

## Lesson 3

### Sharing My Faith: The Conversation Part 1

#### Mt. Zion Church Bible Study

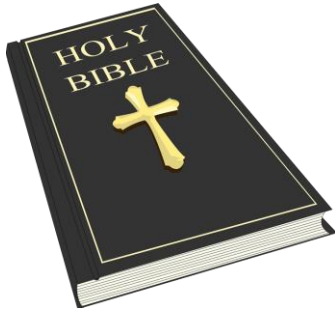


Lesson written by

Dr. Ken Patterson, Pastor

We Have a Vision to Be Intentionally Learning!

**Introduction:** The following lesson is designed to assist students in understanding how to transition from casual conversations about one’s faith to a scriptural conversation about Christ. The model for the lesson is Jesus’ encounter with the Woman at the well. By following this pattern, students will understand how to meet people where they are and how to help them to begin considering the need for Jesus as the answer to all of their life’s issues beginning with salvation.



Readings for this lesson:

Matthew 28: 19-20

John 4: 1-25

**Beginning Thought:** Please read each passage then answer the following question.

Matthew 28: 19-20, Mark 16: 15-18, Luke 24: 45-49, John 20: 19-23, Acts 1: 8



Why would each Gospel writer record this one thought? What purpose does the repetition serve?


I. John 4: 1-9—Breaking Down Barriers

This passage begins with a truth many Christians forget. People are rarely running up to us randomly asking for the Gospel. The Great Commission emphatically states that we are to “GO!.” It does not suggest that people will “COME” to us asking questions. Therefore, we must understand that our encounters will often begin with a level of resistance that we must overcome.

What barriers are present in this passage? Why are they barriers?

Barrier	Reason for barrier

What barriers do you encounter with people and why?

Barrier	Reason for barrier

What barriers do you bring with you and why?

Barrier	Reason for barrier

## II. Transitioning the Conversation—John 4: 10-15

A close read of verses 10-15 give us an indication that Jesus and the woman are having two different conversations. Jesus discussed spiritual matters while the woman discussed everyday issues. She talked about needing something to get the water with, Jacob who dug the well, how deep the well was, and indicates a misunderstanding about the phrase living water. She was not confused. She simply was focused on the here and now instead of the future.

Remember, people who do not know Christ will often have a focus in a different space than your focus. This is not a reason for you to become frustrated. It presents an opportunity for you to transition the conversation. How does Jesus do this?

In verse 13-14, a subtle shift of conversation happens. Can you identify where the shift of conversation occurs?

What does Jesus say to transition the conversation?


Notice, Jesus begins with the earthly (verse 13) and moves to the spiritual (verse 14). Jesus transitions with the word “but” to help show that there is a difference in what he offers and what she came to pull from the water.

When we are in conversations with others we can do the same!

---

*You can use different topics such as fitness, family, current events, etc. to begin a conversation about someone’s faith*

---

Example: Andy lives in your neighborhood and each day you see him walking by your home. The two of you often

discuss the benefits of exercise and you have an easy rapport where you talk about news, family, and other mundane occurrences. How can you take your regular conversations and infuse it with an invitation to Christ and/or to your church (if you know that he is a Christian).

Did you know you can use fitness, family, current events, the neighborhood as points of discuss to lead the conversation where you want it to go?

What if you used the topic family?

SAMPLE CONVO: “Hey Andy, my family and I see you and yours walk by every day. It seems like you all are close. We were wondering if you all wanted to do a family event with us. We have a community service day for families coming up at our church and we would love for you all to hang out with us. By the way, I never asked, do you all belong to a church?” (Based on the answer, you have a direction to go with the conversation.) If yes, then... “Great, we love visitors so come visit us and we will visit you when you guys have an event.” If no, then... “That’s okay, we like to hang out with families whether they have a church or not. This will be an opportunity for you to meet some nice people and for your kids to meet some other kids while we serve the community.”

A study by CNN in 2018 found the top 10 reasons people attend church.

1. To become closer to God. (81%)
2. So their children will have a moral foundation. (69%)
3. To become a better person. (68%)
4. For comfort in times of trouble or sorrow. (66%)
5. They find the sermons valuable. (59%)
6. To be part of a faith community. (57%)
7. To continue their family’s religious traditions. (37%)
8. They feel obligated to go. (31%)
9. To meet new people or socialize. (19%)
10. To please their family, spouse, or partner. (16%)

- This approach covers 4 of the top 10 before you ever invite a person to worship on Sunday morning (# 2, # 4, # 6, # 9) . At the event, you invite them to worship and you will have covered (# 1, # 4, # 5, # 7). You can meet 80% of a person’s faith needs/ wants through a simple conversation.

Pause and reflect for a moment.

1. How many opportunities do you have to share Jesus with others?
2. Where do these opportunities occur?

### III. Addressing the Issue—John 4: 16-18

At the end of verse 15, the woman indicates she wants to try what Jesus has to offer. Then Jesus zeroes in on her area of pain. In verses 16-18, Jesus ask her about her intimate relationships with men. While you and I may not have the same level of knowledge about people, we are given access to people’s thoughts. How? They tell you! In fact, if you ask someone how they are doing, you may get more information than you want!

When did you have a recent opportunity to use someone’s pain as a jumping off point to let them know what Jesus offers?

Did someone tell you:

1. Family issues
2. Personal addictions or poor behavior
3. Sickness
4. Confusion
5. Lack of hope



**Look for opportunities from God to begin a conversation with others about their needs!**

As Jesus addresses the woman’s need for a “water that would cause her to not have a thirst” she comes to realize that the men she was using (and potentially being used by) were unsatisfying. THEN and only then does Jesus give her the full Gospel message (this part for a later lesson)!

The implication is that we often want to jump past a person’s pain to tell them about Jesus when the pain point is the place where we should identify Jesus’ ability. Jesus opens up the door for her to be comfortable sharing her lifestyle issue. From there, He talks to her about spiritual truths and the difference His “water” could make in her life!

- How do you think this approach to sharing faith differs from what you have learned in the past?
- How would this approach help people hear the Word of God easier?

Conclusion: In this lesson, students should have understood that talking to people and opening the conversations for their understanding is the best approach for sharing our faith. Satan will attempt to use barriers to stop the conversation but a

patient and loving care for the person we are sharing with will overcome Satan's plan. In our next lesson we continue the process of learning how to use spiritual truths found in scripture to introduce people to Christ!

Based on this lesson, I should do the following:


Closing prayer: Dear Jesus, thank you for those you have place in my path who need you. Help me to be intentional about my conversations so that I can say just the right words for your glory. In Jesus name, Amen.