

He Loved Me . . .

He Loves Me Lots

The Gospel of John

Text

John 4:27-42

Topic

The disciples return to Jacob's Well and are shocked to find Jesus talking to a Samaritan woman

Title

***"Samaritan Woman,
Say What You Heard From Me!"***

Lady and the Tramp had two very different worldviews.

Tramp: "Aw, come on, Pige. Open up your eyes to what a dog's life can really be. I'll show you what I mean. Look down there. Tell me what you see."

Lady: "Well, I see nice homes with yards and fences."

Tramp: "Exactly. Life on a leash. Look again, Pige. There's a great big hunk of world down there with no fence around it where two dogs can find adventure and excitement. And beyond those distant hills, who knows what wonderful experiences?"

Jesus revealed His worldview to His disciples after His talk with the Samaritan woman.

She hurried back to the city to proclaim that the Messiah was at Jacob's Well. Samaritans "went out of the city and came to Him." Jesus said to His disciples, "Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, **for they are already white for harvest!**" (v35).

Jesus viewed the world as a harvest of souls for the Kingdom of God.

I'll organize my comments around two points: **#1 Lift Your Eyes To See The Harvest**, and **#2 Live Your Life To Seed The Harvest**.

#1 - Lift Your Eyes To See The Harvest (v28 & v31-38)

One definition of worldview says, "It's the decision-making filter that we use. It's the intellectual, emotional, and spiritual filter that helps us to understand and interpret and respond to every reality that we experience."

Jesus spoke to the Bad Samaritan at Jacob's Well. There is no doubt she was saved in the encounter. We will point out the evidence as we go. She was the firstfruits of the greater harvest in her city.

We will take the verses slightly out of order, starting with the disciples, then returning to the Samaritans.

Joh 4:28 And at this *point* His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?"

It was taboo for a Jewish man to speak with a woman in public, much less a *Samaritan* woman. It was worse than they thought: She was a serial adulterer, married five times, and currently living with a man.

The disciples wanted to but didn't ask the woman, "What do you seek?" There is a lesson in it for us.

The disciples assumed she wanted something from Jesus. *He was offering to give her something.* Abundant life now and eternal life afterward were gifts she would be offered and receive.

We need to be overly careful not to give the impression that we want something from nonbelievers.

Salvation is all grace, no works, and the only 'profit' to us is our joy is a person's transformation from darkness and death to light and life.

The disciples wanted to but didn't ask Jesus, "Why are you talking with her?" The Message Version of the Bible reads, "No one said what they were all thinking, but their faces showed it." The word that comes to mind is slack-jawed, mouth hanging open from shock or confusion.

Skip to verse thirty-one.

Joh 4:31 In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat."

They were on their way to Galilee by going *through* Samaria. It was logical to assume they would have little to no dealings with Samaritans and not linger there. At best, it was a pit stop.

There are places you don't want to stop when traveling. Like my hometown of San Bernardino. The local newspaper recently ran a story saying San Bernardino and Riverside Counties are the worst places in the US to survive a zombie apocalypse.

Seriously. Researchers scored cities in four categories: the ability to defend against the zombie-bite virus, ability to contain the virus, ability to find a cure, and ability to outlast the epidemic with an ample food supply.

Boston has the highest chance of surviving a zombie apocalypse. Salt Lake City, Columbus, Baltimore, and Virginia Beach are also well-positioned to fight World War Z.

Meanwhile, back at the well... Your plans often need to be sacrificed when following Jesus. I know that I miss spiritual opportunities because I've 'planned my work and am working my plan.'

Joh 4:32 But He said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know."

Joh 4:33 Therefore the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him *anything* to eat?"

Joh 4:34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work."

Let's refrain from criticizing the disciples for not immediately understanding what Jesus meant. Think of it this way: When you read the Bible, do you immediately understand what is meant? I don't.

The encounter with the woman started with Jesus being "weary." He was for sure hungry and thirsty. But He would not let the temporary needs of His physical body overrule a spiritual opportunity.

More than that. Jesus was on a spiritual diet that required doing His Father's will. We can put it this way:

Serving God nourished Jesus.

It has become popular to think of serving God as *depleting* you. 'Sabbatical' is a word I hear all the time. Ministers are encouraged to go away for extended periods. One organization that promotes sabbaticals said, "When you are busy with your work, family, or ministry, it can be hard to fit in caring for your own soul. This can lead to burnout or becoming spiritually stagnant."

The prophet Elijah took a sabbatical. After his success against the prophets of Baal, he fled Jezebel into the wilderness. He ended up in a cave. We can call it, *The Cave of Blunders*, because Elijah complained that he was the only believer doing any work for God. There were seven thousand other servants.

If serving *is* what nourishes you...Then withdrawing is the opposite of what you ought to be doing.

The Lord sacrificed sleep to spend time with God the Father:

- In Mark 1:35, we read that Jesus went out to a solitary place; and there He prayed to His Father during the night.
- In Luke 6:12, we learn that He left His followers to spend the night in prayer at the foot of the mountain.

The apostle Paul says bluntly, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up" (Galatians 6:9).

He said something similar to the Thessalonians: "But *as for you*, brethren, do not grow weary *in doing good*" (Second Thessalonians 3:13).

God gave Jeremiah the granddaddy of all "do not grow weary" verses when He said, "If you have run with the footmen, and they have wearied you, Then how can you contend with horses? And *if* in the land of peace, *In which* you trusted, *they wearied you*, Then how will you do in the floodplain of the Jordan?" (12:5).

Impossible? God's Holy Spirit in you is His enabling. He cannot weary.

Jesus said elsewhere that the laborers were few. He suggested we pray for more laborers. What happens at your work when there is a lot of work but fewer workers? **You** work harder, longer.

Joh 4:35 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!"

Albert Barnes writes, "Grain, when ripe, turns from a green to a yellow or light color, indicating that it is time to reap it." The crowd coming from Sychar to the well would have been wearing white outer garments typical of the culture. Jesus told His disciples to "lift up [their] eyes" and see a harvest of souls rather than a group of Samaritans.

Farming is hard work, year-round. However, in the simplest sense, farmers plant, then wait until the harvest. The crop comes in its time.

Spiritual harvesting is different. It isn't work followed by waiting. We are to Always Be Sowing or reaping what others have sown.

Joh 4:36 "And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.

Joh 4:37 For in this the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.'

Joh 4:38 I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors."

John the Baptist "labored" in the wilderness. He sowed by baptizing Jews unto repentance as preparation for the coming King and His Kingdom.

He found joy in his work, once saying to his disciples, "The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now complete" (John 3:29).

John would die a particularly gruesome death, never seeing the harvest on the Day of Pentecost. Jesus' disciples would reap the harvest. Peter led three thousand to Jesus on that glorious birthday of the church.

Notice, too, that the Lord promised "wages," "joy," and "fruit for eternal life."

- "Wages" communicates that our work is not for nothing. It may seem as though all the seed you sow falls on shallow ground, or hard soil, or that the birds eat it. You'll never know the influence you have on some people.
- "Joy" accompanies harvesting. We live in the Church Age between Pentecost and the Lord's return to resurrect and rapture His church. All over the world, all of the time, condemned people who are a heartbeat away from Hell are getting saved. Thus "We've got that joy, joy, joy, joy, down in our hearts." The apostle Peter calls it "joy unspeakable and full of glory" (First Peter 1:8).

- “Fruit for eternal life” looks forward to our rewards in Heaven and the untouchable investments we make there serving our Lord.

Two worldviews were made apparent at the well:

1. The disciples returned to the well and saw a despised Samaritan woman interrupting their journey.
2. Jesus saw a soul in despair and distress, thirsty for God.

Pollster George Barna reported last year, “Only 6% of Americans have a “biblical worldview.” Last September, the Cultural Research Center revealed survey data compiled in January 2020 that showed that 2% of millennials hold a biblical worldview even though 61% identify as Christian.

“Lift your eyes” is an exhortation the church needs right now.

#2 - Live Your Life To Seed The Harvest (v28-30 & 39-42)

The reaped become reapers.

The Samaritan woman returned to Sychar and announced she had met the Messiah.

It is one of several reasons we can safely say she was saved. She couldn’t wait to introduce others to her Lord.

Joh 4:28 The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men,

Joh 4:29 “Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?”

Jesus had offered her living water. Leaving her waterpot signified that well water was now secondary to spiritual things. It was indicative she believed Jesus.

If you were saved later in life, you probably had the experience of leaving 'waterpots' behind. They may have been habits that no longer controlled you. Or influences and influencers who would hinder rather than help you grow in the Lord.

The woman "said to the men." In ancient cities, the leading men would hang out in a particular spot. They would be at the gates if the city was big enough to be walled. There they could be approached by the regular folks to hear and settle disputes, answer questions, etc.

It was probably to those men that the Samaritan woman spoke.

It would have been mind-blowing for her to do so. Being seen with her was unacceptable. Spiritually speaking, she was no longer the same woman. There would have been something about her, a spiritual change, that held the attention of the men.

She had come to the well alone at Noon to avoid the other women of Sychar. Now she was speaking to the men.

I submit that the woman at the well is the most overlooked example of boldness in the Bible.

This kind of boldness comes from the Holy Spirit.

Joh 4:30 Then they went out of the city and came to Him.

Joh 4:39 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did."

Ten minutes old, a very baby Christian, she shared what she knew about Jesus. It was enough for others in Sychar to believe and receive the Lord.

You know enough to introduce Him

Joh 4:40 So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days.

Jesus' disciples would never have thought that going *through* Samaria meant staying there for a couple of days.

One of the obvious lessons drawn from their delay is that we ought to be ready for interruptions.

There's another side to that. Staying in Sychar meant they would not get to their planned destination as soon as expected.

People and things you think you need from the Lord may be delayed or not arrive. You might not get that phone call from a friend or that visit from a minister. It could be that those people are slacking. But it is as likely that God wants to show you that He is your everything.

Later in the Gospel of John, the Lord will hear that His friend, Lazarus, is sick unto death. The Lord purposely delays going to Lazarus. Lazarus dies during the delay.

Of course, in the end, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead and uttered the precious promise, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die" (11:25-26).

BTW: When Jesus said, "whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die," He was talking about believers who will be alive at His coming to raise the dead. He was talking about the rapture.

God the Holy Spirit lives in you. He comes alongside you as Comforter and Counselor in ways no human can. He is more real than the physical world. God will withhold people and things you think you need *to show you that you don't*.

Joh 4:41 And many more believed because of His own word.

After His resurrection, Jesus was with two of His disciples as they returned to Emmaus from Jerusalem. He hid His identity from them.

As they walked, “beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself” (Luke 24:27).

Just think how much Jesus could share in a couple of days.

It should not be lost on us that one of the Lord’s most exciting, most fulfilling, most successful ministries was to Samaritans despised by Jews. Jesus once said He was “I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matthew 15:24). He had come to offer Israel the Kingdom of God on Earth. That kingdom was open to any Samaritan and all Gentiles. It is for “whoever will believe.”

The Gospel is a universal call to all men for their universal problem of sin.

All this was challenging but life-changing for Jesus’ Jewish disciples, who had never had dealings with Samaritans and grew up despising them.

Joh 4:42 Then they said to the woman, “Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard *Him* and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.”

It sounds like a put-down; it’s not. God used the woman to bring them to hear Jesus. Hearing Him, they, too, believed. It’s not unlike inviting your friend or family to church.

Since the spiritual harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few, it is incumbent on us to submit our plans to the Lord’s plans. It will mean something different to each of us.

For example, you work to buy food and pay for your life. If there are nonbelievers, where you work is a field “white for harvest.” The harvest includes sowing spiritual seed and possibly reaping someone else’s sowing.

You are to labor in that field as if everyday was harvest until the Lord sends you to another one.

The Lord might have you pass up a promotion.

He might have you promoted earlier than you had planned. He may send you away from Kings County. *He may not want you to leave.*

- Tramp told Lady to "Look again."
- Jesus is telling us to "Lift our eyes."