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THE GOSPEL OF JESUS

## THE COWARD AND THE LOVER

JOHN 4:3-43

### I. INTRODUCTION

A. In our last teaching, we talked about John the Baptist being still alive at the time, but that he would soon be put in prison and die at the hands of Herod, for telling his something that he didn't want to hear.

1. Well, there is more to that story and that is where will begin in this study.

II. **MAR 6:17-29 (NKJV)** FOR HEROD HIMSELF HAD SENT AND LAID HOLD OF JOHN, AND BOUND HIM IN PRISON FOR THE SAKE OF HERODIAS, HIS BROTHER PHILIP'S WIFE; FOR HE HAD MARRIED HER. **18** BECAUSE JOHN HAD SAID TO HEROD, "IT IS NOT LAWFUL FOR YOU TO HAVE YOUR BROTHER'S WIFE." **19** THEREFORE HERODIAS HELD IT AGAINST HIM AND WANTED TO KILL HIM, BUT SHE COULD NOT; **20** FOR HEROD FEARED JOHN, KNOWING THAT HE *WAS* A JUST AND HOLY MAN, AND HE PROTECTED HIM. AND WHEN HE HEARD HIM, HE DID MANY THINGS, AND HEARD HIM GLADLY. **21** THEN AN OPPORTUNE DAY CAME WHEN HEROD ON HIS BIRTHDAY GAVE A FEAST FOR HIS NOBLES, THE HIGH OFFICERS, AND THE CHIEF *MEN* OF GALILEE. **22** AND WHEN HERODIAS' DAUGHTER HERSELF CAME IN AND DANCED, AND PLEASED HEROD AND THOSE WHO SAT WITH HIM, THE KING SAID TO THE GIRL, "ASK ME WHATEVER YOU WANT, AND I WILL GIVE *IT* TO YOU." **23** HE ALSO SWORE TO HER, "WHATEVER YOU ASK ME, I WILL GIVE YOU, UP TO HALF MY KINGDOM." **24** SO SHE WENT OUT AND SAID TO HER MOTHER, "WHAT SHALL I ASK?" AND SHE SAID, "THE HEAD OF JOHN THE BAPTIST!" **25** IMMEDIATELY SHE CAME IN WITH HASTE TO THE KING AND ASKED, SAYING, "I WANT YOU TO GIVE ME AT ONCE THE HEAD OF JOHN THE BAPTIST ON A PLATTER." **26** AND THE KING WAS EXCEEDINGLY SORRY; *YET*, BECAUSE OF THE OATHS AND BECAUSE OF THOSE WHO SAT WITH HIM, HE DID NOT WANT TO REFUSE HER. **27** IMMEDIATELY THE KING SENT AN EXECUTIONER AND COMMANDED HIS HEAD TO BE BROUGHT. AND HE WENT AND BEHEADED HIM IN PRISON, **28** BROUGHT HIS HEAD ON A PLATTER, AND GAVE IT TO THE GIRL; AND THE GIRL GAVE IT TO HER MOTHER. **29** WHEN HIS DISCIPLES HEARD *OF IT*, THEY CAME AND TOOK AWAY HIS CORPSE AND LAID IT IN A TOMB.

A. This gives the gruesome details of John the Baptist's death although it is in the "past tense".

1. Meaning that Mark is telling us what has already happened.

a) You see Herod actually like John. He was fascinated with him and convicted at the same time.

b) He didn't know exactly what to do with him.

c) He liked talking to John and did so often, but it was very unsettling because John didn't pull any punches when it came to repentance of sin and Herod was in sin!

(1) So, for a while, John just sat in prison.

2. King Herod, was not actually a king at all!
  - a) Story has it that Emperor Augustus denied the title “king” to Herod. But he had a VERY ambitious wife – Herodias.
    - (1) Goaded by his wife, Herod pressed for the title again and again until he so offended the emperor’s court that he was dismissed as a traitor. (David Guzik’s Commentary)
      - (a) So, Herod is pretty spineless and easily manipulated.
        - (i) Not good qualities for a would be “king”.
3. Herodias was furious with John for calling out her and Herod’s sin and she wanted him dead.
  - a) She found that opportunity when Herod threw himself a birthday party, and she sent her young daughter Salome’ in to do a very seductive dance in front of Herod and his buddies.
  - b) It worked! Herod promised her anything she wanted, and she wanted John head on a platter because that is what mommy wanted!
    - (1) Spineless Herod – couldn’t back down at this point and John was executed!

B. Before we move on – what can we learn this?

1. Selfish ambition muddies our thinking processes and can very much alter the outcome of any situation.
  - a) **Php 2:3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.**
    - (1) Too much emotion can do the same thing!
2. Pride is a terrible reason to make a bad choice.
  - a) **1Jn 2:16 For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.**
    - (1) Herod failed in all three of these areas!
3. If your spouse or anyone else wants you to do something that you know is wrong – DON’T JUST GO ALONG WITH IT!

III. **JOH 4:3-4 (NKJV) HE (MEANING JESUS) LEFT JUDEA AND DEPARTED AGAIN TO GALILEE. 4 BUT HE NEEDED TO GO THROUGH SAMARIA.**

A. Samaria was the shortest route to Galilee, but most Jews avoided it like the plague!

1. They considered the Samaritans to pretty much be “low-lives”. Even despised more than the Gentiles.
2. To quote David Guzik: *When the southern kingdom of Judah was conquered by the Babylonians, they took almost every captive, exiling them to the Babylonian Empire. All they left behind were the lowest classes of society, because they didn’t want “that type” in Babylonia.*
  - a) From a religious point of view, they considered them “half-breeds”, mongrels of the Jewish faith.
    - (1) So - for Jesus to head to Galilee through Samaria, was out of the ordinary. But Jesus always has a reason for what He does.

IV. **JOH 4:5-6 SO HE CAME TO A CITY OF SAMARIA WHICH IS CALLED SYCHAR, NEAR THE PLOT OF GROUND THAT JACOB GAVE TO HIS SON JOSEPH. 6 NOW JACOB'S**

**WELL WAS THERE. JESUS THEREFORE, BEING WEARIED FROM *HIS* JOURNEY, SAT THUS BY THE WELL. IT WAS ABOUT THE SIXTH HOUR.**

A. This “sixth hour” can be a little confusing because if John was using Jewish time, it would have been noon.

1. If it was Roman time it would have been six o’clock in the evening.
  - a) Either way it doesn’t change the fact that He was thirsty.

**V. JOH 4:7-10 A WOMAN OF SAMARIA CAME TO DRAW WATER. JESUS SAID TO HER, "GIVE ME A DRINK." 8 FOR HIS DISCIPLES HAD GONE AWAY INTO THE CITY TO BUY FOOD. 9 THEN THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA SAID TO HIM, "HOW IS IT THAT YOU, BEING A JEW, ASK A DRINK FROM ME, A SAMARITAN WOMAN?" FOR JEWS HAVE NO DEALINGS WITH SAMARITANS. 10 JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID TO HER, "IF YOU KNEW THE GIFT OF GOD, AND WHO IT IS WHO SAYS TO YOU, 'GIVE ME A DRINK,' YOU WOULD HAVE ASKED HIM, AND HE WOULD HAVE GIVEN YOU LIVING WATER."**

A. The woman is more than a little shocked at Jesus’ request considering what we have just discussed.

1. In that day and age, a Rabbi did not speak to a woman in public and it is very possible that it was the first time that she had ever spoken to a Jewish man.
2. In a nutshell, Jesus basically says, “If you knew who I was, you would be asking me for a drink of water!”
  - a) I love how the Lord always knows what our deepest need is even when we don’t. And that is often.

**VI. JOH 4:11-12 THE WOMAN SAID TO HIM, "SIR, YOU HAVE NOTHING TO DRAW WITH, AND THE WELL IS DEEP. WHERE THEN DO YOU GET THAT LIVING WATER? 12 ARE YOU GREATER THAN OUR FATHER JACOB, WHO GAVE US THE WELL, AND DRANK FROM IT HIMSELF, AS WELL AS HIS SONS AND HIS LIVESTOCK?"**

A. As is usually the case Jesus is talking about her Spiritual needs and she is doing her best to understand by relating it to what is around her.

1. She most likely figured that being a Jew, He would not want her touching His water, and she could see that he had no way to get that water he was talking about. Or perhaps I should say, “The water she ‘thought’ He was talking about?”

**VII. JOH 4:13-14 JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID TO HER, "WHOEVER DRINKS OF THIS WATER WILL THIRST AGAIN, 14 BUT WHOEVER DRINKS OF THE WATER THAT I SHALL GIVE HIM WILL NEVER THIRST. BUT THE WATER THAT I SHALL GIVE HIM WILL BECOME IN HIM A FOUNTAIN OF WATER SPRINGING UP INTO EVERLASTING LIFE."**

A. She is thinking “fountain of youth”! But Jesus is not. He is thinking “Fountain of Life”.

**VIII. JOH 4:15 THE WOMAN SAID TO HIM, "SIR, GIVE ME THIS WATER, THAT I MAY NOT THIRST, NOR COME HERE TO DRAW."**

- A. "Never thirsty and never having to come here every day and draw water from this well, I am in!"
1. Another interesting to note is that at that time, a natural spring was referred to as "living water" as opposed to a lake or the very well that was in front of them!
    - a) Jesus is drawing her in..

**IX. JOH 4:16-17-18 JESUS SAID TO HER, "GO, CALL YOUR HUSBAND, AND COME HERE." 17 THE WOMAN ANSWERED AND SAID, "I HAVE NO HUSBAND." JESUS SAID TO HER, "YOU HAVE WELL SAID, 'I HAVE NO HUSBAND,' 18 FOR YOU HAVE HAD FIVE HUSBANDS, AND THE ONE WHOM YOU NOW HAVE IS NOT YOUR HUSBAND; IN THAT YOU SPOKE TRULY."**

- A. This had to blow her away. She just met Him. There is no way that He could know this in the flesh.

**X. JOH 4:19-20 THE WOMAN SAID TO HIM, "SIR, I PERCEIVE THAT YOU ARE A PROPHET. 20 OUR FATHERS WORSHIPED ON THIS MOUNTAIN, AND YOU JEWS SAY THAT IN JERUSALEM IS THE PLACE WHERE ONE OUGHT TO WORSHIP."**

- A. She's not going down without a fight!

1. This is the modern-day equivalent of, "There are lots of religions in the world, what makes you think you are right?"
  - a) Look at His answer.

**XI. JOH 4:21-24 JESUS SAID TO HER, "WOMAN, BELIEVE ME, THE HOUR IS COMING WHEN YOU WILL NEITHER ON THIS MOUNTAIN, NOR IN JERUSALEM, WORSHIP THE FATHER. 22 YOU WORSHIP WHAT YOU DO NOT KNOW; WE KNOW WHAT WE WORSHIP, FOR SALVATION IS OF THE JEWS. 23 BUT THE HOUR IS COMING, AND NOW IS, WHEN THE TRUE WORSHIPERS WILL WORSHIP THE FATHER IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH; FOR THE FATHER IS SEEKING SUCH TO WORSHIP HIM. 24 GOD IS SPIRIT, AND THOSE WHO WORSHIP HIM MUST WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH."**

- A. "You do not know who or what you worship!"

1. And basically He is telling her that neither one of the two groups had it right.
  - a) Religion usually gets it wrong.

**XII. JOH 4:25 THE WOMAN SAID TO HIM, "I KNOW THAT MESSIAH IS COMING" (WHO IS CALLED CHRIST). "WHEN HE COMES, HE WILL TELL US ALL THINGS."**

- A. "I go to church, I even know that the Messiah is coming and when He does He will straighten all this out!"

**XIII. JOH 4:26-30 JESUS SAID TO HER, "I WHO SPEAK TO YOU AM HE." 27 AND AT THIS POINT HIS DISCIPLES CAME, AND THEY MARVELED THAT HE TALKED WITH A WOMAN; YET NO ONE SAID, "WHAT DO YOU SEEK?" OR, "WHY ARE YOU TALKING WITH HER?" 28 THE WOMAN THEN LEFT HER WATERPOT, WENT HER WAY INTO THE CITY, AND SAID TO THE MEN, 29 "COME, SEE A MAN WHO TOLD ME ALL THINGS THAT I EVER DID. COULD THIS BE THE CHRIST?" 30 THEN THEY WENT OUT**

## OF THE CITY AND CAME TO HIM.

A. Jesus' reply? You're looking at Him!

**XIV. JOH 31-38** IN THE MEANTIME HIS DISCIPLES URGED HIM, SAYING, "RABBI, EAT." **32** BUT HE SAID TO THEM, "I HAVE FOOD TO EAT OF WHICH YOU DO NOT KNOW." **33** THEREFORE THE DISCIPLES SAID TO ONE ANOTHER, "HAS ANYONE BROUGHT HIM *ANYTHING* TO EAT?" **34** JESUS SAID TO THEM, "MY FOOD IS TO DO THE WILL OF HIM WHO SENT ME, AND TO FINISH HIS WORK. **35** DO YOU NOT SAY, 'THERE ARE STILL FOUR MONTHS AND *THEN* COMES THE HARVEST'? BEHOLD, I SAY TO YOU, LIFT UP YOUR EYES AND LOOK AT THE FIELDS, FOR THEY ARE ALREADY WHITE FOR HARVEST! **36** AND HE WHO REAPS RECEIVES WAGES, AND GATHERS FRUIT FOR ETERNAL LIFE, THAT BOTH HE WHO SOWS AND HE WHO REAPS MAY REJOICE TOGETHER. **37** FOR IN THIS THE SAYING IS TRUE: 'ONE SOWS AND ANOTHER REAPS.' **38** I SENT YOU TO REAP THAT FOR WHICH YOU HAVE NOT LABORED; OTHERS HAVE LABORED, AND YOU HAVE ENTERED INTO THEIR LABORS."

A. Remember Jesus had sent them for food.

1. Jesus had been doing His Father's work and will and that was more important to Him than real food.
2. They disciple had just brought back food that they did not sow nor reap; but enjoyed the "fruits" thereof.
  - a) He is telling them they need to be harvesting for the Lord.
    - (1) Someone else may have planted and someone else may have watered, but now – the harvest is ready!
    - (2) And THAT fruit – is eternal life for those who believe.
    - (3) Not to mention that because of His own planting and sowing in the life of the Samaritan woman – there is a harvest coming!

## XV. CONCLUSION

A. **Joh 4:39-41** And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I *ever* did." **40** So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. **41** And many more believed because of His own word. **42** Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard *Him* and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."