

TELLING THE NEXT GENERATION

COMMITTED TO THE WORD: A CASE STUDY IN OUTREACH

OPENING PRAYER

INTRODUCTION

Understanding *cultural diversity* . . .

Brief group work:

Describe the cultural diversity of your school.

Describe the cultural diversity of your community.

****FOR FURTHER STUDY:** Reflect on the questions in Appendix 2.

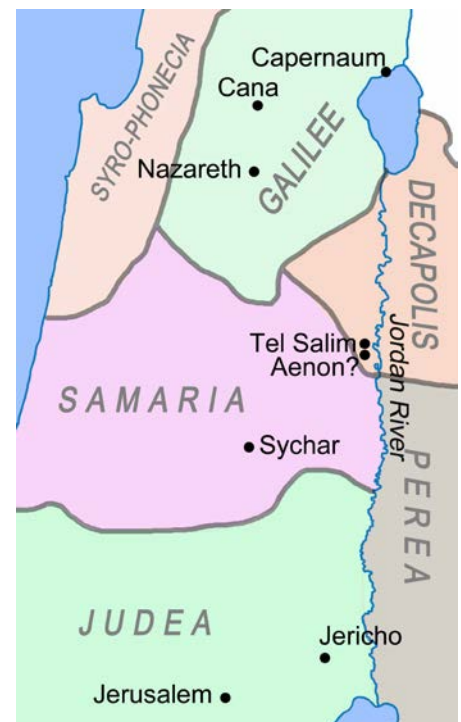
A CASE STUDY IN OUTREACH: JESUS AND THE WOMAN AT THE WELL

INTENTIONALITY

Some background notes to consider about Samaria:

Verse 4 states that Jesus *had to go through Samaria*. The original Greek says that *it was necessary for him to go through Samaria*. Look at the map. It wasn't necessary geographically for Jesus to go through Samaria in order to get from Judea to Galilee. In fact, most Jews wouldn't go through Samaria. What does John mean then that Jesus *had to go* this route?

What does that tell you about Jesus? What does that mean for our outreach?



Determine outreach lessons the disciples needed to learn from Jesus on this trip. Consider the whole story, but give special attention to verses 27-38.

Brief group work:

1. Identify Bible verses that support the necessity of reaching out to all people.
2. What issues of cultural diversity are challenges for your church and school in outreach?
3. Identify potential groups of people in your school or community that you could reach out to with better intentionality.
4. Considering your answers to #3, brainstorm ways that you could make intentional your outreach to certain cultures or groups of people within your school or community.

****FOR FURTHER STUDY:** Discuss in greater depth as a ministry team these points and others in Appendix 3.

METHODOLOGY

Recall the greater cultural and historical context of that encounter at the well. If you were an average Israelite man on that day, what challenges would you anticipate in starting up a faith conversation with that Samaritan woman?

How would you describe Jesus' methodology in this outreach endeavor?

- What was his approach like?
- What was his starting point for conversation?

- How did he turn a regular conversation into a faith conversation?
- How did he lead the woman to think about *really matters*?

Brief group work:

1. Identify Bible verses or stories that give us encouragement or examples for having a planned method or strategy for outreach.
2. Discuss how different groups of people in your school or in your community might have different starting points for regular, every day conversations.
3. Create a list of regular, every day conversation starting points with families in your school or community.
4. Building off of #3, now create a list of conversation transitions. How will you turn those regular, every day conversations into faith conversations?
5. Identify specific times or occasions that present great opportunities for faith conversations with the families in your school or community.

****FOR FURTHER STUDY:** Discuss these points in greater depth as a ministry team in Appendix 4.

OPPORTUNITY

As with the disciples in this story, sometimes the biggest obstacle to overcome in outreach is ourselves! Sinful pride, cultural bias, laziness, apathy, or downright ignorance can hinder and hamper our efforts. Sometimes Jesus needs to say to us: *Open your eyes and look at the fields!* (v. 35)

Personal reflection:

Identify personal struggles that have stood in the way of your outreach to others.

Identify possible solutions to these struggles.

Brief group work:

1. Identify Bible verses that encourage us to see the harvest opportunities around us in the world.
2. Make a list of outreach obstacles that exist within your church, school, or community.
3. Determine possible solutions to the obstacles identified in #2.
4. Share perceived untouched opportunities for outreach in your community. Who could you reach that you have not yet?
5. Brainstorm ideas for reaching the people identified in #4.

****FOR FURTHER STUDY:** Discuss these points in greater depth as a ministry team in Appendix 5.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Share your favorite part of reviewing this story in John 4. What stands out? What hits home? What is something you will not forget?

****FOR FURTHER STUDY:** As a ministry team, work on the S.W.O.T Analysis in Appendix 6.

Closing thoughts . . .

CLOSING PRAYER

APPENDIX 1: Bible Text

John 4:1-42

4:1 The Pharisees heard that Jesus was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John,² although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples.³ When the Lord learned of this, he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.

⁴ Now he had to go through Samaria.⁵ So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph.⁶ Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

⁷ When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?"

⁸ (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

⁹ The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

¹⁰ Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

¹¹ "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water?"¹² Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?"

¹³ Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again,¹⁴ but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

¹⁵ The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."

¹⁶ He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back."

¹⁷ "I have no husband," she replied.

Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband.¹⁸ The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

¹⁹ "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet.²⁰ Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

²¹ Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.²² You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.²³ Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

²⁵ The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

²⁶ Then Jesus declared, "I who speak to you am he."

²⁷ Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"

²⁸ Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people,

²⁹ "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?"³⁰ They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

³¹ Meanwhile his disciples urged him, “Rabbi, eat something.”

³² But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you know nothing about.”

³³ Then his disciples said to each other, “Could someone have brought him food?”

³⁴ “My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. ³⁵ Do you not say, ‘Four months more and then the harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. ³⁶ Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. ³⁷ Thus the saying ‘One sows and another reaps’ is true. ³⁸ I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor.”

³⁹ Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I ever did.” ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. ⁴¹ And because of his words many more became believers.

⁴² They said to the woman, “We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.”

APPENDIX 2: Reflection and Discussion on Culture and Diversity

Personal reflection:

Agree or Disagree

A/D: Our school is a culturally diverse school.

A/D: Our school reflects the cultural diversity of our community.

A/D: Our church is very intentional with its outreach through our school.

A/D: Our church is very successful with its outreach efforts through our school.

A/D: Our church and school understand the ripe harvest field surrounding them.

A/D: Our school is as diverse as I would like it to be.

A/D: Our church reaches out through our school as much as I would like it to.

After responding to these statements, go back and spend time reflecting on *why* you answered as you did.

Share these personal reflections with your ministry team. Listen to each other. Consider differing opinions. Discuss how your ministry team can better unite in understanding and assessing the cultural diversity of your community and ministry.

APPENDIX 3: Outreach Intentionality

1. Identify Bible verses that support the necessity of reaching out to all people.

2. What issues of cultural diversity are challenges for your church and school in outreach?

3. Identify potential groups of people in your school or community that you could reach out to with better intentionality.

4. Considering your answers to #3, brainstorm ways that you could make intentional your outreach to certain cultures or groups of people within your school or community.

5. In your ministry who takes the lead in identifying prospects for outreach?
Principal/Preschool Director? Pastor? Teachers? School Board?

6. In your ministry, once a prospect is identified, how is that contact shared with the pastor and/or evangelism team?

APPENDIX 4: Outreach Methodology

Discuss what we can learn from Jesus about how he specifically shared Law and Gospel (sin and grace) with the Samaritan woman.

Law =

Gospel =

1. Identify Bible verses or stories that give us encouragement or examples for having a planned method or strategy for outreach.
2. Discuss how different groups of people in your school or in your community might have different starting points for regular, every day conversations.
3. Create a list of regular, every day conversation starting points with families in your school or community.
4. Building off of #3, now create a list of conversation transitions. How will you turn those regular, every day conversations into faith conversations?
5. Identify specific times or occasions that present great opportunities for faith conversations with the families in your school or community.

APPENDIX 5: Outreach Opportunity

1. Identify Bible verses that encourage us to see the harvest opportunities around us in the world.

2. Make a list of outreach obstacles that exist within your church, school, or community.

3. Determine possible solutions to the obstacles identified in #2.

4. Share perceived untouched opportunities for outreach in your community. Who could you reach that you have not yet?

5. Brainstorm ideas for reaching the people identified in #4.

6. Jesus is coming back and he is coming back soon! Reflect on how an End Times urgency will help you see the outreach opportunities in your school or community.

APPENDIX 6: S.W.O.T. Analysis

Consider the cultural diversity of your school and your surrounding community. Do a S.W.O.T. analysis of your ministry for reaching out through your school.

Ministry Strengths:

What are strengths of your church and school in reaching out to others?

Ministry Weaknesses:

What are weaknesses of your church and school in reaching out to others?

Ministry Opportunities:

What are ministry opportunities? What people in your school or community could you make improvements in reaching out to? What opportunities for growth exist? Who are people that are willing or able to be a part of these outreach efforts?

Ministry Threats:

What challenges exist for these outreach efforts? What obstacles stand in the way of the opportunities? What situations in your context might make outreach difficult?

TELLING THE NEXT GENERATION

RELATIONSHIPS

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY:

Please write on the notecard provided your name and the sin you have committed that you are most ashamed of. They will be read aloud for the group.

DEFINITION OF RELATIONSHIP:

ME AND MY MINISTRY

Biblical References to Relationships:

John 13:33-34 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Loving relationships a_____ the world and show C_____.

John 21:7 Then the disciple whom Jesus loved...

Jesus did not have the s_____ relationship with everyone.

Psalms 133:1 How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!

Great r_____ make for great m_____.

Are you (your teammates) people or project focused?

Relationships in children's ministry settings:

1. Between G_____ and m_____
2. Between my s_____ and m_____
3. Between my f_____ and m_____
4. Between p_____ and p_____
5. Between t_____ and p_____
6. Between p_____ and t_____ and other t_____
7. Between t_____ and p_____ -- both m_____ and p_____
8. Between m_____ parents and n_____ parents
9. Between p_____ and s_____
10. Between t_____ and s_____
11. Between m_____ students and n_____ students
12. Between s_____ and c_____ leaders
13. Between c_____ and s_____

Rate health in each of these on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent). Come up with action steps to improve those rated lowest.

Actions to improve relationships:

- Need t_____.
- Need r_____.
- Need p_____.
- Need to c_____ relationships.

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RELATIONSHIPS BREAKOUT GUIDE

1. (15 minutes) List below each person on your team and discuss and label whether they are more focused naturally on people or projects or in the middle:

Name	Person	Middle	Project
Total of Team --			

What do these totals and tendencies mean for your team when it comes to relationships?

2. (15 minutes) Relationships in children's ministry settings:

1. _____ Between God and me
2. _____ Between my spouse and me
3. _____ Between my family and me
4. _____ Between principal and pastor
5. _____ Between teachers and pastor
6. _____ Between principals and teachers and other teachers
7. _____ Between teachers and parents -- both members and prospects
8. _____ Between member parents and non-member parents
9. _____ Between pastor and students
10. _____ Between teachers/principals and students
11. _____ Between member students and non-member students
12. _____ Between school and community leaders
13. _____ Between church and school

Individually rate health each of these on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent).

Compare answers to arrive at a consensus of those rated lowest.

Come up with action step to improve those rated lowest and identify person to drive improvement:

1. Relationship to work on: _____

Driver:

Action(s):

2. Relationship to work on: _____

Driver:

Action(s):

3. Relationship to work on: _____

Driver:

Action(s):

3. (15 minutes) Discuss whether one of the four relationship needs is the biggest in your setting or is it something different:

- Need time
- Need resources
- Need priority
- Need to control relationships
- Need other? _____

As a group identify an action step to work on the greatest need.

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HARVEST STRATEGIES

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

- You know your situation:
- Your congregation needs to know your situation:
- A harvest strategy needs to include a planting strategy:
- A harvest strategy is about connecting people to God's Word, not about increasing congregational membership:
- We want to have a good handle on expectations:
- There are some common sense things we can do:
- Recognize there is not a one size fits all harvest strategy. Find what unique opportunities your situation presents and plan to capitalize on them.

- Use the resources available in our synod:

MISSION STATEMENT:

“The mission of Beautiful Savior Lutheran preschool is to serve families in the community by nurturing children with a Christ centered education.”

VISION STATEMENT:

“Guided by God’s love and will, we will reach out with the Gospel, grow in the knowledge of God’s love for us, and increase our ministry opportunities by expanding our facilities and staff to meet the existing and growing membership and enrollment needs.”

HARVEST STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

1. Teach the congregation and staff about the mission
 - a. Sunday Bible classes
 - b. School of Outreach
 - c. Staff meetings
 - d. Tell stories
2. Have “curb appeal”
 - a. Clean, safe, professional environment
 - b. Advertise well
 - c. Be creative in getting people talking about your school

3. Communicate with families

- a. Office appointment should be scheduled with prospective families
- b. Tour of facility and meet staff, including pastors
- c. Orientation
- d. In the home (principal/director)
- e. Possible visit with the pastor

4. Determine spiritual “requirements”

- a. Find out the church status of families
- b. Be open about beliefs and teaching, but be wise.
- c. Requirements range from a pastoral message at orientation to full BIC. There is a difference between ECM and LES when it comes to spiritual requirements.
- d. This is a good discussion to have as a church and staff.
- e. Decide on what is best for your situation

5. Daily school welcome by pastors

- a. Pastor at the door
- b. Teachers ready for the day

c. Pastors should be available at pick up as well

d. Get to know the names of kids and parents

e. Call kids by name

f. Weekly chapel services

6. Worship and congregational welcome

a. Pastors and staff watch for families

b. Include a children's message in each service

c. Unified ministry between church and preschool programs

i. Mornings with Mommy feeds preschool

ii. Sunday school classes for parents with little ones

iii. Staffed nursery if possible

iv. Family friendly worship

v. Follow up on school worship visitors

vi. Nurture committee includes preschool in ministry plan

vii. Make every effort connecting school ministry to church ministry

7. Have a plan and work the plan

- a. At least be familiar with it
- b. Communicate with staff and congregation
- c. Evaluate the plan
- d. Do be a slave to your plan

EXPECTATIONS

1. We believe there is one ministry

- a. Pastor and principal/ECM director
 - i. Work together
 - ii. Understand what is/is not your role

- b. Communicate

2. Know the kids and families

- a. Learn names as soon as possible
- b. Keep communicating (do whatever it takes to learn about these families)

3. Pastors should be around, be visible, and be available

4. Weekly chapel

- a. Conducted by pastors
- b. This prepares kids for Sunday worship

5. Communicate the Word of God

- a. In season
- b. Out of season

6. Continued growth

- a. Not in numbers
- b. In opportunities to share the Word
- c. In excellence

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

TELLING THE NEXT GENERATION

HARVEST STRATEGIES BREAKOUT GUIDE

INTRODUCTION:

- Take 2 minutes and write a summary of your current harvest strategy.
- Compare Notes

ANALYSIS:

- Strengths of current harvest strategy.
- What are the challenges of our current strategy?
- How can we build on our strengths?
- How can we address our challenges?

1. In what ways do our congregation and school work well together?

2. In what areas could we improve the relationship between the church and school?

3. What expectations do the congregation and school have of each other?

4. You know your situation. What is unique about:

a. Your school?

b. Your congregation?

c. Your community?

5. What do you wish your congregation knew about your school?

6. What do you wish the families in your school knew about your congregation?

7. What do you want your community to know about your congregation and school?

8. What is it about being a confessional Lutheran congregation that makes us different from the typical non-denominational church and school? How will this impact our harvest strategy?

STAFF ANALYSIS:

Finish the sentence.

- We have a great staff because...

- The issue we need to address with our staff is...

PLANNING:

What did you learn today that you want to implement at your school as soon as you get back?