

John 4vs27-54

The Proper Response...

© St Helen's Church

Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version, published by Harper Collins Publishers. © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers.

Used by Permission. All rights reserved.

The Proper Response...

John 4 vs 27-54

We arrive at the end of the section that started with the wedding at Cana – with the behaviour of the ultimate Bridegroom and the miraculous provision of the magnificent wine at the feast.

Now the section concludes with the conquering of death itself.

Jesus is demonstrating that he is all that the prophet Isaiah foretold 700 years before:

*ISAIAH 25 vs 6-9: On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined.
7 And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations.
8 He will swallow up death for ever; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken.
9 It will be said on that day, "Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is the LORD; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation."*

Time to recap....

- What does Jesus offer? Life with him for eternity
- How does the offer come Being born again through washing (forgiveness) and a new heart (God's Spirit living in us)
- To whom is the offer made? To all through GRACE
- What does he want? True worship!

And in this passage the question is what was Jesus' Mission?

The mission at hand...

JOHN 4 vs 27-30: *Just then his disciples came back. They marvelled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, “What do you seek?” or, “Why are you talking with her?”* ²⁸ *So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people,* ²⁹ *“Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?”* ³⁰ *They went out of the town and were coming to him.*

- v 27 - The disciples come back... we have already realised how shocking it was that Jesus was talking to this Samaritan woman – now they too are seriously shocked!

v 27: ***They marvelled that he was talking with a woman...***

But they didn't say: ***“WHY are you talking with HER?!”***

- vs 28-29 - She is an outcast figure – not exactly likely to have been “in” with the townsfolk...

YET - She leaves for town – and boldly starts to speak of Jesus:

v 29: ***“Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?”***

- v 30 - The townsfolk set out to find Jesus. Imagine the crowd turning up, walking across the fields to find him.

4 vs 31-38: *Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.”* ³² *But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.”* ³³ *So the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought him something to eat?”* ³⁴ *Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.* ³⁵ *Do you not say, “There are yet four months, then comes the harvest”? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest.* ³⁶ *Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together.* ³⁷ *For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’* ³⁸ *I sent you to reap that for which you did not labour. Others have laboured, and you have entered into their labour.”*

- v 31 - Meanwhile... the disciples are thinking practically – Jesus should eat something!
- v 32: ***“I have food to eat that you do not know about”***
- v 33 - They think someone must have popped out to get him a sandwich from the local sandwich bar!
- NO! Jesus says that his ***‘food’*** is to do God's ***will*** and God's ***work*** - v 34 :

“My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.”

This leads to a big question – what is God’s **will** and what is God’s **work**?

4 v 35: “**...Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest.**”

What is Jesus telling them to look at?

- Corn goes **white for harvest** time...
- but as the disciples lift up their eyes, what they see is not corn but the townsfolk streaming towards them across the fields!

4 v 36: “*Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together.*”

- A loose translation could be “*Look disciples – STOP thinking about your stomachs – I have come to do something far more important... the will of God, the work of God - to gather a harvest of people for eternity...*”

Put simply – the disciples are thinking of physical needs – whereas Jesus is concerned about the spiritual!

So - in this section of John:

- Chapter 2: Starts with the new creation – a feast... and wonderful wine
- Chapter 4: Ends with Jesus’ mission statement – to bring people to the new Creation:

v 36: “***gathering fruit for eternal life***”

- THIS is GOD’S will!
- THIS is Jesus’ work

Hence: v 36 loosely translates - ‘**SEIZE the moment!** – *It’s harvest time NOW - get cracking!*’

- Jesus sows... the ‘reapers’ are the disciples... and they have work to do!

The shock for the disciples?

- The harvest starts with this woman – a Samaritan no less!
- Now they look up and see a whole village of Samaritans coming!

v 35: ***“Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest.”***

Jesus' work - and God's will - is to draw people into the Kingdom regardless of:

- Race
- Religion
- Background

Consider... do we realise the time we're living in?

From the moment that Jesus arrived (with his mission to gather his people) we are living in:

- **THE** “harvest time”. It might have taken thousands of years to get to this point but these are the end times... It's harvest time!

We are offered the same chance as the Samaritans from that town –

- to enjoy entry now into Jesus' new Creation.

Now is the time of the harvest – and it's a global harvest!

Whole town won over!

JOHN 4 vs 39-42: Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, “He told me all that I ever did.”⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days.⁴¹ And many more believed because of his word.⁴² They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world.”

Jesus has come to gather v 36 genuine '**fruit**' – what's the response he's looking for?

Well... we've seen that the Samaritan woman:

- Hears Jesus' words
- Believes
- Tells others

Now the Samaritans:

- **Believe** v 39: ***because of the woman's testimony***
- **Believe** v 41: ***because of his word***
- Recognise Jesus as v 42: ***the Saviour of the world!***

What a fascinating comment – v 41: ***And many more believed because of his word.***

- It wasn't the miracles that did it – it was **HIS WORD!**

Let's just pause and look back again to John chapter 2:

JOHN 2 vs 22-25: *When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.²³ Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing.²⁴ But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people²⁵ and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.*

John 2 v 22 - the disciples heard Jesus' ***word*** – later they remembered what ***he had said... and they believed the Scripture and the WORD that Jesus had spoken.***

In contrast - in John 2 vs 23-25 we read of Jesus reaction to belief based on just ***the signs that he was doing...***

- So Jesus makes clear by his attitude to people ('**man**') that he thinks they might just as well have a belief based on a magician's tricks!

Back to John 4 vs 39-42:

It is clear from the Samaritans that the real '**fruit**' that Jesus talks of in v 36 comes from believing in Jesus' ***word...*** Vs 41: ***And many more believed because of his word.***

...And therefore - not simply relying on the signs he gives.

As far as Jesus is concerned, it seems signs and wonders do not produce genuine faith.

True faith is based on Jesus' ***word***, as he explains the significance of the unique signs that he did when he walked the earth.

I came...I ~~saw~~ heard... I believed!

JOHN 4 vs 43-54: *After the two days he departed for Galilee. ⁴⁴ (For Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honour in his own home town.) ⁴⁵ So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast. For they too had gone to the feast.*

⁴⁶ So he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. And at Capernaum there was an official whose son was ill. ⁴⁷ When this man heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. ⁴⁸ So Jesus said to him, "Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe." ⁴⁹ The official said to him, "Sir, come down before my child dies." ⁵⁰ Jesus said to him, "Go; your son will live." The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way. ⁵¹ As he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was recovering. ⁵² So he asked them the hour when he began to get better, and they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him." ⁵³ The father knew that was the hour when Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." And he himself believed, and all his household. ⁵⁴ This was now the second sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea to Galilee.

v 46: ***So he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine.***

- vs 43-46 show Jesus arriving back in Cana in Galilee... where Jesus did his first miracle back in Chapter 2, at the wedding.

We have learned that the wedding feast and the conquering of death are two signs which together connect to the promises of Isaiah 25 - that God's King will:

- answer death and
- bring in the new creation.

So now we arrive at v 47: In Cana... Jesus is now asked to come and heal this Official's son:

...he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death

However Jesus' response in v 48 "***Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe***"!! ...ties in precisely with what he objected to back in:

JOHN 2 vs 23-25: *Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing. ²⁴ But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people ²⁵ and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.*

But by verse 50 things have changed...

v 50: ***The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way.***

- The official ***believed the word*** – that Jesus spoke
- Just as the Samaritans had done in v 42:

“...we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world.”

vs 51 & 52 – The official was right to believe:

51 As he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was recovering. 52 So he asked them the hour when he began to get better, and they said to him, “Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.”

v 53 ***And he himself believed, and all his household.***

- So - not just the official, but all his household believed as well!

This story of the Official is a summary passage that captures much of what we have learned in this section of John’s Gospel from Chapters 2-4:

- The only way that any of us can believe... is to listen to Jesus’ ***word***
... and learning to TRUST Him!

v 50 ***The man believed the word that Jesus spoke***

v 53 ***And he himself believed, and all his household.***

Consider...

It’s a good time to ask ourselves some questions....

First - have I now got reached the position of the Samaritan villagers?

- They are able to say – vs 42: ***It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world.”***
 - Can you say this for yourself?

Second - how is it that the Samaritan villagers reach this point?

- They listen to Jesus' **word** and believe what he has to say. V

v 41 ***And many more believed because of his word.***

- So how can one get to the point of belief?
 - Keep listening to Jesus' **word**...

Third: if we are able to say what the Samaritan villagers say, ***'this is indeed the Saviour of the world'*** then what does Jesus want from us?

- The Father is seeking true worshippers who worship Him in Spirit and in truth.
- Remember John 4 v 23?

“But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.”

Fourth: what will it look like to worship him in Spirit and in truth?

- I will need to go back to Jesus' **word** to be taught how to do it!

We could say to God:

“If you are there and this is true, help me to listen carefully to your word.

Help me to believe it, and to put my trust in you”

What comes next..?

A whole new section, as we start to look at what Jesus' work is...

John 4 vs 27-54

²⁷ Just then his disciples came back. They marvelled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, “What do you seek?” or, “Why are you talking with her?” ²⁸ So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, ²⁹ “Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?” ³⁰ They went out of the town and were coming to him.

³¹ Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.” ³² But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” ³³ So the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought him something to eat?” ³⁴ Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work. ³⁵ Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, then comes the harvest’? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. ³⁶ Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. ³⁷ For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ ³⁸ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labour. Others have laboured, and you have entered into their labour.”

³⁹ Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, “He told me all that I ever did.” ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. ⁴¹ And many more believed because of his word. ⁴² They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world.”

⁴³ After the two days he departed for Galilee. ⁴⁴ (For Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honour in his own home town.) ⁴⁵ So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast. For they too had gone to the feast.

⁴⁶ So he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. And at Capernaum there was an official whose son was ill. ⁴⁷ When this man heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. ⁴⁸ So Jesus said to him, “Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe.” ⁴⁹ The official said to him, “Sir, come down before my child dies.” ⁵⁰ Jesus said to him, “Go; your son will live.” The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way. ⁵¹ As he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was recovering. ⁵² So he asked them the hour when he began to get better, and they said to him, “Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.” ⁵³ The father knew that was the hour when Jesus had said to him, “Your son will live.” And he himself believed, and all his household. ⁵⁴ This was now the second sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea to Galilee.