- We are called to share the Gospel to open people.
- Pray with expectation that God will give to you opportunities.
- God puts seeking people next to believers who are praying for opportunities!

#5 Get around lost people on a regular basis. Be intentional about spending time with lost people. Go where the lost people are. Successful fishermen are by the water and they have a line in the water.

- There are 500 ways to get around lost people. You can figure this out.

#6 Relax. Be calm. “Don’t grip the bat so tight!” You cannot get a hit when you have a death grip on the bat. You are not going to die and if you do die you are going to spend eternity with Jesus and have the joy of entering eternity while you were sharing Christ.

- When we focus on the glory of God and the desperate need of the person in front of us, rather than if we will look foolish, we can relax and engage the person.

#7 “Share the Gospel and make the ask!” “Is there anything keeping you from trusting Jesus right now?” (Then “zip your lip” and make them answer!)

- Do the lost person a huge service by giving them the Gospel with clarity and by asking them to trust Christ.
- Do them a huge service and “Make them answer!”
- They are either going to say, “Yes, No, or I need to think about this.”
- But don’t fail them by not asking them to trust Christ.

Trans: Bottom line, this is very important:

The Big Idea: With a little bit of work...you can be an excellent evangelist! That’s the truth!

Transition: So now,

Hammer it! Julie T. and lunch in Anchorage.

- The fields are white unto harvest friends. There is no need to argue with combative people. Just move along and keep looking for seeking people.

- Learn the Gospel, pray, and spend a lot of time around lost people.
- Pay attention! You never know when God is will drop a Gospel opportunity in your lap!

PRAY.