

Reaching the Hurting and Lost
Jesus Beyond Barriers • Message 4

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Prayer Points for Prayer Time

- **Ask God to help you love people the way He loves them.**
- **Pray for God to use you to bring His light into dark places.**
- **Pray that Brookwood is a place where everyone feels welcome.**

Scripture Reading:

The Samaritan woman said to him, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.” “Sir,” the woman said, “you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?” Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

John 4:9-14 (NIV)

This is the Word of the Lord

Bryan Jones

A. Introduction

Highlight India:

Text Thread

Photo of Campus

Video clip of children singing

Impact Sunday...

The other night, I was going on a prayer walk around my neighborhood. We have this walking trail, and Tristan wanted to come. So, he came, and he brought a flashlight... but he kept shining the flashlight into people's houses, and I'm like, *Son, this is the South, where people take the Second Amendment very seriously. Are you trying to get shot?...* I took it from him, and we started walking. It was so dark we could barely see in front of us... and Tristan... wait for it... went first the whole walk. He was walking ahead of me... and I was like, *You go, man.* He's leading the way in the darkness. He went into the most unlikely place I thought he would, and he faced it head-on... we got done with the walk and I said, *Way to go. You went out in front the whole time, that took courage...* and he said, *Yeah, but in all the movies the person in the back is the one to die, so I just thought it was better for it to be you than me...* Oh, the bravery....

Now, even though he didn't have the best of motives....it is still unlikely that a child would be willing to walk through the darkness. I was a bit surprised... but nothing is more unlikely or surprising than Jesus walking and bringing light into darkness in John chapter 4.

All throughout the Bible, Jesus walks into dark places and brings light and change...

B. Jesus Beyond Barriers

1. Jesus brings light that heals RACIAL divisions.

(John 4:1-4, 20)

Jesus knew the Pharisees had heard that he was baptizing and making more disciples than John (though Jesus himself didn't baptize them—his disciples did). So he left Judea and returned to Galilee. He had to go through Samaria on the way.

John 4:1-4 (NLT)

Jews absolutely hated Samaritans... they didn't get along... guess where Samaritans are... they are in Samaria, where Jesus went... and notice what it says in verse four.... Jesus had to go...

Now, what's interesting is that going through Samaria, where he was going, was a three-day journey... but Jews hated Samaritans so much they would often hop on 385 and go around Samaria, which would create a six-day journey.

Have you ever gone to great lengths to avoid someone? Anyone?.... Raise your hand... now go ahead and point them out... you know every one of you has done this at some point... you see someone, and you pretend like you're on the phone so you don't have to interact... it's one thing to avoid someone... but how much do you have to hate someone to travel around three extra days in the desert to avoid them?

(Put highlighted on screen to explain)

History of Samaritans: (building)

End of 1 and 2 Kings – Babylon conquers Israel. Israel is in captivity.

Daniel and Ezra – People are in captivity. Some begin to intermarry.

So, you have two groups in Babylonian captivity: those who stay true to the commands of God and those who don't. Some start to intermarry... this is important... this isn't against interracial marriage... it's against interfaith marriage. Back then, all nations had their own God, so to marry someone from another nation was to marry their God. Oh, and an important side note, for those who are younger or newer to the faith: the Bible is clear...we should not date or marry anyone who isn't a believer. So, they start to marry and intermingle faiths... and this group is called Samaritans...

Syncretism- Religion of those who were worshipping Babylonian gods and Yahweh. So, they synchronized the worship of the one true God with the worship of another god. They became a cult. The difference between a cult and another religion is about starting and departing... they started with one faith and departed to another... think about it... Mormonism and Jehovah's Witnesses are a cult because they start with Christianity, but they depart from it. So, this group of Samaritans went to the Old Testament and discarded all the other books of the Bible except the first five books, and they still rewrote a portion of it.

Building Wall/Temple – Samaritans aren't allowed. Built their own holy city with their own take on God's temple... and that's why, in this story, the woman asks about the true place to worship.

"So tell me, why is it that you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place of worship, while we Samaritans claim it is here at Mount Gerizim, where our ancestors worshiped?"

John 4:20 (NLT)

Now fast-forward a thousand years, and you have all this hatred. Then Jesus enters the picture. You have more tension than ever before. Jews would walk around to avoid Samaria... and they called Samaritans half-breeds...

So let me come back to this to say that Jesus' "had to" wasn't a geographical have-to. It was a divine appointment. Think about this: His ethnicity told him not to. His culture told Him not to. His politics told Him not to. But yet his love said, *I have to*.

This wasn't about geography; it was about theology.

Jesus tears down racial divides...

3 types of diversity: (and we will have to fight for them)

1.) Racial diversity

Years ago, a buddy I had owned a landscaping company. We talked about it, and I went to help him with a few projects for several days. And I thought, *Ok, I'm in...* Let me set this up by saying most of my workdays are spent exercising two things... my fingers to type and my mind. The rest of me rarely is active and exercising throughout the day... so this was hard work... most of the people I was working with were 19 or so...they were in a bit better shape. We worked 11-hour shifts with one 30-minute break, and I busted it because I had too much pride to let a 20-something one-up me. And when I got home the first day, I took a whole lot of Advil, fell on the couch, and didn't move for two hours or so.... And my wife came over, and she looked at me....she saw how much pain I was in and then she said..... *You aren't really the work horse type, are you? You are much more of a show pony....* (if that's not love, I don't know what is)

But I went back to work... we were in the car... and one of the guys saw a Hispanic man, and he rolled down the window and shouted a derogatory remark... here was someone who didn't know anything about this guy, but he tore him down because of the color of his skin.

Guys, we must be aware that prejudice...and even racism...still exist... **(show water bottle)**... what does it say.... the name of the water bottle and all I can see is that the back says recycle me... it means I have to come around and see what someone else might see...

I love the diversity that is growing in this church, but in one that is predominantly white... there are those who are your Black brothers and sisters, or those in the Hispanic community, who might have a different perspective than you...

If we are going to reach those who are hurting and lost, we must tear down racial barriers. We must be willing to value others...

D'Andre... leading my son...don't mess it up bro... but he said he predominantly led... like tithing, we just want to take a step. A black pastor friend once said... *Resurrection requires crucifixion...* dying to self.

See, we must make sure we are defined not by the color of our skin, our accomplishments, or our past... only by Jesus... We must elevate our second race, and that's that we are children of the highest.

There are two dangers: one is color blindness, but the other is color idolatry.

We have to keep fighting for what unites us, and that is Jesus! The first-century church in Antioch was a city made up of Africans, Persians, Jews, Greeks, Chinese, and Indians... when the gospel hit this city...

it was the first-ever multi-ethnic group of people. In Acts 13, that's why they are called *the church*... these people could no longer be defined by where they were from, but rather by who they followed.

It's the beginning of the term Christian...

2.) Economic diversity

3.) Generational diversity

We have to fight to be one church... too many churches become the young church, or the single church, or the married church, or the older church... we have to fight to be one church...

2. Jesus brings light that heals SPIRITUAL divisions.

(John 4:5-19)

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 about the sixth hour.

John 4:5-6 (ESV)

Savior Complex

Critical of others

Sin is small

Grace is cheap

Savior Complex

Critical of others

Sin is small

Grace is cheap

Savior Need

Compassion for others

Sin is big

Grace is scandalous

So, a couple of things... in the Old Testament, they didn't have eHarmony... they had wells... I'm serious... so, I know none of you would do this, but today people go to bars or clubs, or they hop online to meet others... although my favorite story is of someone in our church who met his wife at Costco... you know he was getting his toilet paper in bulk and he saw her and knew she was the one... they didn't have Costco or eHarmony so people would meet at the well...

So, here's the other thing... did you notice the time? Now, they also didn't have phones to tell the time, so they would count time after the sun would rise... so the first hour was about seven, so guess when the sixth hour was... Twelve.

Guess what the hottest time of the day is? Twelve... and you guys understand heat... I told you this... I was in Columbia last summer at the zoo. I'm convinced Columbia is the waiting room for hell... but think about how hot it is in the desert...

Now, why would someone go to draw water in the middle of a desert at the hottest part of the day?

Because this woman had a story, and she didn't feel like she belonged with others... and that's how a lot of people feel... this is what sin does... it makes you feel separated and "other than"... like you don't fit in... and the hardest part is when those in the church make you feel that way.

Women and children would draw the water in this culture ... and this woman had a past... so most people believe she would have been ridiculed and shamed for her life... so she went to

draw water when no one else would... except the most unlikely person showed up... a Jewish rabbi named Jesus.

The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

John 4:9-10 (NIV)

Here's what he's saying... You're going to the wrong well. You're going to the wrong source. And I love this... Jesus tells her... you're trying to find it in men... in relationships.

"The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true." "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet."

John 4:18-19 (NIV)

Don't you love how she responds... *Oh, I can see that you're a prophet.* 😊... but here's what's fascinating...

six men are mentioned... but guess who the seventh is... Jesus... and guess what seven is in the Bible? It's the number of completion and fulfillment....

Think about this... we all have a bucket we go to... I saw a pastor do this illustration and I really liked it.

But for some people, they go to something and they make it the source of fulfillment...

(grab bucket) So Jesus could be a part of your life... but you're looking for a job or relationship bucket to fill you up... but when that doesn't work...

Moral bucket- Clean up your life/ Islam.

Bigger bucket- You think the issue is what you are chasing after... you just need more... you need more money, more success, more relationships. And this is what the woman at the well was doing... jumping from relationship to relationship, thinking, *I just need more.... more... more... more....* You keep thinking in this place, *I like big buckets and I cannot lie...*

Alcohol bucket- I was a little worried about this... but it's true for so many people... when life is hard or difficult, you go to this bucket... and it's become a source of peace and joy... this is where you retreat...

Or... this is my favorite bucket...

KFC bucket- this is it. You eat your feelings... you try but you go to this over God... it's the place you find comfort and joy...

There is a problem with all these buckets... listen...

He didn't want to just forgive this woman... He wanted to fulfill you...

Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

John 4:13-14 (NIV)

It doesn't last. It won't fill you up... but you have to let go of that bucket... and whatever you're chasing... and take hold of God...

Jesus came to bring healing... what bucket do you need to let go of?

Jesus never calls us to leave something behind unless He calls you to something better.