

**JOHN**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to John chapter 4 as we continue our study through the Word of God. In our last study we saw the story of Nick at night. It was the story of the Pharisee named Nicodemus who came to see Jesus at night. And this religious leader heard those words that if he wants everlasting life, if he wants to see the Kingdom of God, he must be born again.

It was not through the Law, good works, religious trappings, but a life that is surrendered to God by faith in the Messiah, in Jesus. Remember what Jesus told Nicodemus, “**And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.**” John 3:14-15.

Jesus was bringing Nicodemus back to the Old Testament and just as when the children of Israel were bitten by the venomous snakes, they were to look at the snake on the brass pole and they would be healed. And for those who have been bitten by sin, and we all have, all we need to do is look to Jesus who was judged in our place for our sins and we will be saved!

It is a pretty remarkable story. And then those famous words of Jesus that bring comfort and joy to our lives, “**For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.**”

In our study this evening we are going to see Jesus meet a woman by a well in Samaria and this woman, who came to get water was going to receive the living water, Jesus Christ in her life. Of this we are told,

The entire chapter tells the story of Jesus' encounter with a Samaritan woman in the city of Sychar. The Samaritans were isolated in the land of Israel as half-breeds and outcasts. But Jesus tells the woman that if she drinks of the water He can give her, she will never thirst again. When Christ reveals to her that He knows she has been married five times, she recognizes Him as a prophet from God. The woman also comes to believe that Jesus is the promised Messiah and shares the good news with the people of her town. As a result, many believe on the Lord as the "Savior of the world."

- Elmer Towns, John, p. 37

Also, if you remember from our last study, we saw that John the Baptist said these words regarding Jesus, "**He must increase, but I must decrease.**" John 3:30. Now that is what we are going to see as the ministry of Jesus continues to grow, people being drawn to Him and His message of hope that is found in repentance, a turning towards God.

And make no mistake about it, that is what we are to do. We are not to give people ourselves, all we have done, what we are about, we are to give them Jesus because He is the only One who can save.

With that as our background, let's begin reading in John chapter 4 beginning in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as study through His Word.

**JOHN 4****VERSES 1-3**

As word spread to the Pharisees of all that Jesus was doing, how His following continued to grow, it upset them. Thus, instead of having a confrontation with the Pharisees at this point, Jesus moves out of the region of Judea to Galilee in the North. You see, it was not yet time for this confrontation to occur, and things are going to go according to God's plan and not man's.

Now, as we look at verse 4 we see something very interesting with this verse. Look at what John tells us.

**VERSE 4**

Now this is interesting to me because we are told that Jesus “**needed to go through Samaria.**” Keep in mind that Samaria was located in the middle of the land, between Judea in the south and Galilee in the north.

During the time of Jesus, if the Jews were traveling to Galilee from Judea or visa-a-versa, they would not go through Samaria, which was the shortest route, but they would go east of the Jordan River along the desert strip called the Trans Jordan or Perea and then cross over again, going twice as far as if they would just go through Samaria.

Now I don't know about you, but if I am traveling I am going to take the shortest route to get to my destination. Why did the Jews not want to go through Samaria? Why was it such a big deal?

Let's look back at their history because as we do you will see why there was this animosity between the Jews and the Samaritans. If you remember from our Old Testament studies, the Northern Kingdom of Israel was taken into captivity by the Assyrians in 722 B. C. And the Assyrians were a brutal people, leading them away with fish hooks in their mouths.

What would happen next is that the Assyrians would bring in other captives from different nations into the land and they inter-married with the Jews who remained there and these people are known as the Samaritans.

Thus, to the Jews, they were half-breeds and looked down upon; they were despised by the Jews! Morris gives to us this insight as he wrote, "Their route from Jerusalem to Galilee lay through the region beyond the Jordan. This was considerably longer, but it avoided contact with the Samaritans. Those who were not so strict went through Samaria."

In fact, Jewish Rabbis said, "Let no man eat the bread of the Cuthites [the Samaritans], for he who eats their bread is as he who eats swine's flesh." Not Kosher!

Not only that but a popular prayer in those days went like this, "And Lord, do not remember the Samaritans in the resurrection." So, the Jews did not like the Samaritans, not at all. Thus, to walk through the land of Samaria would be something most would never do!

Today, there are only some 200 Samaritans left, dying off because of marrying within their own families, but the religion they practice is still the same as it was in Jesus day.

They believe in the first five books of Moses, but they changed some of the stories around. The Garden of Eden was located on Mount Gerizim, Noah's Ark rested on Mount Gerizim, Abraham offered Isaac on Mount Gerizim and they had a temple on Mount Gerizim where they offered sacrifices to God, all in the land of Samaria.

So, these other issues irritated the Jews as well, and not wanting to even get the dust of Samaria on their feet, they went around this land to get to their destination.

But notice again what we read here in verse 4 as John tells us that Jesus “**needed to go through Samaria.**”

Again, the question is why did Jesus need to go through Samaria? Some feel it was the shortest route and maybe He needed to get to His destination faster. I don't think that is right because in verse 43 of John chapter 4 we see Jesus stayed two more days before He departed to go to Galilee.

Then why in the world did He go through Samaria? I believe it was because He had an appointment to meet someone there, an appointment that was made before the foundations of the world were created, and thus, Jesus is going to a place that very few Jews would go, Samaria!

What about you? Is God calling you to go somewhere and you are refusing to take those steps of faith? There are people that need to hear of Jesus, are you ready to go?

#### VERSES 5-6

Keep in mind that the city of Sychar was ancient Shechem, and was the capital city of the Samaritans. Sychar, located between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal was the place where Jacob's well was located and even today, you can see this site located in what is now called the West Bank and it is very dangerous to go to because of all the terrorist activity that is going on in the West Bank.

But this well, Jacob's well, is still there and it reaches down some 150 feet and is fed by underground springs but it really is a cistern in a sense, it is not necessarily fresh water, it became old and stagnant and Jesus will expound more on that in a few minutes.

John tells us that Jesus was “**wearied**” from His journey, which may sound surprising. The reason it is surprising to us is that we see Jesus as God and we stop there. Yes, He was fully God in the Incarnation but don’t forget His humanity. Jesus was flesh and blood in the Incarnation. Fully God and fully man and thus, He got hungry, He got tired, He got thirsty and-so-on.

Maclaren expounds on this and gives to us some interesting insight into what Jesus was feeling. He tells us, “That little word *thus* seems to have a force difficult to reproduce in English. It is apparently intended to enhance the idea of utter weariness.” In other words, He was exhausted!

It is as Bruce tells us, “While our Evangelist insists that it was the divine Word that became flesh in Jesus, he insists at the same time that what the divine word became was *flesh*.”

#### VERSES 7-9

Keep in mind that we are told in verse 6 that the timeframe is the sixth hour and if we are going by Jewish time here, it is 12 noon. I believe that is what John is saying here.

That is why when we see this Samaritan woman come to the well for water she is alone. You see, you would go for water in the morning or evening when it was cool out, not in the heat of the day, so she was all alone, like she wanted to be.

She did not want any confrontations with the women of the city because of her lifestyle. Now as this woman approaches Jesus He asks her for a drink of water.

Now we read this and don’t think much of what Jesus was doing, speaking to this Samaritan woman. And, not only was she a Samaritan but also a woman, two big strikes against her. And then throw in her questionable character and that is strike three, you are out!

And the Jews hatred of the Samaritans was very deep. You see there was a rabbinical law from around 66 A. D. that stated that Samaritan women were considered as continually menstruating and thus unclean.

That means anyone coming in contact with them would be unclean also.

Now even though this was much later than Jesus time, they still felt the same way, they still practiced these things, you would never see a Rabbi speaking to a woman alone and I doubt if you would see a Rabbi speaking to a Samaritan woman!

In fact, in regards to women in general and Samaritan women, Barclay said, "The strict Rabbis forbade a Rabbi to greet a woman in public. A Rabbi might not even speak to his own wife or daughter or sister in public. There were even Pharisees who were called 'the bruised and bleeding Pharisees' because they shut their eyes when they saw a woman on the street and so walked into walls and houses!"

Not very nice, but that is the way it was.

Now here comes Jesus and I like that about Jesus, He comes and touches those that many people feel are untouchable, not worth anything.

I am thankful that God looks at us differently than man does, aren't you? We must be careful that we don't exclude people because of the way they look, the way they dress, their lifestyle they have. Jesus ministered to them and so should we, reaching out to them in love as Jesus did so often!

Let me share this story with you because you will see how we are not to cast people away but reach out to them, you just don't know what is going on in their lives and the salvation that they need. We are told,

Stuart Briscoe has shared a story that is even more dramatic. When he was at Capernway Bible School, he and his wife were separated from each other for a day. He had left her the car, but he had accidentally taken the keys with him. After a couple of hours, Jill borrowed another car, and as she was driving down the road she saw some girl's hitchhiking, so she picked them up. They turned out to be three German girls visiting England. She managed to persuade these girls to come with her to a conference for German Christian young people, and one of them was marvelously saved there. Afterwards Stuart Briscoe told that girl's story:

She was a theological student in Germany. She had come under the influence of some false teaching that, instead of leading her to an intelligent worship of God, had filled her with much doubt and confusion. She had delivered an ultimatum to the God whose existence she doubted. She told God that if he was there he should show himself to her in some way. He must do this within three months. If he didn't she told him, "I'll quit my schooling, quit theology, quit religion, and I think I'm going to quit living because there's nothing to live for."

After explaining this, she turned to my wife with great emotion and said, "The three months end today."

- R. Kent Hughes, John, pp. 102-103

Again, where do we need to go through? Who do we need to reach out to? Be open to where the Lord is leading you!

#### VERSE 10

Jesus started out on the physical level, "**Give Me a drink.**" And now moves on into a deeper issue, the spirit, "**living water.**"



And here is a great witnessing tool. Jesus drew this woman into a conversation and in doing so she was curious about what He was saying. You don't want to preach to people, you want to draw them into a conversation about the things of God, who Jesus is, what God has for them, so they can ask questions, talk about these things. It is a conversation!

Now this "**living water**" that Jesus spoke of was, in ancient times called a spring because the water bubbled up from the ground. But Jesus was not speaking of a spring of water but the spiritual water that will quench your spiritual thirst and give to you life!

And the "**living water**" that Jesus was speaking of here is God Himself, the fountain of living waters. We see this spoken of in Jeremiah 2:13, which says, "**For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, And hewn themselves cisterns - broken cisterns that can hold no water.**"

Also, in Jeremiah 17:13 we see the Lord spoken of as the fountain of living waters, "**O Lord, the hope of Israel, All who forsake You shall be ashamed. 'Those who depart from Me Shall be written in the earth, Because they have forsaken the Lord, The fountain of living waters.'**"

And listen to the response of this woman who was offered this living water!

#### VERSES 11-12

As you read through these verses you can clearly see that she is stilling looking at the physical and can't understand how she can obtain this living water. You see, Jesus had nothing to draw out this water and the well was deep and thus, in her mind, she just didn't understand how this could be possible! How He could give her this living water!

And her conclusion is that Jesus is not greater than their father, Jacob, who gave them this well. You see, the way this question is phrased in the Greek is that she is expecting a negative response. She did not believe that Jesus was greater than Jacob!

Bruce gives us some insight to this as he wrote, “The (admittedly much later) Samaritan liturgy for the Day of Atonement says of the Taheb (the Samaritan counterpart to the Jewish Messiah), ‘Water shall flow from his buckets’ (language borrowed from Balaam’s oracle in Numbers 24:7).”

And her question to Jesus is an interesting one, “**Where then do You get that living water?**” Listen to what Jesus says next.

#### VERSES 13-14

Jesus is comparing the physical with the spiritual and He is saying that material things will never satisfy us, even though we think they will.

Think about this for a minute. How often have we said, “Boy, if I only had such-and-such, that is all I need!” What happened?

You still needed something else, the thing you thought would satisfy didn’t! Your latest and greatest computer you just bought last week is outdated already!

You see, the worldly realm can never satisfy the thirsty soul even though we keep trying to accomplish that with worldly things. Jesus is speaking of drinking in the spirit, spiritual things, that is where true satisfaction and lasting satisfaction is found.

And if we try to satisfy this God-created inner thirst with other things instead of Jesus, we will continue to thirst, we will not be satisfied.

I like the way that Spurgeon sums this up for us. He wrote, “What does a thirsty man do to get rid of his thirst? He drinks. Perhaps there is no better representation of faith in all the Word of God than that. To drink is to receive-to take in the refreshing draught-and that is all. A man’s face may be unwashed, but yet he can drink; he may be a very unworthy character, but yet a draught of water will remove his thirst. Drinking is such a remarkably easy thing, it is even more simple than eating.” (Spurgeon, *Good News for Thirsty Souls*)

What an offer this is and how will this Samaritan woman respond to these words of Jesus, this water that springs up into everlasting life? How would you respond?

#### VERSE 15

I think we can safely say that Jesus got her attention and if we were in His shoes, we would be leading this woman in the sinners’ prayer at this point, but not Jesus.

That is interesting. Why? Because there still is the issue of her heart that needs to be dealt with. She wants the blessings without the flesh being crucified, and that can’t happen! There is no conversion without conviction!

Think about how she responded, it is like many do today and I don’t believe they are saved just as she was not saved at this point. She was basically saying to Jesus, “***Jesus, if you want to make my life easier and more convenient, then I’m all for it. Give it to me!***”

Please understand that Jesus did not come to make my life easier, to make it more convenient, He came to save me from my sins! And thus, unless I repent of my sin then I cannot be saved! I need to understand that I am a sinner in need of a Savior, in need of Jesus! In other words, ***REPENT, FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS AT HAND!***

And if you are doubting what I am saying, let's read on and you will see Jesus expose her sin so that she may repent and be saved!

### VERSES 16-18

Talk about her mask of self-righteousness being pulled off, that is what we see here. Her mask is off, her sin is exposed and now she must decide which she loves more, her sin or the Messiah! I want you to notice how Jesus uses His words like a surgical instrument to get to the heart of the matter with this woman. And He does the same with us as we read the Word of God.

Paul put it this way in Hebrews 4:12-13, **“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a Discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.”**

We too must not live behind those masks pretending to be something or someone we are not. God sees right through those masks and we need to come clean before Him.

Remember in Acts chapter 2, as Peter gave that powerful sermon on the day of Pentecost, and in Acts 2:37 we see the response of the people to the Word of God, **“Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Men and brethren, what shall we do?’”**

You see, conviction, **“cut to the heart”** and they ask Peter what they need to do to get saved and Peter tells them to repent, turn towards God and away from sin, receive Jesus Christ into your life! You see, conviction before conversion! And that is what we are seeing here with this Samaritan woman!

Now I want you to listen to the last part of verse 17 and into verse 18 again because there is something I want to share with you that is very important, especially in the days we are living in. Jesus said, “**... ‘You have well said, 'I have no husband,' for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly.’**”

What I want you to notice is that the man she is living with is not her husband and thus, living together and marriage are not the same thing, I don't care what you say! And just because you say, “We are married in God's eyes!” does not make it true.

It is as Paul said in Hebrews 13:4, “**Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.**” God has told us what marriage is all about, what He considers marriage!

Now in regard to what Jesus was doing with this woman, exposing her sin, it is as Alford points out for us, “I am persuaded that the right account is found, in viewing this command, as the *first step of granting her request, 'give me this water.'* The first work of the Spirit of God, and of Him who here spoke in the fullness of that Spirit, is, to *convince of sin.*” (Alford)

Notice how this woman responds to what Jesus just said of her, the sin He exposed in her life!

### VERSE 19

Ever since the first encounter that Jesus had with this woman at this well in Samaria, notice the progression she has made in regard to Jesus.

First, she saw Him as a Jew, and then she calls Him Sir, and now a prophet.

Her faith is growing as her sin is exposed.

But just recognizing that Jesus is a prophet won't save you, you need to see Him as the Messiah, as Savior, and so will she! Spurgeon wrote, "It would have been better if she had perceived that she was a sinner." How true that is!

But before she gets to that point, she takes a side road that truly is not the issue; the issue is "What have you done with Jesus?" But she says . . .

### VERSES 20-26

Did you notice how she deflected the attention off of her and put forth a question for Jesus to settle. And her question is kind of like, "Can God create a rock so big that He can't lift it? If He can or can't He is not all powerful!"

She wanted Jesus to settle this issue of who is right and who is wrong in the way they worshiped God, the Samaritans who worship on Mount Gerizim or the Jews who worship in Jerusalem?

First of all, God did instruct the Jews to build the Temple in Jerusalem as a place of worship unto Him, but that truly is not the issue.

Worship is not a matter of location but a matter of the heart. And yes, the Jews had the oracles of God or the Words of God, and thus, salvation is of the Jews, this light of God they were to share with others as Paul tells us in Romans 9:1-5, **“I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.”**

You see, Paul is grieving over the fact that the Jews who had the Words of God have now rejected Him. They made this relationship with God into rituals to be kept instead of a love relationship.

Also, notice that Jesus was not afraid to tell her she was on the wrong spiritual path, and neither should we be afraid if someone is not on the path to Jesus.

Too often people tell us we are not tolerant of other religions. That is not true, I just don't agree with them, they don't lead people to God, it is not that all roads lead to God, but only one, Jesus! Now we either believe that or we don't and what we believe will be manifested in our lives, what we do and what we say!

And if you believe that all roads lead to God then it doesn't matter how you worship Him. But listen to what Jesus says here, **“... for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”** John 4:23-24.

So, Jesus is saying that it does matter how you worship Him. First of all, you must worship Him in spirit. That is, you must be saved, born again before God will accept any part of our worship.

Paul put it this way in Romans 8:6-9, **“For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.”** If you are saved, then the Spirit of God indwells you!

Secondly, we must worship God in truth. What does that mean. Jesus is saying that if we want to worship God we must not only be saved but we must also worship Him according to His Word.

We cannot just approach God any way we want, He is holy and righteous and like the President, we just don't do what we want. We just can't walk into the White House and say "Hello!" There are things we must do, ways we are to approach him, and the same is true with God.

How do we know what to do? Like I have said, by following His Word, being obedient to what God's Word says for our lives. Jesus said in John 17:17, **“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.”** Thus, when we come before God we must do so in Spirit and in truth!

After that we see that this woman recognizes that the Messiah is coming and she tells Jesus that she is waiting for her version of the Messiah to come, the ones the Samaritans were looking for.



And I love the response that Jesus gives her. Jesus tells her it is He. Now in the English it does not come across as clear and strong as it does in the Greek.

In the Greek Jesus says, “**I Am, that speaks to you.**”

In other words, Jesus is claiming to be the voice from the burning bush from Exodus chapter 3, the Great I Am, the Becoming One! In the Greek, it is *EGO AMI* and for those that say that Jesus never claimed to be God, sorry, He makes that point very clear here in John 4:26!

Now, as we will see, as all this is going on His disciples return and notice what they are thinking and what happens to this woman who has just met the Messiah!

#### VERSES 27-30

So, as the disciples of Jesus return with some food that they bought they see Jesus speaking to a woman, which they would not do. And thus, that is why these guys were shocked and not only that, but a Samaritan woman!

But they kept silent. I think Morris expresses the reasons why they were silent as he wrote, “They had learned enough to know that, while Jesus did not always respect the conventions of the Rabbis, He had good reasons for what He did.”

Now this Samaritan woman, maybe feeling the awkwardness of the situation as the disciples of Jesus come back, leaves and goes back to her town but as she leaves she left her water pot behind. Why did she leave her water pot behind? Didn't she come to the well in the first place to get water?

Yes, she did come to the well for physical water, but she left with spiritual water that was refreshing and everlasting. Thus, she leaves the old life behind, the old wineskins you might say, and has come out of that way of life into a new life in Christ!

Paul put it this way in II Corinthians 5:17, **“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”**

And like I have said, she then goes into town to tell the men of this town of the Messiah, Jesus, that He is here, come and see!

Why did she go to the men of the town? Maybe because the women hated her and her lifestyle, seeking after the men of the town for her pleasures and they wanted nothing to do with her.

The men on the other hand responded to her, but they are going to get more than they bargained for in return!

What I want you to see here is that this Samaritan woman was so impressed by the love of Jesus, even though He did confront her with her sin, she knew He was special and wanted everyone else to come and see this Jesus! Wow, what faith!

And the response, **“Then they went out of the city and came to Him.”** What a witness she was of what God can do in a person’s life, but they too had to see Jesus for themselves!

#### VERSES 31-34

Keep in mind that the disciples of Jesus went into the Samaritan village to get food, and wanted Jesus to eat what they brought to Him.

And here we go again. The disciples are thinking physical food, and Jesus is speaking of spiritual food.

Jesus came to complete the work that was set before Him and in that He found true satisfaction and so will we, doing what we were created for!

Thus, in Jesus' life we read in John 17:4, "**I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.**"

May we be able to say the same as our life comes to an end in these earthly bodies that we have finished the work that God has given us to do!

Let me share with you this example. We are told,

Historians say that John Knox, the great Scottish preacher, was so feeble as an old man that he had to balance himself on the pulpit. But as he began to preach, his voice, at first very weak, would regain the power of a trumpet call, and he was like "to ding the pulpit into glads [to knock the pulpit into splinters], and leap out of it!" The message completely filled the man with divine power, and he experienced supernatural sustenance. That is what happened with our Lord.

- R. Kent Hughes, John pp. 131-132

Listen to what Jesus has to say now regarding this work that is before them.

#### VERSES 35-38

I love this verse because Jesus paints for us a beautiful picture of what the harvest is really about.

Keep in mind that this woman went back to get the men of the city, and as they are coming through the grain fields with their white turbans on their heads, Jesus says, "**Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!**" John 4:35.

First of all, this saying was a proverb. And the idea is that there is no particular hurry for a task because things simply take time and you can't avoid the waiting.

Jesus *did not* want His disciples to have this mentality; He wanted them to think and act as if the **harvest** was ready *now*.

And what a picture this is as these men that were coming were the harvest, the harvest of souls that were to be brought into the Kingdom. You see, as these men walked through the grain fields wearing their white turbans, it looked like the fields were ready for harvest, and they were! The harvest of souls! What a picture!

What about us, are we looking for the harvest or are we just sitting around doing nothing? Jesus was encouraging His men here that there is a harvest that is ready now and I believe He is saying the same to us, be looking, watching and gather in what God has placed before you!

And in verses 36 through 38 we see that these disciples of Jesus did not do anything and yet look at the harvest they would bring in. What is the point? You see, it was this Samaritan woman who brought these men to Jesus!

In other words, we may sow the Word but not see the fruit from our labor, someone else may. But it is not about us, but about the Lord and building up His Kingdom and not ours. Just rejoice that you can be a part of it, a part of the work.

Paul put it this way in I Corinthians 3:5-9, **“Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, you are God’s building.”**

The sower and the reaper should be able to rejoice in what God is doing!

VERSES 39-42

You see, this woman saw Jesus first as a Jew, then she called Him Sir, then a prophet, then the Christ, the Savior of the world. In other words, she got saved!

And what I like you to see is that her conviction of her sin led to her conversion, but that is not the end of it.

This led to evangelism as she tells others what she found.

And those from her city who came out and heard the words of Jesus, many believed. They listened to the woman and then they saw for themselves as they too were saved!

Now think about this for a minute. We see here Samaritans coming to Christ when the Pharisees wanted a confrontation with Him!

We see that so often today with people who hold onto a religion instead of a Redeemer! Those who hold onto a Sacrament rather than a Savior! In saying that, what do you think of Jesus, is He your Savior? He needs to be!

One more point and that Jesus stayed there in Samaria for another two days teaching them. Again, we don't think much of it but the Jews did not stay in Samaria and yet, they now welcomed this Jew, Jesus and Jesus will stay where He is welcomed!

VERSES 43-45

Keep in mind that it was the area of Galilee where Jesus grew-up. And because the people knew Him, watched Him grow-up, they had a hard time believing that He is the Messiah.

Make no mistake about it, the same can happen today when people know so much about Jesus and yet they don't know Him. I can read a story of George Washington and learn a lot about him, but I truly don't know him personally.

The same is true with the Lord, you can read a lot about Him, but He wants a deeper relationship than that, He wants your heart. Don't become so familiar with Him that you truly don't know Him!

Now why did this Galileans receive Jesus? It is simple. These Galileans received Jesus for what He did, the miracle of changing the water into wine at the wedding feast in Cana, not for who He is, God Incarnate, the Savior of the world, the Messiah.

And we are going to see that come through as a certain man has a very sick son and how Jesus will stretch his faith and get him from focusing on the miracle and onto something else.

I like the way that Morris sums this up for us, this empty faith of the Galileans. He wrote, "The enthusiasm of the Galileans was not soundly based. It was dependent on the wonders arising from their sight of the signs, not on a realization that Jesus was indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world. Their very acceptance of Him was thus in its way a rejection. They gave Him honor of a sort, but it was not the honor that was due to Him."

Let's read on and see what John has for us regarding the healing of this nobleman's son.

#### VERSES 46-48

Here we see this "**nobleman**" come to Jesus because his son is very sick, near death. And this man could have been an official in the king's court, for the Greek word to describe this man, "**nobleman**" is BASILIKOS and it speaks of someone who is officially attached to the service of the king.

So, he was rich, he was powerful, influential and yet he could do nothing for his dying son except come to Jesus and ask for help! That is what a crisis does! Thus, he made this 20-mile or so journey to Cana in Galilee to see Jesus!

And as this man travels all this way for help, Jesus says, “... **‘Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe.’**”

That seems harsh, doesn't it? I mean this man is in need and Jesus rebukes him.

Why did He do that? Because a belief that comes through signs and wonders is shallow, it won't last during difficult times.

Our faith must be built upon Jesus and His Word because His Word is sure, it is a solid foundation, and it is truth! Don't build your faith upon experiences but on the Word of God! And it is not that we don't experience God, we do. But those experiences we have with God are in accordance with the Word of God and not apart from it!

#### VERSES 49-50

You can just feel this man's pain, his agony as his son is dying and he wants Jesus to travel to Capernaum to heal him. But that is not what Jesus is going to do, He will stretch this man's faith!

Jesus just tells this man, “**Go your way; your son lives.**” And verse 50 is key to this man's faith. It says, “... **So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way.**”

Now let me ask you this. What did this man believe in, signs and wonders? Not at all, at least not anymore!

He believed in the Words of God and so must we! This man saw no miracle; he just left believing the Words of Jesus. What a difference that would make in our own lives if we take God at His Word, believe that He is able to accomplish that which He has promised!

It is as Paul said in Hebrews 11:1-3 about faith, **“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good testimony. By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.”**

And that is faith folk’s! Trusting in the promises of God found in the Word of God! And it is easy to do until you are in the middle of a trial that is testing your faith. And that is when you need to trust God with all of your heart, with all of your understanding. Just as this man did!

And what happened? Let’s read on and see.

#### VERSES 51-54

I hope you can see that this man believed the Words of God and the miracle of healing only confirmed what he believed! And through this all this man’s faith grew and it touched his family; they got saved through his testimony of Jesus!

Also, I want you to understand that this man did not travel home right away, he took his time and got home the next day. Spurgeon wrote regarding this, “The nobleman was so sure that his child was alive and well, that he was in no violent hurry to return. He did not go home immediately, as though he must be in time to get another doctor, if Christ had not succeeded; but he went his way leisurely and calmly, confident in the truth of what Jesus had said to him.” That is faith!

Now in verse 54 we are told that this is the second sign that Jesus did in Galilee. And the point is that John’s whole point of writing these things down is so that you might believe in Jesus; receive Him as your Lord and Savior.



We are told in John 20:30-31, **“And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.”**

Let me close this evening with this idea of faith. You see, God wants to stretch our faith, to get us to depend more upon Him if we would only allow Him to work in us, not by signs and wonders, but through His Word!

Listen to these quotes from people of faith, what they have to say about faith. We are told,

Faith for my deliverance is not faith in God. Faith means, whether I am visibly delivered or not, I will stick to my belief that God is love. There are some things only learned in a fiery furnace.

- Oswald Chambers in Run Today's Race

Faith does not operate in the realm of the possible. There is no glory for God in that which is humanly possible. Faith begins where man's power ends.

- George Muller

You see, faith is placing our whole weight upon Him, trusting Him all the way! When you sat on that chair this evening you didn't wonder if it would hold you, did you? Of course you didn't! God wants that kind of faith in Him, that He can hold you!

Let me close with this. We are told,

The way to increase faith is to exercise faith. And the true parent of perfect faith is the experience of the blessings that come from the crudest, rudest, narrowest, blindest, feeblest faith that a man can exercise. Trust him as you can, do not be afraid of inadequate conceptions, or of a feeble grasp. Trust him as you can, and he will give you so much more than you expected that you will trust him more.

- Maclaren of Manchester, Expositions of Holy Scripture, pp. 234-235

And I will end with this, from I John 5:1-5, **“Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”**