Connection with Unit Theme: To complement the small group study Living by Faith: Women Who Trusted God, these sermon outlines will use the same Scripture passages as the small group study, so the pastor can reinforce the study from the pulpit.

The Point: Your life-changing encounter with Christ should be shared with others.

Introduction: One of the most fascinating books I ever read was Won by Love, by Norma McCorvey. She was “Jane Roe” in the Roe vs. Wade case, that legalized abortion on demand. In 1995, she came to know Jesus as her Savior, and not long afterward, she became a staunch pro-life activist. In her book, Ms. McCorvey said her attorney in the abortion case, Sarah Weddington, never seemed to care much about her as a person. She told of her conversion to Christ, and then she said this:

Finally, I had found a love that was all-encompassing. On many occasions, Sarah Weddington made it clear that to her I was nothing more than a name in a class-action lawsuit. Jane Roe was all that mattered to Sarah; the real Norma McCorvey was irrelevant. In Jesus, I realized it exactly the opposite. God did not view me solely through the lens of what I had done or how I had been used. Now, after I had been forgiven, Jane Roe irrelevant. The woman he loved – the woman he saved – was Norma Leah McCorvey.¹

Many other men and women can tell similar stories of how Christ changed their lives. In the fourth chapter of John, we read about a woman who experienced such a profound, life-changing encounter with Jesus that she couldn’t wait to tell others about it. Do we have that same kind of eagerness to tell others what Jesus has done for us?

I. A curious conversation.

A. Jesus was talking to a Samaritan woman at the well of Sychar.
   1. This was unconventional for at least two reasons.
      a. Jewish men did not normally speak to women in public.
      b. Jews had no dealings with Samaritans.
         • After the death of King Solomon, the northern ten tribes pulled away and formed their own kingdom, and its capital was later established at Samaria. When the Northern Kingdom was overthrown by the Assyrians, many of its people intermarried with foreigners. Their descendants came to be known contemptuously as “Samaritans”.
¹
2. He told her if she only knew who He was, He would have given her “living water” if she requested it.
   a. “Gift of God” would be better translated “free gift of God”. 2
   b. “Living water” normally referred to flowing water, as opposed to still water. Jesus, of course, was not speaking of physical refreshment, but spiritual refreshment (Isaiah 12:3).

B. The woman was both puzzled and intrigued by Jesus’ words.
   1. How could Jesus possibly give her any kind of water?
      a. He had nothing to draw water from Jacob’s well.
      b. Jacob’s well supplied water for the entire city of Sychar. How could Jesus give her anything better?
   2. Jesus said He was offering her supernatural “water” that would quench her thirst once and for all.
      a. The woman was immediately interested, since it sounded like this water would spare her a lot of work.
         • Both of my parents grew up in the Great Depression, and they lived on farms that had no electricity or running water. They had to draw their water from a well, and they said it was tedious work. They both had private wells on their own property, but the Samaritan woman had to draw water from a public well, and then carry it back to her own house.
      b. We can only speculate whether she was serious or just humorizing Jesus, but one thing is clear: He had her attention!
         • Most of us make small talk with our friends about movies, TV shows, books, news, etc. You can turn almost any of these conversations toward spiritual matters, and they are great opportunities to tell your friends about Jesus.

II. A convicting declaration.

A. Jesus asked the woman to bring her husband to the well.
   1. The woman told Jesus she had no husband, which was true.
      a. She had been married to five different men.
         • We must be balanced on the subject of divorce. There are extenuating circumstances, and many divorced people never wanted their marriages to end that way. However, we have good reason to question a man or woman who has had multiple unsuccessful marriages.
      b. She was currently living with a man who was not her husband.
   2. The woman acknowledged Jesus as a prophet, but then she tried to change the subject.
      a. People still use that same tactic when you confront them with sin. Like the woman, they’ll try to get you bogged down in a theological debate.
      b. Jesus would not be deterred from His message of redemption, and neither should we.

B. Jesus’ approach shows us some important truths about evangelism.
   1. We are not being true to the Gospel if we ignore the reality of sin.
      a. The penalty for sin is also very real (James 1:13-15).

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b. If there is no penalty for sin, Jesus’ death was unnecessary.
   • My brother is a medical doctor. Can you imagine him or any other doctor writing out a prescription without telling his patient why the medication was needed? Likewise, it’s rather foolish for us to talk about Christ’s atonement for sin unless we let people know that they are sinners.

2. We should give proper attention to sin and the penalty for it, but we should not stop there.
   a. Our Lord did not come to condemn, but to save (John 3:16-17).
   b. The bad news of sin enables us to appreciate the good news of redemption.

III. A courageous proclamation.

A. The woman immediately ran back to the city and told people what had happened to her.
   1. Jesus told her He was the promised Messiah (v. 26).
      a. She had suspected He was a prophet, but now she knew He was much more.
      b. This was good news for both Jews and Samaritans.
   2. This action was likely out of character for the woman.
      a. Because of her past, she was likely shunned by many people in the city.
      b. The text says she told “the men”. Some scholars speculate they were men she had been with previously.

B. Likewise, we need to tell others what Jesus has done for us.
   1. You do not have to be a theological scholar, but you do need to know some basic facts, such as:
      a. All have sinned (Romans 3:23).
      b. Jesus died on the cross for our sins and rose again.
      c. Those who trust in Him as Lord and Savior can receive forgiveness and eternal life (John 3:16).
   2. You may be surprised at how God will use your testimony.
      • If you grew up in a Christian home, as I did, you may not think you have much of a testimony. That simply isn’t true. The most important part of a testimony is not what your life was like before your conversion, but how God has worked in your life since then. You may have come to Christ at a young age, but your understanding of Him has grown since then. Tell people how He has worked in your life (and how He is still working) to make you more like Jesus.

Conclusion: I’m the youngest of six children, and I was nine years old when my parents had their first grandchild. I remember the night my sister called my mother to tell her she was expecting a baby. Needless to say, it generated a lot of excitement in the house, and the excitement built over the next nine months. When the baby was born, a whole new wave of excitement broke out. My parents told everyone they knew
about their new granddaughter. Every time they received pictures of her in the mail, they showed them to all of our friends and relatives. And why not? The arrival of a grandchild is good news! No one wants to keep that kind of news to themselves.

As followers of Jesus, we have the best news of all. God sent His only son into the world to pay the penalty for our sins. He has risen again, and He offers forgiveness and eternal life to all who believe on Him as their Lord and Savior. It’s the best news of all time, so how can we not want to share it? Tell everyone the good news of Jesus!

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Ken Jones is the senior pastor of Worsham Baptist Church in Farmville, Virginia. He holds a B.S. in history from the University of Tennessee at Martin and an MDiv. from Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary. His wife, Celia Carroll Jones, is an associate professor of government at Hampden-Sydney College.