

Jesus—The Soul Winner

John 4:4-42

John 3 and 4 go “hand-in-hand.” Each chapter gives an example of how Jesus did personal soul winning. Jesus was **the master soul winner**. I don’t know of a better model of soul winning technique than how Jesus dealt with this lost woman of Samaria.

Note some parallels between Jesus’ encounter with Nicodemus in John 3 and the Samaritan woman in John 4:

- In John 3, Jesus dealt with a man—In John 4 He dealt with a woman.
- Nicodemus was named—the woman was not named.
- Nicodemus was an up-an-outer—the woman was a down-an-outer.
- Nicodemus was a Jew—the woman was a Samaritan.
- Nicodemus was moral—the woman was immoral.
- Jesus’ encounter of Nicodemus took place at night—His encounter with the woman was during the day.
- Both Nicodemus and the woman were ignorant of Who Christ was.
- Both responded to Jesus’ first statement with a “How” (John 3:4; 4:9).
- Both misunderstood the symbolic language and message of Christ (spiritual birth/human birth—spiritual water/material water).

BOTTOM LINE: Nicodemus and the woman both got saved!

➡ Let’s observe and learn from Jesus as He gives us a soul-winning demonstration at Jacob’s well.

- I. **His COMPULSION** (v. 4—“...*he must needs go through Samaria.*”)
 - A. Going out of His way—Jesus was going from Judaea to Galilee (cf. 3:22-23; v. 3). Jews would avoid Samaritans (v. 9). But Jesus was compelled to go out of His way keep a “divine appointment” with this woman at Jacob’s well who needed to be saved. He set aside Jewish traditions and racial differences to win one sinful woman.
 - B. The extra effort—Winning a soul sometimes takes some extra effort. It was a tiring walk traveling over mountainous terrain to Sychar. John 4:6—“*Jesus therefore, being WEARIED with his journey, sat thus on the well.*” We must go when we are tired.
 - We must not be weary in well doing (Gal. 6:9).

II. His CONCERN.

- A. A **PRIORITY**. Jesus had a deep CONCERN for the lost. He came *“to seek and to save that which was lost”* (Luke 19:10).
1. In Psalm 142:4, David cried, *“No man cared for my soul.”* But no one can say that of Jesus. He had a heart for souls.
 2. Jesus was “soul conscious”—Conscious of people’s need.
- B. A **PASSION**. From winning Nathaniel in the beginning of His ministry to winning the thief on the cross at the end of His earthly ministry, Jesus had a passion for souls (read vs. 31-35).
1. Jesus was doing the will of God (v. 34). Paul wrote, *“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”* (1 Tim. 1:15).
 2. The harvest Jesus spoke of (v. 35) was a harvest of souls.
 3. May you *and I* have the same care and concern for souls Jesus had.

III. His CONTACT.

- A. The **PLACE** of contact. Jesus went where the sinners were.
1. Jesus went to the pool of Bethesda... Jericho (Zacchaeus)... Gadara... to a tax collector’s banquet...
 2. One of the accusations against Christ was, *“This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them”* (Luke 15:2).
 3. Soul winners position themselves in a place where they can make contact with the unsaved.
- B. The **POINT** of contact (v. 7). Jesus took the initiative (vs. 7-8). We cannot wait for sinners to come to us. We need to take steps to initiate the conversation. (ILLUS: Philip in Acts 8).
- C. The **PROPOSITION** of contact was His thirst. He asked a favor of this woman. He had no rope or bucket. He used HIS “need” as a means to talk about the *“living water.”*
1. It is a good strategy to ask someone for assistance or help to gain an opportunity to witness.
 - ILLUS: Asking J.C. Story to help fix my car.

- ILLUS: Asking Bernard Riendeau's brother-in-law, Ray, to help build our church building in Barton, Vermont.
2. The whole dialogue with this woman arose from the context of the situation. We need to pray for God to give us wisdom to use our circumstances to interject spiritual truth.

IV. His CONVERSATION.

➤ Jesus adapted His approach to fit the situation of the individual He was dealing with.

- To aging Nicodemus, He talked about being "*born again.*"
- To the blind, He talked about being "*the Light of the World.*"
- To the sisters grieving the death of their brother, He said, "*I am the resurrection.*"
- To the fisherman, He spoke of being "*fishers of men.*"
- To the woman at the well, He spoke of "*living water.*"

➤ Notice the topics of their conversation:

A. WELLS (vs. 7-12).

1. Begin where people are, rather than where you want them to be.
2. Seek to establish some "common ground."
 - In this case it was "a well." Jesus used the well to arouse interest in "*the gift of God*" (vs. 10-11). We must "salt the oats" to create an interest in our message.
3. Jesus made a smooth transition from a physical well to a well of "*living water.*"

B. WATER (vs. 10, 13-15).

➤ Jesus would not be "side-tracked" by her racial question (vs. 9-10). Instead of answering her question, He continued dealing with the need of her soul.

1. Christ used water to introduce salvation as the "*gift of God*" (v. 10), that He GIVES (v. 14) to whoever ASKS.
2. Jesus instilled a desire. Until a person becomes dissatisfied with their current condition, they won't desire to change.

➤ “...*this water*...” (v. 13). The water of the earth/world—wealth... fame... knowledge... pleasure —“*this water*” will only make you more thirsty. Jesus made her thirsty for something no water on earth could satisfy.

ILLUS: v. 14—The other day, I was reading about the severe cold spell surrounding Michigan’s Great Lakes. 88% of the Great Lakes are now covered in ice. However, in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula is a natural pool about 40 feet deep and 300 feet across. It is called “The Big Spring.” It is fed by underground springs that push more than 10,000 gallons of water a minute through the rocks below and up to the surface. Additionally, the water keeps a constant temperature of 45 degrees Fahrenheit, meaning that even in the brutally cold winters of the Upper Peninsula this pool never freezes.

The source of water Jesus talked about will never freeze over or run dry. It is always available and satisfying.

Jesus is the *Water of Life*. He alone can quench our thirst. Gatorade’s slogan is “the thirst quencher.” Sorry, Jesus is better than Gatorade! Jesus is the only true “thirst quencher.”

C. **WICKEDNESS** (vs. 16-19).

➤ Another another example of Jesus knowing what was in a person (John 2:25). Jesus read people like a book. He knew what was in Nicodemus and He knew all about this Samaritan woman.

1. **Conviction** of sin. Jesus confronted her with her sin.

a) He told the truth about herself (v. 18).

- Similar to how Jesus dealt with Nathaniel (John 1:47-48).

b) A person must face their sin and realize they are lost before they can be saved (Rom. 3:23).

Jesus did not dwell on her sin. He didn't say, “Five husbands! Wow! Tell me about husband #1—Sam. Then, we'll talk about why you left husband #2—George. And what

about about Pete and Harry. And who is this guy you are shacking up with now?"

Once an unsaved person's sin has been exposed, you don't need to explore it. Just get the person to admit he's a sinner, and move on from there.

2. **Compassion** of the Savior (v. 16). Christ gave two commands— "*Go*" (that wrought conviction) and "*Come*" (that showed grace and compassion).

D. **WORSHIP** (vs. 20-24).

➡ The woman changes the subject (v. 20). This same tactic is used today. Rather than be confronted with the issue of sin, people will ask unrelated questions—"Did Adam have a belly button? Where did Cain get his wife? How could all of the animals fit on the ark?"

1. She begins to talk about "her religion." Nicodemus was religious... Paul was religious... Cornelius was religious. The Ethiopian eunuch was religious. But **religion isn't salvation**.
 - She knew about worship, but not true worship.
 - She knew her Bible (vs. 25), but she didn't know Jesus.
 - She was focused on the place of worship, not the person to worship (vs. 20-22). Many church members fall into this category. They don't know God.
2. "*Salvation is of the Jews*" (v. 22). If you are going to get saved, you gotta get it from a Jew!
3. Jesus brought her to a personal confrontation with Himself. (vs. 25-26). Jesus is the issue!
 - ➡ In His conversation, Jesus exchanged SEVEN statements:
 - (1) "*Give me to drink*" (v. 7).
 - (2) "*If thou knewest the gift of God...*" (v. 10).
 - (3) "*I shall give...*" (v. 14).
 - (4) "*Go, call...*" (v. 16)
 - (5) "*Well said...*" (v. 17)

(6) “*Believe me...*” (v. 21).

(7) “*I ... am he*” (v. 26). With that, she is convinced!

V. Her **CONVERSION** (vs. 28-29, 39, 41).

➡ She made a change in direction (v. 28).

A. Her WATER POT—**Why did she leave her water pot** (v. 28)?

1. She did what Peter did when confronted by Christ—He left his fishing nets; she left her water pot.
2. What was important to her before no longer mattered. Her thirst was satisfied with “*living water.*” Now there was something more important—Bring others to Jesus. The water can wait. Jesus may not be at the well very long. The heavy water pot would slow her down. She had to make haste!
 - ➡ What is slowing you down from telling others about Jesus? Is there something you need to leave behind to bring others to Christ?
3. Perhaps she left her water pot out of gratitude. “You gave me ‘*living water.*’ If You still want a drink from the well, take the whole pot. It's Yours.” When people truly get saved, they stop asking, “What can I get from God?” and ask instead, “What can I give to God?”

B. Her WITNESS—She became a witness (v. 29). She made a public confession, and others were saved (v. 39).

SUMMATION: Have you partaken of that “*living water?*” Are you telling others where they can get it? Have you witnessed to a lost soul lately?