

The Satisfaction of Obedience

SCRIPTURE: *John 4:27–43*

[27] Just then his disciples came back. They marveled 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.

- V28, what would cause you to leave and go?
 - Ex: going into labor, an accident, refugees leaving and going
 - You only leave and go when there is something more valuable, more pressing
 - A baby, a love, a treasure, your life
- What is this thing of great value that would cause this woman to leave and go?
 - The Christ (explain)! Something they’ve waited for, history has been pregnant for
 - Ex: Muslims pray multiple times a day for the straight path; Jews were waiting for the Messiah; the whole world groans for redemption;
 - You see it in our movies, our books, our pursuits, our fears, our joys
 - If Jesus is the Christ, then he is of supreme value → the aim of history
- Person of peace, she leaves, goes, tells, people listen → they see his importance too

[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 labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”

- Now I like food. How is obedience greater than food?
 - Food has an immediate satisfaction and a midterm satisfaction (sometimes long term consequences!)
 - Obedience
 - Immediate = joy of obedience, satisfaction in Christ, a type of reward
 - Midterm = results of obedience, maturing, growth, Christ exaltation
 - Eternal = joy forevermore, satisfaction in Jesus forever, eternal reward
- When something greater or more pressing is before you, you forget to eat.
 - Nobody is pausing during labor, pulling over the ambulance after breaking a leg, etc to swing through McDonalds.
 - For Samaritan woman: Go and tell was more pressing than the water
 - For Jesus: obeying the Father was more rewarding and pressing than food

- So, food = obey the will of God, but what is his will
 - C.F. Spirit Walk: “What is the will of God? What is God doing? How can you join in?” → ex: one reason why I said yes to this Greece trip. God is WORKING!
 - What is God’s will? He tells us in v35. → Will = harvest.
 - Our excuse? Not yet.
 - “I’m not ready.” // “They’re not ready.” // “Not yet. It’s summer.”
 - Jesus’ response: “Yes, they’re ready.” → Do you believe that?
 - Nicodemus was ready... Samaritan was ready... Town was ready... Next week see a man who some thing was a Gentile is ready...
 - Why did Jesus come here? Because they were ready! Because he knew God was drawing, working, calling
 - Tell you the truth: If you don’t think people are ripe for the gospel, you won’t share it with them. You won’t obey
- But the ones who are obeying are getting...
 - Wages = that joy, satisfaction, reward we were talking about
 - Fruit = people!
- V37, Maybe you don’t get to reap, but you get to sow! Different jobs look differently. And v38, whether you sow or reap it looks basically identical - tell people the gospel!
- Others have labored. God is working. We know what the will of God is, now we join him
 - Ex: refugees and their openness to the gospel. God is working, we know his will, now we go. Someone else labored, we get to reap. We stand on their shoulders.

[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 Savior of the world." [43] After the two days he departed for Galilee.

- Here we see a picture of gospel proclamation and how God works. People who say, “I can’t tell people the gospel” need to pay attention. Think about how much this woman knew about Jesus - just met him.
 - Woman: “He told me all I ever did!”
 - Townspeople: “Come and see for themselves.”
 - You said... we heard... now we know... He is the savior of the world!
- Savior of the world.
 - Nicodemus = Jewish power structure in Judea
 - Samaritan Woman = Samaria
 - ‘Gentile’ official in next section = Gentile, the nations, ends of the earth
 - *Acts 1:8, [8] But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”*
 - Jesus is the savior for everyone, so share about him w/ everyone.

OBSERVATIONS:

- **When we find something of great value, it changes our course, plans, intentions, and we talk about it! Jesus is of the GREATEST value!**
 - The question is not “Why should I obey?” It is, “Is Christ exceedingly valuable and satisfying to me?”
- **God has prepared a harvest for obedient workers to reap through the labor of obedient workers who have sown.**
 - What is the will of God? Where is he working? How do we join him?
 - E.g. People are more ready than we realize.
 - **Question: Are you joining his work?**
 - As a sower... as a reaper...
- **God does AMAZING work through people faithful to obey and share what God reveals to them.** (She is a person of peace, fruitful soil)
 - The woman responds obediently.
 - She shares what she knows (that’s all!).
 - The people hear her and investigate for themselves.
 - They know for themselves (or reject for themselves).
 - **Don’t reject the gospel FOR people with your silence.**
 - God keeps working.

APPLICATION: What does God want you to do in response to this?

- **Question: Are you like this woman? Are you faithful soil?**
 - Are you obediently allowing the gospel to change the direction of your life?
 - Are you obediently sharing what you know about Jesus?
 - Are you inviting others to discover Jesus for themselves?
 - Are you allowing God to work through you as you meet with him?
 - If you are, keep going! Let the Word of God dwell in you and overflow!
 - If not, you are only choking out your own joy, satisfaction, and rewards.
- **Question: If not, is Christ valuable to you?**
 - Since Jesus is satisfying, obeying Jesus is satisfying. (c.f. V34 & V36)
 - How can you value Jesus more? You must meet with him, seek him like silver.
 - **Matthew 13:44 - “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.**
 - Three reasons you won’t value Christ like a treasure.
 - (1) You think you’re rich without him (e.g. you don’t think you need Jesus)
 - (2) You don’t think he is sufficient for your poverty (e.g. he can’t save you)
 - (3) You love your stuff more than the treasure
- **Solution: Seek him like buried treasure and he will reveal his worth.**
 - Then you will leave what is temporary to gain what is eternal. You will seek his will over your own. You will join him in his work. You will build a spiritual legacy.
 - The Lord is my portion... I have a beautiful inheritance (Ps 16)