

## Sermon Outline

### “LIFE IN HIS NAME”: THE PURSUIT OF WHOLENESS AND THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

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#### THE HARVEST IS NOW! (JOHN 4:27-38)

#### I. They Marveled (Jn 4:27)

- A. So the Lord has declared himself to this woman of Samaria. He has told her that he is the Messiah she has been waiting for.
- B. The disciples come back from the trip to the town (v 27). “They marveled that he was talking with a woman...” (v 27)
- C. In that culture, Jewish rabbis who were single and alone didn’t typically start conversations with women—much less Samaritan women.
- D. Yet, the disciples knew to keep their mouths shut: “no one said, ‘What do you seek?’ or, ‘Why are you talking with her?’”
  - 1. It is interesting that John tells us this, because it suggests to us that these would be the typical responses from people if they saw what Jesus had been doing.
  - 2. These statements suggest to us that what Jesus did may have been considered taboo in that culture. If anyone was seen talking with a woman alone, it opens someone to misunderstanding, misrepresentation.
- E. Principle: Always guard against hasty judgments.
  - 1. Think clearly before jumping on the bandwagon of judgment: God might be at work, and we must be careful not to judge hastily.
  - 2. Yes, one could use evangelism as a cloak for sin. But until we know the truth, we are not in a position to pass judgment.
  - 3. The more Christians observe this principle, the less we shoot our own troops.
- F. The disciples held their tongues, likely because they knew that Jesus does what the Father tells him to do.  
—The Father does not always ask Jesus to do “socially acceptable” things. He always asks Jesus (and us) to do his will.

#### II. The Samaritans Come to See Jesus (Jn 4:28-30)

- A. It is a good thing that they did not judge their Lord, because the very next thing we see is the result of the Lord’s conversation with the woman.
- B. Look now at verses 28-29: “So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, <sup>29</sup>‘Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?’”
- C. The woman leaves the shadows and starts evangelizing! That’s what coming into contact with Jesus will do to you.

- D. When we meet Jesus, we forget what people think about us. And if the Lord likes you, you don't care anymore about what people think of you.
- E. What do the people do? They start coming to Jesus (v 30).

### III. My Food Is to Do His Will (Jn 4:31-34)

- A. But as all this was happening, the disciples were trying to get Jesus to eat something. "Rabbi, eat" they said (v 31).
- B. But Jesus was too excited to eat! "I have food to eat that you do not know about" (v 32).
- C. The disciples start wondering to one another: "Has anyone brought him something to eat?" (v 33).
- D. Jesus' reply is powerful: "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work" (v 34). And in that statement alone, we have the entire life purpose of Jesus.

### IV. Jesus the Righteous

- A. Jesus is able to be our Savior, because of this—his perfect, seamless, and uninterrupted love for God.
- B. Because he was without sin, because there is not the slightest resistance to God in him, Jesus' devotion to the Father is absolute in a way that no one else can claim.
- C. If we take seriously what Jesus is saying, it means that the entire purpose of his life on earth is *to do the will of God the Father*.
- D. How many of us can say that on any given day? Can any of us say that the sole purpose in our lives is to do the will of God? I think it's an ideal that we want. And we have that desire because the Spirit of the Lord Jesus dwells in us. And yet, it seems impossible this side of heaven.
- E. The Gospel is about Jesus. It is the fact that Jesus lived for God; that he did this to accomplish our salvation. But ultimately, he did this for the glory of God. Salvation was the work that God sent Jesus to accomplish.

### V. The Harvest Is Now! (Jn 4:35-38)

- A. Still on the topic of his work, Jesus uses a proverb to help his disciples see what God has already begun to do in the world.
- B. Jesus uses a proverb to help his disciples understand the times: "There are yet four months, then comes the harvest" (v 35).
  1. It's a farmer's way of saying that the harvest is almost here.
  2. But Jesus wants his disciples to know is that the great Harvest of the end-times is already here: "Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest" (v 35).
- C. And "the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together" (v 36).

1. In normal earthly conditions, the sower and reaper do not rejoice together, because there is always time between the sowing of the seeds and the reaping of the crops. (Seeds don't sprout right away.)
  2. But Jesus is pointing out that God is hastening the process. Now that God's appointed Christ, Jesus, has come, the exiles (the harvest) are coming home!
- D. Don't be discouraged about the bad situation in the world: God is doing a great work in the world that no man can stop.

## VI. Reap What You Did not Work For (Jn 4:37-38)

- A. Jesus uses another proverb to teach his disciples that they are invited to share in the work that God has already started in Jesus Christ: "For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps'" (v 37).
1. The original intent of this proverb may have been to remind people that they do not always enjoy the fruits of their labor.
  2. Jesus uses this ordinary proverb to make the disciples know that they are enjoying the fruits of *God's* and *Christ's* labor: "I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor" (v 38).
- B. The "Others" may include God, John the Baptist, the earlier prophets—and in this case, Christ himself.  
—It was Christ, not the disciples, was the one who delivered the Gospel seed to the woman.

## VII. Fellow Workers with the Lord

- A. First Corinthians 3:9 connects with John 4. Paul writes: "For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building."
- B. The Holy Spirit is calling us to do today through this passage in John 4—to come alongside our Lord Jesus and all those who have gone before us to reap the harvest of lives. God is calling the exiles home. And he wants us to share in that work.
- C. The key is in the idea of "sharing," of being God's "*fellow* workers," of reaping that for which "*others* have labored."
1. We all know that evangelization is something that God calls us to do.
  2. But we get discouraged because we think that the only way to do evangelism is to go to people who have never heard the Gospel at all and try to start the Gospel conversation from scratch. And that can be hard.
  3. But we can go to where God is already at work, where the Gospel has already left a mark.
    - a. We can go to friends who show interest in the Gospel, who are willing to give us a hearing.
    - b. We can seek out those who know that they are already broken, and we can offer them living Water.
- D. *Pray more for the work of evangelization in this church.*
1. Pray:
    - that God would give us a fresh love for bringing the Gospel of Jesus to others

- that God would show us where/in whom he is already at work
  - that God would bring into our lives hurting people who know their need for grace (like the Samaritan woman)
2. Pray far more than you plan!
- E. Practical note: Since the Gospel is best received by those who know they are losers, you might start by going to those who are deeply broken and hurting. For instance:
- the underperforming student
  - the exhausted coworker
  - those society has given up on

## VIII. Evangelization Starts at the Feet of Jesus Messiah

**Remember how the Samaritan woman got started evangelizing to begin with. Her evangelism, if we could call it that, was not something she planned to do. It was the natural response of having met Jesus. The desire to tell the world about Jesus and to see that good news about Jesus re-shape our lives, communities, and societies—all that is the natural response of being captivated by Jesus and his grace for us. To begin the work of evangelization, we must go to Jesus and receive his gift of living Water.**

### Questions for Reflection

1. Was there anything in particular about today's sermon that blessed and encouraged you?
2. Was there anything that you disagree with or found difficult to accept?
3. Why did the disciples marvel "that he was talking with a woman" (v 27)?
4. "[N]o one said, 'What do you seek?' or, 'Why are you talking with her?'" What does this comment teach us about how people would have judged Jesus' action?
5. A key principle that we learn here is that we must always guard against hasty judgments.
6. What was it that made the disciples hold their tongues?
7. Look now at verses 28-29: "So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, <sup>29</sup>'Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?'"
8. According to Jesus, what was his "food" (v 34)? What does this tell us about Jesus and why he alone can serve as our Savior?
9. How does 1 Corinthians 3:9 connect with John 4? How does this teach us about what God wants the church to do today?
10. Will you ask God to give you a new love for evangelization—and to show you where you can join his work?
11. Looking at the Samaritan woman as an example, where does our work of evangelization begin?