

# The Power of the Gospel, Pt 1

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## I. Overview

A. This year we set the theme for the year as GateCity On the Road. We shared that we felt the Lord was calling us to step more into our apostolic calling as a church and that we were going to multiply through outreach to the lost and hurting and multiply through training and sending.

B. We have seen God do some really special things this year so far including:

- Planting GateCity's Buckhead Location (Premiere Service - 450+ in attendance, with 100+ in weekly attendance)
- Develop a greater culture of invitation through special services: Easter - 1000+ in attendance with 20+ salvations, Pentecost ATL - 300+ in attendance. This fall we are going to be doing an evangelistic outreach on the Lawrenceville Lawn.
- We have conducted monthly baptisms. Including our youth and young adults, we have had over 80 people baptized year to date.
- Extending our campus outreach to multiple local college campuses (GGC outreach is going to a new level and we have things in the works with KSU and GA State)
- At the same time, we are taking 5 short term mission trips this year, along with sending 4 long term missionaries while staying engaged with and continuing to support our mission bases with Send56 in Africa (3), MAPS in the 10/40 Window(4), and Holy Place in Mexico (3)).

C. As we continue to embrace this year's theme of GateCity on the road we are going to take the next 4 weeks and talk about the power of the gospel and our commission as believers to reach the lost.

D. I am convinced most Christians lack joy, because they have not connected to the joy that comes from the Father in seeing the lost be found and the prodigal come home. Many have become accustomed to the joy of His presence but forgotten the joy of salvation and new birth.

## **II. Jesus' Commission to the Church**

*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*

—Act 1:8

*And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' Amen.*

—Mat 28:18-20

## **III. The Woman at the Well**

Jhn 4:1-43 Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John 2 (though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples), 3 He left Judea and departed again to Galilee. 4 But He needed to go through Samaria. 5 So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. 6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. 7 A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." 8 For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. 9 Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, 'How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman? For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.' 10 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." 11 The

woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? 12 Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?" 13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." 15 The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." 16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." 17 The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' 18 for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly." 19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. 20 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship." 21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. 22 You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. 23 But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. 24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." 25 The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming (who is called Christ). When He comes, He will tell us all things." 26 Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He." 27 And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, 'What do You seek?' or, 'Why are You talking with 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. 43 Now after the two days He departed from there and went to Galilee.

#### **IV. Who were the Samaritans?**

A. We see in the story that Jews and Samaritans carried obvious animosity toward one another. The question is why?

B. When Assyria conquered Israel in 722 BC, many Israelites were deported, and foreigners were resettled in the land. This produced an ethnically mixed population, blending Israelite and foreign bloodlines.

C. They wrote their own first five books of the bible (Pentateuch), with 6000 variations from the original to support their beliefs. They didn't recognize the prophets or psalms.

D. They rejected Jerusalem's temple and built a rival temple on Mount Gerizim, claiming it was the true chosen place for worship.

E. Jews in Judea saw them as racially impure, spiritually compromised, and worse than Gentiles because they claimed to be true Israel.

F. Centuries of religious rivalry and cultural insults made Jews and Samaritans avoid each other completely (John 4:9).

G. All of this led to deep hatred from the Jews. Scholars agree that in Jesus' day, Samaritans stood out as traitors, and apostates. Prostitutes, Romans, and other Gentiles each carried their own stigma, but the Samaritans combined ethnicity, heresy, and rivalry to make them uniquely despised.

## **V. Who was this Woman?**

A. The fact that she came to draw water alone at noon signaled that she was likely a social outcast. It would have been unusual and uncomfortable for her to come at this time. It's like she was trying to avoid the other village women.

B. Jesus revealed that she's had five husbands and is now living with a man who is not her husband (John 4:17-18). With each divorce and remarriage, she was moving down the social status ladder. Until finally she is living with a man who is not her husband.

C. She is likely burned out, bruised, and broken. She's an outcast in a society that is outcast from Israel.

D. She is shocked that Jesus would even talk to her for several reasons:

- Jews had great animosity for Samaritans, i.e. "No dealings"
- Respectable Jewish men and especially Rabbi's didn't talk to women who weren't family members in public
- She is an outcast and of questionable morality, Jesus is risking being associated with her questionable morality. Being alone with her only heightens the potential suspicion.
- Drinking from her water vessel indicates he was willing to share an unclean vessel from an "unclean" person, since Jews considered Samaritans unclean.
- In Jewish history, wells were associated with courtship stories, Both Jacob and Moses began to court their wives at a well.

E. Many scholars see her multiple husbands as symbolizing Israel/Samaria's history of spiritual adultery (chasing false gods and rival temples). She represents both an individual with a broken moral story and her entire people's spiritual condition.

## **VI. Disciples Mentality**

A. The disciples were likely anticipating getting to be home in Galilee a couple days early by going through Samaria.

B. They were thinking of this as a quick stop to get food and whatever

other supplies they needed so they could get back on the road.

C. They marveled when they returned to find Jesus engaging the Samaritan woman.

D. Jesus used the whole encounter as a key point of instruction for them. You know the saying that the Harvest is going to take some time before it's ready? I am telling you to look at the fields and see that they are ready for harvest. The field He was referencing was the Samaritan village and all the people that were there who were getting ready to receive the Gospel.

## **VII. Jesus' Example**

### **A. Jesus was Authentic**

*Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. 7 A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink."*

*—John 4:6-7*

- Jesus wearied from the journey. It's amazing how easy it was for Jesus to just be real and show His humanity. He had no problem just being Himself. He was tired and thirsty and had no problem expressing this.
- When he asked her, "will you give me a drink of water?" He is simply expressing His need and asking for help.
- The fact that he asks her for help to meet his immediate need is stunning. Though He is the answer to her every need, He asks her for help. This is such a key pattern for believers who want to share their faith, consider expressing need and asking for help from someone in order to show your authentic self.
  - It honors another when you acknowledge their ability to do for you what you cannot do for yourself.
  - Jesus gave dignity to the woman ( who by all accounts had lost all dignity) by acknowledging that she was able to meet a need for Him that He couldn't for Himself.
  - When Jesus meets her in this way it opens up a cascade

of conversation.

- Being authentic is so valuable. Your needs, your pain, and your path is likely what another needs to hear to be able to be comfortable in hearing how you received your healing. In a certain sense your pain and your path is a gift to another that enables them to hear the story of your healing.
- If our Savior could show his physical vulnerabilities to an unbeliever, how much more should we be able to?

## **B. Jesus was Relational**

- Jesus found it better to ask her for a favor than to tell her, “Your lifestyle is abhorrent! I completely disagree with how you are living.”
- Jesus stayed with them for 2 extra days to connect and share and be present. The fact that He stayed with them is as stunning as any part of the story.
- It strikes me that Peter was with him on this trip, yet Peter was still having trouble going to Cornelius’ house, when the Lord was sending him.

## **C. Jesus was Secure**

- He was secure in His identity. He had no problem crossing cultural and social barriers to share the Father’s love with ones who desperately needed it.
- He was secure in His calling enough to be vulnerable and express His needs
- He was secure in the Father’s leadership, not driven by other’s expectations.

## **VIII. Sowing and Reaping**

*Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together.*

*—John 4:36*

- This implies heavenly rewards go to the sower and the reaper,

while the harvest itself receives eternal life.

- There are very real eternal rewards that are awaiting all of us who engage in sharing our faith and seeing people come into the kingdom.
- There is great joy available to all who will engage with the harvest and most believers live completely outside of this joy

## **IX. The Fields are Ripe**

- Looking freshly at the “fields are ripe for harvest”, Consider the fact that the fields Jesus is referring to are the Samaritans! Those Jewish disciples likely didn’t want to have anything to do with them. Jesus calls them ready and ripe harvest.
- How many times does the church look at a group and think of them as “Samaritans” and Jesus says they are ripe harvest.
- The true worshippers the Father seeks begins with the Samaritans!

## **X. Inconvenient Mercy**

- Mercy is inconvenient. The path through Samaria would’ve saved the disciples 2 days on their journey. They were going home. They are likely going to buzz in to Sychar, get some provisions and get on their way. They return to see Jesus talking to a woman. This is a huge scandal. The entire scene is awkward and terribly inconvenient.
- Reconciliation is never comfortable. We have prioritized comfort over truth. If you try to come off as “having it all together”, you will leave a legacy of impressiveness, if you invite people into your humanity, you will leave a legacy of impact.
- We will never “go into all the world” unless we are willing to be inconvenienced uncomfortable.

## **XI. A Call to the Harvest**

- Many believers who reject a prosperity gospel, embrace a Gospel of comfort and ease. They believe that God wants them to be as comfortable as possible in every way possible.
- Many in the church are dealing with older brother syndrome.



They have become so accustomed to the comfort of the father's house that they've become ungrateful and judgmental.

- They've forgotten or never known the destitution of the pig pen. They've forgotten the horror of being lost so they look with disdain on those who are.
- The Father is filled with joy when a lost son comes home, but the older brothers judge the wayward and lost all the while enjoying the safety and security of the Father's house.
- The unkind and arrogant version of Christianity that wags its finger and struts at moral victories looks almost nothing like the version that Jesus gave us, which is a version of Christianity that meets outcasts at the well, gets in the dirt with harlots, eats with tax collectors and sinners, and spends days reaping souls in Samaritan villages.