

**INTERACTIVE TEACHING METHODS**  
**Scripture Text: John 4:3-42**

**OUTLINE**

- (1) Share the truth with humility (v3-9)
- (2) Share a benefit of God's truth close to heart of audience secures an opening (v10-15)
- (3) Share the truth without apology pointing out besetting sin (v16-19)
- (4) Share the truth with preparedness giving Biblical solutions (v20-24)
- (5) Share the truth to lead audience to be reconciled with God (v25-30)
- (6) Share the truth urgently for the field is white to harvest (v31-38)
- (7) Share the truth to the glory of God (v39-42)

**INTRODUCTION**

Our Lord Jesus is the Teacher of teachers, the Master Teacher. In the history of mankind, there is no greater teacher than our Lord Himself. Jesus is the final revelation of God and there is no further. Jesus is the only Saviour of the world (v42).

He was divinely sent by God the Father to bring reconciliation between sinful men and the living and true God. His life personified perfect righteousness because Jesus is fully God. Yet He is fully man leaving us the perfect example. How did Jesus interact with people?

Jesus proactively (v4) sought out the woman living in this particular town in Samaria called Sychar as he journeyed from Judea in the south to Galilee in the north. Let's study the interaction between Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well. There are 7 Biblical Principles gleaned from His encounter with the Samaritan woman.

**(1) Share God's Truth with Humility (v3-9)**

Jesus initiated the conversation by humbling Himself to ask drink from this woman in Samaria (for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans). In fact, historically, they were bitter enemies. The Jew would not stoop low to ask a drink from the Samaritan even though he may be thirsty. Jesus reached out to the unlovable and outcast Samaritan proactively. He did not despise her but saw this "outcast" as a precious soul needing the gospel. So must we if we care for lost souls.

Jesus' act of condescension startled the woman. This brought forth a response from her. His first words caught her attention – GIVE ME TO DRINK (v7).

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He was thirsty. It was noon time when Jesus requested water from the Samaritan at the well. In the Near Eastern community, the well was frequently the social centre.

Jesus' act of condescension is something we can learn how we too can reach out to those who are undeserving. Putting aside our prejudices, we humble ourselves in sincerity of heart to reach out to them. This condescension on the part of our Lord demonstrated a spirit of meekness<sup>1</sup>. The meek man is contrasted with the proud man. He does not speak as a superior to an inferior. Jesus is not puffed up nor does He put Himself above the woman and talk down to her.

Therefore, laying aside cultural and social prejudices (v7) He secured the attention of the Samaritan woman (v9) to share with her the truth concerning her need for salvation and everlasting life.

Jesus, by His condescension, was helping the woman to see her need for spiritual life and to humble herself to receive the living water (of the Gospel) that Jesus would give her even as Jesus humbled Himself to ask the woman for water.

This is the Christ-like character "the fruit of the Holy Spirit."

In fact, what distinguished the Christian teacher is that he is Spirit-filled. This is the soft-skill that makes all the difference. Not just what he says but who he is that impacts the students.

### **(2) Sharing God's Truth Close to Heart of Audience Secures an Opening (v10-15)**

Having caught the attention of His listener, our Lord proceeded to show her a spiritual benefit. He opens up the storehouse of God's promises by stating a promise of God close to the heart of the audience. He utilized the illustration of "living water" that will quench her thirst forever alluding to everlasting life from God to arouse her interest to seek to know more of the truth. Which audience would resist such a benefit?

Though the gospel is expressed somewhat vaguely, it was enough to capture the heart and attention of the audience to want to keep this interactive process alive.

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 11:29 "Take my yoke upon you, **and learn of me**; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." In humility, we find rest in our souls. This Jesus wanted to impart to the woman, to humble herself to receive help for her lost estate and receive rest in her soul. Jesus taught by example, He humbled Himself, reaching out to this Samaritan woman.

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V10a “the gift of God” – Jesus speaks of God’s gift of His Son (John 3:16-18; Romans 5:15) who Himself brings everlasting life to all who believe. And He used the term “living water” that He is able to supply that will quench her thirst forever.

V10b “living water” – The woman took it to mean the water from the well. It prompted a response from her. It caused her to think and puzzle over what He had just said. But her response was in the affirmative! She had asked for “living water” and now Jesus proceeded to give to her.

### **(3) Share without Apology Pointing Out Besetting Sin (v16-19)**

Jesus secured an opening to continue His conversation with the woman by stating a spiritual benefit - this living water that quenches thirst forever. She responded in the affirmative – “Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.”

She had a need for true love. Her soul yearning is not satisfied. That emptiness in her soul was absence of God’s love. She has had five husbands. Jesus knew her problem and addressed it – “Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.”

Yet we see in our Lord’s gracious response. He did not condemn her by a sharp rebuke – Jesus said “Thou hast well said.” This woman is over taken with the sin of adultery until this day when our Lord came to rescue her.

Jesus was gentle to the sinner. Paul said well the Jesus’ way when he said in Galatians 6:1 “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.” The word “restore” is a command. We have no option but to help a brother in sin. We are to do so in the spirit of meekness and not in self-righteousness. We are sinners too, we are no better.

Jesus was leading the sinner to be reconciled with God by pointing out her sin which she could not deny. Jesus did not mince His words to point out the woman’s besetting sin! He knew her well. He knew that it would prick the conscience of the woman when her sin was pointed out but it was needful to help her reconcile with God.

The realization that we cannot go on living in sin was conveyed to the woman. God knows and God sees our sins. We cannot hide from Him. And our Lord was the instrument of the Father to help this woman with her sin problem. She realized that there was no where to hide and she admitted to our Lord what He said was true – “Sir, I perceive thou art a prophet.” Jesus’

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admonition was accepted by the woman. What rejoicing to see the sinner repenting and be reconciled with God.

Indeed, the teacher is like a modern day prophet to point sinners to Christ to be reconciled with God.

She was arrested with the realization of her sinfulness and her need for the Saviour!

#### **(4) Share the Truth with Preparedness giving Biblical Solutions (v20-24)**

The woman had a legitimate concern. Where should she worship? The Jews worshipped in Jerusalem. Tradition has it that for the Samaritans, "our fathers worship in this mountain" There is no way she could be accepted to worship in Jerusalem. Where then could she worship?

Jesus was prepared with an answer for her question – where should she worship? Our Lord gave her a "biblical" solution to her question – "God is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." God is Spirit and not confined to the Temple in Jerusalem or the mountain in Samaria. You must worship God with whole hearted devotion "in spirit" and "in truth".

The preparedness of the teacher to answer a question on the spot is needful. And the teacher must not give her own opinions but "thus saith the Lord". Therefore, it is important that teachers devote time in personal self-study and preparation so that they can be a "ready scribe" in the service of the Lord.

#### **(5) Share the Truth to lead Audience to be Reconciled with God (v25-30)**

Having addressed her concern by providing a biblical solution, our Lord finally led the woman to receive Him as Lord and Saviour. The teacher must always point students to Christ so that they may receive salvation. What tremendous opportunity the Christian teacher is given to bring a lost soul into the eternal blessings of reconciliation with God.

The converted woman testified to others in Samaria of her new found faith – "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" - She testified with great excitement. The disciples were surprised that Jesus talked with this unworthy woman. But this was Jesus' mission - to save the lost.

#### **(6) Share the Truth Urgently for the Field is White to Harvest (v31-38)**

The scene changes with Jesus now addressing His disciples who had returned from buying lunch. During the time of their absence, Jesus had

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profitably used it to win a soul for the kingdom of God. This was our Lord's life mission and by His example Jesus taught His disciples to follow in His steps.

Jesus esteemed the work of soul winning so highly that He was willing to forsake meat and drink – the comforts of this life – to get the work done!

He painted the picture of the ripe harvest field to spur His disciples on to put the “go” in the gospel. He encouraged them with the promise that those who are in the work of soul winning may be rewarded with eternal rewards far superior to the wages received in their earthly labour for the things of this life – “he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal.”

Indeed, when our Lord Jesus returns, He will reward His servants for their faithfulness to this Gospel work entrusted to them.

#### **(7) Share the Truth to the Glory of God (v39-42)**

All glory redounds to our Almighty God who alone can convert a soul. Having done all we can, we leave the results to God. Indeed, it was a blessed time when Jesus remained behind for 2 days at the woman's request to speak to others. Many more believed. The power of the gospel to change sinners from the inside alludes to God's power. It was a time of great rejoicing.

#### **CONCLUSION**

May the Lord grant to you His Spirit's empowering to share the truth in humility, to share God's promises, pointing out sin, providing Biblical solutions to life's problems, helping the sinner to be reconciled with God. Go about the work urgently for the field is white to harvest! Let us obey our Lord's command to make disciples to the glory of His Name. Amen.