

## In the Mean While

- We're going to go back and examine some of the verses we missed in chapter four tonight
- Finishing the account of the woman at the well
- We should reacquaint ourselves with the Samaritan woman's story to begin
- Jesus meets her at Jacob's well, where she has come to draw
- He asks her for some water
- And this starts a conversation
- It is an unusual conversation because, among other things, the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans
- As they talk, she learns of "living water"
- And also learns that Jesus knows her life story - in detail
- He knows this because He is the Messiah she has heard about
- And she eventually comes to understand and believe this
- When she does, she leaves her task of water retrieval and goes to tell the men of the city what she has experienced
- And they come to Jesus
- That's where we pick up the account...

## John 4:31-32

31 In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.

32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.

- We're told earlier in the passage (verse 8) that His disciples "were gone away unto the city to buy meat"
- This is a necessary task, but there are higher priorities
- This is a lesson Jesus taught in Matthew 6, starting in verse 31...

"Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

- Another relevant passage can also be found in Matthew, chapter 4...

"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. And when the tempter came to him, he

said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

- But what is Jesus talking about exactly?
- First a question from the disciples...

John 4:33

33 Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat?

- A familiar theme runs through these early chapters of John
- Jesus makes an attempt to teach a spiritual principle to someone who responds with worldly understanding
- He's not speaking of physical food
- Just as He was not speaking of physical birth when He spoke to Nicodemus of being "born again"
- And He was not talking of physical water when He told the Samaritan woman of never thirsting again
- As often times in life, something greater is at play
- And we hear what that is next...

John 4:34

34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

- This work, His ministry to the woman at the well, nourished Him
- One commentary makes this application...

"His great object - the great design of his life - was to do the will of God. He came to that place weary and thirsty, and at the usual time of meals, probably hungry; yet an opportunity of doing good presented itself, and he forgot his fatigue and hunger, and found comfort and joy in doing good - in seeking to save a soul. This one great object absorbed all his powers, and made him forget his weariness and the wants of nature. The mind may be so absorbed in doing the will of God as to forget all other things. Intent on this, we may rise above fatigue, and hardship, and want, and bear all with pleasure in seeing the work of God advance."

- We can be nourished by doing God's will in obedience to scriptures like I Corinthians 15:58...

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

- This was God's intention for Him, as prophesied in Isaiah 61...

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified."

- We have been assigned Great Commission work by Jesus after His resurrection
- It is work to which we must give ourselves fully
- Look at the next verse...

John 4:35

35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

- Again, not talking about a physical harvest, but a spiritual one
- The harvest isn't in the future
- The fields are perpetually ready
- There are souls that God is preparing by His Holy Spirit
- Souls like this one that Jesus encountered at Jacob's well
- Souls that are weighed down with sin
- Souls that are in need of water that will satisfy a spiritual thirst

John 4:36-38

36 And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

37 And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.

38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

- All that are involved in this work of harvesting souls may rejoice together
- The one who gave just a word of testimony that was rejected can rejoice with the one who saw the spark of new life in the convert
- And with the one who begins to teach and train this new disciple in the word of God
- All rejoice with the one saved from sin and reconciled to God
- And they do so within a local church that is committed to the mission of repeating this pattern

- Seeing lost sinners saved, baptized into their assembly, and trained to be a disciple - and a disciple-maker
- And many of us will reap where other men have labored
- None of this effort will succeed without God, for we may plant or water, but it is God who gives the increase
- It is the work of the Holy Spirit, through the word of God that will make conversion possible
- Isn't it a wonderful privilege for God to include us in the process?
- The Samaritan woman was off to a good start...

John 4:39-40

39 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.

40 So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days.

- There was more work for Jesus to do
- He was able to spend time with a people that no Jew would have wanted to be seen spending time with
- And yet He saw not the cultural barriers or social boundaries
- But saw only thirsty people in need of a well of water - not like Jacob's
- But one welling up into life everlasting
- And He saw a harvest...

John 4:41-42

41 And many more believed because of his own word;

42 And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

- The testimony of man is so helpful
- It is something we are commanded to give
- It is part of the way God works in the lives of those He saves
- But it is the intervention of Jesus himself
- Of the word of God that does the final work
- "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Romans 10:17 says
- And they heard directly from God - and believed

John 4:43-44

43 Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee.

44 For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country.

- I struggled a little over this statement, until reading one commentary, which seems helpful...

"all the Oriental versions read, "in his own city"; that is, Nazareth: for these words must not be understood as a reason why Christ left Judea, and went into Galilee, because he had no honour in Judea, in which was Bethlehem, the place of his nativity; but are a reason why, when he came into Galilee, he did not go to Nazareth, his own city, where he was educated, and had been brought up, and had lived the greatest part of his life, because they treated him with great disrespect and contempt;"

- The account of Jesus ministry continues...

John 4:45-47

45 Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galilaeans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.

46 So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.

47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.

- Someone else is in need of help

- This time, it is physical help

- And Jesus has power to heal this physical ailment too

- As we will find, it is often His healing of these physical problems that lead men to belief in Him for spiritual healing...

John 4:48-50

48 Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.

49 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.

50 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.

- Jesus knew the heart of this man - and others that may have watched or listened

- And He knows our hearts

- So often we fail to believe unless we see

- But this man believed what Jesus said about healing his son

- And it was after He believed that He came to see...

## John 4:51-54

51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth.

52 Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.

53 So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.

54 This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee.

- Jesus needs not be present to do His miraculous work
- We, more than any of His people in history, should know this to be the case
- For He has gone back to be with His Father - not physically present
- And Has continued His work without any interruption in the world
- And as we speak His words and do His commandments, we see Him heal and raise dead men to life
- We hear Him say what He plans to do - then come to find He has done exactly that

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