



Series: Intentional Moments (Part 2)

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INTRODUCTION

We continue to explore the meeting of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well as a model of spiritual encounters. Last week, we learnt that it was by no accident that Jesus chose to travel through the land of Samaria. Nor was it an accident that Jesus chose to stop at that particular well at that particular time.

This week, we looked at how Jesus chose to engage in spiritual conversation with the Samaritan woman that changed her life forever. We learnt that Jesus shifted the conversation (see John 4:7-26):

- (1) From the natural world (water to quench physical thirst) to the spiritual world (living water);
- (2) From the ordinary concerns (travelling to the Well to draw water) to hard truths (sin in the woman's life); and
- (3) From the wrong way of thinking (having to go to Jerusalem to worship) to the right way of thinking (worshipping in spirit and in truth).

This encounter is a great example of Paul's instructions to the church of Colossae on how to interact with non-believers (see Colossians 4:6):

“Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”

DISCUSSION

1. Research shows the average person speaks at least 7,000 words a day, with many speaking much more than that. Words are powerful. Recall a time when you had a conversation with someone who made a positive impact on your life. What did he/she say to you and how did that conversation turn your life around?
2. Read John 4:7-26. Let us look at how Jesus encountered the Samaritan woman.
 - a. Who initiated the conversation? Have you reached out to a person on your impact list recently?
 - b. Jesus opened the conversation with a need. Whose need did he first raise?
3. Conversations are a two-way street of reciprocity. How have you responded to a rude comment? Conversely, how would you respond to a display of vulnerability as Jesus did?
4. Jesus was not only vulnerable, his question was counter-cultural. He challenged what the Samaritan woman thought she knew about Jews which attracted her to find out more.

How are you behaving counter-culturally? What common assumptions about Christianity are you challenging?

5. Jesus moved the conversation from the ordinary (drawing water from a well) to the spiritual (living water for eternal life). The Samaritan woman listens with open attentiveness to Jesus as she asks him questions about her faith and hope. The longer she talks with him, the more her understanding grows until she sees the full truth: Jesus is the Messiah.
 - a. Did Jesus cite passages from the Torah / Old Testament? He used an example applicable to the specific context at hand. How do you meet people where they are or fulfil their needs?
 - b. How did Jesus know about the Samaritan woman’s relationship history? There can be no spiritual encounters without the Holy Spirit.
 - i. How impactful was Jesus’s divine revelation to the Samaritan woman? See John 4:29.

- ii. To have compassion for others, we often must suspend our initial judgement, ask questions, and investigate the backstory. Jesus conversed with the Samaritan woman in the same way He talked with His dear friends Mary and Martha.

What is the Holy Spirit challenging you with this story as you think about the ways you have tried to share the gospel or engage in spiritual conversations with others?

WHAT WILL YOU DO

Jesus went to that well to bring reconciliation to Samaria, starting with one sincere worshipper going out to fetch water. He saw her vulnerability and spoke to her grief. He did not walk the other way to avoid the region or avoid her past. Jesus assured the Samaritan woman that ultimately, worshippers of God can be found “in spirit and truth”, not Samaria or Jerusalem; in the “living water” of Jesus, not a mere well from Jacob. And this woman was so trusted by Jesus that He told her unequivocally that He was the Messiah.

Jesus gave the Samaritan woman the time and honour she deserved, and His encounter with her transformed the region. We can be ministers of hope and healing by learning from Jesus in this story.

1. Keep praying for the people on your impact list.
2. Reach out to them with intention, moving from ordinary conversation to spiritual conversation.
3. Allow the Holy Spirit to grant you revelation and guidance.

MEMORY VERSE

“Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.” - Colossians 4:6