

John 4: Sharing the Gospel Across Cultures, Part 1

by Ken Behnken

*From the Missional Bible Studies series
of the Center for U.S. Missions*

1. If you had to choose to either walk through a section of town that was densely populated by people of a different ethnic group, or go several blocks out of the way to miss that part of town, what would you do? Why? John 4:4
2. Do you feel that "it is necessary" or "it is God's will" that we seek out or put ourselves in touch with people from different ethnic groups even if we might have strong feelings or prejudices? John 4:4
3. Where would be a good place for you to meet with a person from a different ethnic background where you would both have something in common to talk about? John 4:6
4. Jesus was willing to cross over cultural barriers and take the risk of talking to this woman. What cultural barriers inhibit us today from reaching out to another ethnic group? John 4:9
5. Do people from other ethnic groups get the feeling that we (individuals or congregations) really care about them and want them to be one with us in this congregation? If not, why not? John 4:9
6. How can we pique the curiosity of the ethnic people who live around us in the way that Jesus stirred the interest of the woman at the well? John 4:10
7. Are we willing to share the utensils of people from a different ethnic group? Are we willing to eat their food and honor their customs? Is this necessary? John 4:11
8. Jesus led this woman to discover the truth. How can we lead these people around us to discover Jesus? John 4:11
9. Jesus and the woman shared some common history. Do we share any common history with the ethnic group living in our neighborhood? How can this common history be a point of contact for us? John 4:12
10. Jesus was willing to listen to this woman and hear her out. Why is it so difficult to really listen to the other person and develop our conversation from what we heard the other person say rather than what we had planned to say?
11. Jesus started off by asking the woman to help Him rather than offering to help her. Is this a good approach? Why? How could we do the same thing as we reach out to people of another culture?

December 2006. Ken Behnken, after retiring as Director of the Center for U.S. Missions, is working part-time with the Pacific Southwest District in cross-cultural ministries.. Accompanying Leader's Guide is also available from the Center for U.S. Missions.