

Launch – How could we lead others to Christ, simply by building a relationship with them?

Read John 4:1-26. This is the story of Jesus and the Samaritan Woman. Notice, Jesus started His conversation with natural dialogue, “Give me a drink.” He did not **preach** to her. We could learn a lot from this conversation. **Jesus modeled relational conversation.** In trying to share the transforming power of the gospel with others, many Christians today focus first on dissuading people from their worldviews - perspectives on politics, evolution, or abortion, for example. This approach may fuel conversation, but it is rarely fruitful and usually polarizing. The first objective of Christians is not to win people to a worldview; it's to invite them into a relationship with Jesus.

Explore – Discuss how the following verses provide examples of how to be relational in conversations.

1. Listen and Learn (1 Corinthians 9:19-23).

Example: You may have heard the phrase, “Reading the Room.” When we develop relationships with others, it is important to learn what is important to them. Too often we want to “bulldoze” people with our knowledge or opinion. When we listen, and learn from them, we earn an opportunity to speak truth.

2. Spread the Joy – Be joyful when you speak. (Philippians 1:1-8).
3. Just Be Real (Romans 15:7-13 *emphasize v. 13*).

Example: We often use this phrase when we want to express ourselves in a meaningful way. We need to be authentic, genuine, and admit that our life in Christ is not always easy. Our transformation in the Lord is a process, and not always an easy one.

4. A Fence or a Gate (Matthew 23:1-8). Do we shun people who have different beliefs or opinions than we have or are we considerate and inviting. We do not agree with false beliefs, but we can show love and kindness.

Apply – How can you apply what you just studied and learned?

- What verse that we just studied sticks out to you the most? How can you apply that verse to your life?
- What steps could you make to apply your verse?

Prayer – Ask the group to pray for you according to the verse that you want to apply most in your life.

Father, forgive us when we miss opportunities to build relationships with others. Lift our eyes to see that opportunities that You appoint for us. Take us on adventures with you and draw many, even multitudes, into your Kingdom.