

Worship Leads to Mission

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[0 : 0 0] So I want to share a brief passage with us about what does it look like to be on mission as God's people. And I'm hoping that this will lead into communion. So we're going to see, because this is the first time we've ever tried this.

But if you came in today, you got a bulletin. And in this bulletin, you had a Bible verse. And so I need you to take that out and hold it in front of you, because we are going to talk through this.

And usually we have Scripture read, but we didn't have Scripture read today. And what I want to do is briefly look at this passage in John chapter 4. So, everybody got your bulletin? Everybody got your passage?

Okay. So I'm going to paraphrase it. I encourage you to go back and talk about it. This has been a huge passage for me in my life as I think about why God kept me around.

So last week was the anniversary of my heart attack. So I had a heart attack 13 years ago, and it was an eye-opener for me. And as I went through that process, I realized, why did God keep me here?

[1 : 0 0] And I thought that he has us here so that we can worship him, that we can make his name great and present him to people who do not yet know him. And that's why we're here as a church. So if you look at the bulletin, I'm just going to talk through this.

This is in the life of Jesus. And Jesus has been in the south of Israel, and he's been teaching in Jerusalem. And he's been getting some heat from the Pharisees and from the authorities in Rome. And so his disciples have decided to go back up to Galilee.

And Galilee is in the north. The Sea of Galilee is in the north of Israel. And so they're on this hike to go back up there. And as they're walking up from the south of Jerusalem to the north of the Sea of Galilee and Capernaum, where his home base is, they have to go through this land called Samaria.

And Samaria is this place where it has a terrible reputation. Remember last week we talked about Daniel, and we said that Daniel was taken from Babylon. He was taken from Israel, and he's taken to Babylon with about four other guys, Meshach, Shadrach, and Abednego.

And this happens whenever the Assyrians or the Babylonians came in to destroy a land. And so we read in 722 B.C. that the Babylonians and the Assyrians, they come in, and they decimate Israel.

[2 : 0 8] They decimate God's people, and they take away most of the population back to Babylon. They don't take away everybody. The people they leave there, they basically are like the poorest of the poor.

They're the farmers, they're the people who are in debt, they're prisoners. And so they leave those people there. And then what they do is they bring in their own people, and these people come into this land, and they start to marry the Jews.

And so Samaria is a place where people are called half-breeds, because they are there, and they basically intermarried with people from the captors. And so when the Jews finally come back from Babylon, and they come back into Israel, they want nothing to do with the Samaritans, because they're defiled.

They're ceremonially uncleaned, and they are no good. And so most of the time, if you are a holy man in Israel, you wouldn't even go through Samaria. You would walk way around Samaria, because even just stepping on the ground, they would say, you're defiled.

So Jesus is walking with his disciples, and they're going up north, and they decide to go through Samaria. And the passage says in the beginning that Jesus is tired. And so they get to this town called Shikar, and Jesus is tired.

[3 : 14] And so the disciples leave him at a well. It's Jacob's well. It's found in Genesis 33. It's the well that Jacob, our father, dug for his people. And so Jesus is sitting at this well, and he's about to have this, I think, amazing encounter.

Now, it's about 12 o'clock at noon. And picking up in verse 7, this lady comes, and she's a lone woman. She's there by herself to draw water at noontime. Now, if you know anything about the culture, if you know anything about Jewish people, if you know anything about women in that day, that was probably not a good thing.

I mean, in the culture, women always came together. Women never did things apart, especially in public. And so the fact that this lady is coming to a well, she has three strikes against her, okay?

She's a Sumerian. She's a woman, and she's probably a lady of ill repute because no one wants to be around her, and she has to do everything by herself. And so she comes there, and she's about to grab and get some water.

And what we're told in this passage is Jesus does something unheard of. I mean, if you were a Jew and you were listening to this story or you were watching him, you would not understand at all what he's doing here.

[4 : 21] And what he does here is he asks this lady for a favor. And actually, if you read in the passage, it seems kind of blunt, give me a drink. But in the Greek, the heart behind it is, I'm weak.

Can you help me? And so Jesus is sitting at this well. He's exhausted. He's tired. And he says to this woman, I'm weak. Can you help me? And this is unheard of in his day. I mean, no Jewish male would ever talk to a Samaritan woman.

No holy man would ever talk to a Samaritan woman. Just by talking to them, he would be considered unclean. The Jewish scriptures and laws, the Mishnah would say that every Samaritan woman is totally unclean all the time.

It basically says that they are menstruating all the time. They're on their period, so they're looked at as totally unclean. And so for Jesus to come to her and to talk to her and ask for her to give him water is something unheard of.

Because what he's basically saying is, I know you're unclean, and I'm willing to become unclean to reach out to you. So Jesus is there in this passage, and he breaks all the social norms. He breaks all the cultural norms.

[5 : 26] And he humbles himself by asking a favor. I don't know if you ever thought about this, but God, when he comes to us, he humbles himself. And most of us have a hard time asking forgiveness from anybody or even just granting forgiveness when somebody really hurts us.

But here God, the creator of the universe, comes to us. And in verse 9, when he does this, this woman is totally amazed, and she's shocked, and she doesn't even know what to do. The passage says that she just goes after Jesus verbally, and she's just kind of picking at him and throwing darts and teasing him.

And what we see in this story is that Jesus just ignores her the whole time. I mean, Jesus doesn't play her game, but instead he starts to talk about this gift, this gift of living water that God wants to give her.

In the passage, her words are very simple. They basically point to someone who's selfish. They want something for themselves. And basically her attitude is, what is in it for me?

What do you have to offer me? She wants something physical. She wants something that's going to satisfy her. And what Jesus is actually giving her is he's giving her something spiritual.

[6 : 35] And so she just keeps attacking him and attacking him. And he basically just kind of defers all those things, and he just goes right to her heart. And he starts to ask her some questions in verse 16.

And he looks at this hidden secrets in her life. He looks at the selfishness. He looks at the idols. He looks at all the mistakes that she's made. And as he's trying to look at our heart, she's trying to say, Yeah, but what about this?

Yeah, but what about this? Well, yeah, but what about this? And in verse 16, he gives her a commandment. And the commandment points to her real heart issue. But the commandment also gives her something to do with the message.

The commandment is her mission. The commandment is our mission. And the commandment is go, call, and bring. And then in verse 19 through 23, she starts to throw out the smokescreen about where she worships.

And Jesus tells her, he tells us, you know, he says, you know, it's really not important where you worship God. But what's more important is the God that you worship. And he says, what's even more important than the God you worship is that you worship the God you worship in spirit and in truth, how you worship him.

[7 : 42] In Greek, the words actually say that you are truly spiritual when you come to worship God. It means that you have a correct view of who God is.

His holiness, his character, who he's done and what he's done. That you have a correct view of who you are. And that your heart and your head are fixed in on what the gospel means.

Then in verse 26, Jesus says something amazing. And this is what he says. He uses the exact same words that God used to describe himself to Moses in Genesis 3. Because this woman starts to talk about the end times.

She starts to talk about this Messiah. And Jesus says to her the exact same thing that God says through the burning bush to Moses. He says, I am. I am the Messiah.

I am God. Well, in verse 27, the disciples come back. And, you know, they're probably looking at him and going, what are you doing? You're a holy man. And this woman is definitely not a good girl.

[8 : 41] And why are you even talking to her by yourself? Because the law of the Torah would say that a rabbi isn't even supposed to talk to his wife in public. So here he's talking to this woman of disrepute.

And as his disciples come in, in verse 27, the woman just goes. You notice that? She just disappears. She goes on a mission. I mean, she remembers what Christ commanded her in verse 16.

She remembers the words, go, call, and come. And the powerful thing to me about this passage is, is that when she leaves and she goes back to her city, her village, she doesn't take her pot for water.

She doesn't take her physical pot of water. She doesn't take the reason that she came to the well. But when she goes back to her people, what she does instead carry is a witness of living water.

She carries the message of God. She carries the message of the gospel. And in it, she's remembering go, call, and come. And she realizes that she has a message that everybody in her village needs to hear.

[9 : 50] Because everybody in her village is thirsty. And they're dying for something that they're looking in their whole life. And they're looking for things physically that are going to fill up their heart. And she finally realizes that no matter how many things that she gets to fill that emptiness in her heart, she's still going to end up thirsty.

And Jesus has the only thing that will fulfill her. Now, remember in verse 7, she has three strikes against her. She's a woman, she's a Samaritan, and she's a prostitute.

But she just goes in obedience. And the amazing thing is the passage tells us when she goes and she shares, the people believe. The people believe her testimony. And actually, the people come back and they want to see Jesus.

So in this passage in John 4, which I just ran through, what you see is a woman who is far away from God. She's angry with God. She's an enemy to God. And in this passage, she goes from being an enemy for God and far away from God to becoming a witness for God.

Think about it. As you go into the communion time, that's your story also. The Bible says that every one of us in here was far away from God.

[11 : 08] We were angry with God. We wanted nothing to do with God. But God humbled himself. And he came to you. And he started to dialogue with you.

And some of you right now, God is still dialoguing with you. And he's dealing with things in your heart. And the message that he wants to give you is a message of eternal life in living water.

There's three things I want you to think about as we go into communion. Three things and points that stick out to me. And the first point is this. God pursues us.

The passage is very clear that even when we're in far off places, even when we're in dark lands, even when we're in Texas or Australia or New Zealand or wherever you are from, that God goes into your life.

And God goes out of the way. And God humbles himself. And God initiates worship with you.

[12 : 16] There's none of us in here who found God. It's impossible. The story of the gospel, the story of God's word, is that God went and he found you.

And he humbled himself to bring you back into you. He is continually pursuing you right now. So the first question I want you to think about when you go into communion is, how is God pursuing you?

How is God pursuing you right now? What are the words that he's speaking to you? How is he touching your heart? What are the things he's asking you to do and to obey and just to worship and to love him?

Because the passage says that God pursues us. The second thing I want you to think about as you go into communion. You were made for worship.

The passage in all of scripture says that worship is our response to the thing that we treasure the most. What do you treasure the most right now? The woman, when she came to the well, she was treasuring security.

[13 : 26] Intimacy. Sex. I mean, the question is, what are you worshiping right now?

Well, some of you might say, well, I don't know. And there's an easy way to find out. An easy way to find out is just look at what your hands are doing. Look at what your words speak to.

Look at what comes to your mind when you have free moments. Whatever comes to your mind, whatever your hands are doing, these are probably really good indicators of what you're worshipping.

That's why we taught the creed this morning. Because sometimes we, as God's people, we forget what we worship, and we go off on these tangents, and it's good to be back and remember why we worship and who we worship and what is worship all about.

So God pursues us. God is pursuing you right now. You were made for worship. We're all worshipping things. And the final thing is this. The passage says that we're all on this search. We're all on this search for something to satisfy our souls deeply.

[14 : 30] But in this story, God offers us something beyond physical. He offers us something eternal. He offers us living water. And so the question I want us to answer and to think about as a church is, what do we do with this living water in our lives?

I mean, what do we do with the message of Christ? What do we do with Christ? How does it play out in our lives? What do we do with Christ? The John 4 passage says that if we understand the gospel, and if we understand grace, that we will go, and we will call, and we will bring those who do not yet know him.

Basically, the passage says that if we understand these things, and if we worship God, we'll be a witness to him in all these things. The Bible calls this going mission. And so the third question you need to ask is, what kind of mission are you on today?

If I were to look at your life and to see what preoccupies you, what is the mission that you're on? Because some of us are on missions to make our lives comfortable, and some of us are on missions to redeem our lives, and some of us are on missions just to get rid of the pain and junk in our life.

But we're all on a mission. I'm going to ask the communion stewards to come forward now. And as they come forward, I want you to think about the three questions that you were asked.

[16 : 05] How is God pursuing you? Because God's word is really clear that he's pursuing you every moment of every day because he wants a relationship with you.

You were made for worship. What are you worshipping right now? And three, what kind of mission are you on with your life? I want you to say, live in my life.

Am i or am i or am i or am i or am i or am i in love with you? I want you to think about the eu and I, and I have the patience that you put in my life with him in your life. So 5,000 rinduja secundi and anthony. What kind of mission are you going to do? And these are the conversations that you give?

Which time are your così pre Palestina, you will have the ed. I want to think about all the titles that you could read. That's what you here think! The cigarettes you are. So we've grown over a marathon star. Yeah, and now I'm going to do this.

If you do it in my life,