

Life

JOHN 20:31
IN HIS NAME



Upcoming Events

- **Sunday, Nov. 15:** Preaching at Thalia United Methodist Church
- **Sunday, Nov. 22:** Preaching at Nimmo UMC
- **Sunday, Dec. 27:** Preaching at Lynnhaven United Methodist Church

Organizations supporting the persecuted church

Voice of the Martyrs and Open Doors USA are two organizations that are highly dedicated to serving the persecuted church.

Voice of the Martyrs is a nondenominational organization founded by Richard and Sabina Wurmbrand in 1967. Richard and Sabina spent 14 years imprisoned and tortured in Romania for sharing their faith.

Today, Voice of the Martyrs' mission statement reads, "Serving Persecuted Christians through practical and spiritual assistance and leading other

members of the body of Christ into fellowship with them."

Open Doors USA was founded by Brother Andrew, who attempted to smuggle Bibles into communist countries during the Cold War. He is best known for his book, *God's Smuggler*.

Currently, Open Doors USA serves the persecuted church in more than 60 countries.

Prayer requests and praises for the church and this ministry

- Praise God for the 6 churches that are supporting my ministry financially and with prayer: Lynnhaven UMC, New Town UMC, Woodstock UMC, Verona UMC, First UMC Fox Hill, and New Creation UMC.
- Praise God for the 21 families that have signed on to support my ministry financially and in prayer.
- Praise God for the powerful time of worship at Mission Charlottesville. I preached at their 2yr. anniversary service. May God continue to guide and bless them.
- We're now receiving 42% of our monthly needs.
- Pray for the persecuted church around the world. Pray for their protection, for God to give them great grace, and that the church would advance. Pray also for those persecuting, that they would have their own "road to Damascus" experience" where God corrects them, and they turn to Christ for salvation around the world.

Sharing Christ: Simple Steps: Part 2



Icon of Jesus and the woman at the well mentioned in John 4.

There are vast insights, principles and truths to be understood from a study on faith sharing in the Gospels; and not just knowledge, but wisdom from the Spirit that is revealed. Looking at Jesus' conversation with the woman at the well is a great start.

John writes, "Now he had to go through Samaria" (John 4:4).

Jesus had a need and a plan. Many Jews went around Samaria to avoid it. Therefore, it wasn't geographically necessary for Jesus to pass through there. There was a deep rift between the Jews and the Samaritans rooted in different views of faith and culture. **Principle 1: Jesus goes to the people that others avoided.**

The humanity of Jesus comes through clearly in this passage – Jesus is tired and thirsty as he rests by Jacob's well. It's high noon and Jesus is alone when the Samaritan woman comes, and he asks her for a drink. In our culture of independence, we are often reticent to ask others for help, even people within our "group," much less a stranger. I have seen many groups circle the wagons when doing church work, not allowing others to join in. In your church experience, which comes first: Belonging or believing? I would suggest that people come to authentic faith in Christ more easily when the community welcomes them in, before they believe.

Principle 2: Jesus invites help from people whose faith is unsure.

Jesus creatively changes the subject from the division between the Jews and Samaritans to spiritual realities, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would

have given you living water" (John 4:10). There is no shortage of negative and depressing news around the topic of faith and religion. We can redirect conversations to more positive topics and truths. Jesus points people to himself, and rightly so. He's the Savior! The Son of God! So, we point people to Christ!

Principle 3: Be positive and winsome, gradually moving the conversation to talk about Jesus.

Jesus brings up a difficult topic with the Samaritan woman, "You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband" (John 4:17). A woman in the 1st century who had five husbands is a woman who has been serially mistreated and discarded.

Almost everyone in our day understands the language of brokenness. So many young people are crying out for healing. Jesus' compassion for the hurting, sick and burdened brings real hope and help to people today – but they must hear of Jesus.

Principle 4: Share God's good standards, God's Law and share God's amazing love seen in Christ laying down his life for us. The Samaritan woman changes the subject when things get too personal and she brings up a well-known religious debate between the Samaritans and the Jews: Where is the right place to worship? Jesus never gets bogged down in controversy, he has answers that transcend the options.

As you share Christ, be prepared for distractions and smoke screens, but also for honest debate. Some of the topics people bring up are hypocrisy in the church, the church just wants your money, validity of other faiths, and the question of salvation for those who have never heard the gospel. If you don't know the answer to a question, don't try to make something up. Just say, "I don't know, I'll research that. Good question." I always bring conversations back to what we know of Christ and his resurrection. If he really did rise from the dead, it's the most important event in the history of the world, don't you think?

Principle 5: Don't get pulled too far into side issues, deal with them honestly, but come back to the main topic: Jesus, His life, teachings, claims, death and resurrection. Jesus changes the focus of her question from *where we worship* to *what kind of worshippers God is seeking*, and this prompts the Samaritan woman to speak of the Messiah. Jesus tells her plainly that he is the Messiah and her faith comes alive. In the next newsletter I'll pick up here on helping someone to put their faith in Christ and call on him for salvation.

****I am available to train churches in evangelism and basic apologetics face to face or via Zoom.**