

Holy Trinity Redditch

Life



Lent 3 Evangelism

John 4.5-42

Evangelism can be a somewhat frightening word to some of us. It is often defined as a special gift of God only given to special and very particular people as such why would we include Evangelism within our framework of deepening our discipleship?

Our reading from John's Gospel highlights a number of features of sharing the Good News about Jesus with those around us. It also demonstrates things which we can integrate into our lives that aid in this process of sharing and demonstration of God's power to change. This all comes in a time when there is much talk to self-isolation and social distancing, how can we continue to reveal God's love in times such as these and in the future?

The first thing which Jesus demonstrates is a willingness to go beyond social norms. He pushes through various social taboos by talking to a lone woman and, not only that, a woman from a group disapproved of by Jerusalem focussed Jews, a Samaritan. Is a key part of sharing our faith in Jesus a willingness to go be willing to spend times with new people? Those new people may be those the same as us, similar to us or very different from us. We need to be willing to be led by the Spirit into places of interaction and then be willing to dwell for a moment.



Secondly, Jesus lets the conversation flow, He starts with the mundane, "will you give me a drink?" (V7) This moves to a place where they are discussing who Jesus is which results in our nameless woman wanting more, "Sir, give me this water..." (v15) I appreciate we might say, "but we are not Jesus," but are we willing to let conversation flow, are we willing to look for places where our experience of God connects into the flow? We do not need to provide all the answers we simply need to prompt more questions. In this we have the potential to deepen our understanding of our relationship with Jesus.

The next stage of this interaction is that there is a demonstration of the prophetic (v16-19). In that moment Jesus speaks of our women's previous husbands and her current domestic situation. A word of knowledge and insight beyond the ordinary. Again, aware we are not Jesus, but we do have His Spirit within us, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit include insight beyond the ordinary. If we seek to look at, and listen to, people as Jesus does, we can be gifted with the right words to say or the right silences to keep. In this narrative Jesus is in a place of risk, are we willing to take risks for God?

Jesus reflects upon the interaction with this Samaritan women and her actions with the disciples. He points them to the part they, and we, play in sowing and reaping the fruit of the Kingdom of God. He Points to our call to make ourselves available to God and willing to take the opportunities He presents. Our nameless women does that and, "many...believed in him because of the woman's testimony." She was receptive, faithful and willing to speak of what she can received. It was then God who continued the work – we don't need to do it all. "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Saviour of the world." (v42)

To Reflect upon this week

1. Can you recall a moment when you first know who Jesus is? Who was part of this moment? Give thanks for that person, that interaction.
2. Is there a place of meeting in your life? A place where you can be attentive to what God has for those who are with you in that place. God does not always send us to a new place he is often calling us to know that He is within the places we already are. Pray that God may equip and use you.
3. What do you thirst for? The woman at the well says, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water?" (v15) Do you have wells which only quench you first from time to time is Jesus calling you to a better well? Pray that your thirst may be satisfied in a way that drives you to share the Good News.
4. We often have a very narrow view of what evangelism looks like. We think of Billy Graham and other great internationally known speakers or those who step out in mission work abroad. These are good but not the only way. The Church is in a season of change how might we change to support the outward sharing of who Jesus is? If you can, investigate <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/church-resources/evangelism-and-discipleship> or read <https://www.psephizo.com/life-ministry/can-the-c-of-e-do-evangelism/> for an exploration for some of the challenges. Pray something in this may excite you.
5. Are we in a season of sowing or reaping? Prayer that we might share in Jesus' words. May we pray that our food it to do the will of God.
6. We started thinking of how we received the Good News, how can you be a part of someone's journey of faith in Jesus? What would doing this feel like? Would it deepen your faith, is it worth the risk?

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