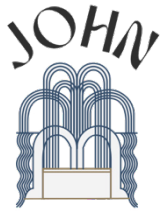


An Exposition of the
GOSPEL OF JOHN



“THE ATTRACTION OF THE GOSPEL”

John 4:27-42

Theme: Sharing our faith enables us to rejoice as co-laborers with God in the harvest of souls.

Introduction: Some messages must be shouted to capture attention. Others simply shine. The gospel of Jesus Christ is one of those radiant messages—it doesn’t rely on human eloquence or clever persuasion; its power lies in what it does to a person who genuinely encounters Christ.

In John 4, we see a profound example of this truth. A woman of questionable reputation meets the Messiah at a well, and by the end of their brief conversation, she becomes a magnet for her entire town. She doesn’t perform miracles or preach a sermon. She simply runs back to the people who knew her sin and says, “Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done!” Essentially, she declares that she has found someone who helped her confront a past she sought to avoid.

This simple, authentic testimony became the spark that drew others burdened by sin to Christ, not because of her packaged presentation, but due to the compelling, visceral nature of the gospel itself. The townspeople came, listened, and believed—not just because of her words, but because they experienced Jesus for themselves and declared, “This One is indeed the Savior of the world” (v. 42).

In this passage, we see that the gospel is not only powerful; it is attractive. It speaks to the thirsty, the broken, and the hungry. When it is conveyed through the life of someone who has genuinely been transformed, it draws people in—not to us, but to Christ.

Today, we will see how the transformed life becomes a living invitation, how the gospel draws souls to salvation, and how we can participate in the joyful privilege of pointing others to the Savior of the world.

[Read the text] The theme of this section is: ***“Sharing our faith enables us to rejoice as co-laborers with God in the harvest of souls.”*** There are three things to consider regarding the attraction of the Gospel and advancing it in this text:

- 1) **The Constraint of the Gospel – 4:27-34**
- 2) **The Cooperation with the Gospel – 4:35-38**
- 3) **The Capability of the Gospel - 4:39-42**

I. The Constraint of the Gospel – 4:27-34

A. The Constraint on the Beneficiaries – vv. 27-30

1. Having masterfully confronted this woman with her need for forgiveness of sin and his offer to fulfill that need as the promised Messiah, God's sovereign control is demonstrated as his disciples return from their errand in town - *"At this point His disciples came . . ."*
2. We are told that since rabbis never engaged women in conversation, *"they were amazed that He had been speaking with a woman."*
3. However, they trusted the wisdom of Christ enough not to seek an explanation of the Lord: *"Yet no one said, 'What do You seek?' or 'Why do you speak with her?'"*
4. However, having had her soul lifted from the sludge of her sin, *"the woman left her waterpot,"* – indicating that whereas she came to the well seeking refreshment, she leaves with no thought of it – her soul itself having been watered even as Jesus had promised.
5. She *"went into the city and said to them men, 'Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done;'"*
 - a) *One of the characteristics of a person who has come to know Christ is the tremendous desire to share Him with others.*
 - b) *This woman, having become the beneficiary of the grace of God given through Christ Jesus, is immediately compelled to spread the good news of the work of the Messiah.*
 - c) *Notice, the essence of her message is on the freedom from sin – "a man who told me all the things that I have done."*
6. Previously, this woman had avoided confronting the issues of her sin, even coming to draw water at a lonely hour. But now, she owns up to her "dark past"—mostly because she has dealt with it in the presence of the Messiah.
7. Her question: *"This is not the Christ, is it?"* is a way by which she opened the door for the people of Sychar to determine for themselves Who He is.
8. Hence, *"they went out of the city, and were coming to Him."*
9. Essentially, when a sinner is freed from the power of their sin, cleansed of the associated guilt, and transformed, the love of God that has so blessed them compels them to share the glorious message of the Gospel – cp. [2 Corinthians 5:14](#); [Galatians 2:20](#).

B. The Constraint on the Benefactor – vv. 31-34

1. However, not only is the beneficiary constrained by God's love, but God Himself is also bound by His love for sinners.

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2. The disciples had left an extremely weary Master to go and get food. Bringing it back, they sought to get Him to eat: *“Meanwhile the disciples were urging Him, saying, ‘Rabbi, eat.’”*
3. Jesus, having been tremendously invigorated by the redemptive exchange with the woman at the well, responds that *“I have food to eat that you do not know about.”*
 - a) Here, Jesus is once again speaking figuratively – even as He had done with the woman – *“food”* is a reference to that which brings fulfillment, nourishment, and refreshment.
 - b) Christ had gained all these things through His interaction with a sinful soul who was turned to God from her sinfulness.
4. The disciples failed to grasp what He was saying and thought he was still talking about physical food: *“The disciples were saying to one another, ‘No one brought Him anything to eat, did he?’”*
5. Christ responds that *“My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.”*
 - a) Jesus indicates that he was compelled to serve the Father by yielding to His will and doing what work He wanted done.
 - b) Of course, we understand that the will of God and the work of the Son all centered on the redemption of sinful men – cp. [John 6:38-40](#).
 - c) Christ was compelled to do just that, which He Himself fully accomplished: [John 17:4; John 19:30](#).
6. It is similar for us – we have been given a distinct assignment as believers to “make disciples” – cp. [Matthew 28:19-20](#).

II. The Cooperation with the Gospel – 4:35-38

A. The Partnership in the Harvest – vv. 35-36

1. Knowing what the Samaritan woman was doing—spreading the good news of redemption—Jesus recognized that the people’s interest in Him was increasing (cp. [v. 30](#)).
2. The likelihood is that the disciples had ruled out the possibility that Jesus had gotten food by foraging in the fields since they were saying among themselves: *“There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest.”*
3. The time of this event was approximately late December, while the harvest time was not until late April, and the disciples had been commenting on the month-old grain in its infancy and how it could not have provided Christ any nourishment.

4. Now Jesus transitions into his desire for all His people to be involved in the process of harvesting by calling for them to recognize the immediate ability to see fruit born by the seed of the Word of God – *“Behold I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest”*
 - a) This is undoubtedly a reference to the people of Sychar who were coming out of the town to meet Him.
 - b) Whereas the grain harvest is four months away, the soul-harvest is now – (the *“food to eat that you do not know about.”*)
 - c) He sees them as a *“harvest”* waiting to be reaped – eager souls disposed to believe in Him, and calls upon His disciples to see their role in that harvest.
5. He comments on the work that is already being done by the woman He had just graciously delivered: *“Already he who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering fruit for life eternal”* – while referring to the woman, he generalizes the principle to describe anyone so occupied in spreading the Gospel.
 - a) Such people who have sown and are reaping are said to be *“receiving wages”* for their labor – cp. *Psalm 126:5-6*
 - b) The essence of these wages is the souls of those saved through their witness – *“gathering fruit for life eternal.”*
 - (1) This does not refer to the securing of eternal life for themselves.
 - (2) It merely means that the consequence of their labor or the “fruit” is eternal in that others are also being saved.
6. The actual impact of our cooperation with God in the salvation of the souls of men is that we can rejoice as co-laborers together with God in redemption – *“so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together”*
 - a) We all work together with God, who truly is credited with giving the increase – cp. *1 Corinthians 3:6-9*
 - b) The fullest consequence is the ability to *“rejoice together”* with everyone who has been involved – God, the sower, and the reaper.

B. The Principle of the Harvest – vv. 37-38

1. Here, Jesus generalizes this principle even further: *“For in this case the saying is true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’”*
2. It is true in many ways – He had sown with the woman; she had sown with the people of the town; and now, the disciples would be involved in the reaping of the souls.
3. Jesus says to the disciples that in this case, He was sending them *“to*

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reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored and you have entered into their labor.”

- a) Jesus is referring to His work of spreading the Gospel to the woman and her spreading it to the town – *“others have labored”*
- b) They were going to be able to go and *“pick ripened fruit.”*
- 4. The great principle is that none of us knows where we are in the process of the harvest – we might be the initial sowing, or the watering, or we may reap the benefit of others’ labor of sowing and watering.
- 5. The important part is that we are being obedient and have entered the harvest fields of men’s souls and apply ourselves to reaping the harvest God says is “ripe already.”

III. The Capability of the Gospel – 4:39-42

A. The Influence of a Witness of God’s Grace – vv. 39-40

- 1. The power of the Gospel is inherent, not dependent on the presentation of the witness – *1 Corinthians 2:1-5; 2 Corinthians 4:5-7*
- 2. This is demonstrated in what happens in this account: *“From that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, ‘He told me all the things that I have done’.”*
- 3. There was a hunger for the knowledge of Christ that was sparked in them, simply by the influence of her testimony: *“So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days.”*

B. The Impact of the Word of God – vv. 41-42

- 1. However, it is not until a person comes directly to Christ that a work of redemption will occur: *“Many more believed because of His word.”*
- 2. Faith is born out of the message of Christ – His Word brings life – cp. *Romans 10:17*.
- 3. When they heard her witness of what Christ had done for her, the people were interested in “checking it out” for themselves, and so they inquired.
- 4. Once they heard the Word of God and the Spirit of God worked to produce faith in their hearts, their interest was no longer due to the woman’s testimony – but because of the Word of God: *“and they were saying to the woman, It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of*

the world.”

5. It was the power of God’s Word itself – unadorned by miracles or signs (that were primarily designed to indict the unbelieving Jewish people) – which sparked faith in the lives of these Gentiles.
6. The general point here is that our witnessing must take on two essential features:
 - a) *Share what Christ has done for you personally – if you can’t articulate this, perhaps it is necessary to evaluate whether He’s done anything for you yet.*
 - b) *Share the Word of God when you witness – it is that which can make one wise unto salvation – Romans 1:16-17; 2 Timothy 3:15; 1 Corinthians 1:23-24.*

So What?

- 1. In what ways has Jesus exposed and redeemed my past, and how could sharing that help others see the grace of Christ?**
- 2. How is my life characterized by gratitude and transformation as a result of personally meeting the Savior?**
- 3. What patterns in my life show that serving the Lord has become a source of spiritual nourishment instead of just a duty?**
- 4. How am I currently working in the Lord’s harvest, and in what ways am I trusting God for the outcome of that work?**

Theme: Sharing our faith enables us to rejoice as co-laborers with God in the harvest of souls.