

20240908 Having God's Heart – Duane Newport

John 4:27-38

John is doing more than telling a story; he's doing more than showing the way that Jesus deals with people. He is moving beyond these things and sending a strong message about, how we, as Christians relate to people who need somebody to care.

This morning, as we look at Chapter 4, I wish to focus on three critical things:

1. Historical Context
2. Transformative Encounter
3. Christ-like mindset

1. Historical Context

In John 4:3-4, it says, *"He left Judea and departed again to Galilee. But He needed to go through Samaria."* These verses show that Jesus, and his disciples are on their way to Galilee but needed to go through Samaria. Why did they need to go through Samaria? It was uncommon for Jews who were going from the southern part of the land, Judea, to Galilee in the north, to travel through Samaria because of racial tensions between the Jews and the Samaritans. Therefore, they would normally avoid Samaria and travel to Galilee through the Jordan valley. When we understand the historical context and then read verse 4, *"Jesus needed to go through Samaria"*, it shows us that the Holy Spirit must have been prompting Jesus to go through Samaria as there was something He needed to do.

2. Transformative Encounter

In verses 5-7, we read, *"So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, 'Give Me a drink.'"*

In Samaria Jesus and His disciples come to a well. Jesus is tired and waits while the disciples go into town to buy food. As He waited, a woman came with a water pot. It's the heat of the day and therefore this isn't a time when women should come to get water at the well. The fact that this woman was along, coming to the well at high noon said something about her social status in the community. It says she was unwelcome to come when the other women came.

When she comes, Jesus starts a conversation with her because he recognises that this is the reason the Spirit had moved Him to come this way, this is why He needed to travel through Samaria. Jesus says, *"Would you give me something to drink?"* (7). In the woman's response we see the racial tension between the Samaritans and Jews: *"How is it that You, being a Jew, asks me, a Samaritan, for something to drink"* (9). However, *"Jesus answered and said to her, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.'"* (John 4:10)

The woman still hasn't quite figured out what Jesus is talking about and says, *"Sir, what do you have to draw with? The well is deep"* (11). But Jesus is talking about another dimension of water, living water. The woman then thinks more about the living water and says, *"I don't understand. Tell me how I can get the kind of water you are talking about."* At this point realises this man, Jesus, has something to offer and she says, *"Whatever You are talking about—I'd like to have it."* (v15)

Jesus says, *"Go get your husband and bring him back and I'll talk to you about it"* (v16). She says, *"I don't have a husband"* (v17). Here comes the confrontation, Jesus said, *"I appreciate your telling the truth because you have been married four times and the man you are living with now isn't your*

husband.” I am sure the woman would have been a bit flustered, but she says, “*Sir, I perceive You are a prophet.*”

3. Christ-Like Mindset

At this point a few things happen, firstly, the disciples arrive back and wonder why He is talking to such a woman and secondly, the woman heads to the city with the promise of coming back. While she is away Jesus enters into conversation with His disciples and it’s this conversation, I want us to look at more closely this morning. I’ve turned to this passage to look at the truth that John reveals to us after this encounter. It has to do with an attitude of mind—a mindset, a mindset that understands that, as a follower of Jesus, there are certain things that we need to prioritise. A mindset which understands how Jesus thinks, how He reaches out to people and how His heart is moved regarding the needs of people.

Having God’s Heart is the title of my message this morning. It’s a message really about learning to feel the way Jesus does about people. Here we see Jesus as He goes about, not only touching a human life, but challenging the mindset of His disciples. They voiced their displeasure, “*Why are you talking to with this woman?*” and then they moved on to a different topic, “*Listen. It’s time to eat. We’ve had a hard day and a long journey, and You need not only the rest we’re enjoying, but some food. All of us do.*” But Jesus’ response is very profound, “*But He said to them, ‘I have food to eat of which you do not know. (34) Jesus said to them, My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work’*” (John 4:32,34). Jesus is telling His disciples, and us, “I want you to understand. There are things that are far more important or far more satisfying than eating. There’s a satisfaction that comes from feeding on the Father’s will, being sensitive to His timing in reaching out and touching people”

Jesus was challenging their mindset. He was saying to them, “Listen, I want you to see beyond the things that usually compel you. The things that dominate your time and to become available, available to God and to people.” This is the heart beat of this text. In response to the disciple’s words, “*You need to eat.*” Jesus said, “*My meat is to do the Father’s will.*” Look, He didn’t say, “No, I don’t need to eat” but he is telling us to keep a correct perspective. He’s telling us don’t let the agenda of our lives become so ruled by the ordinary, the usual and the practical, and not even sinful. Don’t let our lives become so full of the ordinary that we aren’t available to the other things the Lord can do with us.

There’s a strong message here about having God’s heart as it’s seen in Jesus. Jesus’ heart is full of Passion and Compassion. These are the two things he wants to work in us. Passion, a sense of urgency, being tuned in to the Holy Spirit, always being available to be used by Him. And compassion—having a heart that senses people’s hunger, loneliness and searching. Seeing beyond what we see with our natural eyes, reading between the lines. Jesus calls us to a mindset for ministry. It’s in verse 35, “*Don’t say there are still four months and then comes harvest. Look on the fields, lift up your eyes and see that they are white for harvest.*” Most scholars suggest that Jesus gestured at this moment to a large crowd on people following the woman out of the city.

We need to recognize that opportunities to touch people with God’s love are abundantly available all the time, every day, now. Jesus is calling us to a sensitivity; that of a disciple’s mindset, a true disciple of Jesus has a mindset of availability for ministry in any environment at any time. In v36 Jesus then says, “*He who reaps receives wages and gathers fruit for eternal life that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.*” Listen to these words. There’s a reward and a rejoicing that comes from doing the Father’s will. The reward of having touched the person with the life and love of God.