

Sermon Outline

THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD

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(JOHN 4:42)

I. Introduction

II. The Lord Jesus and the Woman of Samaria (John 4)

- A. In John 4, Jesus heads north from Judea to Galilee with his disciples.
- B. On the way to Galilee, Jesus and his disciples come to Samaria, and the town of Sychar.
- C. Jesus rests by a well while his disciples go and get food.
- D. A woman comes to the well to collect water, and Jesus asks for a drink (4:7).
- E. The woman responds: “How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?” (4:9).
- F. To understand the Samaritan woman’s response, we have to know something about the relationship between the Jews and the Samaritans.
 1. The Samaritans were descendants of the northern Israelite kingdom that rebelled against the House of King David (1 Kgs 12).
 2. The Samaritans also did not recognize most of the books of the Old Testament.
 3. This religious and cultural animosity between Jews and Samaritans explains the woman’s response to Jesus.
- G. Why did Jesus even take the route through Samaria in the first place?
 1. Many Jews would have bypassed Samaria by crossing the Jordan and heading north on the eastern bank.
 2. Given that such an alternate route exists, why did Jesus do what he did?
 - a. Jesus “can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing” (Jn 5:19).
 - b. It could be that God asked Jesus to go through Samaria.
 - c. God wants to gather up his long lost Samaritan children.
- H. Jesus uses his own request for water as a springboard to introduce the woman to the water of life, which is an Old Testament symbol of salvation (4:10; Isa 12:3).

—Jesus uses the ordinary necessities of life—such as water—to introduce deeper spiritual realities.

- I. There are two important lessons we can draw from this.
 - 1. There is a lesson for our own *personal witnessing*.
—Almost any ordinary necessity in life, whether it be air, or water, or food, can be an occasion for witnessing.
 - 2. There is a lesson for *how* we treat the things of the world.
—God gives us the whole of creation as a sign to point us back to him.

- J. As his conversation with the woman progresses, Jesus...
 - 1. demonstrates to her that he has supernatural knowledge about her life (4:18-19).
 - 2. teaches about the coming age where people will worship in the Holy Spirit, all over the world (4:21-24).

***Questions for reflection:** (1) Why did the woman of Samaria respond the way she did to Jesus' request? What is the historical background behind that statement? (2) How does Jesus use his request for water to introduce the Gospel? What two lessons can we draw from this?

III. An Unlikely Missionary (John 4:29)

- A. Having been confronted by all that the Lord had said, the woman goes back to her village and tells her people about Jesus (4:29).

- B. This is the most natural way of doing evangelism. Having heard about Jesus, and believed in him for ourselves, we rush to tell others about him.

***Questions for reflection:** How is the woman an example for us? What does her response to Jesus teach us about evangelism?

IV. The Samaritan Confession of Faith (John 4:39-42)

- A. Those who come to Jesus will experience him in all his life-giving, life-fulfilling glory.

- B. The Samaritans experienced Jesus in this way.
—“Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, ‘He told me all that I ever did’” (4:39).

- C. The Samaritans invited Jesus to stay for two days, during which they (presumably) received his teaching.

- D. After two days with the Lord, they come to the following conclusion:
—“...we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed *the Savior of the world*” (4:42).

- E. The Gospel of John is very clear on what happened to the Samaritans who believed in Jesus.
 1. John 1:12-13: “But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to *become children of God...*”
 2. Interestingly, by receiving Jesus (who is the true heir to the throne of David), the Samaritans have returned to the House of David!

***Questions for reflection:** (1) How did the Samaritans respond to Jesus after hearing the woman’s testimony? (2) What did the Samaritans call Jesus after they had spent two days with him? (3) According to John 1:12-13, what happened to the Samaritans who believed in Jesus?

V. Marveling at Our Savior of the World

- A. What does it mean to call Jesus, “The Savior of the world”?
- B. The word “savior” (*sōtēr*) can also mean “deliverer” or “preserver.”
- C. To call Jesus, “savior,” therefore is to acknowledge that he is someone who saves or delivers people from trouble, as well as preserves them from destruction.
- D. But what does it mean for Jesus to “Savior of the world”?
 1. The “world” (*kosmos*) refers to creation in general, but primarily (in the Gospel of John) to the world-community, the human race (1:9-10).
 2. To call Jesus “Savior of the world” is really to call him, “the Savior of the human race.”
 - a. Jesus is more than just the Savior of the Jewish people.
 - b. Jesus is more than the Savior of the Samaritans.
 - c. Jesus is the Savior of all mankind! Israelite, Samaritan, Greek, Roman, Persian, Chinese, Indian, or Malay!

***Questions for reflection:** (1) What does “Savior” mean? (2) What does it mean to say that Jesus is “Savior of the world”? Who can be saved by Jesus? Only Jews?

VI. What in the World Is Wrong with the World?

- A. Why does the world need saving in the first place?

—The Word of God makes it very clear that there are three major, interrelated problems with the world.
- B. The first: *The world community has severed its ties with God.*
 1. God made the human race to be his civilization of priestly rulers.
 2. Instead of holding to God’s purposes for them, our first parents chose to listen instead to the words of God’s enemy, Satan (Gen 3).

3. Instead of finding their dignity and purpose in God, they chose to listen to Satan’s advice, and to find their dignity and purpose in themselves.
4. Our first parents severed us from God and introduced death into the world.
—“The wages of sin is death” (Rom 6:23)

C. The second: *The world community has come under a new ruler.*

1. This new ruler is not YHWH, the life-giving Creator-King, but Satan (Jn 12:31; 16:11; 2 Cor 4:4).
2. By listening to Satan instead of God, we have practically given Satan the respect and obedience that is due only to God himself—we have treated Satan like a god.
3. Our parents’ rebellion made them slaves of the evil one and his forces (Eph 6:12).
4. Why do humans do evil things to one another?
—Because Satan tempts them to do bad things.

D. The third: *The world community has come under the punishment of God himself.*

1. Because God is all-righteous and all-holy, God hates all that is evil.
2. God promises to punish and to destroy all who reject him, whether human or angel.
—“Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels” (Mt 25:41).

***Questions for reflection:** (1) According to Scripture, what are three major problems the world community faces? (2) How did the world community sever its ties with God? (3) Whose rule did humans come under after our first parents broke faith with God? (4) How does God promise to punish evildoers?

VII. How Jesus Christ Saves the World

A. First: *Jesus saved us from the punishment of God by taking it for us.*

1. Christ redeemed us from the curse of breaking God’s law by taking the curse upon himself (Gal 3:13).
2. The death of Christ is a propitiating or appeasing sacrifice (Rom 3:25).
3. Jesus redirected the punishment of God into himself, so exhausting that punishment once and for all.
4. The infinite worth of Jesus’ holy life was able to fully compensate the Father for every single wrong that was done to him by us.

B. Second: *Jesus saved us by reconciling us to God.*

1. Colossians 1:22: “he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him.”

2. Romans 5:10: “For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.”
 3. By satisfying the debt of punishment which we owe to God, Christ removes once and for all the obstacle that stands between God and us.
- C. Third: *Jesus saved us by freeing us from the rule of Satan.*
1. By taking our punishment and reconciling us to God, our Lord Jesus frees us from the rule of Satan.
—Colossians 2:15: “He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.”
 2. By dying on the cross to pay for our sins, and reconcile us to God, Christ has singlehandedly removed the grounds for Satan to rule us.
- D. Fourth: *Jesus saved us by rising from the dead and ascending into heaven.* In doing so...
1. Jesus guarantees that we too who believe in him will rise bodily from the dead and ascend into glory as well.
—This frees us from fear of failure and death.
 2. Jesus has brought us into the presence of God.
—Because Jesus represents his people, there is a sense in which we are already seated with God in heaven, even if we are not yet physically there (Eph 2:6).
- E. The world still looks for salvation in the works of Man for salvation—government and political power, education, and traditional conservative values.
—But God’s appointed Savior is his Son. Only Jesus can save us.

***Questions for reflection:** (1) What are four ways by which Jesus save us? (2) How does the death of Jesus save us? (3) The death of Jesus reconciles us to God. How do? (4) The death of Jesus frees us from Satan’s rule. How so? (5) How does the resurrection and ascension of Christ save us?

VIII. Rest on Jesus Alone

God wants us to receive Jesus Christ as our all-powerful, all-sufficient Savior-King. He wants us to rest entirely on Jesus alone for righteousness, holiness, dignity, purpose, and eternal life in the Kingdom of God. On the day of his glory, Jesus will complete his saving work by bringing his people from all over the world into his eternal Kingdom, there to glorify and enjoy him forever (Rev 11:15).

***Questions for reflection:** (1) How does God want us to respond to the Savior of the world? Does God want us to pretend that we can save ourselves? How are we to relate to Jesus? (2) What are we to depend on Jesus for? (3) What will Jesus do at the end of days? Why will Jesus bring us all into his Kingdom?