

“Sir, Give Me This Water”

John 4:1-42

This is the second time in the life of Jesus that He is found doing what He came to earth to do – bring people to Himself in order to save them (Luke 19:10). The first time it was with the Jews (representing, in part, the religious but lost world) – “He came unto His own and His own received Him not” (John 1:11). This time He came to the Samaritans (representing a people that are not regarded as worth saving by the religious world) – the next step to reaching the world. We will find Him doing that throughout His earthly ministry. It is a pattern that we are called upon to follow over and over again in the Bible. We are given the duty and responsibility to bear witness to Christ – to bring people to Him as He taught us to:

Matthew 4:19

19 And he saith unto them, **Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.**

Mark 1:17–18

17 And Jesus said unto them, **Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.**

18 And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

Luke 5:10–11

10 And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, **Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.**

11 And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

The reason we do this is because we have been

commanded to:

Matthew 28:19–20

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Mark 16:15

15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

Luke 24:47

47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

John 20:21

21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

Most of us, myself included, have not been doing our job as Christians in following Christ in being “fishers of men.” This story before us, this life-illustration of Jesus, will help us understand why we need to do more to bring people to Him, and maybe even learn a little bit about how Jesus won people.

J. K. McClure tells about a woman at Springfield, Illinois who had been bedridden for seventeen years and was almost helpless. For many years she had been praying to God in a general way to save souls. One day, she asked for pen and paper, and she wrote down the names of fifty-seven acquaintances. She prayed for each of these by name three times a day. She wrote them letters telling them of her interest in them. She also wrote to Christian friends in whom she

knew these persons had confidence, and urged them to speak to these persons about their souls welfare and to do their best to persuade them to repent and believe. She had unquestioning faith in God. In her humble, earnest dependence upon Him, she thus interceded for the unsaved. In time, every one of those fifty-seven persons avowed faith in Jesus Christ as his Savior.

There is one thing to note here before we get into the actual outline. What this text, and others like it throughout the Bible, demonstrate to us is that the principles Jesus taught and exemplified were that of what can be called "relationship evangelism." Although that term has been abused and can lead to never actually giving the true message of the gospel to anyone, it is something that was taught and practiced by Jesus and the early church. I believe that all practices of gospel presentation can and should be used, but the one that will work best in today's culture is that of letting people see Jesus in you and you sharing the gospel with them as you befriend them. That's what Jesus did here. He didn't wait until He had built a long-term relationship with the woman at the well – He showed He loved her and cared about her and then simply told her to trust in Him.

I. SEE THE NEED – VS. 1-8

A. In order to see the need, we have to go where people are IN need – vs. 4-5 (we looked at this last week in our first point).

1. The phrase "must needs go through Samaria" was to show that Jesus came to

call all to Himself – both Jew and Gentile, including the Samaritans.

2. The Samaritans were hated by the Jews – the city of Samaria was the capital of the northern ten tribes known as “Israel” in the Old Testament after the kingdom was divided. It was made the capital by Omri, King of Israel.
3. It was repopulated by the Assyrians after the fall of the Northern Kingdom in 722 BC. They brought in peoples from other lands that they had conquered for the purpose of diluting the “bloodline” of the true Jews and focusing their allegiance away from the “God of the land.” This caused the Jews of the land to follow the varied and many false gods of the peoples that were brought there to intermarry (2 Kings 17:24-41). Because of this, the Jews (in particular, those in Judah and Jerusalem) hated the Samaritans, and they still did in Jesus’ day, some 650 years later.

B. No matter how weary we are from the journey, no matter how tired we are from the battle, we must see the need – vs. 6.

C. If we are where we should be, doing what we should be doing, then God will bring the people He wants us to reach by our way – vs. 7.

A writer in the Sunday School Times tells how during a season of revival a friend was praying one evening for a certain unconverted neighbor. After this manner he prayed: “O Lord, touch him with Thy

finger, Lord!" The petition was repeated with great earnestness, when something said to him: "Thou art the finger of God. Hast thou ever touched thy neighbor? Hast thou ever spoken a single word to him on the question of salvation? Go thou, and touch that man and thy prayer shall be answered." It was a voice from the throne. God's servant arose from his knees, self-condemned. He had known the man as an impenitent for a quarter of a century, yet he had not uttered a word of warning. Hundreds of opportunities had come and gone, but the supreme question of life had been set aside for such topics as the weather, the latest news, politics, trade, etc.. His first duty as a Christian had been left undone. "As we therefore have opportunity, let us do good unto all men."

- HF Sayles

II. SHOW THE SAVIOR – vs. 9-10

A. No matter who they are, they need the Savior – vs. 9.

It was the rule of the day (and had been for hundreds of years) for a Jew to never pass through Samaria. They would go far out of their way to avoid it. It was, at times, even against the law of the Jews to go through Samaria. Today, the descendants of the Samaritans are considered part of Judaism and are no longer a despised group.

Jesus was on His way to Galilee from Judea but it is unclear where He was in Judea. It

would be safe to say that He would have been on the west side near the Jordan, since He was with His disciples as they were baptizing converts (John 3:22-23).



Luke 17:16-19

16 And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

17 And Jesus answering said, **Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?**

18 **There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.**

19 And he said unto him, **Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.**

B. Once they see Him, all they need to do is ask, and He will save them – vs. 10.

1. Jesus mentions the “gift of God” – this is speaking of both Himself as the gift, and what He brought with Him when He came to give Himself, namely, eternal life.

a) The gift of the Son of God

John 3:16

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Isaiah 9:6

6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

b) The gift of the grace of God

Ephesians 2:8–9

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

c) The gift of the Holy Spirit of God

Luke 11:13

13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

2. Jesus told the woman at the well that if she had known who it was to whom she was speaking, all she would have had to do was ask and He would have given her eternal life – that’s still true today.

Luke 18:13-14

13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Luke 23:42-43

42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

43 And Jesus said unto him, **Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.**

III. SATISFY THE THIRST – VS. 11-15

A. Once we have done our part in seeing those in need and showing them the Savior, He has the power and authority to satisfy their thirst for the living water.

John 7:38-39

38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

B. One thing to note in this story is how Jesus used a visual aid (the issue of water at the well) to present the Gospel to this woman. We need to use whatever we can to point people to Jesus.

1 Corinthians 9:19-22

¹⁹ For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

²⁰ And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;

²¹ To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.

²² To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

Jude 22-23

²² And of some have compassion, making a difference:

²³ And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

Sophie Lichtenfell was but an humble, German washerwoman, yet, any minister would envy her record of souls won for the Lord. Dr. R A Forrest, president of Toccoa Falls Institute, who was supposed to have preached her funeral sermon, revived the well-known story of "Sophie the Washerwoman." He related the following incidents relative to her zeal for souls and relative to her funeral:

"Rainin'!" "Yes, it is raining very hard." "It's nice to be under a shelter." "Yes." "Are you sheltered from the wrath of Gott?" "I don't know." "Have you a mudder?" "She has been dead for a long time." "Didn't your mudder pray for you?"

These words of a barrel-shaped, German washerwoman in New York, uttered while standing under an awning during a shower, resulted in the conversion of the man to whom the words were spoken. Years afterward, when the washerwoman lay dead, the man came to her funeral, and just before the sermon was to be preached, arose and told the above incident to a large audience.

That started a testimony meeting; the sermon was never preached. One after another, men and women in all walks in life arose spontaneously to tell how Sophie Lichtenfell led them to Christ. There was one solid row of street car conductors. Everyone loved Sophie the Washerwoman because she spoke to high and low alike about her Savior and their need of Him.

Sophie's pastor, the famous Dr. A B Simpson, had preceded her in death by one day. Someone thoughtfully suggested retaining a bouquet of flowers from his funeral for Sophie's, so that the contrast would not be too painful. But such fears were needless. Dr. R A Forrest, the minister who was to have preached her funeral sermon, states that the entire front of the church was a solid bank of flowers—tangible evidence of the love and affection the big city had for an humble washerwoman who spoke much,

though brokenly, of her Savior.

IV. SECURE THE SOUL – vs. 16-27

A. The conversion of the woman at the well was not instant – vs. 16-19.

1. It took a little time for her to actually believe who Jesus was.
2. Jesus showed her who He was by pointing to her life and showing that even though she was living in sin, she could still be saved – vs. 16-19.

B. Even though she had some religious belief in her, it wasn't enough for her to secure her soul for eternity – vs. 20.

C. He then points to when He would be ascended back to heaven and finalizes the Law with His work on the cross, and when the worship of God would no longer be done only at Jerusalem, but could be done, and would be done, wherever true, born-again believers are – vs. 21-24.

1. The word "worship" is described as thus:

To worship, do obeisance, show respect, fall or prostrate before. Literally, to kiss toward someone, to throw a kiss in token of respect or homage. The ancient oriental (especially Persian) mode of salutation between persons of equal ranks was to kiss each other on the lips; when the difference of rank was slight, they kissed each other on the cheek; when one was

much inferior, he fell upon his knees and touched his forehead to the ground or prostrated himself, throwing kisses at the same time toward the superior. It is this latter mode of salutation that is meant by worship. (Zodhiates)

2. Worship can take place anywhere true believers are – vs. 21, 23-24.
3. Worship is to be done by those that know whom it is they are worshipping – vs. 22.
4. Worship is done “in spirit and in truth” because God is a Spirit – this means that because God is not an idol to be worshipped in front of, He can be worshipped by all peoples everywhere at all times because He is everywhere at all times – vs. 24.
5. We can worship God at church, but that is not why we come to church. Worship is to be done by true believers by our spirit as it fellowships with His Spirit, and through the Word of God. In other words, when we are reading the Bible, and the Holy Spirit speaks to us, we can, at that moment, bow before Him and worship – that’s true worship.

V. SPREAD THE WORD – vs. 28-30

A. She went with urgency and haste – vs. 28.

1. She dropped her water pots where she stood and took off running for town.

2. She wasted no time in finding someone to tell whom she had met.

Matthew 28:8

⁸ And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.

Luke 24:9

⁹ And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.

Luke 24:33-34

³³ And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,

³⁴ Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

B. She went with the truth – vs. 29

1. “Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did” – it’s still the same Man that is telling us the truth about our sin.
2. “Is not this the Christ” – she went with the truth of her Savior.

C. She went with effectiveness – vs. 30

1. What a joy it must have been to see the city responding to her testimony.
2. IT STILL WORKS THAT WAY TODAY!!!!

Acts 8:5-8

⁵ Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.

6 And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.

7 For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed.

8 And there was great joy in that city.

"A traveler was journeying in the darkness of night along a road that led to a deep and rapid river, which, swollen by sudden rains, was chafing and roaring within its precipitous banks. The bridge that crossed the stream had been swept away by the torrent, but he didn't know it. A man met him and said to him in an indifferent way, 'Are you aware that the bridge is gone? I heard such a report this afternoon, and though I am not certain about it, perhaps you had better not proceed.'

"Deceived by the hesitating and undecided manner in which the information was given, the traveler pushed on in the way of death. Soon another came along and cried out in consternation, 'Sir, sir, the bridge is gone!'

"'Oh, yes,'" replied the traveler. "'Someone told me that story a little while ago, but I'm sure it is an idle tale.'"

"'Oh, it is true!' exclaimed the other. 'I barely escaped being carried away with it myself. You must not go on.' In the excitement of his feelings, he grasped the traveler by the hands, by the arms, by the clothes. Convinced by the earnest voice, the earnest eyes, the earnest gestures, the traveler turned back and was saved.

"So it is only through a burning zeal for the salvation of the lost--a zeal glowing in the heart and flashing out in look and action and utterance--that the confidence of unbelief can be overcome and the heedless travelers of the broad way won to the path of life and happiness. Love is the most potent logic: interest and sympathy are the most subduing eloquence." -- Christian Work

-- Charles Haddon Spurgeon

VI. SHARE THE REWARD – vs. 31-42

A. Reward for being faithful to the will of God – vs. 31-35

1. The key verse is verse 34 where it says that the purpose of Jesus' ministry was to "do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."
2. We will share in the reward of souls being saved if we are faithful to doing the will of our Father, just like Jesus did.

1 Corinthians 4:2

² Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

Matthew 25:23

²³ His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

Luke 16:10-12

¹⁰ He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in

the least is unjust also in much.

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

B. Reward for being fruitful in the work of God – vs. 36-38

1. Key is in verse 36 – “that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.”
2. Oh, how sweet it will be when we get to heaven to see those that we may not have brought to Christ, but we sowed the seed – the reward for us is the same as the one that actually led them to Christ.

1 Corinthians 3:5–9

5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

C. Reward for fulfilling the Word of God – vs. 39-42

We have a duty to tell others of Christ and making sure they have opportunity to hear the Word of God.

Seeking diversion by fishing in the streams of Scotland, a literary man went from the city with patent pole and a complete outfit of the most expensive kind. After hours of effort without even a bite, he came across a country boy with only a switch for a pole and a bent pin for a hook, but he had a long string of fish. "Why is it, I can't catch any?" the man inquired. "Because you don't keep yourself out of sight," the boy quietly replied. This is the secret of fishing for men as well as trout. Hold up the cross of Christ. Send the people away talking about Him instead of praising you.

- The Volunteer

Conclusion: What are we doing – what have we done – to point people to Jesus?

Roger Storms, pastor of First Christian Church in Chandler, Arizona, tells this story: "One Sunday, a car had broken down in the alley behind our facilities, and the driver had jacked up the car and crawled underneath to work on the problem. Suddenly, we heard him scream for help. The jack had slipped, and the car had come down on top of him.

"Someone shouted, 'Call 9-1-1!' and a couple of people ran for the phone. Several of our men gathered around the large car and strained to lift it off the trapped man. Nurses from our congregation were rounded up and brought to the scene. Somehow the men were able to ease the car's weight off the

man and he was pulled free. Our nurses checked him over. He was scratched up and shaken, but otherwise okay.

"When this man was in peril, people did all they could to help--risking themselves, inconveniencing themselves. Whatever was necessary to save this man, they were ready to try. How we need this same attitude when it comes to rescuing those in greatest peril--the danger of losing life eternally!"