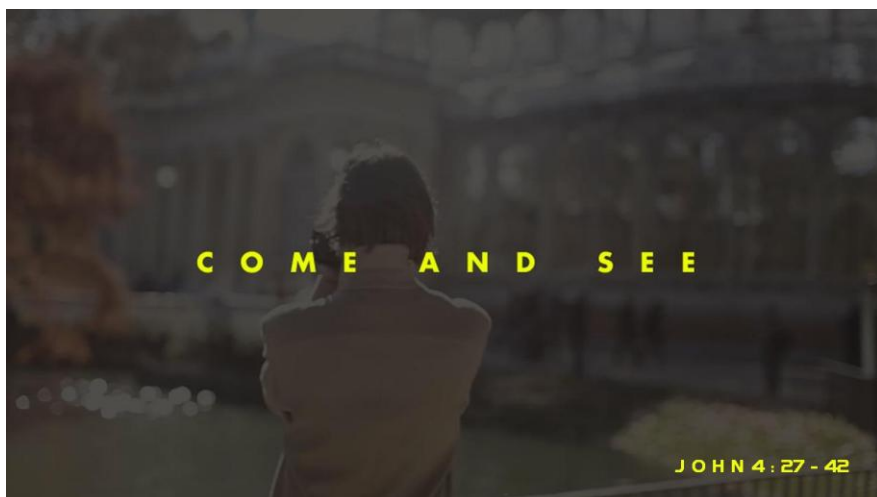


**THE MISSIONAL JESUS - The
Woman at the Well, Part 3**

"Come and See" - John 4:27-42

by Pastor Tim Dodson
at Jesus Fellowship of Believers
in Menomonie, Wisconsin
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her?" 28 The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, 29 "Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" 30 Then they went out of the city and came to Him. 31 In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." 32 But He said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know." 33 Therefore the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?" 34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. 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! 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. 37 "For in this the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.' 38 "I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors." 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." 40 So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. 41 And many more believed because of His own word. 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."

We have been covering the "Missional Jesus" over the past couple of weeks in our times together here on Sunday mornings. In this in-depth look at the story of the "Woman at the Well," we have plunged much deeper than merely the surface story of a Samaritan woman whose eyes were opened to Christ, though that alone is an awesome story of His glory and grace. We have taken notice of His missional methodology, His intentionality, His breaking of cultural mores. As we have already mentioned, we could attribute all that occurred that day to a supernatural act of an omniscient deity. But to do so would be to "let us off the hook" so to speak, when it comes to our own personal calling and responsibility to evangelistic and missional pursuits. If we are born again *children* of God, then we are also therefore ambassadors for the *kingdom* of God.

When the apostles returned from town, they came upon the tail end of this scene which we have thus covered, and the text says they "marveled." I guess this "event" was beyond the unusual! The actions of Jesus always seemed to 'raise some eyebrows.' He was never one who could be neatly 'put into a box.' In fact, everyone on this day would 'marvel'. From the disciples, to the woman herself, to the townsfolks that are now entering the story. That's what Jesus does to the person who has become very aware of Him...He causes us to 'marvel'.

This woman's world had been shaken. What was priority that morning, had been replaced by that afternoon. So much so, that she sat down her waterpot and actually left it there to return to town in a frenzy. Apparently that 'living water' had so satisfied her thirst that she forgot what she came out there for! There was no 'sinners prayer' recited here. There was no baptism service, or offering plate passed. Like the thief on the cross, what supernaturally occurred herein did not happen because of the right words reviewed or correct personal actions conducted. No... whatever happened, happened somewhere deep inside these folks individually. Way down in their very souls, they *believed* and that belief immediately found motion.

While we have an abridged version of the conversation herein, what we can gather is that whatever happened out there that day had rocked her world. "*Could this be the Christ?*" "*Could this be my answer? That which I have sought my whole life?*" There are many people out there today that are saying the same thing. People who have been 'touched' by such an encounter with the living Christ, and even though they are essentially 'blind'...*dead even*, according to scripture, they experienced the 'wind of the Spirit' blow over them at some point...at some 'divine meeting' for which God ordained, and are thinking right now, "*what was that...? What just happened?*" These are 'ripe for the harvest.' (vs 35) These are the folks that God has chosen. These are the folks we are to seek.

We have already spoken of the need...the searching...the 'god-sized-hole' that comes as standard equipment with this body and this life...that we receive upon our birth on this planet. So we search the corners of the world...we turn over all the proverbial rocks, looking for "it"...looking for "him." This woman was asking the right questions now..."*Could this be Him? Could this be the Christ?*" And those who have so experienced Him today, they too are wondering...if only in the quiet solitude of their lives, "*Is this Him? Is this "it"....is this 'the answer?'*"

The woman went on to speak to everyone. She told them of this man, and that He knew her even though He didn't know her! What is really important here was THEY apparently knew her! They knew her life! They knew the world she lived in and how she lived it in their midst and whatever had so fantastically grabbed a hold of her was of profound interest to them. Such dramatic and earth shattering power could not, and still today cannot, be ignored. Suddenly she was a powerful living testimony of God's grace and love.

And that's what we are when we come out the other side of that same 'divine meeting' with Jesus! Not the most educated graduate from Dallas seminary would be able to move the world at that moment like that woman! For her message was not one of theory or intellect. This was not about "*book learnin'.*" Hers was a testimony of experience...a "gnosko knowledge." This event was not from a video tape in class, but rather she had touched the flame and knew the heat of the fire personally and intimately. She bore the marks, and everyone around her could see them. When the world sees the same in us Christian, we cause a stir. To some we are the 'smell of life' and to others we are the 'smell of death.' 2Corinthians 2:16 tells us "*To those who are perishing, we are a dreadful smell of death and doom. But to those who are being saved, we are a life-giving perfume.*"

But the disciples were still missing the impact of the event that had transpired. They were busy with the physical needs of life, while Jesus was involved in something that was greater...more "filling" than the pizza the boys had brought back from town. That's the level of importance that Jesus placed upon His work as an evangelist. This 'call' upon him consumed His life. He loved the people that much! The disciples no doubt wanted to eat and get back to *their* mission, while Jesus was letting them in on *His* mission. How easy it is to get so singularly focused on a church program or an organized outreach and then literally miss the people who God places in our way. People who He wants us to reach out to.

We as ambassadors must adopt a harvest mindset. We must be willing and watchful to not just see the natural around us but the supernatural. We must seek Christ for these eyes and the opportunities to engage others.

There is a reality of life that we all share. A need to shop and eat, go to work, pay our taxes, do laundry, and mow the lawn. There is a fact that the material world must be dealt with or we will be living in an alley somewhere in a refrigerator box. But where do these things fall in our priorities and passions? What level of importance do we place on that which is quite temporal in relation to the eternal and toward those who are around us that are dying apart from God for all of time?

For Jesus, what had occurred there that day was literally as important as eating. Jesus came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10). Food and drink were secondary; reaching lost people was primary. So even after those three short years, Jesus could pray, "*I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.*" (John 17:4) We on the other hand tend to place Jesus and the mission He has given us to somewhere in the background; ...when there is time,when we aren't busy, ...when our other obligations have been satisfied.

We know God calls us to "seek first the kingdom of God," but we just factually do not do it. We don't love Him or the lost more than we love the things of this world. And we don't trust Him to follow through with His promise that "*and all these things will be added unto you.*" He thus is relegated to the position merely of Savior, and is never allowed to be **Lord** of our lives.

All our earthly stuff is of no value after we die, but the mission and priorities that pay rewards for eternity are worth working for! A billionaire on his deathbed who has not laid up treasure in heaven is like the man in Jesus' parable who planned to build bigger barns, but was not rich toward God (Luke 12:15-21). He was a fool and leaves with nothing. But the one with a harvest mindset who labors for souls is working for something that lasts forever!

We know that planting the seeds of evangelism are crucial also. Our participation in such is important and we must know that not all of evangelism is about praying with someone to receive Christ and eternal life. There was a man...a Baptist evangelist by the name of Adoniram Judson, who labored his entire lifetime in Burma with much hardship, many disappointments, and little visible fruit in terms of converts. But today there are over a million Christians in Burma who trace their roots back to Judson's labors. Your sowing is not in vain if others reap the fruit. Thus we must be faithful in sowing the seed!

But it's also not all about planting either. The reality is...if we are looking around us, the field is ready to harvest today. There are those...like the woman at the well, that are ready to come to Christ and need only our interaction with them to "open the door" so to speak, for them to surrender their lives to Christ. In this case, Jesus took time for *one woman* and a village of people found new life. If we spend our lives working and living for the temporal, we will never find "wholeness" in this life and we will be left in the end with nothing invested in the thousands of years which will follow this passing lifetime.

What occurred in this story was the stuff of movies. But we must never forget that the Holy Spirit can break down barriers that the world has erected. Just as Nathanael had to "come and see" Jesus for himself (1:46), so now at the woman's invitation to "come," the Samaritans came to Jesus and came to believe that He is the Savior of the world.

That fact that Christ is Savior means that people are lost and need saving. They don't just need a few helpful hints for happy living. They need to be raised from the dead and given eternal life. In our witness, we must focus on who Jesus is. We need to encourage people to read the gospels and answer Jesus' crucial question, "*But who do **you** say that I am?*" (Matt 16:15)

We all can so often wish we were more like Jesus when it comes to being a great and awesome witness. We seek the right words and search for that perfect turn of phrase or that killer story. Yet we must know that so often that is pride and fear at work. The fact is, often with a simple and straightforward testimony, there will be fruit. We don't need to be intimidated when we can't answer questions or come up with the right illustrations. I can say this....I can join the Samaritan woman and say, "Come and see." For herein the Scripture records that *many* believed because of her simple testimony.

"Jew," "Sir," "Prophet," "Christ," and finally "Savior of the world." Not with a deep theological display, but rather a simple call to her heart: "*are **you** thirsty?*"