

Seeds Of Doubt

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They promised you they would come to the meeting. They never showed up. They agreed to study the Bible with you. They backed out at the last minute when some “emergency” suddenly arose. Such repeated rejection can quickly extinguish the fires of evangelism, the very fires that gave us the courage to ask and invite them in the first place. What’s worse, when we see no immediate results from our initial efforts, we develop an attitude of “nobody cares anymore” or “why even bother?”

Consider Jesus, the Master Teacher. Whether in a large crowd or one-on-one, Jesus had this unique ability to always say the right thing at the right time. Did everyone listen and follow Him? No, only those who had ears to hear. But at least He gave everyone the information to decide for themselves. He is the one who instructs us to “go and teach” (Matt. 28:18-20); He is also the one who invites us to “come and learn” (Matt. 11:28-30). Let’s sit at His feet for a while and see how He refused to become discouraged while talking with the Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well.

People are prospects, not suspects. Jesus could have easily passed up the opportunity to talk to this woman as one who “probably wouldn’t listen anyway.” John reminds us that “Jews have no dealings with Samaritans” (John 4:9) and reveals that the disciples “were amazed that He had been speaking with a woman” (John 4:27). But Jesus didn’t care about those things. He just saw a soul who was in desperate need of a Savior.

We give up too quickly on people. But just because the last five have no produced no visible results does not give you the right to write off the sixth one. Instead of taking one look at someone and judging them an unfit prospect, let’s remember that the gospel is the power of God to save “everyone” (Rom. 1:16). Any other approach is suspect.

Patience and persistence eventually payoff. At first, this woman just didn’t get it (John 4:10-15). He talked about living water. She asked, “where’s your bucket?” He told her about water that quenches your spiritual thirst. She remarked, “I sure would like some so I wouldn’t have to keep coming to this well to draw water.” Yet Jesus did not dismiss her as someone who was too ignorant to understand. He kept trying.

Maybe that’s why the Master Teacher referred to it as sowing seeds. You plant and water and fertilize and water some more. And you wait. We get frustrated when people

can't see the application of passages that seem so plain to us. But the truth will always open the eyes of those who are willing to see. Be patient. It's worth the wait.

It only takes one. Jesus took time to talk to a woman whom we would have classified a "dead end." And because He refused to disqualify her, an entire village was given the opportunity to hear the same gospel message. "From that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified" (John 4:39). She went and reported what had happened to her neighbors, her family, her fellow citizens. When they came to investigate for themselves, they developed their own faith. But it all started with one conversation.

Do you know why we need to keep trying and planting and inviting? Because, sooner or later, we will find that one. Someone who learns the greatest story ever told and decides that it's too good not to tell. They tell their boyfriend. They tell their mother. They tell their boss. They tell their neighbor. And I'll tell you what the best thing to do is when you find that one. Go find another one.

Think about the person who shared the gospel with you. If your mother or father taught you, think about the person who taught them. Aren't you glad they didn't get discouraged and quit? Aren't you thankful that they were persistent through the first signs of resistance and kept searching for the most effective way to get the message through? That's what the Master Teacher did. And He needs pupils who care enough about the souls of men that they will reach out and rescue them from the bondage of sin. Someone did that for you. Go and do likewise.

We have come and learned of Him. Now it's time to go and teach of Him. Please tell me, what part of "go" don't you understand?