

# Merry Conversations – I’m Not a Church Person

Hope Church December 8 & 9, 2018

Christmas is a special time of year not only because we celebrate the birth of our Savior, but it is also a time when you are supported in efforts to have conversations about Him because of songs played, nativity scenes and even parties. Christmas is on nearly everyone’s minds, even those that claim they are NOT a church person.

**Pray:** Ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes and direct your words. He will! Start this season out by reviewing or discovering what you believe and then articulating why you believe it. Ask for the Spirit to guide you so that you are clear about your purpose. You won’t feel confident without this step. This must come from your heart or you may abandon approaching others, feel like you’re fumbling with your words or set yourself up for unrealistic expectations. Remember, this is the Lord’s work and you just need to be seeking His direction.

**Study:** This weekend we are looking at *John 4*, in particular the story of Jesus and the Samaritan Woman.

- Read *John 4:39-42*
- Think about this background information: In that time, Rabbis despised women and thought them not capable of being taught. In addition, Jews did not believe that Samaritans had a right to church. So, this person had two significant factors that would have made her the last person to invite to know Jesus. This is why the disciples were shocked. But, invite, He did.
- Reflect on her response. After experiencing/discovering Jesus, what did she do? As a result of her actions, how was a town impacted?
- What do you think gave her the courage to talk to people so boldly?

**Apply:** William Barclay writes: “The Christian life is based on the twin pillars of discovery and communication. No discovery is complete until the desire to share it fills our hearts...First to find, then to tell, are the two great steps of the Christian life.” Write your thoughts about how this applies to you:

**Study:** How much do you know about the disciple Andrew?

- Read *John 1:41-42* and *John 6:8-9*
- Think about this: Although he was one of the twelve apostles, he lived his life in the shadow of his brother, Peter. Outside of John’s Gospel he is mentioned only in the lists of apostles. He was an ordinary and little-known person. And yet, Andrew was distinctive in at least one way: He was constantly bringing people to Jesus. First, his brother and later a little boy came to the Savior because of Andrew’s invitation. (Reference: study notes in The Daily Walk Bible)
- Reflect on how you might relate to Andrew. Does his story encourage you?

**Apply:** If it’s difficult for you to invite others to church, seek the Lord to search your heart so that you can identify what the barrier is to overcome it. If you know your barrier, but still struggle, then make a goal to take the next step this week and don’t delay. Maybe you are already inviting others to church, do you feel the Spirit calling you to invite in a different direction-perhaps to form a Life group or invite that friend to a 1:1 study?

**Notice:** Note some names that come to mind when you think of this topic.

If you have taken the God Space class or read the book by Doug Pollock, you have some tools to help your “conversations happen naturally.” If you haven’t gone to this class, look for an upcoming opportunity to grow in this area. Doug suggests using what’s happening or what’s naturally being talked about to wonder out loud by

asking and seeking more information. An example might be, "I was wondering if you would like to join me at church." We want to encourage you to:

- Wonder in your prayer life
- Wonder in your conversations
- Wonder in your social media

**Remember:** God's got your back. Do this to share life-giving love and to honor the Lord. Don't get discouraged if your friend or the person you are inviting does not take the invitation right away; some things happen in a time and place that we may not know. Have faith and be faithful to His will.

Do you live more like the Samaritan woman before she met Jesus or after she met Jesus? You are not shunned by God, or an outcast to Him. You are His beloved daughter or son. You can live in His true love every day. In your prayers this week focus on an area of need. This may be asking the Lord to open your eyes to sin in your life, directing your actions as one who has special responsibility, or growing your love for others. It is our prayer that through the transformation of the true love of Jesus Christ in you, that the world will be changed.