

## John Ch 4:27-54

“Harvest Time”

We left off last time right in the middle of this ordained encounter of Jesus Christ with this woman at the well. She was a Samaritan, and He being a Jew should have traditionally had nothing to do with her, there was some real ethnic tension between these 2 groups of people, but Jesus Christ breaks down any ethnic barriers that may exist. It doesn't matter who you are, where you've been, or what you've done, Jesus loves you and gave Himself for you.

He didn't come to save the righteous but the sinner, not those who are well, but those who are sick, those who know that they've erred and the needs that they have go well beyond their own ability to deal with them. Those who know that they're sinners and in need of a Savior, and so He sought after this woman even as He sought out each and every one of us who know Him.

We thought we just had a random chance encounter with Christ that changed our lives forever, but the fact is He sought us out, didn't approach us like Mr. Know it all, but rather in humility built a bridge by which we would receive from Him even as He did with this woman. We seen how He aroused her interests regarding what it was that He had to offer, and Who it was there before her offering it. and Once she began to get a glimmer of those 2 things she wanted it, but there's a problem.

It sounded enticing but she seen it more as a convenience than a desperate need, and so Jesus began to unveil to her, her need for this living water by opening up her heart and revealing to her, her own sin. and We took note of the fact that with out conviction there's no conversion, until I recognize that I'm a *sinner*, I can't see my need for a *Savior*. and Jesus was searching her heart as only God can, not in a harsh *condemning* manner, but in a truthfully gracious yet *convicting* manner.

In a manner that was drawing her near to Him, that's the difference between condemnation and conviction, the enemy wants to dangle your past out in front of you in order to shew you away from God, but the Holy Spirit lays the depravity of your own heart out in front of you to show you your need for God. One says, “What are thinking, you're such a wretched unworthy sinner, just give up and go your way, you're just a hypocrite anyway, if you truly loved God you wouldn't do those things.” and You feel all condemned, and like just giving up, being driven away from God. The other says, “What are you thinking, you are a wretched unworthy sinner, that's why you need Me so desperately, now you've seen the way it goes when you try and work things out on your own, so quit striving against Me and start walking in stride with Me.” and You feel all convicted, and full of sorrow, because you know you've broken the heart of God, and you just feel like drawing near to God and walking with Him closer than ever that you might never do that again.

That's the way Jesus is leading her here, convicting her in such a way as to reveal to her, her need for Him. Much like the Lord said through Isaiah when He said, "*Come now, and let us reason together,*" '*Says the LORD,*' "*Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.*" Isa 1:18

So this woman sensing the conviction says to Him, "Where do I go, what do I do to get right with God, our Fathers say go here, the Jews say go there.." and Jesus said, "It's not about what *the fathers* said, it's about *The Father* says. and It's not about worshipping in some location; it's about a relationship with Him, because the Father is seeking those who will worship Him in spirit, and truth, why? Because God is Spirit, so then the realm that connect up with God and worship God is in the spirit, now obviously the segue or the transition is often made from the spirit into the practical. So that we worship God as we come to this place and sing praises to Him, study His Word, we worship through our giving of His tithes and our offerings, through doing good and loving one another.

But each of those practical things is the overflow of my honesty and integrity before the Lord; they're rooted in, or spring forth from the spirit, from my heart before the Lord. I worship from the heart and then my heart will be displayed in the practical way that I lead my life. We worship in spirit, from the heart (as opposed to the mouth), and in truth. Meaning honestly according to the whole counsel of the teaching of God's Word. That's how we worship in truth, according to the standard of the Word of God, we don't just do whatever we want and as long as we're sincere it's all ok. If that were the case it wouldn't matter which path you chose in life as long as you were sincere, God would receive you, but that's not true, in vs 22 Jesus told that woman, "You worship what you do not know." and Such is the case with any religion that does things contrary to the scriptures and the point here is that God doesn't receive it. Vs 24 emphatically states that whoever worships God *must* worship in spirit and truth, or from the heart according to the standards of the Word of God.

Then Jesus, once He revealed to her the reality of her being a sinner, He revealed Himself as the Savior. and She was born again right there, she was being filled with those torrents of living waters springing up into everlasting life.

Vs 27

You see in that culture a Rabbi wouldn't talk to a woman in public, not even his own wife. and So to see Jesus not only talking to a woman, but a *Samaritan* woman was rocking their world. But they weren't about to question the matter. They'd come to expect with Jesus the unexpected. You know so many people see Christianity as a woman belittling, male chauvinist type religion, and yet they don't even know what they're talking about.

Jesus Christ is the One who elevated women to the place of equality with men, you go to any culture in the world who hasn't been introduced to Jesus Christ and the women are still radically subjected to the men. I'm not saying that it's right, as a matter of fact it's absolutely wrong and that's why Jesus broke down that barrier.

Now surely there's a godly order to the home, but Jesus is the One who placed the woman beside the man and yet people want to slam Christianity but they only display their own ignorance regarding the matter. The point that Jesus is demonstrating here is that which the Holy Spirit articulated there in Gal 3:28 and that is that in Christ, "*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*" But these disciples are still working on that and so they just stand there in silent awe.

Vs 28-29

Now there are a few things we want to observe here briefly. 1<sup>st</sup> of all we notice that she came to this well to draw water, but when she left, she left her water-pot behind. She came thirsty and left satisfied, she came looking for literal water and left satiated with living water. Why did she leave this water pot?

A few possible reasons #1 As I mentioned on the spiritual level I believe it serves us as an *illustration*, she's not thirsty any more, she has no need to draw from the water of the wells of this life. That which was of utmost importance suddenly didn't matter anymore. and That's the way it is with us when we come to Christ; we just leave our water pot behind. That which seemed to be the driving force of our lives, which meant more than anything, suddenly we don't need it anymore, it's just not the priority it once was and I just don't have a thirst for that particular thing, or that illicit relationship, or that which consumed me previously, anymore.

I think that's demonstrated here, #2 not only as an illustration, but also out of *appreciation*, she's had a personal encounter with Jesus Christ that's changed her forever. "Jesus you've met a need that was so deep with in me, you've healed my hurts, satisfied my thirsty soul, you wanted a drink, here have the whole thing, it's the very least I can do."

"Everything that's meant anything to me, Jesus you can have it." and I find that consistent in those who've had a genuine life changing encounter with Christ. They stop worrying about what they can get *from* God and start asking what can I give *to* God, how can I bless His heart, I want to serve, not be served. and Then 3<sup>rdly</sup>, and most probable in this scenario as it was happening she left it as an *indication*. An indication that she'd be back and didn't want Him to go anywhere. "Here's the water pot, you guys use it all you want, but don't go anywhere I'll be right back."

We begin to see the practical working reality of the outcome of an individual who's had a life changing encounter with Jesus Christ The torrents of living waters bubble up, and begin to gush out into the lives of others, she immediately begins to share her testimony. Notice, she said to the *men*, the women didn't like her so she went to the men. and She said, "You'll never believe who I just met, this guy knew all about Me, and yet He still loved me. Could this be the Christ?" She knew it was the Christ, but she's baiting their interest now.

She's really a rebuke to Jesus' disciples who went into the town and didn't share Jesus Christ and here she goes and she's telling all of them no holds barred. and As to where Jesus was incredibly tactful and masterfully strategic, I find that I'm more like her, (I'm seeking to become more like Jesus and learn of Him) but I find that I'm more like her. "Hey, you've got to check this out, you're not going to believe it." and She just tells them her testimony, doesn't talk about living water, doesn't understand the depths of theology, all she knows is her life has been radically altered and the guy who changed her life, His name is Jesus. and People, that's all you need to know, do you need to grow in the knowledge and understanding of God's Word? Absolutely, but meanwhile share what you do know, when people see the change in your life and you tell them of your encounter with Christ, it'll spur on curiosity in them as well, and they'll want to check this thing out.

### Vs30-34

His disciples were a lot like you and me; just couldn't understand what Jesus was trying to say. and He wasn't saying that He never needed physical nourishment, but what He was saying is that there's a higher priority in life than the physical and material. The bible is clear, "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.*" Matt 4:4 and Again, "*A man's stomach shall be satisfied from the fruit of his mouth; From the produce of his lips he shall be filled.*" Prov 18:20

What Jesus is seeking to communicate here is that true nourishment, and satisfaction for the inner man comes by being busy about 2 things which are essentially the same, #1 God's Word, and #2 God's will. He says here, "My food (or my true nourishment and sustenance) is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to (notice) *finish* His work." In other words to live My life in complete obedience to the Father's direction and directive for My life. To finish, or perfect that which He's committed to My trust, which as you know was the work of redemption. It wasn't finished yet, because Jesus hadn't been crucified and resurrected yet. When He's there on the cross, it's then that He'll cry out, "*It is finished!*" John 19:30

The stripes that offer healing will have been laid upon Him, the blood that offers forgiveness and redemption will have been shed, the penalty for our sin will have been paid, but not yet. But notice the resolution of Jesus, He knows the cross awaits Him but He's determined to do the Father's will. The Pulpit Commentary makes this comment, "'Lo, I come to do thy will, O God,' was the motto and burden of his life. 'Not my will, but thine,' was the sacrificial cry which redeemed the world."

### Vs35

They were there at the well; the men of Samaria headed their way wearing their robes and their white turbans. and Jesus in essence says, "Why is it never the right time to witness, why do you always think you need a bit more qualification or preparation before you're ready to engage in sharing the Word of God?" and What He's saying is don't waste time looking for further qualifications or preparations, get to work now.

“Lift up your eyes,” get your eyes off yourself and those things that are preoccupying you, keep your head in the game and look to the greater need. There are people leaving the planet with out Jesus Christ and they’re just waiting for someone like you to reap them, someone like me to share with them. But it’s never the right time is it? Jesus is saying, “Now’s the time!” “Quit putting it off and get busy about Kingdom matters.”

Notice the fields that were ready to be harvested, it was the field of the Samaritans, the social rejects, the homeless, the one’s no one else wanted to deal with. Our problem is that we always want to see the big secular bands saved, or the Hollywood Hero’s saved. and I’m not seeking to dismantle the need for them to hear, but who did Jesus go to? Where did He say the harvest lied? Turn quickly to Luke Ch 4 (Vs16-19).

That person that everyone ignores at work or at school, that person who won’t benefit you or your reputation in any way, those people who already know that society has written them off, Jesus said, “Lift up your eyes,” they’re ready to be reaped. Jesus was concerned for hurting and down trodden souls, He came to proclaim liberty to the captives and preach the gospel to the poor in spirit, those who knew they were needy and deprived of heart.

#### Vs36-38

Prov 11:30, “*The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who wins souls is wise.*” and Again, “*Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever.*” Dan 12:3 There are those who’ve labored years before we ever came onto the scene and now we get to enter into the fruits of their labors. Others labored before they were here and they reaped the fruit of those who went before them, those who come after us will reap the fruit of our hard work. But whether you sow, or you reap, God knows the work by which you’ve labored in concerning His kingdom and you’re reward is sure. Paul put it like this, “*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.*” 1 Cor 3:7-8

#### Vs39

You guys don’t miss this, why did they believe? Because of her testimony, because she wasn’t ashamed of Jesus Christ but she shared her faith. Paul said, “*I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes.*” Rom 1:16 May God help us not to be ashamed of the gospel of Christ but rather to recognize its power and share it accordingly.

#### Vs40

They knew a good thing when they seen it. The bible says, “*Take firm hold of instruction, do not let go; Keep her, for she is your life.*” Prov 4:13 These guys were listening to the life giving words of Jesus Christ and they said, “We’re taking hold of you and not letting go, stay with us for awhile.” and Jesus did.

Vs41

This is still the way God moves today, through your personal testimony, and the life changing power of His word. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Peter tells us that we're born again not by corruptible seed, but incorruptible, the word of God which lives and abides forever. Jesus said, "*It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.*" John 6:63 So upon hearing His word, they believed. The word of God will change your life if you only but have ears to hear it.

Vs42

"Hey, God definitely used your testimony to wet my appetite, but I'm not here because of what you said any longer, but now I've had my own personal encounter with Jesus and I know that He's the Christ, the Savior of the world." and The question that's implied here is this; they know that Jesus is the Christ, do you know that Jesus is the Christ? Have you had a personal encounter with Christ that's changed your life forever and given you revelation as to who He is?

Notice again how their understanding of Him has come full circle, 1<sup>st</sup> He was "A Jew," then He was, "Sir," next He was, "A Prophet," finally He was acknowledged as, "The Christ," and now here we have, "The Savior of the world." What's the point? The more you understand who Jesus is, the higher the priority He's going to take in your life, and as you grow to know Him, He'll increase, and you'll decrease in your life.

Vs 43-45

Again they received Him, not because of who He was to them, but because of what He could do for them. They receive Him on the basis of signs and wonders, and of course earlier (in Ch 2) we seen how Jesus refused to commit Himself to those who sought to commit to Him purely on the basis of the miraculous. We see here where He knew that they really wouldn't receive Him for who He was, because anytime someone knows you from the time you were young, it's difficult for them to see the reality of what God is doing in your life in a manner in which they can respect. They still see you as little Joey, or the neighbor kid down the block and it's difficult for them to get past that, but He went there anyway, why?

Because the scriptures had prophesied that the people who lived in the darkness of Galilee would see a great light. and Of course Jesus is the light of the world, so, more than just being prophecy about Him, the scriptures became directions and instructions to Him. He obeyed the word of God for His life, what's my point? Jesus was a doer of the word, not a hearer only, and He gave to us an example that we should do likewise. We're not just to agree intellectually or consent theologically with the word of God; we're to do it. How do I make the word of God practical for my life? Like Nike said, "Just do it!" Be a doer of the word.

## Vs46-47

Or to understand it another way, this man was desperate. It's interesting how all of his notoriety, his prominent position, and everything that was working for him as far as this world is concerned went right out the window when his child was dying. and That's the way it is, the ground is level at the foot of the cross, we all come to Jesus the same.

I don't care if you're wealthy, if you're on the "Who's who" rather than the, "Who's He?" I don't care if you were a homeless individual or a prominent businessman and entrepreneur, none of that matters when we come to Christ. We all come to Him the same way, in humility recognizing a need, this man is interceding for his son, right now he has what we might call, "*Crisis* faith."

The implication here is that if it weren't for the crisis, he would've never sought Jesus out. and That's the way most of us come to Jesus, we call out to Jesus from crisis, and out of control catastrophe in our lives. But notice what Jesus says to him.

## Vs48

Ouch! Again Jesus rebukes the mindset of faith built on signs or the miraculous. It's as if Jesus wants to know, "What if I don't rescue you from your crisis, will you still believe?" "What if I don't give you a sign, what if I don't become your knight in shining armor, are you going to forsake Me, because I won't give you your 3 wishes, do you seek Me for who I am, or how I can benefit you?"

What a soul searching question to you and me, maybe you've been beseeching the Lord to rescue you from a current crisis, what if He doesn't? Are you going to throw your faith in the trash? Why are you seeking the Lord? We don't have Him in a lamp that we can rub on and get 3 wishes, and His ways aren't our ways, are we going to question His love for us if He doesn't do things the way we say, or how we believe they should be done?

Do you need a sign to believe? Sometimes we feel like the Lord isn't near to us when we can't "feel" Him like we once did, and so we cry out to the Lord to make His presence known again. But how does that really differ from seeking a sign? We need to know by some circumstantial evidence that You're with us. But He's readily said, "*I will never leave you nor forsake you.*" Heb 13:5 Do we believe it, or do we need the sign?

## Vs49-50

Did Jesus do things the way this man told Him to? No, He doesn't need our direction, yet I so often try to give it to Him. How much better to just lay the need before Him and say, "Lord, here's the situation, not my will but yours be done. Just do as you please with this." There's nothing wrong with bearing your heart before the Lord, but make sure you're not seeking to get your will done in Heaven, but rather His will done on earth. You can trust that He's aware of your situation and will work it out for your eternal good and His glory, it's simply our part to bring the need before Him, and He'll do with it as He pleases.

Now to His credit this man believed Jesus word, and that's what faith is, it's taking Jesus at His word. Just believing what the Word of God says, and so His *crisis* faith has become, "*Confident* faith."

Vs51-54

The transition continues, His confident faith became "*Confirmed* faith", and the confirmed faith became what? "*Contagious* faith," he himself believed and his whole household, and I have found by and large that when the dad of the family gets turned on for Jesus Christ that eventually so will his whole household. It may not happen immediately, but the dad tends to regulate, and make sure that his family gets placed under the fountain of God's Word, which turns out for their salvation as well. Not by corruptible see, but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever. This whole ch speaks of the Harvest. You guys it's harvest time, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for the harvest.

So whether you're one who's thirsting for more than what this life has to offer, the waters of this life you've found unsatisfying and only a temporary fix at best. Or you're one who's here on the basis of the testimony of another, now you've heard the words of Christ yourself, perhaps crisis has brought you to this place.

The 1<sup>st</sup> miracle Jesus performed in Cana was in the midst of celebration, this 2<sup>nd</sup> one is in the midst of devastation either way Jesus was the one who was needed, and He met the needs faithfully in either case. So whatever finds you here today, let Jesus Christ find you here today, Jesus wants you to experience a personal encounter with Him that'll change your life forever.

He stands here ready to minister to your need, your need for forgiveness, He's finished the work, but you have to believe Him for it. The bible says today is the day of salvation, don't put off today what you're not guaranteed tomorrow, so if you hear His voice, and He's knocking on the door of your heart, open the door, and receive Jesus into your heart and into your life.