

This transcribed message has been lightly edited and formatted for the Web site. No attempt has been made, however, to alter the basic extemporaneous delivery style, or to produce a grammatically accurate, publication-ready manuscript.

Teaching: Carlon Tschetter
Series: The Gospel of John
Message: Crossing the Boundaries

Transcribed Message
March 23, 2025
John 4:1-10

We were on a one-week break last week when Francois was here. We're back in John chapter 4 this morning, the Gospel of John. And if you were with us last Sunday, it really wasn't any break at all. He didn't go specifically to the Gospel of John. He was in Colossians 4, but you remember in his challenge to us, his challenge was to missional living and to really live with a sense of focus. And of course, that's what we see in the life of our Lord. One of the reasons that the Gospel of John is unique among all the Gospels, and I think one of the reasons that people love to study the Gospel of John is because John gives us more of the conversations that Jesus had with individual people than any of the other Gospel writers. And he doesn't just give us more of these individual conversations, but he gives to us the longest discussion of those conversations that we have in any of the Gospels. We've already seen that to some extent with the third chapter. We're going to see it again as we come into the fourth chapter. And what we see in those encounters, in those conversations, in those interactions that Jesus has with people, is obviously we see the heart of our Lord, don't we? We see the heart of our Lord. We see him interacting with people. We see his love, his care, his concern that flows into and towards these people that he's having these spiritual conversations with. Not only that, but I feel like it's almost like we are taking a doctoral course in evangelism in this section of John's Gospel, because we're literally sitting at the feet of our Lord, the greatest evangelist who ever lived, and we can just draw these principles out for how it is that he wants us to live our lives today as well.

Our big idea this morning is simply this: Jesus is seeking sinners who aren't even looking for him. Think about that. Jesus is seeking sinners this morning who aren't even looking for him. Now, you know somebody like that. There's somebody in your world, there's somebody in your family, there's somebody at work, there's somebody at school, there's somebody in your neighborhood who Jesus is seeking, and they don't even know that he's seeking after them. It's

very possible that that person might be you this morning. Maybe you're here this morning by God's divine providence and design because you're the person that Jesus is seeking.

Let's begin by just setting the stage here for this fourth chapter. The setting and the context, as we say all the time, is crucial, isn't it? Never more so than when you come to the fourth Gospel, the fourth chapter of John's Gospel. I think the first three chapters just set up this fourth chapter. Let's just look briefly at those opening three chapters that we've already looked at. In the first chapter, we go to verse 14, and there in that 14th verse, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld the glory as of the only Son of God, full of grace and truth.

And then you go to chapter 2, and remember Jesus does the miracle of water to wine. At the end of that chapter, in verses 23, 24, and 25, we read that Jesus knows the heart of man. Jesus knows what's in somebody. As He's having these conversations, as He's interacting with them as we've already seen, and as we're going to see in this fourth chapter, He knows what's in the person's heart. He is the one and only one who has that capacity.

And then the third chapter, verse 35, you have that wonderful statement where we read, the Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. Now that's a remarkable statement. The Father not only loves the Son, but He's given all things into His hand. We're going to see how all those truths play out in this fourth chapter.

But what I want to do before we come to this first verse of the fourth chapter, is I want to just take a moment and reflect on the differences of the contrast between Jesus's conversation with Nicodemus, and now the woman at the well, who is, of course, unnamed. Just look at this contrast. This is what John is going to want us to see. He wants us to see that there's probably no contrast greater than the one between these two people. And He puts them right beside each other, chapter 3 and then into chapter 4, purposely so we will get this picture of no greater contrast than these two. By the way, if you ever don't get the blank filled in on your outline, that's always available on the resource section of the webpage. So let not your heart be troubled if we go through this too fast and you don't get them all.

The place, of course, was Jerusalem. For the woman at the well, Samaria. The time. The meeting with Nicodemus, at night. The time of meeting with this woman, middle of the day,

noon. The occasion. You have to believe that the occasion was one that Nicodemus initiated. Nicodemus reached out to Jesus and said, can we meet tonight at such and such a time and such and such a place? In the case of the woman, it's simply a picture of providence. It's the divine providence and work of God that just brings these two together. And of course, Jesus is the initiator in this second conversation. The ethnicity of these two is very different. Obviously, Nicodemus being a Jew and the woman being a Samaritan. The status couldn't be farther apart. Nicodemus is a part of the upper socioeconomic class. He's a part of the elite of the religious community. He is respected, revered, no doubt, in some circles. The woman at the well is on the totally opposite end of the spectrum. She is despised. She is looked down upon. She's ostracized. Nobody wants to have her in community. The gender, a man and a woman. The result in chapter three, we're not told specifically. I believe Nicodemus comes to faith when you get to the 19th chapter. He's mentioned with Joseph of Arimathea, stepping out into the public forum, and he's going to go and take the body of our Lord and prepare it for burial. So almost certainly, Nicodemus at some point, whether it was that night or as he considered the claims of Christ on his life later, comes to faith, I believe, in Christ. The woman at the well, of course, believes, as we'll see in this account. And then the approach. Just think of the approach. Jesus says to Nicodemus, Nicodemus, you have to be born again. You have to be born from above. He no more understood what Jesus was talking about than the woman at the well, when Jesus says, you have to drink of the living water. And we're going to see she has no idea what he's talking about either.

But here's the thing. At the end of the day, they're both equally lost. And they both equally need a Savior. I think the message to us is simply, they're both welcome to the gospel. This same gospel. Jesus reaches the elite of that time and of our day. And he reaches down to the most despised of his time and of our time. And we never want to lose track of the fact that God's love knows no distinction in that way.

Let's look at this divine appointment. This is a fascinating story that we get to look at this morning, or at least get started. There's a historic transition that takes place that we have to understand as we come to this fourth chapter. And we begin by just simply noticing Jesus's initial movement is going to be from Judea. So let's look at the first three verses. Now, when

Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John, although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples, he left Judea and departed again for Galilee. Here's what you can see just at the beginning of this first verse.

When it says, “and when”, that's the English Standard Version that I'm reading out of, it could just as easily have been translated as it is in the New American as “therefore”. Here's one of these “therefore”, right? Even though in this case the translators chose to translate it with now when, it really is a “therefore”. So it's telling us stop and look and understand what the context is.

I think it takes us back to chapter three and verse 22. And back there we read this. After this, Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside, and he remained there with them and was baptizing. This first verse of chapter four takes us back to this time in which Jesus and John the Baptist are both ministering in the Judean area and they are baptizing and seeing people respond to the message of repentance and come to understand that the Messiah is here. This is the context.

You remember when we looked at that a few weeks ago, there was this sense of competition. There was this sense of rivalry that had risen up between especially and mainly John's disciples towards Jesus and no doubt Jesus's disciples. And so that's what John wants us to see – that this is the setting. This is the context for Jesus leaving and going from Judea. It just reminds us again of how easy it is to fall into a sense of competition and a sense of rivalry and a sense of comparison.

I would just say if you want to live in defeat and you want to live in misery, then just give yourself constantly over to comparing yourself to other people. Compare yourself constantly to other people and to other circumstances and to other situations. And that is a formula that you will live your life basically. There's always somebody that you're going to compare yourself to that you're going to feel like you've come up short. Here's just a beautiful picture because Jesus is not going to have any part of that. Jesus is leaving from Judea. This rivalry is not going to happen. He is not going to allow for the Pharisees to bring any kind of a wedge between himself and John's ministry. And so he's leaving.

Look at verse 3. There's this early departure, right? He left Judea and departed again for Galilee. The cause of it was, verse 1, the Pharisees are coming to see Jesus and his ministry as being more popular than was the ministry of John the Baptist. And so just a couple things in passing. You notice, first of all, that Jesus does not baptize. That's what we read in verse 2. Jesus wasn't doing the physical baptizing. His disciples were doing it in his name. And we commented, no doubt that is the case because of the statement in 1 Corinthians chapter 1. You remember when Paul is writing to a church that's fractured and divided and has a spirit of rivalry and competition, right? And he says, yeah, I know some of you are talking about the fact that Apollos has baptized you and some of you are talking about the fact that Peter has baptized you. And then he says, and I'm just glad I didn't baptize any of you. Oh yeah, I did baptize Gaius and I did baptize Crispus, but I don't think I did anybody else. Well, you can imagine, again, as we said before, if you had been baptized by Jesus, just think of how that would play, right? You would ask people who baptized you? Well, Jesus baptized me. Jesus didn't baptize, as we see here.

Now notice secondly, there in that third verse, he left. He left. This isn't in your outline other than just to write it down. But he left. He left Judea and departed again for Galilee. I just want you to note the word he "left" because it's a strong word. It can be translated, he abandoned Judea. We easily forget how quickly in the life and ministry of our Lord, the hostility of the Pharisees and the religious leaders rose up. It's easy to think of Jesus's life just kind of going along and then somewhere in the third year of his life, a lot of hostility, a lot of anger, and a lot of opposition. It didn't really, that wasn't the case at all. It was very early in the ministry of our Lord, and we're seeing it right here. He leaves Judea. Judea is the center. It's the hub. He goes to Galilee because the Pharisaical influence is not nearly as strong in Galilee. There could be even a sense of a judicial judgment here that he left, he abandoned. They're not open to his ministry. They're in opposition, and that opposition is only going to grow.

Here's what I want you to see. I want you to see a very practical outworking of just a beautiful picture of the balance here in these opening verses between the doctrine of divine sovereignty, the sovereignty of God, and human responsibility. These are two truths that the Scriptures teach, and they're two truths that oftentimes seem to conflict with each other, don't

they? They seem to be at odds with each other. They're really not. But because now we see in a mirror dimly, we can't see how these two things can always be true. But it is true that God is sovereign over all the details of life, and it's also true that we have human responsibility and free moral choice to step into those decisions that we make. That's what we see here. In the life of our Lord, Jesus is showing us how to walk in wisdom, and at the same time, how to walk in trust.

When you go back to that third chapter and that 35th verse, when we just said the Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. Well, if the Father has given all things into the Son's hand, why is He leaving Judea and going all the way up to Galilee? I mean, God is sovereign. He's okay. Nothing's going to happen to Him. But why would He choose to leave? Well, I can tell you, He did not choose to leave out of fear. He's not running from something in the sense of being afraid of it, but I think He's just showing to us this balance, this picture. Jesus is under the protection of the sovereign will and purpose of God until His hour has come. The Bible, John tells us that. Look at chapter 7 and verse 30. You see it there, just simply stated for us. So they were seeking to arrest Him, but no one laid a hand on Him because His hour had not yet come. He says the same thing in chapter 8 and verse 20. We don't even know how it is that the Father protected the Son and didn't allow these people to harm Him, but that's exactly what we read. They wanted to harm Him. They wanted to do away with Him early on in His ministry. The sovereign purposes of God prevail and nothing of that sort happened to Him.

At the same time, Jesus exercises His wisdom and His choices to leave Judea. Look at chapter 7 and verse 1 and you see that very thought. After this, Jesus went about in Galilee. He would not go about in Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill Him. No, there's the tension, isn't there? God's protection over His Son. His sovereignty is very, very real. Jesus makes choices with that in mind. It's the pattern we follow. We trust God. We make choices according to the wisdom that God has given us.

Now look at these fourth through sixth verses. He's going to Samaria and He had to pass through Samaria, so He came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, so Jesus, wearied as He was from His journey,

was sitting beside the well. It was the sixth hour. Now to begin to even understand what's going to unfold in these next verses, we've got to step into this history of hostility that exists between the Jews and the Samaritans. And to adequately understand that, we have to go back in time 930 years from this conversation.

930 years before this conversation, the nation of Israel split into two and the ten northern tribes broke away from the two southern tribes. The ten northern tribes are generally referred to as Israel or Samaria. The two southern tribes are referred to as Judah. When that split took place, they literally became two different nation states. Then, because both nations turned their back on God, engaged in idolatry, and forsook their covenant relationship, God brought judgment. First, He brought judgment to the ten northern tribes and in 722, the Assyrians came, and they took the nation of Israel into captivity. They took all the upper class and the educated and the wealthy and they deported them back to Nineveh, to Assyria. And what the Assyrians would then do is they would import other peoples, other Gentiles then were brought to live in this vacated land called Israel.

Well, what do you suppose happened? Those people that were brought in then began to intermarry with the remaining Jewish population. That's the origin of the Samaritans. They not only intermarried, which was obviously a violation of God's covenant for His people, but they intermixed their religion. The Samaritans had an odd mixture of the Old Testament. Basically, the Pentateuch is all they believed was a part of God's word to them. They rejected all the Psalms, all the Song of Solomon, all the wisdom literature, all the prophets. They didn't want to hear anything about Jerusalem. They only wanted to hear what was said in the first five books.

Then you have in 586, the Babylonians come and take away the two southern tribes. And that's when Daniel and his friends are taken and deported to Babylon. Well, 70 years later, just according to God's promise, those people came back to the land. And what did they do? They began to rebuild the walls, and they began to rebuild the temple. If your mind goes to the book of Ezra, the rebuilding of the temple, and Nehemiah, the rebuilding of the walls, you remember what happened. As the building progress is going on, who comes and says, hey, we'd like to help you. The Samaritans come down and say, we want to help you rebuild your temple,

and we want to help you rebuild your walls. Remember what Ezra and Nehemiah say? You will have nothing to do with any of this. You're no longer a part of the covenant people. You have forsaken your God. You've mixed in all kinds of idolatry and other blasphemous things. You'll have no part in this.

So you have this history of hostility. You have this centuries-old hatred that exists between the Jews and the Samaritans. I mean, think today of what happened in the early 90s in Bosnia and the hatred of those groups towards each other. Rwanda and the hatred between those groups. Think today of Palestinians and Jewish people and the long-standing distrust and hostility. We can look all through our world and see a similar thing. The point is this has been going on for 900 years. That's what John, the writer of the gospel, wants us to understand by way of the context. This is really what is the backdrop to this story.

It's an amazing picture that we move into next because next we look at a divine appointment. The divine appointment is in verse 4, speaking of Jesus. And he had to pass through Samaria. And he had to. Now you're familiar with that verse because that was our scripture memory verse for this week. And he had to pass through Samaria. Some of you wondered if I left a number off and it meant to say John 4:14, because that's a great verse. Or John 4: 24 because that's a great verse. Or John 4:34 because that's a great verse. No, I actually intended for it to be John 4:4. Not that you would pick this as your life verse, but this is the centerpiece of this story. This whole story revolves around verse 4. In fact, I love the way the King James translates verse 4. He must needs go through Samaria, right? He must needs go through Samaria. That captures what John wants us to understand. Jesus had to go through Samaria.

My question is this, in what sense did Jesus have to go through Samaria? In what sense can we say he must needs go through Samaria? I mean, just look at a map. An Orthodox Jew did not want to go through Samaria. An Orthodox Jew would either go by the Jordan River through Perea and up and then come back over into Galilee, or they would go up along the far western shore just simply to avoid Samaria. They did not want to go through and be in any way made unclean by having any contact at all with anybody who was from Samaria.

We ask the question, in what sense does John, by virtue of the Holy Spirit, mean to say to us he had to go through Samaria? Well, it can't be in an absolute sense, and it can't be in a geographic sense. There are other ways to get there. What does it mean? It means he had to in the sense that this was his mission. He had to in the sense that he was on a spiritual journey to encounter someone whom God had prepared for him to meet. This is simply an illustration of what we saw in John 3:16. For God so loved the world that he gave his only son that whoever would believe in him should not perish but have everlasting life. Jesus always acted on divine imperatives. He always sought to do the Father's will.

Look at that fourth chapter in verse 34. This could have been our Scripture memory verse, right? Jesus said to them, my food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work. This is no accident. This is not a happenstance meeting. This meeting that Jesus is going to have with this unnamed woman at the well is not her lucky day. If you're new to Covenant, the only time we use the word "luck" around here is to say we don't believe in luck. Otherwise, we don't use it. It's not a matter of luck, is it? It's not a matter of happenstance. There is no accident. In God's will and purpose for the life of his son and in fact for the life of this woman.

It's good at times to just step back. It's good at times just to step back and look at our life and to see our lives in a similar way. To see the hand of God on our life. To see in his divine providence and how he has arranged different things in our lives. Things that other people might look at and say, well, that was good fortune. Well, I'm sure glad that happened for you. Or as is so often the case, that was good luck, wasn't it? No, no, it's not. There's the divine providence of God. He is directing the affairs of our life. He's bringing this woman and Jesus together by his divine purpose and will.

How can we live? How can we live with that sense of divine appointment? How can we go through our day with much more of a vision for what God is doing around us and in us? God is never just doing one thing. God's never just doing one thing. He's always doing a lot of things. And the people that we encounter and the lives that we touch and the conversations that are before us, we need to see as divine appointments. We need to see ourselves as being on mission, right? Just as Jesus did.

Look at verse 6. Jacob's well was there. Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour. I've called this the hypostatic union. I've called this the hypostatic union. And you say, what in the world are you talking about from verse 6? Well, look at verse 6 again. Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey. Jesus was wearied. He was tired. He was thirsty. This is a picture of what theologians call the hypostatic union. The word hypostatic simply comes from the word *hupostasis*. *Hupostasis* means person. It means essence. This is a revelation to us of the uniqueness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus. Remember John 1:1, in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. Jesus is God incarnate. Jesus is not two people, divine and human. Jesus is one person. The hypostatic union speaks of the essence of our Lord as being one person but having two natures. God the Son. John 1:14, we beheld his glory. The glory of the only begotten of the Father, was wedded with, his deity was wedded with humanity. Jesus isn't a man who took on in some sense some divine spark. Jesus is very God of very God, joined with, in this unbelievable mystery that we can't comprehend, a sense of humanity. And that's exactly what John wants us to see.

We want to see that Jesus in his humanity is just exactly like us. Yet without sin. He's just exactly like us, but without sin. When Jesus cut his finger, guess what? It bled. When he was hungry, he needed to eat. When he was thirsty, he wanted something to drink. When he was tired from walking 30 miles from Jerusalem to Sychar, in the heat of the day, he needed to rest. He was exhausted. He was tired. That's what John wants us to see. He wants us to see that Jesus is sitting here at 12 o'clock noon in the heat of the day, having spent probably a day and a half walking up from Judea to pass through Samaria.

Then the conversation begins. Verses 7 through 9. A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, give me a drink. For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, how is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria? For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. I look at this and I see first of all, according to verse 7, three strikes and you're still in. Three strikes and she's still in. Three strikes, she's still up to bat. Three strikes, she's still in the batter's box. Verse 7, a woman from Samaria came to draw water.

Look at what we're told just in that brief introduction. It's the sixth hour we were told. It's 12 o'clock noon. It's the heat of the day. Nobody came to draw water during the heat of the day. You came to draw water early in the morning. You came to draw water later in the day. But here it is. It's noon. It's the heat of the day and she's coming to draw water. She comes alone. Almost certainly women would come to the well early in the morning or later in the day in a group. It was safer. It was their time of community and fellowship and interaction with each other. They always came together. They came in a group. She's alone. There's three strikes against her.

As Jesus would contemplate this divine appointment and the opportunity for a conversation to ensue, we have to see that there are three strikes against this ever happening. Number one, she's a woman and a man would not normally enter into a conversation with a woman he did not know in a public setting. And it certainly would have been true that he wouldn't do it as a Jew. The second strike against her is she's a Samaritan. It would never happen. An Orthodox Jewish man would never enter into a conversation with a woman in a public setting that he did not know, and he would most certainly never would do it if she was a Samaritan. Thirdly, she's ostracized by others. We're going to see in our study, Lord willing, next Sunday, she's probably ostracized because of her immoral life. she doesn't come with the other women, not because she wants to come at noon. She comes at noon because nobody wants her in the group when they come in the morning or when they come in the evening. She comes alone.

She comes to the well and she sees a Jewish man sitting there looking quite exhausted and she says nothing. She says nothing. Jesus is the initiator. Look at verse 7. A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, give me a drink. For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

My first question from verse 8 is how many men does it take to go buy lunch? And I'm not going to answer that question because half of my audience are men, and I don't want to offend you, and I don't want to give the other half an opportunity to laugh. I'm not even going to finish that joke, right? How many men does it take to go into Sychar to get lunch? I don't know. But I know this. My family always enjoyed when we would pull up to the ordering place

in the fast-food line and I'd call in the order. I'd put in the order. Of course, there was a time when those communication systems weren't all that good. They only got about every third word that you said. It wasn't a matter of driving up in the car and saying give me six hamburgers, six fries, and six Cokes. That would have been too easy, right? There were always special orders that I had to work into that whole process. And before I was done, almost always the entire car was laughing trying to figure out what dad was doing in placing this order. I know it takes more than one guy to go in and get it. And don't even ask me about going to Starbucks with Bonnie, because what she orders, I don't even know what it is. I have her say it word by word and then I put the order in. And I was reminded that some genius at Starbucks, instead of just doing small, medium, and large, had to do this short and tall and grande and venti or whatever it is. Kind of like messing with metrics, right? You know just small, medium, large.

But all of that to say this is all purposeful. Jesus intended for his disciples to be out of the way. This meeting that he has with this woman is by divine providence and Jesus is on a mission. She's here and this is a picture of a seeking, pursuing God. He comes to us. He's seeking you this morning. Jesus is seeking sinners who don't even know he's looking for them. And that's what's happening here. She comes, she says nothing, and Jesus breaks all the rules. He breaks all the boundaries. He overcomes all the barriers, and he says to her, give me a drink. Give me a drink. Trust me. See, she is so shocked at this point. She has no words. She doesn't even know what to say. Here is a Jewish man asking her to give her a drink.

When she gathers her thoughts, look at verse 9. The Samaritan woman said to him, how is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria? For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. This is an incredulous response. Her answer is dripping with incredulity. She is basically saying to him, how is it that you, a Jew ... and by the way, you Jews, you don't need anything from us until you need something from us. You don't want to have anything to do with us until you need something from us. That's basically what she's saying to him here. A Jew speaking to a Samaritan. It was unheard of. A man speaking to a woman he did not know. It was unheard of.

But this is the capstone. When you look at that 8th verse, for Jews have no dealings, right? That's a commentary that John gives us. For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. How

are we to understand that? Jesus just sent all his disciples into Sychar to get lunch from Samaritans. What does he mean when he says, for Jews don't have any dealings with Samaritans? If that were the case, those guys would have never gone into Sychar to get lunch.

Here's what it means. The New English translation, I think, gives us a very accurate and understanding rendering. It translates it this way. Jews use nothing in common with the Samaritans. That's a more literal rendering of this verb. Jews use nothing in common with Samaritans. So do you see what just happened? All these things that we've already rehearsed, Jesus sends the disciples, they're off, they're away from him, and he, in a conversation with a Samaritan woman in public, a Jewish man who would never do that, is not just asking this Samaritan woman for a drink. He's asking the Samaritan woman to give him a drink using her utensil. That's what's happening here. I don't have a utensil. I don't have anything to draw water with. You have it, and I'm asking you if I can use it. I'm asking you if I can have a drink out of your cup.

Now, I look at this story, and it goes on, right? This is an incredibly compelling story, and this is an incredibly convicting story, because what Jesus is showing us here, and what he's going to show us in the verses that follow, is simply again an illustration of John 3:16. God so loves the world that he's willing to overcome any and every barrier, any and every boundary. He'll break all the rules to make way for an honest conversation with a Christian. How does Jesus answer her question? Well, he doesn't. He tells her two things that she needs to know, and if you want to know what those two are, you have to come back next week, because there it is.

What do we take away? Here's what we take away. Jesus wants to disturb our comfort. Jesus wants to disturb my comfort. He wants to disturb your comfort. He wants to disturb your apathy. He wants to disturb our apathy. He wants to disturb our selfishness, our self-centeredness. He wants to disturb our busyness. He wants to disturb our walled-off lives from other people. How easy it is for us to go through life, to go through a day with tunnel vision focused on ourselves and our family and our job and our responsibilities. Then we simply miss all the divine appointments that God wants to arrange for us to have with people that he is

seeking who don't even know he's looking for him. What Jesus does is he wants us to see that everyone everywhere needs the gospel, and he wants us to share it.

The gospel, my friends, is simply this. It's bad news because all of us have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. The bad news is sin brings death. It brings separation from God in time and for all of eternity. But the good news is this, that Jesus came. He came to this earth as very God of very God, joined with very man of very man, so that he could live a perfect life, die a terrible death on the cross for you and for me. And all he asks us to do is to believe that what he did is all that needs to be done.

Your being in church this morning is a wonderful thing. Maybe you've been baptized, and that's a great thing. Maybe you give money to the poor and the needy, and that's a good thing. Maybe you're a kind neighbor. That's a good thing. Maybe you're a hard worker. That's good. But none of that – none of that – earns you heaven. The only way we enter into an eternal relationship with God in time and for all of eternity is simply to agree with what God has said about his Son Jesus, that what he did was all that needed to be done. And I say to you this morning, if you've never put your faith and trust in Christ alone, God is seeking you this morning and he wants you to put your trust and your faith in his Son Jesus.

Let's pray. Father God, I do pray that you would do this good work in my heart, Father, and in the heart of each person that's here. I pray that we truly would live life with a sense of divine purpose, divine mission, understanding that all these circumstances and conversations and events and all of the rest, Father, are just a part of your work in our lives. Help us to see with eyes of faith the people that you have placed in our path. Lord, give us courage to open our mouths, give us boldness to declare the gospel, and Father, we pray that you would open the hearts of those who hear. In Jesus' name, amen.