



November 5-6, 2022

Ice Breaker Questions

- In today's text we see the first group of people who believe in Jesus because of his words rather than his signs (Read John 4:39-42 and then look back to John 2:11 and forward to John 4:48-50).
 - We know that God can call people to himself through miraculous signs, and through the everyday witness of his word. Which of these 2 'methods' drew you to Jesus? Have you prayed for a miraculous sign to confirm your own faith, or the faith of others? Did God answer that prayer as you expected, or in other ways?

Understand Their Story

John 4:1-42 is the only story in which John records Jesus engaging directly with Gentile (non-Jewish) people. We'll break it down into two sections and try to understand some of the big ideas it is communicating.

1. John 4:1-30 records Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman.
 - a. List all the things which confuse the Samaritan woman in their first conversation (v 7-15). How does Jesus answer her? What is the conversation primarily about?
 - **Samaritan woman's confusion:**
 1. **Why is a Jewish man asking me for a drink? (v 9)**
 2. **How is Jesus going to give her water? He has no bucket / ladle / scoop (v 11)**
 3. **Is Jesus claiming to be greater than Jacob, who dug the well in the OT? (v 12)**
 4. **At the end of the convo, she still thinks he is talking about physical water (v 15)**
 - **Jesus' doesn't answer all her questions, but focuses on one big idea**
 1. **If you knew who I was you would ask me for living water (v 10)**
 2. **The living water I offer leads to eternal life (v 13-14)**
 - **Conversation about water: He is offering her a different kind of water.**
 - b. When Jesus reveals her marriage history, the woman perceives that he is a prophet (v 19), and her statements become theological. What does she ask, and what does she know (v 16-26)?
 - **What is the right place of worship: This mountain or Jerusalem (v 20)?**
 - **She knows that a Messiah is coming, who will tell them all things (v 26)**
 - c. What is the climax of the story? What happens as a result of this conversation?
 - **Jesus reveals himself as the Messiah, the disciples' arrival breaks up the conversation, and the woman goes back into town to invite people to meet Jesus.**
2. Read John 4:31-42.
 - a. As the disciples join him back at the well, Jesus gives them a fuller picture of his mission. What does he want them to know?

- That he is sustained by doing God's will and accomplishing his work (v 34)
 - That the harvest of people 'ripe for eternal life' (v 36) is ready, and they will have an opportunity to reap where others have sown as they join him in his work of proclaiming the kingdom of heaven. (v 38)
- b. What is the link between Jesus' words in John 4:31-37 and the narrator's summary in 4:39-42?
- Jesus tells the disciples that the harvest is ready in John 4:31-37, and then the disciples see the truth of this as many Samaritans believe in John 4:39-42.

Connect to His Story.

3. Some cities that we read about in the Bible have a significant history. Jesus meets the Samaritan woman in *Sychar* which was known as *Shechem* in the Old Testament. Look up the following texts to see a few events (there are many more!) which have happened in this location:
- a. Read Genesis 12:1-7 (and focus on v 6 & 7) What happens at Shechem in these verses?
- God appears to Abram, promises him the land, and then Abram builds his first altar
- b. Read Genesis 33:18-20. What happens at Shechem in these verses?
- Jacob builds an altar to the Lord when he returns to the promised land with all of his wives, kids, and flocks and is reconciled to Esau.
- c. Joshua 24:1-5, 14-25, 32. What happens at Shechem in these verses?
- 24:1-5, 14-25 - Joshua renews the covenant between God and the people of Israel (Abraham's descendants) once they have taken the promised land
 - 24: 32 Joseph's bones (which were carried up from Egypt) are buried there.
- i. In Genesis 12:1-3, God promises Abram that through his family, all the nations of the world will be blessed¹. In response, Abram builds his first altar to worship God at Shechem. How is Jesus fulfilling these promises to Abraham at Shechem, as he speaks to the Samaritan woman in John 4?
1. Through Jesus (who is a descendant of Abram), God is blessing all the families of the world. For the first time in John 4, the gospel is going out, not only to Jews, but also to Gentiles.

Apply to Our Story

John 3:22-36 can be applied to us in at least two ways.

- Our personal response: Along with the Samaritan woman, Jesus is calling all people to drink of the living water (accept his offer of salvation and the gift of the Spirit - see John 7:37-39 and Revelation 22:16-17), and worship him in Spirit and in truth. Have you accepted his offer of living water? If so, what does / could it look like for you to worship Jesus in spirit and in truth?
 - To worship Jesus with our head, heart & hands. Head = our intellect, thoughts. Our heart = our will, emotions, and affections. Our hands = our obedient actions. Romans 12:1-2: Offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, not being conformed to the image of this world but transformed by the renewal of our minds.
- Our witness: What can you learn from this story about what it looks like to bring others to Jesus? How do Jesus' words about the harvest encourage or challenge you as you think about sharing the gospel?

¹ These promises are repeated to his son Isaac in Genesis 26:1-5 and to his grandson Jacob in Genesis 28:13-14

- Our job is simply to introduce people to Jesus - like the Samaritan woman. The Spirit saves people as they hear & understand the words of Jesus - there don't need to be miraculous signs for people to be saved.
- Other people may have sown seeds in people's lives that we can harvest, or we can sow seeds that other people can harvest in the future. We are simply called to follow Jesus' example and engage in God's work in the world, being confident that the Spirit is drawing people to Jesus.

Prayer

- *Pray in Adoration: Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham: through him all the families of the world will be blessed.*
 - *Pray in Confession: In John 4:34, Jesus says that his "food is to do will of him who sent me". Is this your attitude or posture?*
 - *Pray in Supplication: Ask God to give you the courage and words to introduce others to Jesus.*
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God's work and our Work

How All of Life Connects to the Gospel - in John 4:1-42

In John 4:1-42 we see physical work pointing to spiritual realities. The Samaritan woman comes to draw water (John 4:7), which was part of her daily duties, and Jesus uses this act of work to talk about the living water he offers. Later Jesus uses the physical imagery of harvest (people reaping and sowing crops - John 4:31-38) to draw his disciples' attention to the spiritual harvest which is before them.

- Think about what you "do" in your everyday work. How could your work be used as a means to explain an aspect of God or the gospel to people? Here are some examples to help you think through this:
 - A mechanic identifies where a machine is broken and sets about fixing it. How is this a picture of how God works in the world?
 - A lifeguard watches over & protects human life. How is this a picture of how God works in the world?
 - Parents sustain, encourage, and discipline their own children. How is this a picture of how God works in the world?
 - A structural engineer designs a bridge which brings people in different communities closer together. How is this a picture of how God works in the world?