

Food for thought from the Gospel of John

4 – 3 Are You Ready to Talk about Jesus?

John 4:25-42

John 4:25-30, 39-42 – The Testimony of the Samaritan woman

It was not that the disciples approached Jesus and the woman. Power came with the words, *“I that speak unto you am He.”* (The Messiah – verse 26) She instantly believed. She was not going to get distracted by the group approaching. She was not going to finish her job of getting water for her pot. She set the pot down and went back to town with living water to share with others.

She told others of her encounter with Jesus and declared Him to be the Christ / the Messiah! Some believed immediately. Some were made curious to go and see for themselves. It opened the door for Jesus to come into town and speak with people for two days. Some believed directly through the woman’s testimony. Others believed from hearing Jesus directly. Either way, the woman was the tool, in God’s hands, to cause many to believe in Jesus Christ.

Jesus did not train this woman in doctrine and in methods of evangelism. She simply received the truth about Jesus and then said to herself, *“Other people need to know this, too!”* When and how Christians should start sharing their faith is a difficult subject for many people. Both new and old believers have insecurities about doing it. They feel inadequate and afraid. They may feel that someone else, who is well-trained and skilled should do this – but they don’t seek the training to do it. They may have seen how people react to the gospel and don’t want to experience the anger, mockery, or debate that they may get drawn into. They may have seen other Christians get too pushy and tactless, and don’t want to be associated with that. They don’t want to be labeled “fanatics.” Possibly, their testimony is compromised by their weaknesses. They have old habits and characteristics and don’t want to be labeled “hypocrites.”

Graciousness and a good testimony are very important. We must not neglect that. But the spontaneous response of this woman, who just found out who Jesus is, should spur us on to a child-like faith and courage to forget about ourselves and care more about what people think of Jesus.

John 4:27, 31-38 – Meanwhile, back at the well... A new way to feed the soul

We normally talk about food for the soul as a diet of Scripture, worship, meditation, and prayer. But Jesus has a new thing to be put on the menu. The disciples were sent to get food. They came back with food and invited Jesus to eat. He announced that He had food to eat that they did not know or understand. They had not interfered with Jesus. Neither did they question Jesus about his conversation with the woman. They would understand, in a little while, that the conversation with the woman was leading up to a large outreach to people – unlikely people in the eyes of the average Jew.

So, Jesus would explain that there is a food for the soul which involves using time and opportunities to do the work of the Heavenly Father – to minister to people and bring them to God through the Gospel. Many people have frustrated souls because they have not the flow of God's word and God's Spirit coming to them and then going through them to others. They are merely surviving – taking care of themselves and perhaps some people, that they love, in their circle of family and friends. They need to get outside of that circle and start the soul-enriching activity of blessing others. *"It is more blessed to give than to receive."* (Acts 20:35 – see verses 25-35 cp. II Timothy 2:1-10)

Let us all find fulfillment doing the work of sharing the knowledge of Christ to others.
See I Corinthians 3:6-9; II Corinthians 4:6