



WEEK FIVE: CALLED TO TELL

August 12, 2012

By Carey Madding and Dan Roseman

If you are a believer, you have a story. If you are still considering the claims of Jesus, you are on a spiritual journey that will become a part of your story. The Bible calls us "ambassadors for Christ" and reminds us that God Himself has committed to us the message of love, salvation and reconciliation with God. What's God's story in you?

Where Am I Today?

- 1) Sometimes people come to know and trust Jesus as their Savior by themselves—in their bedrooms, hotel rooms, or maybe at the kitchen table in the middle of the night. But most of us are invited on that journey, or we're taught and encouraged by someone: an ambassador with Good News. Who was that person in your life? If you came to Jesus—just you and the Holy Spirit working together—what caused you to start looking for Him? If you are not quite there, who has been walking with you on this journey to check out the truth about Jesus Christ?

Into the Bible

- 2) Jesus took time for relationships. He had a "walk up and talk to you" ability. He was accessible, approachable, and interruptible. Note anything you think is interesting in the following passages. What do you need to emulate in your daily life? Discuss with your group the warning, "Beware the barrenness of a busy life."

THE CALLED

WEEK FIVE: CALLED TO TELL – STUDY GUIDE

- a. **Matthew 20:29-34**
 - b. **Luke 8:40-56**
- 3) What are the main points of the Good News of Jesus? Not your life story, but the gospel of salvation. Look them up and then jot down the main point of each verse. It's all you need to start sharing your faith.
- a. **1 John 1:9**
 - b. **Romans 10:9**
 - c. **Ephesians 2:8,9**
 - d. **John 1:12-13**
- 4) **Read John 4:13-14, 39.** Mike likened the Spirit of God working in our lives to water. Are you a stagnant cistern that doesn't yet know the Living Water, unfit for drinking? Are you a gurgling pool, which should bring refreshment, but doesn't flow out to others? Or are you a spring of Living Water, strengthening and refreshing all you meet through the power of the Spirit of the Lord? Do you believe your story actually could bring Living Water to someone else's life?

How Does This Apply?

- 5) Jesus brought everyday items to life—and turned them into spiritual object lessons. What topics of conversation are typical to your life, and could be turned into questions and discussions on spiritual matters? Is it child raising, the theme of success vs.

THE CALLED

WEEK FIVE: CALLED TO TELL – STUDY GUIDE

materialism, or something else that you are thinking about? Do you have a friend in the same situation? Can you bring up what you are learning from the Bible about that topic? Take time to write out some possible conversation starters that allow God to influence others and draw them to Himself.

- 6) What are the common threads of your life story that can connect with others who are hurting or searching? What is God's story in you? Where is Jesus in this story? Write out "how I was" before Jesus, "how Jesus rescued me" from this situation (sin, hurt, addiction, loneliness, or purposelessness) and "what my life is like" right now—you should have current evidence of Jesus at work in your heart and life! Write out a brief outline of your testimony on the back of this sheet.

- 7) Mike challenged us to have a list of people for whom we are praying, and actively planning and hoping to share our faith. If we don't have a list, we were urged to start with a blank sheet, pray and confess our hard-hearted attitude towards our lost friends, and ask God to change us and give us opportunities. You may not feel comfortable sharing, but if possible, explain where you are on this process.

THE CALLED

WEEK FIVE: CALLED TO TELL – STUDY GUIDE

Digging Deeper: Going Further on Your Own

Mike Madding mentioned in the message that Jews and Samaritans weren't supposed to intermingle. By the time Jesus entered the scene, there had been tension between Jews and Samaritans for over 700 years. Over time the tension built to the point of those two people groups becoming sworn enemies.

This began in 722 BC. Assyria conquered Israel at the end of the divided kingdoms, when Judah and Israel were separate nations. During the divided Kingdom period, Samaria was the capital city of Israel and a rival city (both politically and religiously) to Jerusalem in Judah. The region around the city of Samaria was also called Samaria and had other cities. When the Assyrians conquered Israel they kicked the Israelites out of the cities in that region and allowed people from Babylon and other places to move in.

Some Israelites stayed, intermarried with their conquerors, and adopted their religions. Over time this led to a strange mix of "worshipping" God in addition to other gods. They became known as Samaritans and were not considered to be Jews or true Israelites. Many Samaritans considered themselves to be the true Jewish people who were the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (hence the woman's reference to "our father Jacob" in John 4:12).

They had their own version of the Old Testament, their own temple (that was destroyed before Jesus' time) on Mt. Gerizim, and their own version of Israelite history. Tensions between Jews and Samaritans became so heated that Josephus, a Roman/Jewish historian who lived after Jesus, wrote about wars between the two groups that were so intense that Roman soldiers had to step in and stop the fighting.

- 8) This is the tension that Jesus was walking into when He approached the woman at the well. What does that say about his boldness and His willingness to approach people even when it was difficult? About His breaking away from what his fellow Jews were expecting Him to do? How can that challenge us to approach Jesus with a fresh perspective? In light of the barriers Jesus crossed to share the gospel, what barriers can you cross to share the gospel with people you may never otherwise speak to? **Read John 4:1-29; 1 Kings 12:16-26; 2 Kings 17:24-34; Galatians 3:27-29 and Revelation 7:9-10.**

Also check out this resource from Bible Gateway:

<http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/ivp-nt/Glory-Is-Revealed-Among-Despised>