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Loving Like God

Well, welcome back. As we continue to let the Lord grow our own heart in love with Him, in love with people around us, beginning to have greater awareness of how He's working in empowering you, and yet also preparing the hearts of people that you would be ministering to by being the salt and light that He has called us to be. And of course, we're talking about walking with the Lord. And I was always thinking, you know, I don't want to just invite Him to bless what I want to do today. I want to know what the Lord is doing in my day and be about doing His business. My food, would you say this of yourself, my food is to do the will of my Father and we love Him so much.

So today I want to talk to you a little bit about intersections. And we're talking about divine intersections, those ready moments for people when their heart is open. And I've seen so many different kinds of intersections, we're going to talk about one specifically today, but I've seen so many different types of intersections, where people will open their heart up in a fresh, maybe a special moment in their life. It could be maybe getting married, or they're having the birth of a child, or they're going through something that's difficult, they're

going through something that's a trial. They're going through something that's causing fear or whatever, or maybe they're going through a physical issue. The list could go on, but there's intersections that the Lord would have you become aware of, and may become aware of because He loves people so much. In the Book of John chapter number four, and by the way, the whole book of John is just loaded with learning the presence of the Lord and what He does in the lives of people, and I'd encourage you just to read it through in your devotions, if you've not been reading your word, just pick it up and just enjoy reading the Book of John. It just reveals so much about the Lord. But, in chapter number four is the story of the Samaritan woman. It's the woman at the well that we've commonly called it. And I want to I want to point out a couple of things that just make you and me aware that He has intersections with people in their lives. You know, I have had relatives that I have prayed for because in my growing up years I had no relatives that knew the Lord, and I come from a family of ten kids, his, hers, and theirs, divorced family. My mom didn't know the Lord, my stepdad didn't know the Lord, nor my next step dad didn't know the Lord, nor did my dad know the Lord, nor did my step mom know the Lord. And then of all the kids, there is ten of us again, we did not know the Lord, but God has such love for people, and I want you to entertain that because He loves who you love. And by the way, He probably loves who you don't like too. But He loves people, and He wants to bring life to them, and He wants

to bring healing and into their life. And that's His constant desire, is to, in any distance between people and God and just make them whole through a wonderful relationship that we can have with the Lord.

Well, you know, Jesus is with His disciples, and He'd been out ministering to people and He was leaving Judea and He was, you know, departing, the Bible says, again to Galilee. Well He, on His way to Galilee, it says in verse four of John four, "But he needed to go through Samaria." Now, I will tell you, the only real reason that He went to Samaria was He had an appointment with someone that didn't know that they were about to have an appointment with Him. Now, I want to be a part of that. If He has made you and me light into the world of darkness, if He's made us salty to where we bring taste into situations, we bring life and wholeness and something better into situations, and He's empowered us and He's given those people a thirst for Him. He also has these intersections. So, I might be praying for a relative that doesn't know the Lord and believe in God to touch them. He might be raising somebody up that might be hundreds of miles away, to maybe, a coworker, etc. You might be that coworker that is in answer to prayer to someone. Well, Jesus had need to go to Samaria because He had an appointment that He knew about. The disciples didn't know about it. The woman that was going to go to the well at noon hour did not know about it. But He knew about it, and He loved that woman and wanted to intersect her life.

Now that woman, and it's very clear, that woman that was in the city of Samaria, she had gone to the well at a time when she was gathering water for her and for her household. And while she was there, she would be aware that that was not the time the other women of the city came out to gather water. They would have come out earlier in the morning. Well, she was there probably because she didn't want to face the other women. She had some shame in her life from the lifestyle that she was leading. But I find this so beautiful. She didn't need to be ashamed with the Lord because He actually wanted to be there, and wanted to minister to her and really to bring fullness into her life, knowing that what she was facing. And you might be aware that she came along while Jesus was sitting by the well, and He asked for a drink and she turns it into a whole religious discussion. By the way, don't get sidetracked into people's theology and don't get sidetracked into weird doctrines, don't get sidetracked into political issues. In fact, it's interesting, in Matthew chapter number eight, the Bible actually says in Matthew 8:2, He's talking to the disciples and He said, "Beware, be cautious of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of Herod." Now, leaven is that which, you know, when you mix it in dough, it causes it to expand and expand and expand. And He's really using that symbolically, to be aware of something that would, through expansion, destroy your life. And one of the things He's saying is be aware of the leaven of the Pharisees. That would be

people who have lots of religious knowledge, but they don't have the presence and relationship with the Lord. And because of that, everything was turning into legalism, and judgment, and criticism, and what you can achieve on your own, and through that legalism, and it was away from their relationship with the Lord. That's what Jesus was seeing and warning about, but also be aware of the leaven of Herod. Who was Herod? He was the political leader of the day. Be aware, that is sometimes we actually diminish conversations with people by becoming political with them. And it can be very destructive. It can just lead to an undermining of the importance of what you would be carrying to them otherwise. And so Jesus warns us to be aware of that.

You know, I want to share just a personal view on that, that hopefully will just cause you to become more aware of a walk with the Lord today and how He would have you touch intersections in your life. And that is, I'm not sure that Satan, our enemy of our soul, cares a whole lot about what your position is on various issues. I think what he's concerned is that we would leave the character of Christ to express those views. So you can be right in what you would be expressing, but you can leave that which you never want to leave behind, which is the love and goodness and grace of the Lord in the way that you are communicating with people, and in the way that you're being with people. Well, Jesus, with this woman at the well, cut through all of that stuff. And He then said,

"by the way, go get your husband." She said, "I don't have a husband." And He said, "You're right, you have five." And she then gets into that "I perceive you're a prophet." Well, the end result of that is that this woman goes from there, she goes into town, and basically brings the town back with her. Yeah, by the way, the disciples went into town and brought nothing but food. It was almost as if they thought, "Well, aren't I on a lunch break? Aren't I on vacation?" And yet she went into town and her very life spoke of the presence of the Lord. And so they all came out to hear. And great revival happened because of that, as you read at the end of the chapter. So what I become aware of, is the way that Jesus understood people. And that is, this woman, He didn't get stuck in what she was doing wrong. Because, again, what she was doing wrong was allowing things, was using something else to try and fill an empty spot in her life that only God can fill. He wasn't judgmental about that. He was inviting her to have the real water.

You know, I've been fishing a few times. Maybe some of you have, too, and maybe even some of you are avid fisherman. I know when I'm reeling that trout in, that I'm hoping to put on the barbecue later and have some good food. And I'm bringing it up into the boat, or onto the shore, onto the dock, or whatever I'm fishing from. That fish, once it clears the water, especially, it fights for all its life to try and get back in the water. Because it cannot breathe unless it's in the water. And I've noticed fish that have jumped

off my hook, or even, I've noticed fish that were still on my hook and they made it back into the water, maybe they, before I could reel it in the rest of the way, they had flipped back into the water and they were happy all of a sudden. And I'm thinking, "They're happy in dirty water." Well, they wouldn't have been happy long term in that dirty water, but they'd rather have dirty water than no water. And it's true with people. So, people want you to be very aware as opposed to, you know, we don't want to be judgmental, we don't want to be religious with them, we want to be people that are carriers of the love of God and the presence of the Lord. We've been empowered by the Holy Spirit, and we need to be very aware that there are people, and they're so lonely in their hearts, they're hurting very, very deeply, and people will run to dirty water rather than, it's almost like I can't live in this loneliness, and so they, you know, they'll take drugs, they'll get involved in all sorts of addictions, that kind of, you know, work almost as a false promise to keep him away from the Lord because they're trying this addiction to fill that place of loneliness. And so, I'm just so thrilled that Jesus sees past all that stuff. And when He looks past it, He sees you and He sees me, and He knew how to redeem us, He had an intersection back.

I think kind of what every church needs is a couple of women like this, couple men like this that we remember, "Hey, I was trash in my life to the whole lot. And the Lord met

me. And He didn't judge me. He forgave me. He wanted relationship with me. He wasn't against me. He was for me. And He still is for me." And that's the that's the contagion that we carry into our community. That's the way we look at people, regardless of whether they are the Samaritan to you, they're the different one that would be someone that otherwise maybe would be despised, but instead they'll catch you looking at them. They can tell you care and you see something different than what otherwise people would see in their life. I want to tell you a story about that. I was back, Benita and I, Benita is my wife, we were ministering back east and as I recall, we were ministering in New York, and when I've been ministering for maybe three days, I get exhausted and I'm just happy to get on the plane and fly home. And so we had flown from there to Chicago, changed planes, and then we are heading to Los Angeles, L.A.X. And we couldn't get tickets that allowed us to sit together. But we were, thanks to the particular airline we were on, I was in seat C, which was right on the aisle, and she was on seat D on the other side of the aisle. So, you know, she was that close to me as it would be. But I remember kind of spying out the land. And, you know, while you're getting on, you're walking down the aisle, you sort of look to see who you're going to be held captive with, you know, who's in other words, who's going to be in seat A, and who's going to be in seat B. And anyway, I looked down and I can still recall it was row 11 on the plane, and there was a lady in seat A and a lady in seat B. And I

thought, this is fantastic. They're talking already with one another, that means I didn't have to join into their conversation trying to not be rude because I was just tired, exhausted. And I remember thinking, all I want to do is get on that plane, and I was going to do a little bit of S.O.A.P. journaling because it refreshes my soul, I didn't want to just go take a nap, I wanted to do that to that. I wanted to eat a little snack pack from the from the airplane, I wanted to do my journaling, and then I wanted to just sleep the rest of the way to L.A. to take a little bit of rest after we had ministered. Well, we took off from Chicago, all was good, I was busy eating pretty quick and then I thought, all right, it's journal time. And, you know, again, Lady and Lady B, they're busy talking to one another. And it was a match made in heaven. And so I'm there doing my S.O.A.P journaling and got my Bible out, and they never even looked over. And I wasn't concerned anyway, but I didn't mean to eavesdrop. But I hear them talking, and Lady A is asking Lady B how long they've been married and they've been married like 21 years. And Lady B, out of courtesy, but maybe interested too asked Lady A, "Oh how long you've been married?" "Oh we've been married three years, you know." And, and so they began to talk back and forth. It ended up that both of them worked for competing corporations, that both had international influence, and in the corporations they were in and they both worked in the same department of the competing companies. Lady B was head of that department, Lady A worked in

that department. And so Lady A was just an average, "Oh, boy, I'd give my right arm to have your job." And, you know, she was just talking like that. And of course, I have a little bit of sarcasm in me sometimes and I thinking, "Well, you know, you don't want to give away body parts because eventually you can't do the job that they're going to need you to do." And anyway, I think "Come on, Rob, concentrate. Do not listen to Lady A and B while they're talking."

Well, then they start talking about their relationships with their husbands. And I had just done a two day married couples conference, so I thought, "Hey, maybe I'll get some new material or something while listening to it." And so they were busy chatting and Lady A, asks Lady B, she said, "You know," I'm referring to a seat A that's by the window and seat B that's right in the middle between me and in the window seat. And so Lady A, ask Lady B, she said, "Well, tell me," she said, "You know, what do you guys enjoy doing and stuff?" And she briefly said, she said, "Well, we're going to, you know, kind of," she said "marriage has its ups and downs," and she said, "we're going through a time when we're needing to put a little more work into it." And Lady A just pipes up, she said, "That sounds like a boring relationship." She said, "You know what you need to do? You need to get rid of that man and you need to find somebody that'll light your fire." Yeah, by the way, I'm thinking, "Really, do I have to get involved?" And I knew the Lord wanted me to

say something, not by the way, not judgmental. Do you hear me? I'm dealing with kind of a John four kind of situation, where Lady A was kind of promoting a dissolving of relationships and not promoting working on the relationship. Let me say something for all of you that are married. And that is, you know, you can start off almost instinctually treating your spouse well, but within three years, you'll find yourself needing to switch from instinctual to intentional. Because it doesn't always come naturally. You have to decide, "I'm going to treat them well. I'm going to love them. I'm going to learn to listen. I'm going to learn to be filled with gratitude about what they do and actually notice and care and that sort of thing." Because sometimes just the passage of time, and trials and going through things together, that can wear on a person anyway.

So I'm sitting there, and I had one of my Bibles with me, it might even be in this one, and I closed it and I hid it under my journal because I didn't want them, I didn't want them to be able to jump to conclusions without hearing me first. So, I tapped the lady next to me and I said, "Ma'am?" And she said, "Yeah, what do you need?" And I think she thought I needed my air vent adjusted or the light turned off or whatever. And she said, "Yeah, what do you need?" I said, "I wanted to talk to you about what you guys are talking about, if you don't mind." And she just actually almost frightened me a little bit. She jerked over a little bit, and she said, "What do you have in mind?" And I said,

"Well," and I wondered, no, I wasn't trying to pick up on her or something, I mean, but, and I pointed that my wife was sitting right there and I said, "My wife and I give ourselves over to helping people in their marriages." And I said, "I'm just concerned that there are, it sounds like you have some areas that you have need of. Some areas that need to be brought alive." But I said, "If you follow the advice that you've been told, life can get a whole lot worse." And she said, "It sounds like you had something to say, hey don't you just say it?" Now, by the way, I have never had a person speak so boldly of "Why don't you get it out? I can tell there's something going on that you have." And I said, "Listen, you have, "I mean, on the airplane, you never see people again, so it doesn't matter. But really, I love speaking life to anybody that I'm around. And I said, "There is a God shaped hole in your heart. And only He can fill it. You can try filling it by divorcing and remarrying five, six, seven different times. It's happened in our family before we got saved." But I said, "There's only a place that only God can fill, even when you try other things." And she said to me. If you knew where my life has been, you'd know that God doesn't want me anymore. And I said, "Tell me a little bit more about what you mean." She said, "At one time, I knew the Lord," but she said, "Things got messed up in my late teen years," and she said, "It's been a lot of years and a lot of distance between me and God." I said, "Ma'am, God has placed me on this plane right there in Seat C to

tell you He wants you to come home tonight." And she allowed me to pray with her, but I don't mean allowed, she hungered for prayer. She cried her eyes out, in fact the people in front of her were turning, they were actually kind of bending their ear, and listening you know. Hey, remember Romans one, they know there's a God, and maybe they were away from the Lord too. But she cried her eyes out in joy, gave her heart to the Lord, came back to the Lord as it would be that night.

And about that time we were kind of coming into L.A.. I remember the air was choppy because the plane was bouncing around a little bit. And Lady A, who's been silent all this time while we've been talking, but she's listening, but she was silent and she said, "Hey?" I said, "Hey." She said, "I'm a Christian, too." I said, "Wow, that's really neat." I said, "Would you mind talking to me after we get off the plane? I just wanted to talk to you a few minutes afterwards." She said, "No, I'd be glad to." I let Benita know I wanted a minute with the person. And I told her, I said, "Listen," and by the way, the one lady, I got her plugged in a church in the area where she lived in it. The other lady I said, "Listen, I want you to know, I have been where you've been, where I've given bad advice. But there are divine intersections that God wants to use you in your future. And by giving carnal advice, you'll never get there. But being sensitive, caring and giving advice that you think would be from the very heart of God will hit the bullseye.".

Anyway, I want you to be aware, you know who's intersection that maybe God has designed for you to influence their life. And you're the answer to somebody's prayer, or you're the answer to God's design. To see someone that has a need and they'll be sharing. They'll be talking, and you'll be aware of the Holy Spirit saying, "Hey, watch it, I want to share what's true with them to help them out a little bit." You'd be surprised how open people are. Anyway, the Lord bless you, go before your journey, and give you great influence, in Jesus' name, amen.

