

John 4:30 – 54

^{4:8} His disciples had gone to the city to buy food... ²⁷ Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, 'What do you want?' or, 'Why are you speaking with her?' ²⁸ Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, ²⁹ 'Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?'

³⁰ They went out of the city, and were coming to him. ³¹ Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, 'Rabbi, eat.' ³² But he said to them, 'I have food to eat that you do not know about.' ³³ So the disciples were saying to one another, 'No one brought him anything to eat, did he?' ³⁴ Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work. ³⁵ Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest. ³⁶ Already he who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering fruit for life eternal; so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. ³⁷ For in this case the saying is true, 'One sows and another reaps.' ³⁸ I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored and you have entered into their labor.' ³⁹ From that city many of the Samaritans believed in him because of the word of the woman who testified, 'He told me all the things that I have done.' ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. ⁴¹ Many more believed because of His word; ⁴² and they were saying to the woman, 'It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this one is indeed the Savior of the world.'

⁴³ After the two days he went forth from there into Galilee. ⁴⁴ For Jesus himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country. ⁴⁵ So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans received him, having seen all the things that he did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they themselves also went to the feast. ⁴⁶ Therefore he came again to Cana of Galilee where he had made the water wine. And there was a royal official whose son was sick at Capernaum. ⁴⁷ When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to him and was imploring him to come down and heal his son; for he was at the point of death. ⁴⁸ So Jesus said to him, 'Unless you people see signs and wonders, you simply will not believe.' ⁴⁹ The royal official said to him, 'Sir, come down before my child dies.' ⁵⁰ Jesus said to him, 'Go; your son lives.' The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started off. ⁵¹ As he was now going down, his slaves met him, saying that his son was living. ⁵² So he inquired of them the hour when he began to get better. Then they said to him, 'Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.' ⁵³ So the father knew that it was at that hour in which Jesus said to him, 'Your son lives'; and he himself believed and his whole household. ⁵⁴ This is again a second sign that Jesus performed when he had come out of Judea into Galilee.

Questions

1. Remember the ethnic hostility between Jews and Samaritans.
2. Recap the remarkable conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman that had just happened. The main idea is that Jesus satisfies our thirst. He satisfied the Samaritan woman's thirst, which had led her around in circles. Now she goes back to tell the people in her town, who know her story, about how Jesus has come into her story.
3. The disciples and Jesus
 - a. The disciples think Jesus is hungry because he hasn't eaten. But what 'food' has Jesus eaten?
 - b. What is the analogy of the harvest about?
 - i. He who reaps is receiving wages: Jesus is reaping
 - ii. He who sows and he who reaps: 'The Father sows? Jesus reaps?'
 - iii. I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored: Jesus sent them to buy food? Jesus sent them to engage in spiritual conversation with the Samaritans?
 - c. What opportunity did the disciples just miss? They went into the Samaritan village to buy food. They didn't engage with the Samaritans because of their theological-cultural-pseudo-racial prejudice. The Samaritans were just invisible to them.
 - d. Application: Who do you tend not to see with Jesus' eyes?
 - i. Illus: My friend Dakota being a resident advisor and being involved with academic issues behind the scenes. 'Usually you hear about troubled students. There is a lot of need that I had no idea about. But the best thing is that the position gives me credibility. Just because I've been to div school, the students are really open. There is no defensiveness. It's been eye-opening. Many students are actually not antagonistic. They are actually considering it. That's not to say that I know how to do it, but I know the need is there and I know something must be done.'
 - ii. People across racial or cultural lines?
 - e. Application: What do we believe about 'being fed'? So often we expect a church to 'feed' us. But actually God feeds us when we see Him at work in us and others. Also, we believe that we have to know lots of things before we engage other people in love and mission. But really we have to love others and love the story Jesus tells about himself through our lives.
4. What's the difference between the Samaritans and the royal official and that household?
 - a. Why do the Samaritans believe? They heard the woman's story. Verbal witness. And because they are not Jews, they know that Jesus must be for the whole world! Their confession is big! 'The Savior of the world' – wow!
 - b. Why does the royal official and his whole household believe (4:53)? Miraculous sign.
 - c. Why does Jesus critique the latter group? Why might Jesus want people to believe in him without him having to do miraculous signs?
 - d. What do the Samaritan woman and the royal official understand about Jesus based on their interactions with him?
 - i. With the Samaritan woman, Jesus was able to communicate so much: (a) that he knows her and her story, (b) that he could fill her with his Spirit and radically change her life, (c) that he is the new center of the worship of the one true God. He is the source of spiritual transformation.
 - ii. But with the royal official, Jesus is able to communicate that he has the power to heal someone physically. That is significant, that he can physically transform someone. But there is a deeper point that Jesus is trying to make.
 - iii. Also, there is a sense that Jesus can heal from a distance. The second story adds to the first in that way. Jesus had to be proximate with the Samaritans. Jesus did not have to be proximate with the royal official's son.
 - e. Application: In what sense are we focused on Jesus' love and transforming power being available to us as he puts it into us? In what sense are we focused on Jesus doing other things for us, however good?