

South Asia: The woman at the well

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For Christians, Jesus' encounter with the woman at the well is a familiar story. John 4:7-42 tells about a woman who, after meeting Jesus, immediately goes and tells everyone she knows about him. She invited everyone: "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did." The people of that town came to Jesus, and they encountered him too. What happened after that? "And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, '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'" (John 4:41-42). The woman brought people to Jesus, and many believed in him.

This is an amazing story about one of the first missionaries in the New Testament. Perhaps you've probably marveled at this woman's boldness and wished you had that kind of bold, immediate response to the gospel. If you're like me, you also probably have made excuses for yourself about why you haven't responded that way to the gospel before. I mean, we haven't seen Jesus face to face, have we?

This summer in a South Asian village, God opened my eyes to see that kind of amazing, immediate life transformation. You see, I met the woman at the well one afternoon at her neighbor's house. I shared the gospel and my testimony with all of the people in the house, but she was the only one who was interested in Jesus. So, we went to her house, and I told her about Jesus.

When we came back the next day, we found out she had told her friends and family the story of Jesus. She encountered Jesus and was so amazed

God loved us so much he sent his Son to die for the sins of the world, she went and told those she encountered about this amazing story. That day, her husband and two of her neighbors professed faith in Jesus Christ and they began to study the Bible for the first time in their lives. She didn't know the story of Jesus when we met her, but when she encountered Jesus, her life was changed, and she immediately started sharing his story with others.

Watching this take place was like watching the Bible come to life before my very eyes. I have followed Jesus for a long time and believe the stories of the Bible to be true. But it was so easy to fall into believing that things don't happen quite the same way now as they did then. I'm here to tell you it's not true. The woman at the well encountered Jesus, immediately told her entire village about him, and led many people to him. God still is doing that kind of amazing, immediate life change in the lives of people around the globe.

We went back to Jackie's house the next day, and Jackie had shared the gospel with more people. Many came to her house to listen as we continued to study God's word with this newly formed house church. The woman at the well wasn't the reason many people came to faith in Jesus; it was because she pointed them to Christ, and they encountered him themselves. That's the same thing my friend did, and the same thing that Jesus has asked us to do. It's the right response to what Jesus did for us on the cross.

After three days in the village, the American team left. Each of us had been put on a team with local believers and a translator. Our job was to model for the nationals how to share the gospel and our testimonies so they can be equipped to sow seeds and plant churches among their own people. My new sister in Christ and her house church will continue to be discipled by these national believers as they grow in their faith in Jesus and spread his name.

Over the three days we were in the villages sharing the gospel and training local believers, God did many amazing things, as 475 people heard the gospel in their own language, 300 people professed faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and 32 house churches started. Please pray for my new sister in Christ, for her house church and for all the other new followers of Jesus in South Asia as they grow in their faith and spread the name of Jesus.

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