

Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

Date : 2 March 2025

Sermon Title : Jesus: The Stories - The Samaritan

Speaker : Rev Peter Koh

Text : John 4:1-42

INTRODUCTION

This sermon is the third in the series of Jesus - The Story, that introduces who Jesus is in different context of His life. This sermon is about Jesus' encounter with a Samaritan woman.

Many of us tend to build walls around ourselves when we are hurt or feel vulnerable. If we are not careful, we can end up being a prisoner of our own making. We become afraid to relate to other people for fear of being hurt. The Samaritan woman in today's story had the same problem. She did not want to mix with people and was happy to be alone. We will learn how Jesus broke down those walls and barriers that prevented her from knowing God.

Are you a wall builder or a bridge builder in your life? Even if you are not a wall builder, how can you relate to people who have built up walls?

- **Jesus connects with the Samaritan Woman (John 4:1-9)**

Samaria was a place where Jews did not like to go to. Even though the Samaritans and Jews are cousins, they did not see each eye to eye. The Samaritans were deemed to be an impure, weak, corrupted people who had betrayed their Jewish belief as they were from intermarriages between the weaker Jews who remained in Israel and Gentiles, after many able and well-learned Jews were deported when the Northern Kingdom of Israel was conquered by the Assyrians in 722BC and the Southern Kingdom by Babylon in 586BC. The Jews worshiped in Jerusalem while the Samaritans worshiped in Mt. Gerizim because a wall had been built.

To go to Galilee most Jews would rather take big round instead of taking the short cut through Samaria. Yet Jesus chose to pass through Samaria and purposely chose Jacob's well for His rest. Some commentators say that this is the well where many women would go to draw water and look for a suitable man. It is here that Jesus met the Samaritan woman and connected with her by asking her to give Him a drink. (v.7) In those days, men did not talk to women in public especially when the woman is not their spouse. Not only was there a social barrier, there was also a gender barrier. Hence Jesus broke those barriers when He asked her for a drink.

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- ❖ Jesus was intentional in connecting with the Samaritan woman – a Jew talking to a Samaritan, a man talking to a woman. The Samaritan woman was surprised that Jesus a Jewish man had asked her for a drink (v.9) as it was unthinkable.

With our church's theme being 'Your Witness' this year, do we go all out to connect with people that are not believers, or of a different status? What if a man who is an ex-convict sits beside you, tattooed from head to toe, joining us in worship. Would you extend your hand and welcome the person, or would you avoid him? If we want to be God's witnesses, we need to connect with people.

- **Jesus communicates with the Samaritan Woman (John 4:10-15)**

Jesus began to talk to her, turning a normal conversation into a spiritual one. He answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who is it that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." (v.10) Those words aroused a sense of curiosity in the Samaritan woman. It made her want to dig deeper about who this Jesus was, and what He knew about God's gift, God's purpose, what God had in store for her, and how she could have this gift.

Jesus first asked for physical water but turned it into spiritual water, living waters. The woman then asked where he would get the living water when he had nothing to draw water with and if he was greater than their father Jacob. (v.12) She found what Jesus had told her interesting and hungered to know more.

- ❖ Jesus connected and communicated the truth, which got people interested in wanting to know more about the truth that will set them free. (John 8:32)

Jesus then told her that everyone who drinks of the physical water from the well will be thirsty again but whoever drinks of the water he gives will have the promise of eternal life. (v.14)

- ❖ Jesus was offering the woman an eternity with God if she knew who he was and asked, and he would give her this living water. What a wonderful gift!

- **Jesus convicts the Samaritan Woman (John 4:16-26)**

From connection to communication, Jesus now turned to conviction. Jesus also knew this person had an un reputable status in life. He then confronted her about her marital status. (v.18) Jesus knew that the Samaritan woman was living a life that was questionable, yet he was not there to embarrass her but to minister to her.

- ❖ Jesus' approach was not judgmental, not condemning but redeeming. Jesus' explanation about her husband opened a door as she perceived that this was a man of God, a prophet who knew the innermost part of her life, and that caused her to further open up.

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Jesus went on to tell her that it was not the place of worship but the heart of worship that really matters to God. (vv.21-23) Jesus wants our heart. He wants us to come to Him.

- ❖ An invitation was thus given to her, convicting her of her sin so that she can repent and learn how to worship God rightly.

The heart of worship is not about going to church or reading the Bible dutifully to fulfil a task. If our heart is not right, God is not pleased. Our heart is important, and we must worship God in spirit and in truth.

- ❖ Jesus was helping her to deal with her wrong belief about what being a child of God is really like.

God was helping her break down all the barriers in her life – religious barrier, moral barrier, social barrier and gender barrier. One by one they were being torn down by Jesus Christ, so that she was back into right alignment with God.

Are there barriers in your life that need to be broken down too? Or are there people that you need to help to break down those barriers?

The Samaritan Woman's Compulsion (John 4:27-42) – Her witness

The Samaritan woman's encounter with Jesus transformed her. It compelled her to share her encounter with the rest of the villagers who had shunned or avoided her. What a transformation! She left her important water jar which she had brought to draw water with, and went back to the very people who had rejected and avoided her, because God had healed her of her rejection. She felt accepted and she now accepts the community, that she willingly went to them and shared about Jesus. (v.29)

The community then responded to her in v.42, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world". They had a personal encounter with God.

- ❖ Her compulsion led to many more being saved. People initially believed her because her countenance had changed – this was a woman who shied away from people and society, but had now gone back into society, not fearing any shame or guilt. But now, they went and discovered that Jesus was the one that changed her and so they believed for themselves who the real Saviour was.

Witnessing

Jesus reached out to one and the Samaritan woman probably reached out to ten and that ten would probably reach out to a hundred. That is how powerful witnessing is.

The process of witnessing is simple: connect, communicate, convict. We need to pray that the Holy Spirit will convict the person and change that person for a transformation

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to take place. The person in turn will be compelled to continue sharing the good news to the people around him/her.

Jesus's encounter with the Samaritan woman teaches us a few lessons about the Gospel:

- It is for all people - not only to the elite or special people.
- Valuing and empowering - Jesus valued the life of the Samaritan woman. He empowered her, talked to her and she was so full of love that she went out to share;
- Instead of judging, extend grace – Jesus extended grace to those who need God's grace; and
- Focus on a genuine relationship with God and living out His love - Jesus helped her to focus on a genuine relationship with God and to live out His love.

CONCLUSION

God loves all of us, He values us and wants to empower us. He extends His mercy and grace to us and is not judging or condemning but redeeming us. That is the reason why Jesus died on the cross for our lives. He wants us to worship Him in spirit and truth out of a right relationship with Him. Let us be bold and courageous to witness this truth about Him that we have encountered personally.

A. Review Sermon Application

Purpose: Reflect on how you have been embodying God's truth.

- 1a. How successful have you been in fulfilling what you/your group had committed to do for the last FaithWalk!?
- 1b. What were some challenges you faced and what would you like to celebrate?

- 2a. Appoint someone to read John 4:1-42 slowly.
- 2b. Reflect on your life as a member of the church community and your interactions with the people in your community and also beyond. Have you been a wall builder or a bridge builder?

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B. Relate Sermon Content

Purpose: Relate with the Truth and Resolve for Transformation.

3. Jesus connects with the Samaritan Woman.
 - a. Imagine that a person who is an outcast who looks, behaves and smells very differently from what you expect to see in our church sits beside you, joining you in worship.
 - (i) Share honestly what your first reaction would be.
 - (ii) Having learnt what Jesus did in this sermon, what would you do differently?
 - b.
 - (i) What are some barriers that hinder you from connecting or striking up a conversation with a stranger?
 - (ii) What can you do to overcome these barriers so that you can be a witness to anyone that God calls you to?

4. Jesus communicates with the Samaritan woman.
 - a. What important truth did Jesus 'communicate' to the Samaritan woman?
 - b. How did Jesus communicate this truth? How can you apply that to 'Your Witness'?

5. Jesus convicts the Samaritan woman – He convicted her of her sin so that she can repent and learn how to worship God rightly and helped her deal with her wrong belief about what being a child of God is really like.
 - a.
 - (i) Is there anything you need to repent of so that you can worship God rightly? Or is there any wrong belief about being a child of God that you need to deal with?
 - (ii) How can your group members encourage or help you to achieve 5a above?
 - b. If you have responded to Jesus' conviction of sin and wrong belief even before this sermon, what has your encounter with Jesus' love and grace compelled you to do?

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C. Testimonies, Prayers and Action

Purpose: Give glory to God, seek Him and embody His Word.

6. Share how you have used/will use the lessons about the Gospel (page 4) in 'Your Witness' for M25 (Missions 2025).

OR

Give thanks to God for extending grace to you for your redemption instead of judging or condemning you, to transform you and draw you closer to Him through your daily walk with Him.

7. As a group, pray for boldness and courage to share God's truth the way Christ did in love, and seek His discernment and wisdom in living out your daily life as a Christian, to be a witness for Christ to others, wherever His Spirit leads.

Optional items:

Suggested worship songs:

1. Praise – Elevation Worship

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=raFnjGVkHe8&ab_channel=ElevationWorship

2. Goodness of God – Bethel https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4MUUMWMV4&ab_channel=musicmeetsheaven

3. Love of God – Brandon Lake, Phil Wickham

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nO5kZ4xEmsU&ab_channel=BrandonLake

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