

Personal Evangelism with Compassion

09/28/25

Matthew 28: 18-20: ¹⁸ Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations,^[a] baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. ²⁰ Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (NLT – www.biblegateway.com)

I'm sure most of us have read these words many times over the years. They can seem very out of reach. We try to apply these words from Jesus to pastors and Sunday school teachers only. We seem to forget that Jesus was talking to His disciples and to the future disciples. The definition in Greek for a disciple is student, a follower, a committed learner and follower (Strong's Concordance). All those who believe in Jesus and have allowed Him into their heart and mind is a disciple. Not just a disciple, but a committed follower that wants to learn from Jesus. Many people today including Christians are scared of Holy living because it deals with a lifetime of learning about Jesus. John wanted us to better understand Jesus, so we can look at the Gospel of John as a study book on Jesus. Last week we looked at how Jesus presented the Gospel message to Nicodemus who was an example of someone who wants to learn about Jesus. He came at night to ask Jesus questions about what He was teaching. If we don't have this desire to always learn more about Jesus, it will hurt the way we evangelize to those around us. If we don't know the person of Jesus very well, how can we paint a picture of Jesus to someone else. A business man was asked to come to a college to talk about his ideas on how to run a business. When he arrived, they had him come straight to the auditorium. When his time was up to speak, the person leading the seminar had stated the business man's name, but they didn't explain who he was or his background. He had to do that and it cut his talk on business short. The person leading the seminar didn't do their homework and didn't really know the business man which produce an uncomfortable moment for the seminar. Many

people today do not tell others about Jesus because many don't even know Jesus very well themselves. If we don't take time learning about Jesus, then it shows we don't have compassion for our fellow man. It shows we really don't care if people really know Jesus or not. John wanted us to understand the character of Jesus because, as His followers, we are to allow His Spirit to help us to develop the same character traits as Jesus. One of those traits Jesus had was true compassion for the people around Him as we should as well. Jesus reached out to a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin with the Gospel message and today we'll see how Jesus reaches out to another member of society that many would see as untouchable. Let's take a look at another true story about Jesus from John in John 4: 4-9 where we read this, ⁴“He had to go through Samaria on the way. ⁵Eventually he came to the Samaritan village of Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. ⁶Jacob's well was there; and Jesus, tired from the long walk, sat wearily beside the well about noontime. ⁷Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, “Please give me a drink.” ⁸He was alone at the time because his disciples had gone into the village to buy some food. ⁹The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans.^[a] She said to Jesus, “You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?” (NLT – www.biblegateway.com)

Now, verse 4 is very important. John tells us that Jesus had to go through Samaria. During the first century, Palestine was cut into three sections. The south section was Judea and the north section was Galilee. The middle section was Samaria. During the captivity of the Northern kingdom of Israel in the Old Testament, many Jews married non-Jews and they became half-breed cousins to the full-blooded Jews of the north and south. So, the full-blooded Jews looked down on their cousins. In fact, over the years, it became so bad that the full-blooded Jews didn't even want to be around their cousins. So, if a Jew in Judea wanted to travel to Galilee, they would travel through Jordan instead of taking the short route which would have been through Samaria. In other words, Jesus didn't have to go through Samaria. Most Jews would not go the route that Jesus took, but John tells us that Jesus had to go through Samaria. This tells us Jesus was on a mission and that mission had to deal with a town in Samaria that any other Jew

wouldn't go to. What was that mission Jesus wanted to accomplish? We read in verse 5 that Jesus comes to some ancient ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph in the Old Testament. There was a well there and Jesus sits down by the well at noon. Again, remember, Jesus didn't have to go this route or even stop at this town, but Jesus did. So, a Samaritan woman comes walking toward the well to draw some water. The timing here is very important. During this time period, the women would collect water from the well. Usually, the men did not. Plus, the women would usually come right around sunrise and at dusk because of the coolness of the day. Noontime would have been too hot. So, this tells us this Samaritan woman came at noon for a reason. She didn't want to be seen by the other women. Jesus is sitting there alone because He had the disciples go into town to buy food. Remember, Jesus is the disciples' Rabbi. I really believe Jesus had all of this set up to be able to talk to this woman alone. Jesus, just like with Nicodemus, already knew all about this woman. Jesus had a plan. This woman is startled because Jesus starts the conversation by asking her for a drink. Jesus knew Jews didn't talk to Samaritan women, but Jesus does and this startles the woman. So, she asks Jesus why He is asking her because she wanted to know why this Man did such a thing. Jesus does the same thing here with the woman as He did with Nicodemus, Jesus talks to them in a way that gets them to question Him. Jesus was good at that. Again, Jesus had all this planned before He came to that Samaritan town.

Let's continue with this discussion in John 4: 10 – 18, ¹⁰ Jesus replied, "If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water." ¹¹ "But sir, you don't have a rope or a bucket," she said, "and this well is very deep. Where would you get this living water?" ¹² And besides, do you think you're greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us this well? How can you offer better water than he and his sons and his animals enjoyed?" ¹³ Jesus replied, "Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. ¹⁴ But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life."

¹⁵ "Please, sir," the woman said, "give me this water! Then I'll never be thirsty again, and I won't have to come here to get water." ¹⁶ "Go and get your husband," Jesus told her. ¹⁷ "I don't have a husband," the woman replied. Jesus said, "You're right! You don't have a husband— ¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and you aren't even married to the man you're living with now. You certainly spoke the truth!" (NLT- www.biblegateway.com)

So, Jesus starts by letting her know there is a better gift than the water in the well that can be given to her. She can receive living water. Now, this well was about 135 feet deep. Depending on the water condition, she would have to use a large bucket and have to use a lot of energy and time to get that bucket in and out during the heat of noontime. If there was an easier way to get water, she wanted to know about it because Jesus didn't carry a bucket with Him. Jesus knew how to get her attention. Then she asks Jesus if He is greater than her ancestors who dug the well because this well was a landmark like the landmarks we honor today here in America. We have the Mason Dixon landmark just south on Hanover. I remember seeing it as a little kid. This woman wants to know more what Jesus is talking about. So, Jesus tells her that His living water will cause her to not thirst again. She's thinking about that well again. She would love to not have to go during the heat of the day and work so hard to get a bucket of water out so she asks Jesus for more information. Jesus shoots straight from the hip again and tells her to call her husband and come back. Jesus set her up because Jesus already knew she had been married five times and was living with a man unmarried. This is why the woman came during noontime of day was because of her shame. She would have been picked on by the other women of town. To a Jew, this woman would have been the bottom of the barrel or we can say she would have been under the barrel. She would have been like someone with leprosy. Jesus knew she was untouchable, but He still offered her "living water". This was another reason the woman was startled with Jesus talking to her – she knew she was untouchable.

Let's continue with this story in John 4: 19 – 26, "¹⁹ "Sir," the woman said, "you must be a prophet. ²⁰ So tell me, why is it that you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place of worship, while we Samaritans claim it is here at Mount Gerizim,^[a] where our ancestors worshiped?" ²¹ Jesus replied, "Believe me, dear woman, the time is coming when it will no longer matter whether you worship the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem. ²² You Samaritans know very little about the one you worship, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation

comes through the Jews. ²³ But the time is coming—indeed it's here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. ²⁴ For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth." ²⁵ The woman said, "I know the Messiah is coming—the one who is called Christ. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." ²⁶ Then Jesus told her, "I AM the Messiah!"^[b]

So, now the woman realizes Jesus is different and she thinks of Him as a Prophet. She starts to dig more into Jesus by asking Him about worship. Samaritans worshiped at a different location than the Jews and she wanted to know Jesus' thoughts on this issue. This might have been something that was important to her and she wanted to know more. Jesus, as a Prophet, let's her know a time was coming where true worship would be done in the Spirit and in Truth. Jesus is talking about the Holy Spirit and what we enjoy today. During this conversation, she reveals her understanding that a Messiah was coming that would explain everything. Then, Jesus reveals Himself to her as the Messiah by telling her - I am He. You see, Jesus was the seeker here. Jesus reached out to this untouchable woman and told her about Himself. Jesus didn't do this because He HAD to. He did it out of compassion for her and for the town itself. Jesus made the trip into Samaria on purpose – to give them living water.

Why did this woman continue to seek Jesus? I believe it was because she experienced true compassion for the first time. She had lived a life in sin and in a hateful world. What Jesus offered was totally different and holy. This woman, like Nicodemus, left Jesus as a different person because they sought Jesus. We read this in verse 28, "The woman left her water jar beside the well and went back to the village and told everyone, 'Come and meet a man who told me everything I ever did! Can this be the Messiah?' So the people came streaming from the village to see him. (NLT)"

The same people who would look down on her, she went to tell them about Jesus. The same people who made her go get water at noontime when it was hot. She told everybody. She was no longer ashamed of herself. I bet Jesus forgave her sin and she felt free and she wanted everyone to be free. So, Jesus stayed for two days and many believed - Scripture tells us this. Jesus had compassion on the non-Jewish town.

Finally, Jesus tells His disciples this after they come back from the town in verses 34 – 38, “³⁴ Then Jesus explained: “My nourishment comes from doing the will of God, who sent me, and from finishing his work. ³⁵ You know the saying, ‘Four months between planting and harvest.’ But I say, wake up and look around. The fields are already ripe^[a] for harvest. ³⁶ The harvesters are paid good wages, and the fruit they harvest is people brought to eternal life. What joy awaits both the planter and the harvester alike! ³⁷ You know the saying, ‘One plants and another harvests.’ And it’s true. ³⁸ I sent you to harvest where you didn’t plant; others had already done the work, and now you will get to gather the harvest.”

Jesus is calling us to be part of His work. Jesus received spiritual nourishment by doing the will of God and we will receive the same nourishment when we do the will of God. The will of God is to plant and to harvest and He wants every one of us to be doing His work. Are you? Maybe we need to pray for the compassion Jesus had toward the untouchable woman at the Jacob Well. Only then will we be able to see the ripening of the fields around us!

NLT Application Study Bible. Tyndale House Publishers: Wheaton, 1996

The Strongest Strong’s Concordance. Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 2001