

Superfood
2020

August 02,

It's the year 2017, I'm strapped to my seat on American Airlines Flight 115. It's Sunday. The time is 2:50pm, it's a sunny June. I quickly run through my checklist, I've got carry-on, suitcase, water bottle, cellphone, passport. I look up and make eye contact with Rex Rosandich, Grace Watkins and a little further up the aisle was Mike Heinz's smiling face. I'm just as excited as I am nervous. It's my first ever mission trip, and I'd never been to Somotillo, Nicaragua... Well, the time is now 5:38pm, we've finally arrived, it's humid, and we're heading toward the compound where we'll be staying. It's a ride I'll never forget, it felt like we were being chased. The driver, Eduardo, was flying down the street. I don't think the tires hit to road until we got there. Apparently, this was standard driving in Nicaragua. You think I35 is bad. Anyway, we made it. As I settled into my bunk that night, the rice and beans start churning in my gut. On one hand I am excited to be with Fellowship, to experience something new, but on the other hand I don't know where God would take us, I don't know who we'll meet, I don't know how things would turn out. But what I do know is that this isn't the first time God has work for his people to do, and it won't be the last.

My name is Christopher Young, I'm the Young Adults Director here at Fellowship. If you've been following our series, Revived, for the past few weeks you've gotten some insight into the life rhythms/habits/practices of Jesus that revived his spirits, refreshed his life, and motivated him to the finish line.

If you agree with most people, 2020 has been everything but clear vision. If anything, everything's been fuzzy. If it's not the unending pandemic, it's the uncertainty of who will be the 46th president of the U.S.? If it's not that, it's will America ever become a nation of true racial equality? Or will I have a job this Fall? What about the school year? 2020 has been out of control.

My family has felt all of it. At one point we looked to the stock market for financial security, at another point we looked to food for comfort and everyday our clothes got tighter. We were gaining Pandemic Pounds yall! So, we changed our diet. And we began feeling a lot better. The saying is true, "you are what you eat?" But it's not just true for physical food it's also true for spiritual food.

It reminds me of the year 31AD, the disciples are on their way back from the local chipotle, and their pace begins to slow as they see Jesus speaking... *with a woman*. (I can see the puzzled surprise on their faces as they probably remembered the rabbinic writing that forbid a rabbi to speak *or greet* a woman in public.) But no one questioned Jesus about it. (You see they learned from experience to trust Jesus' reasoning – he didn't always respect convention). Then as they see the shock on that woman's face as Jesus spoke with her, and she does her do what many of us would do if someone told us the secrets of our private life, she forgets why she came to the well and breaks for town (leaving her bucket). She is eager to tell somebody/anybody, "Come, see a man

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who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?" The townspeople, impressed by her enthusiasm, they decide to check this man out for themselves.

Meanwhile, the disciples were urging Jesus, "Rabbi, *eat something.*" Jesus was sitting next to that well, shaking his head, he's still brewing on the conversation he just had with this woman. He looks up at his disciples and he decides to let them in on something special. ³²He says, "I have food to eat that *you* know nothing about." His disciples began discussing with one another, ³³"Could someone have brought him food?" ³⁴"My food" (satisfaction, source of fulfillment, strength, joy, what revives me), said Jesus, "is to *do the will of the one who sent me and to finish his work...*" In other words, Jesus is saying 'Yes, I'm still thirsty, I'm still hungry (that burrito smells delicious), I'm tired, I'm hot (this sun is baking me) but there's something about speaking with this woman that energizes me in a way that burrito cannot. Have you ever had a hunger that physical food couldn't satisfy? In one sentence Jesus drops the plate, he reveals a life rhythm/habit/practice that powers his ministry forward, refreshes his life.

This spiritual food is what we all desire. Today, we're going to learn about it, we're going to learn that **Doing the will of God satisfies our soul and revives our life.** Doing what we know God wants us to do uplifts our spirits and energizes us. Let's take a seat, unfold our napkins, and get ready to eat from John 4. The first thing we learn about this food, is that it requires us to...

Go wherever God leads us, even if it's uncomfortable.

This scene begins as Jesus leaves Judea because the Pharisees begin comparing his ministry with John's ministry (1-4), and he and his disciples head to Galilee, where he turned water into wine. V 4 says, "Now he had to go through Samaria (NIV)." The problem with this statement is that going through Samaria wasn't the only way to Galilee (it wasn't geographically necessary). In fact, many strict Jews avoided going through Samaria, even though it was a shorter trip, because of their strong dislike of the Samaritans. So, why did he have to go? He went through Samaria because it was a shorter trip, and more importantly because God had an appointment for Jesus there. And (BTW) God has set appointments for us right here in DFW, and for others of us around the world.

5 So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. 6 Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. 7 When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" 8 (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) (Jewish/Samaritan relations was like cold water hitting hot oil divisive. To Jews, being a Samaritan was as bad as being possessed by a demon (Jn

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8:28). According to Josephus, Samaritans were Gentiles who pretend to be Jews when convenient, but when there is persecution or hardship, they were Gentiles again. Samaritans were seen as half-breeds since when they were captured by the Assyrians a few hundred years back and began to intermarry with Gentiles. So, they weren't true to Jewish law and traditions. This drew a wedge between Jews and Gentiles.)

9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

Here, Jesus is in a city/region where his Father led him. But he's not the only one there. His disciples are there. We see through this interaction that the woman was uncomfortable, the disciples were uncomfortable. Sometimes God leads us to places that make us uncomfortable.

One summer, there was a young couple determined to graduate college, pay off student loans, and lead a respectable family. He quickly learned of his niche in leadership, finding lucrative opportunities to impact company's profit, while she steadily honed her skills to make life taste the way it should, food, of course. As they peeled off toward success with their brand-new baby, something changed. It was something neither of them expected at this point of their life. He began losing his satisfaction in his work. Excitement led to boredom; boredom led to bitterness. God was weaning his heart away from a promising career that afforded his family comfort and privilege, toward an uncertain future, in an uncertain place, amongst an uncertain people. One night, he and his wife discussed everything they would have to walk away from; a familiar city, family support, financial security, true independence. After a short while, they decided to leave home, he later retired, she switched jobs, all to go to a new city, a foreign culture, a dependent life. They followed the Lord to Dallas Texas. And to this day my wife and I willingly follow God wherever he leads us. It's been five years, and we've yet to have an unmet need. You see, we don't know what the future holds, but we know who holds the future.

Where is God leading you? Is it another city, an avoided part of town, a conversation with your neighbor or coworker? Wherever it is, Go, because eating this food (doing the will of God) satisfies our soul and revives our life.

And when we get that there make sure you...

Tell someone about Jesus.

In verse 10, Jesus brings up this concept of living water. 10 Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

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He says, “¹³Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴but whoever drinks the water I give them will *never* thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” ¹⁵The woman said to him, (thinking literally, just like the disciples) “Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.” Here, Jesus raises the issue of the deep inner thirst she has for true contentment, eternal life, God. He offers her life through the living water, the Holy Spirit (6:36).

Jesus continues speaking with the woman, telling her the deep dark secrets of her private life. The disciples making their way back with food; they see the shocked look on her face. Then, forgetting why she came to the well, she breaks for town (leaving her bucket behind) to tell somebody about this man. While the townspeople make their way toward Jesus, he continues to tell his disciples about this life changing food he’s been eating. He says, “³⁵Dont you have a saying, It’s still four months until harvest? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. In other words, he’s saying the harvest is ready. Look at the Samaritan townspeople coming toward us as a result of me speaking with this woman. ³⁶Even 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. He’s says that there is a joy and satisfaction knowing that doing this work (eating this food) has eternal consequences for unbelievers. There is a reviving affect that follows telling people about Jesus. ³⁷Thus the saying ‘One sows and another reaps’ is true. Evangelizing is a team effort with God and man. And then verse ³⁹ gives us more insight why Jesus was so satisfied. ³⁹ Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I ever did.” ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. ⁴¹ And because of his words many more became believers.

I believe there is a spiritual harvest as a result of covid-19. The beliefs/vices that people normally rely on aren’t working. People have built their houses on sand and the winds of 2020 are tearing their lives apart.

According to Dr. James Lake, MD, Psychiatric Times

“The health and financial costs of COVID-19 have resulted in widespread feelings of helplessness and overwhelming anxiety and despair in response to circumstances over which we have little or no control. Chronic exposure to severe stress in the absence of control among countless millions, constitutes a perfect storm, with severe mental health consequences on a global scale, including increased rates of depressed mood, suicide, and posttraumatic stress disorder.”

Covid-19 has primed hearts for the message of hope. The harvest is right now. We can begin telling people about Jesus right now.

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It's been a few days now; we've been sharing stories about Jesus with the Nicaraguans. We used the Evangicube and told the story of the Garasean demoniac. People have been nice and cordial, they've opened their homes, but our team has yet to see someone come to faith in Christ, until this particular day. Our team of about four walk the unpaved streets alongside chickens and other livestock, and we approach this little house. I'll never forget it. We walked into this little house built on gravel. There was a young woman there with a baby on her hip. She had surprise on her face, and we welcomed us in. I was surprised. This unfinished hut with a hammock as their bed, and a large carved open rock as their sink, had a 55-inch Samsung TV. It was surprising. We began introducing ourselves through the translator, and shared the story of salvation with her. And what followed was the highlight of my entire trip. We saw tears flowing down her face, we saw hope in her eyes. Many on the team were moved with emotion. You see we were filled with joy, and for the first time in a long time, I thought "this is what life is all about." And as I think back, this is the food Jesus was talking about, this is the will of God.

Who is God wanting you to tell about his Son? Tell them... because eating this food (Doing the will of God) satisfies our soul and revives our life.

Conclusion:

On the flight back to Dallas, I realized that all my fears and anxieties about going to Nicaragua stemmed from not having control of the future. This trip had too many unknowns. But I tell you, as we followed God and told people about him, we experienced joy, satisfaction, wholeness. Not much has changed in 2020, there are many unknowns. But if we Go wherever God leads us, if we tell people about Jesus, we will be energized and revived.

I want to leave you with two ways to practically begin eating this food. I realize some of us have never shared our faith with anyone. Others of us think that simply living Christianly is good enough.

1. Get your friends to become their friends.
2. Coffee, Dinner, Gospel
 - a. Ask: Do you have a faith? Can I tell you about mine?