

“Mission to the Samaritans”

February 1, 2026

John 4:25-42

I. Introduction

Because of issues with the Pharisees and some of John the Baptist’s disciples, [John 4:3](#) says that Jesus “left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.” Choosing from 3 possible routes, Jesus chose to take the route that went directly through Samaria to return to Galilee. He was about to teach His devout Jewish disciples through a hands-on-experience that He had come to the **world** not just to the Jews. So, He led the disciples to a different culture where they would meet different people—people who the day before they would never have expected or wanted to meet. Part way through Samaria, Jesus had sent His disciples into the Samaritan city of Sychar to buy food while He rested at a well just outside the city. While the disciples were interacting with vile Samaritans in the town, Jesus was at the well talking to a Samaritan woman. This was breaking many man-made restrictions and crossed many cultural lines. To make matters even worse, this woman had such a poor reputation that it appears that she was shunned by the women of Sychar.

Like people from 2 different cultures trying to carry on a conversation, Jesus and the woman used the same words, but didn’t understand each other as Jesus talked about “[living water](#).” But Jesus was patient and the woman slowly began to comprehend what He was talking about. Eventually she acknowledged her sin and recognized her need for a Savior. When Jesus told her in [John 4:26](#)), “[I am who speaks to you](#),” i.e., He was the Messiah, she put her faith in Him and was saved. Today we pick up in the middle of the story as John recorded proofs of Jesus’ claim to be the Messiah.

II. Proofs of Jesus being the Messiah.

A. The timing was perfect. When the disciples returned from purchasing the food, they would have been shocked but perhaps not surprised to see Jesus talking with a woman; a Samaritan woman. In Judaism it was believed that for a rabbi to speak with a woman was at best a waste of time and at worst a distraction from studying the Torah—which could lead to eternal damnation. But in the months that the disciples had been with Jesus, they had learned and were still learning that their Master knew what He was doing and that He wasn’t ruled by Jewish expectations and traditions. They were beginning to understand Jesus’ loving,

unorthodox style of ministry. **Isaiah 55:8** says, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD.' So no one asked, "Why are you talking with her?"

Jesus always had good reasons for doing what He did. This was even demonstrated by His perfect timing—God's timing. If the disciples had arrived earlier, they would have interrupted the conversation before it reached its ultimate conclusion. Had they returned later, they would have missed hearing Jesus' declaration that He was the Messiah. The timing, Jesus 'timing was perfect as He said that He was the Messiah.

B. The Samaritan woman's response to Jesus. As one who now believed in Jesus, the Messiah, the Samaritan woman wanted to share her faith with others. Why she left her water jar behind isn't stated. Whatever the reason and people have come up with many, the detail adds a touch of realism and indicates that the author of this gospel was an eyewitness to this particular incident. The Samaritan's woman response to Jesus was a 2nd proof of Jesus being the Messiah.

So, "Leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town." Considering how little spiritual truth she knew, her zeal and her witness puts us all to shame. On top of that, considering her well-known reputation, she took a tremendous risk when she returned to her town and told the people "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did." But she was willing and enthusiastic and her willingness and enthusiasm to share indicated that her conversion was genuine; at the same time this enthusiasm caused others to listen to her and respond.

With caution and respect, she tactfully asked them, "Could this be the Christ?" The wording in the Greek leads to a somewhat negative response. The woman described her conversation with Jesus and then humbly deferred the question of His identify to the people. She let them make their own conclusion. The people were so impressed by her excitement and sincerity that "they came out of the town and made their way toward him" to investigate for themselves.

C. Jesus' relationship to the Father. After the woman left, the "disciples urged him, i.e., Jesus, to eat something" because they knew He was hungry. "I have food to eat that you know nothing about" was His

reply and, as usual, they did not understand—basically, they were from a different culture, too. They thought He was speaking of literal food, and they wondered where He got it.

Jesus responded to their confusion by teaching them a critical spiritual truth from Moses in [Deut. 8:3](#), “**Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.**” These are the same words Jesus quoted to Satan during His temptation in [Matthew 4:4](#). Jesus explained that doing the Father’s will—in this case, leading the woman to salvation—was true nourishment for His soul. The disciples were satisfied with bread, but He was satisfied with accomplishing the Father’s work. **Turn to [John 6:38-40](#).** Jesus’ relationship to the Father was proof of His being the Messiah.

Jesus didn’t look on the Father’s will as some heavy burden imposed on Him. He viewed God’s work as the very nourishment for His soul. Doing His Father’s will fed Him and satisfied Him inwardly; as David wrote in [Psalm 40:8](#), “**I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.**” Throughout His ministry, Jesus lived in complete obedience to the Father’s will until His cry of triumph from the cross, “**It is finished!**” ([John 19:30](#)), marked the completion of His mission on the earth.

Jesus then changed the image from that of food to that of the harvest, which is the source of food. “**I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields. They are ripe for harvest.**” The image of the harvest is a familiar one in the Bible and is often applied to the ministry of winning lost souls. Using the grain growing in the surrounding fields as an object lesson, Jesus impressed on the disciples the urgency of reaching the lost. There was no need to wait four months; the spiritual fields were already “**ripe for harvest.**”

No doubt when the disciples approached the city of Sychar, they had said, “*There can be no harvest here! These people despise us Jews and would have no use for our message.*” But just the opposite was true. The harvest was ready and only needed faithful workers to claim it. The disciples only had to lift up their eyes and look at the Samaritans coming toward them. Their white clothing against the brilliant green of the ripening grain must have looked like white heads on the stalks that indicated the time for harvest. By telling the disciples that “**even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life,**” Jesus was emphasizing their responsibility to participate in the harvest of souls.

In the physical world, the same farmer who sows the seed usually reaps the harvest. But that is often not the case in the spiritual world. But there must be no competition in the Lord's harvest. Each of us is assigned a task and we are all part of each other's labors. One sows; another reaps; but each worker gets his honest reward for the work he has done. Paul had reminded the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 3:6, “I planted, Apollos watered, but God made it grow.” When Jesus said, “I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work,” He was implying that others had labored in Samaria and had prepared the way for this harvest. Perhaps they were Moses and the Pentateuch or John the Baptist or some of John's followers, definitely there was the Samaritan woman—God knows and He will reward them. But it was Jesus and His disciples who would have the privilege of sharing in the resulting harvest. .

D. The Samaritans response to Jesus. As Jesus finished teaching His disciples, the Samaritans entered the story. Many of the Samaritans believed because of the testimony of the woman, and then many more believed when they heard Jesus personally. “Now we know!” was their testimony. They were so excited about Him that all prejudices were brushed aside as they begged Jesus and His disciples to stay with them. “And He stayed for two more days.” During this short time, His word produced fruit in their lives—John wrote that “many more became believers.” The Samaritan's response to Jesus proved Jesus was the Messiah.

The Samaritans' confession of Jesus as “the Savior of the world” was especially significant because they weren't Jewish. Had He come only to save Israel, as the Jews preferred to think, the Samaritans would have been excluded. Through His conversation with a non-Jewish woman, Jesus gave an entire non-Jewish village the opportunity to receive salvation. In doing so, He set the precedent for the worldwide impact of His saving work. As His forerunner, John the Baptist, had exclaimed in John 1:29: “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

III. Conclusion

The lessons Jesus taught His disciples are for each of us as well. First, we are not alone in the work for the Lord. It takes faith to plow the soil and faith to plant the seed, but God has promised a harvest. Turn to Psalm 126:5-6. In Galatians 6:9 Paul wrote, “Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper

time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.” Those who sow may not see the harvest, but those who reap will see it and give thanks for the faithful labors of the sowers. [Daniel 12:3](#) says, “Those who are wise will shine as bright as the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness will shine like the stars forever.”

Second, we must never look at any opportunity to witness as wasted time and energy—we must use every opportunity to witness to others. [2 Corinthians 9:6](#) reminds us, “Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.” God will reward every Christian for his work—addressing Christians in [Revelation 22:12](#) Jesus said, “Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.” Sowing, cultivating, and harvesting are difficult tasks, not only in the physical world, but also in the spiritual world. There is no place in the harvest for lazy people. The work is difficult and the laborers are few, but the rewards are eternal.

The third lesson is (as it was for Jesus) doing the will of God should be a source of strength and satisfaction for the child of God. [1 Peter 2:21](#) says, “To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.” Doing the will of God should be a source of strength and satisfaction for every Christian. It should be our prime directive. This is what Jesus meant in [Luke 14:26](#) where He said, “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters-- yes, even his own life-- he cannot be my disciple.” As Jesus told His disciples in [John 4:34](#), “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.”

So how about you, are you a disciple of Jesus Christ? Do you use the opportunities God sends you to be a witness for Him? This isn’t just what you say, but, also, in what you do. Is doing God’s will high on your list of priorities—is it number 1? Do you enjoy—even look forward—to doing “God things” or is it the last thing on your mind? Let me close with [1 Pet. 2:9, 12](#): “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light....Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.”

Communion Devotion – February 1, 2026
1 Corinthians 11:23-30

The Lord's Table is a time for those who have chosen to accept God's offer of a pardon for their sins and who have made Jesus their Savior and Lord ([Romans 10:9](#)) to give thanks to God for His love, His mercy, and His grace. As you take the bread, it is a time to be reminded of what Jesus did for you. It is a time to thank Him for His body given in your place. [Isaiah 53:5](#) says, “[He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.](#)” [John 1:12](#) says that “[to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.](#)” As a child of God, there is nothing to fear in the present or the future—you can be at peace, God has everything under control. It's because of God's agape love that we can be at peace—we know “the rest of the story”—we know how it will end.

When we take the cup, we are reminded that Jesus shed His blood for our sins. As we just read in [1 Corinthians 11](#), the Lord's Table is also a time for each Christian to take inventory—a sin inventory—of his or her life. In [1 Corinthians 6:19-20](#) the Apostle Paul wrote, “[Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your body.](#)” When you became a Christian you made Jesus your Lord as well as your Savior. Is Jesus really your Lord? Look at your heart and your mind, do you truly honor God with what you do and think? Do you look forward to doing “God things?” If not—if some sin has crept into your life, confess it to the Lord and ask Him to help you get rid of it.

This morning, during the quiet time while the elements are being passed, thank the Lord for the gift of salvation and then take time to do some heart searching.