

### “Doing the Will of God in 2010”

By this time the woman got it, but the disciples had not.

At first she did not understand why Jesus was there; much less what he was talking about. The woman was confused.

Confused as to why Jesus was even talking to her.

She was a woman. Men did not talk to women in public back in those days, especially if they were alone. Not only was she a woman, but she was also a sinful woman. This lady had five husbands and the man she was now living with she was not even married to. That's why she showed up at the well in the afternoon. So she could draw water when nobody else was around.

And why would a rabbi talk to such a sinner? Why would he dare ask her for a drink of water?

But not only was she a sinful woman she was also a woman from Samaria. What was Jesus doing hanging out on that side of town? Did he not know that Jews and Samaritans don't speak to one another? Had he forgotten about the contempt they had for one another? This was all very confusing to her.

Then there were the words of Jesus. That was confusing too. What in the world was he talking about?

What did he mean when he said to her, “If you knew who it was that was asking you for a drink you'd be asking me instead of me asking you!” (Jn. 4:10)

Or how about when Jesus said, “Everyone who drinks water from this well will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks from the water I give will never thirst.”

Or what about all that stuff about worshipping God on this mountain or that mountain, and how in the end the only thing that matters is whether or not you “worship God in spirit and truth.”

Jesus was speaking spiritually. She was thinking literally. It all went over her head, at first. But then she finally got it. In John 4:26 Jesus told her that **he** was the Messiah whom she believed would one day come to clear up her confusion.

She finally believed. She believed because the Spirit of God opened up her eyes and gave her the grace to believe. And now, because she gets it, she runs back to her hometown and begins to invite all of the townspeople to “come and see a man who told me everything I ever did.” (v.29)

Suddenly all of the shame and guilt of her failed relationships and “loose living” had been lifted. She was touched by the grace of God and was born again by the Spirit of God, and she knew that her sins were now forgiven and that she had been set free from her past.

Why else would this woman go and tell the townspeople to come and hear the man who told her **everything** about her past?

So when she asked, “Could this be the Christ?” in v.29 it was not because she was still having reservations about Jesus, but it was because she was trying to *pull her neighbors in* so they too would come and hear this man.

### **The Confusion of the Disciples**

The woman now gets it, but not Jesus’ disciples.

They were astonished, aghast that Jesus was talking to her.

They could not believe their eyes so they asked him, “What is it that you could possibly want that would necessitate you talking to her? What were you thinking, Jesus?” (v. 27)

The disciples, just like the Samaritan woman used to be, was shocked that Jesus was talking to her.

Not only that, they too, just like the woman used to be, were also confused by the words of Jesus.

The disciples were interpreting his words on the surface, totally missing the deeper spiritual meaning of what he was saying.

The disciples had left earlier to go and get food and while they were gone Jesus entered into a discussion with this Samaritan woman. When they came back they insisted that Jesus stop his conversation with the woman and eat some food for his tired, famished body.

Jesus told his disciples that “he had food to eat they knew nothing about” and just like the Samaritan woman who thought Jesus was talking about literal water and not spiritual water, so too did the disciples think Jesus was talking about literal food, not the spiritual food that comes from God.

So the disciples asked, “Could someone have already brought him food??” (v.33)

To this Jesus replied, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.” (v.34)

In other words, my food is the food that comes from my relationship with the Father and the meal that I eat is the will of God and it is my intent to finish this meal- to complete the task to which the Father has sent me into the world for.

All of this went right over the disciple’s heads.

If they had understood this then they would have not been surprised to find him talking to this woman.

His purpose, his goal in life, was to do the will of the Father and it was the will of the Father that the Son be sent into the world in order to save lost sinners.

The disciples should have understood this, but they didn't. That's why Jesus did his whole spill about the harvest imagery. (v.35-38)

### **The Fields Are Ripe for Harvest**

Come guys, you understand how the harvest works! The sower plants the seed (God). The seed germinates and then four months later the reaper reaps the harvest (Jesus). "Open your eyes disciples and look at the fields! They are ripe for the harvest." (v.35)

In other words, what I am telling you is that this Samaritan woman is one of those seeds who have been germinating in the ground. The Spirit has been working on her heart and now she is ready to hear the good news that I bring to her as Savior. That is why I asked her for a drink of water. So that I might speak to her about the living water of God that will forever quench her thirst.

There is a famous saying from Saint Augustine from a long time ago. I am sure some of you have heard it before. "Our hearts are restless until they find rest in thee." That's what Jesus came to do for this woman. He came in order to fill that God-shaped vacuum that is in the heart of every man.

This is what brought Jesus his greatest **joy** in life- to share in the will of his Father; to do His will, to eat the food that his Father had given him. "Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the reaper (the Son) and the sower (the Father) may be **glad** together." (v.36)

Disciples, you understand that don't you? Well if you understand how the harvest works then you should understand that I have sent **you** to reap as well. (v.38)

So what Jesus was telling them was that it was not just about him doing the will of the Father in his life but it was also about the **disciples** doing the will of God in their own lives. That is where they will find their greatest joy. If they will remain in Christ, if they will do his will, then the joy of Christ will be in them and their joy "will be complete." (Jn. 15:11)

### **Application of the Text for Christian Living**

Today we are beginning another new year in our personal lives and in the life of the church.

A new year provides us with new opportunities to make new commitments in our lives. I would like to offer three things to you from the text this morning as points of application for your Christian lives.

Number one, God first.

Keep God first in your lives in 2010. All else is nothing when compared to this. What you need more than anything in your life is not “water from the well,” but the living water of Christ. What you need is not the physical food that sustains physical life but the spiritual food that gives spiritual life.

When Jesus slips down on your priority list you will be thirsty even though you “went to the well.” That kind of water, the water of whatever else it is that you would drink from ahead of Christ, will not quench your thirst.

Keep Christ first in your lives in 2010. Make worship high priority. Join one of our Sunday School classes. Develop a daily devotional life comprised of prayer and Bible Study. Serve God with your gifts and talents in this church and in the places God puts you in. Keep God first in your lives in 2010.

Number two, share his love others.

This was part *a* of Jesus’ mission in life. The Father sent the Son into the world in order to share the living water of God in people’s lives. Jesus came in order to reconcile lost, broken, beat up, and parched sinners back to God.

In order to do this he had to do part *a*, which was to share the good news with people, and he also had to do part *b*, which was to die for people’s sins, so that the price might be paid and sinners could be forgiven.

As we learned from our text this morning this was not just the responsibility of Jesus, but of the disciples also. Jesus said to his disciples, “I sent you to reap what you have not worked for.” (v.38)

Friends, the fields are still “ripe for the harvest.” People’s basic needs have not changed all these years. We are still all sinners. There is still the guilt problem and the need for forgiveness and the love of God in our lives.

God has given you a field to share His love in, in order to reap a harvest. You have a family, you have friends, neighbors, co-workers, and people that you will meet in the grocery line. Make a commitment to share the love of Christ with others in 2010.

Finally, finish the task to which God has called you.

Jesus said in the text that it was his goal to do the will of the Father and to finish his work.

The work that Jesus was called to finish was the work of the cross. It was not easy. He willingly went to the cross for us sinners, but he sweat drops of blood in doing so and he cried out in lonely anguish, “Father if it is possible, let this cup be taken from me, yet not what I will but what you will.”

Jesus finished the work to which he was called. Those were the very words he uttered when he drew his last breath on the cross. "It is finished." (John 19:30)

This is an admonition to you from God to not give up in your faith in 2010. It is an admonition to persevere in your faith, to run your race well, and to not quit, but to finish the task at hand.

What is your task for 2010? It may be many things but the main thing is to love God and to love your neighbor through your relationship with Jesus Christ. That is a task to which we are all called to work on until we draw our last breath.

Now in order for us to complete that task we must not give up, but rather finish the work by persevering in the faith.

I like what the apostle Paul said in his letter to the Philippians.

- Not that I have already obtained this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not yet consider myself to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 3:12-14)

That's what God calls us to do in 2010. To not give up when we fail, fall short, or sin, but to repent, forget the past, and stay in this race until we all cross the finish line at our deaths. Then we will be with Christ in God's eternal kingdom.

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ finish the race to which God has called you to in 2010.

Amen.