Intentional Conversations That Lead to Christ

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Preacher: Raymond Smith

[0:00] So, but I just wanted to take a few moments here this morning as we're talking about, you know, we had the, this morning's message was about you as a missionary.

If you know Christ to be a missionary. So one of the things I want to encourage you is we're going to talk just a little bit this morning about Jesus's gospel presentation. And some keys in it of just not so much the message, but looking at what Jesus did when he shared the message.
Because sometimes that's the application. We need some application. You have the what, but how do you do it? You know, and so Jesus gives us some examples here that we can redeem and that we can use and apply in our own life.
So, you know, we know that Jesus, the scripture records many conversations that Jesus had with individuals. You know, one of the most famous conversations is John chapter 3 with Nicodemus. You know, where Jesus's famous statement from John chapter 3 is what? You must be what? Born again. You know, that was a gospel interaction between Jesus and Nicodemus.
[1:12] Nicodemus came and asked questions and Jesus gave him answers. You know, that's one kind of interaction that you'll have.

Sometimes people come with questions. But I want you to look over into John chapter 4 because here in John 4 we have something different. And actually you might say the total opposite of Nicodemus in chapter 3.
Because in John chapter 4 you have another famous interaction and it's Jesus with the woman of Samaria. Now, the difference between these two, one came looking for Jesus.
The other had no idea who Jesus was. As a matter of fact, we're going to look at a little bit of this this morning because now once we find here, notice in chapter 4, he says this in verse 4.
It says, He must needs go through Samaria. And they cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sakaar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.
[2:16] Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus, therefore, being wearied at his journey, sat thus on the well, and it was about the sixth hour. And there cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water, and Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

Now I want you to see one very important thing here. When Jesus went to share the gospel here, the first thing you need to have, sometimes people aren't going to come to you, you need to have intention. Jesus knows here, I must needs go through Samaria.
In other words, Jesus went with intention. And sometimes to share the gospel, you have to have intention. You have to be intending and looking for opportunity.
You know, that's one of the keys you'll find in Jesus as we look at this interaction. It involves intention. Intentionality. I must needs go through Samaria.
Why did Jesus want to go through there? You know, we can look, well, he divinely knew this woman was going to be. I think he was also giving us the example that sometimes it takes intention. To say, this is what I want to do for this purpose.
[3:23] Because we see intention, I must needs go through Samaria. But the second thing we see here is it involves contact with people. Have some contact.

You know, look here at verse 6 again. It says that, Jesus therefore being wearied with his journey sat there thus on the well. It was about the sixth hour. And there cometh the woman of Samaria to draw water.
And Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. You know, Jesus here is waiting for the disciples to return. And the Samaritan woman comes out and approaches the well.
You know, I want you to understand, this is not something that normally would have taken place, as we'll see later on in the conversation. You know, I want you to see that this, what took place here

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was not a normal dynamic.
For many reasons. Because we know that the Jews and the Samaritans had a long history and would actually intentionally avoid one another. When Jesus said, I must needs go through Samaria, he did something that Jews normally didn't do.
[4:30] Most of them would depart Jerusalem, go out through Jericho, the other side of the Jordan, head up the other side of the Jordan, then cross back into Galilee. Because they didn't want anybody to know that they would step foot in Samaria.

So when it says, Jesus said, I must needs go to Samaria, there was a lot of intention. There was an intentionality and there was also contact with this woman. This woman that was there, his disciples, especially for Jesus, a Jewish man, to engage a Samaritan woman.
His disciples were shocked when they returned to find Jesus speaking with her. Look down at verse 27 of this passage. Verse 27, we see this. It says, And then came his disciples and marveled that he talked with the woman.
Yet no man said, What seekest thou? Or why talkest thou with her? In other words, they said, this is out of the ordinary. This is different. But Peter even was smart enough to say, I'm not going to ask. If you know anything about Peter and his personality, Peter's the one to always pipe up and say something. Even Peter didn't say anything on this one. I mean, we don't know all the details, but it was different for them.
[5:44] They knew there was something different. But you know, I want you to understand, to share the gospel involves having contact with lost people. That's a very simple principle. Why did Jesus must needs go to Samaria?

Because there was a lost woman that he was going to meet at the well. There was a woman that was needed. We have to be engaged with lost people. You have to be among them. Now, this gets into something I want to explain a little bit, because we need to understand something here that's often misunderstood.
You know, because today you have this picture. People try to present Jesus. He was among sinners. He ate with sinners. I want you to understand, Jesus was among them, but not of them.
I want you to understand, that there was a problem for Jesus to talk to sinners. Luke 15, 2, the Pharisees and the scribes murmured, saying, this man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.
Now, I want you to understand, Jesus was not participating in their sin. They were sitting down over a conversation at a meal or a house. Jesus would interact with these people in either a public or private space, but it was not to participate in their sin.
[6:49] It was to engage in interaction with them. There was an engagement. There was contact that was there. Yes, Jesus interacted with sinners, but he did not participate or partake in their sin.

He was out, oftentimes it was out on the street where he walked to conduct business. I mean, you think about Zacchaeus. What was he doing? He was strolling down, says, Zacchaeus, what are you doing up in the tree? Jesus initiated contact and then went to Zacchaeus' house and shared the gospel with him.
Zacchaeus was a sinner. He was a tax collector. If you read that passage, Zacchaeus wasn't popular in the community. He'd ripped a lot of people off. He was a shyster.
And here Jesus is going to his house. Why? Not to be a shyster. But there had to be that contact. Jesus interacts here with the lady here, but it was a daily course of events.
He spoke to her at the public well. In other words, we understand this woman was an adulterous woman. She was living with a guy who was not her husband. But yet Jesus didn't focus upon that.
[8:02] He met her in a public place with a conversation. Because I want you to say it's important to understand something as a believer. And as I was thinking through here recently, I came across a statement that I thought was a pretty good application.

As believers, we need to be insulated from the world, but not isolated. I thought that was a pretty good description. Our lives need to be insulated from the world, but not isolated of the world.
Now, let's look at Jesus' principle. Turn to John 17. John 17 and verse 15. The Bible tells us this, and Jesus says this as he's praying for you and I.
He's praying for believers here. And you know what he says? He says, I pray not that thou should take them out of the world. In other words, Jesus says, I know my disciples. Those that believe on me are going to have to live in this world.

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But notice what his next phrase is. He says this, but thou shouldst keep them from what? Evil. Insulated, not isolated.
[9:11] We need to keep and make sure about our testimony. That means you don't want to be seen doing things with people. Say, I'm going to lead them to the Lord. You know, I tell you what, people don't get led to the Lord drinking a beer with them at the bar.

Get a testimony problem. We talked about that a little bit this morning, about the importance of your testimony. It ought to be different. You ought to be distinct from some things on purpose.
Because of what those things associate with. You know? Now I want you to understand the importance of what we're speaking of here. Jesus here had contact, but he had the next, the most important thing besides contact.
You need to be around lost people. Then you need to have a conversation. You know, most of us have no trouble talking. If you have something you like to talk about, people talk. Now some people don't say much until you hit on what they want to talk about.
But if something they want to talk about, people talk about. You know? Everybody has something that they love to do or something that they have that they're going to want to talk about. It's not that we can't talk, it's what we choose to talk.
[10:21] Notice Jesus here, he has conversation, he has communication. And we'll talk about that because there's different forms of communication today other than just engaging somebody by word. We have written communication, you have video communication, you have all sorts of different means of things.

It's like, I don't know how anybody, you could use modern platforms like Facebook or X or whatever. I mean, to me, those are a problem sometimes because of clarity of things, but they could be used.
Communication is communication. Notice what Jesus says, look at verse 7. Jesus looks at her and says, give me to drink. Now I want you to see here, when you engage in conversation, one of the keys here is to engage in things that's common to both of you.
You know? If you're going to have a gospel presentation, the best thing to do is not, well what do you think of the wheel in Ezekiel? Or who's the beast in Revelation? That's probably not the best starting point.
Because if they're already saved and have an opinion, you're just going to get sidetracked anyways. And if they're not saved, they're looking at you like you just will paint a third eye on your forehead. You need to have communication that involves something common.
[11:33] What did they have in common? Water. The water was there. You know, one way to engage people, think about all the things we have in common. You know? You live in the state of Nebraska, you have something almost everybody has in common.

They'll talk about football. Or they'll talk about volleyball. You know? Now, I'm not saying you get caught up in it, but you know, sometimes you need to stay ahead of that stuff because that helps you have an opportunity of conversation.
You know? Conversation. Engage in something that you're common, whether it's hunting or fishing or vehicles or kids. I mean, anybody with kids will talk about kids. Nothing else will talk about how bratty somebody else's kids are.
But people will talk. You know, find something in common and then comment about something relating to God or religion. You know, many avenues we have there for us.
We have a, but communication is key because once you open that, you need to transition the conversation. Look at verse 10. I'm running out of time here this morning, so we'll cover these quickly.
[12:38] Look at it. And Jesus answered and said to her, If thou knewest the gift of God and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou would have asked of him and he would have given thee living water.

Now here Jesus goes by asking for a cup of water to explaining, now we move to the spiritual of living water. He moved the conversation intentionally.
He took that conversation and intentionally transitioned it from normal water to living water. He turns or steers the conversation. This is where intentionality comes in.
Forethought. Thinking about how you're going to respond to those things. Have you ever noticed when you're talking to people, oftentimes you think about it after you get done with the

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conversation? I should have.
You know, one of the things that will benefit us if we think about, Hey, if this comes up, how do I transition that? How do I move that to a spiritual conversation? How do you move looking at the stars in the sky to a spiritual conversation?
[13:38] You know, there's a lot of ways you can move that. You know, Hey, those are amazing that God created that. You know what? You're transitioning that conversation.

You're moving into the realm of things to be able to communicate with them. Now, on a sub-note of that, I want you to understand in this communication, don't get distracted. So I want you to see the woman at the well try to distract Jesus.
You know, well, I'm a woman and you're a Jew. Why are you talking to me? Have you noticed Jesus didn't touch that? Jesus didn't get distracted by it. In other words, the devil threw out a hook and he said, oh, kick that one aside.
You know, we need to be careful we don't get distracted to the wrong thing. You know, think about verse 9 here. He says this, And then saith the woman of Samaria, unto him, How is it thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which is him a Samaritan?
For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Now, verse 9, people get distracted with social and political issues. What this woman was talking about is a social and political issue.
[14:42] Those are not necessarily, I'm not saying they're not important, but if you're on intention of sharing the gospel with somebody, don't get distracted. Because it can take all the air out of the room.

You're spending time talking about stuff that was not the intention. If you notice, Jesus just let that lay and moved on. That's some good advice for us too when you're talking to people is you don't have to bite on every abstract thing that goes by.
You know, verse 20, if you look down there, she's talking about even religious things. You know, our fathers worshipped in this mountain and you say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.
You know? Now, as it was a religious thing, Jesus transitions that and doesn't really address that, but refocuses it upon God. Refocuses it upon the message.
So one thing I want you to be careful to be thinking and paying attention that you don't get distracted. Because people can have you chase rabbit trails. You know?
[15:47] Don't get caught chasing rabbits someplace out in the woods. You know, or as we say today, don't get caught by the squirrel going by. Because people will try to distract. Intentionality, you know, don't get distracted.

But also, don't condemn. Now this is important sometimes because this has to do with body language. This has to do with how we respond to something. Because I want you to understand when it talks about condemning here is to express disapproval.
You know? I want you to understand when it comes to reaching people to the gospel, let the conscience do its work that God designed it to do. It's not your or my job to condemn somebody. Now they might accuse you of condemning them because when you point out sin, people feel conviction, which they ought, but make sure that your response is not one that's condemning them. Let the Holy Spirit do the condemnation. John 16 makes it clear that's his job, convict of sin. You know? John 16, 8 says, when he has come, he will reprove the world of sin and righteousness and of judgment, of sin because they believe not on me.
[16:53] You know? Now, turn quickly over to John chapter 8 for a moment. John chapter 8. Now this is Jesus with another interaction. But I want you to see a statement that's made here that's very important to understand.

Jesus didn't condemn those standing around him here. Because if Jesus condemns somebody, you're in trouble. But notice what took place in verse 9.
It says, and they which heard it being convicted by what? Their own what? Conscience went out one by one. What convicted them? The Holy Spirit pricked the conscience of the individual and they knew that there was a problem.
We need to understand that we need to let the Holy Spirit do its work in the conscience of an individual. It doesn't mean you don't talk about sin. Condemning them is putting them to say, I don't want to or I think less of you because of what you do or what you've chosen to do.

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Jesus didn't think less of this woman. He saw her as a person. A soul that needed a Savior. We need to be careful on that because we need to understand it also needs to be a direct presentation. [18:08] Look back in John chapter 4. Look down at verse 26. And it, you know, the woman that is talking about Christ when He has come, He will tell us all things. Verse 26, Jesus says unto her, I that speak unto thee am He.

That gets about as direct as you have. You know? She says, are you the, we're looking for the Christ and Jesus says, that's direct. There's a time in a gospel presentation where you need to be direct.
They need to know what salvation is only through Jesus Christ, not anything that they can do that does require a response. People are not saved by osmosis and people are not saved by information.
People are saved when they call upon the Savior. There has to be a response. Romans chapter 10, verse 8, it says, But what sayeth that the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thine heart? What is the word of faith which we preach? That thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead? Thou shalt be saved for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. [19:13] There has to be a response. People need to know a response is required. You know? It's kind of like showing up to an RSVP event and you didn't fill out the card.

They're going to look at you like, we don't have a card for you. When you call upon the Lord, you RSVP your place in heaven. And Jesus looks at that when you get there and says, hey, you got a place because you've taken care of salvation.
Now we're over time, so I'll cover this last point quick because this is important. Sometimes you need to know when to stop. Every time you go and you get an opportunity to share the gospel, does it mean you have to share the whole thing with somebody?
Because you know what happens? You get so focused in getting your spills spilled out. That people sometimes take time to process. Look at me down in verse 40 of this passage. It says, So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that they would tarry with them and he abode there two days.
Many more believed because of his own word and said unto the woman, Now we believe not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves. And no, this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.
[20:18] You know what? Jesus gave them a little time to simmer on what was said. Sometimes people need some time to process what's been presented. Know when to stop.

Know when they're processing but aren't ready to move forward. You know, sometimes people don't. I had a conversation a while back, presented the gospel, gave the person an opportunity to pray and they said, I don't think I want to.
You know what? They still have the truth. I don't have to be there for them to pray. Know when to stop. Don't push somebody into something that they're doing just for the sake of doing it.
Know when to stop. You know, I encourage you this week as a, you know, we got lots of tracks back there on the table. I encourage you to pick one up.
Maybe it has a phrase or something on it. I want you to pick that up. I want you to read it. And then I want you to pray about who can I use to make contact with and use this to give them a track and have a conversation.
[21:16] That's your Sunday school assignment for the week. Amen? So, let's close in a word of prayer. Heavenly Fathers, we come before you this morning, Lord. We just love you and thank you, Lord.

We're thankful that you loved us enough that you came and died upon the cross for us. Lord, I pray that you just work in hearts and lives today, Lord. We pray that you just might take these things and the challenges and the reality of missions and even our own selves.
Lord, I pray that you just would stir in us the responsibility to live for you and part of that is to intentionally contact and to engage to tell others about you and what you've done.
And Lord, I pray that you just stir our hearts towards you in a mighty way even this week. And Lord, we just give you all the praise in Jesus' name. Amen. All right. See everybody out Wednesday evening.

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Wednesday evening, 6.30 prayer time. One of the most important services of the week, prayer time. Make sure you're here.

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