

# RENEWED VISION

CMBC November 8, 2015

John 4:1 – 42

One of the beautiful sites on the prairies is the fields at harvest time – fields of grain waving in the breeze, stooks, swathes, straight cut fields.

There is always excited anticipation of the harvest, and a renewed energy to get the harvest in before it is too late.

Jesus talked about an even more important harvest, with the same tone of excitement and urgent concern.

**John 4:35** Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.

## 1. The ripe spiritual fields are ready for harvest

- a. We have all heard these words of Jesus at numerous missionary presentations
- b. We don't readily remember the occasion of when Jesus made this statement to his disciples.

## 2. The occasion to teach this lesson

- a. It was when Jesus had met with the Samaritan women at the well.
- b. Jesus was tired from his day of travel, and the disciples went on into the town of Sychar to buy some food.
- c. When they came back they found Jesus talking with a women, a Samaritan women.
- d. You know about all of the taboos that Jesus paid no attention to.
  - i. Talking to a women
  - ii. A Samaritan women at that
  - iii. A women with a bad reputation
- e. The disciples walked into this conversation and were shocked. **But, we read, no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"**
- f. By now they had figured out that Jesus had a different approach to people, a different agenda with people.

## 3. The Samaritan woman's deep need

- a. She had been married to 5 different husbands, and was currently living common-law with another man.
- b. Obviously a troubled past.
  - i. Signs of sexual abuse as a young girl.
  - ii. Maybe kept getting into abusive relationships.
  - iii. Never learned to love, going from one relationship to another

- iv. Longing for love but afraid to trust any man
- v. Maybe hopelessly given up to ever find true love
- c. She was there alone, at high noon, in the heat of the day. Which was just as odd as Jesus being there.
  - i. Everyone avoided her, except the men who wanted to use her again.
  - ii. She was one of those who had messed up her life. But she put on a good face, a brash, who cares face. **“Should you be talking to me, asking me for a drink?”** she said to Jesus. Other women would have been in shock at Jesus’ request and turned their back as if they never heard him, or at best timidly bring up some water, pouring some out without making any eye contact with Jesus. Not this woman.
  - iii. But she was thirsty, looking for something that would give her live meaning.

#### 4. The inner thirst of many

- a. There are many like that.
- b. It is hard to know the truth about people sometimes, the hurts, the pain, the abuse that has made them what they are.
  - i. The crusty old man who is upset with everyone.
  - ii. The woman whose father turned every fault into a sin, who now is so unsure about herself, insecure
  - iii. The workaholic who they said would never amount to anything
- c. People who are longing for something that will satisfy the thirsting of their soul
  - i. The trio just sang:
    - Fill my cup, Lord;
    - I lift it up Lord;
    - Come and quench this thirsting of my soul.
    - Bread of Heaven, feed me till I want no more.
    - Fill my cup, fill it up and make me whole.

Jesus said, **For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.**” When he came to Zacchaeus’ house, just as odd as speaking to this woman. **Luke 19:10**

#### 5. The harvest comes so suddenly

- a. The disciples may have thought, “Jesus, do you know who you are talking to. This women never will turn to God. She will never listen to you. And if she seems to be listening it is only to get something from you. Associating with her – what will people think?”
- b. And Jesus says, “Boys, you need to renew your vision.”

- c. John 4:35 <sup>35</sup>Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.\* <sup>36</sup>Even now (already) the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests\* the crop for eternal life,\* so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together.
- d. The harvest is here. The reaper is just behind the sower.  
**Amos 9:13** "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when the reaper will be overtaken by the plowman and the planter by the one treading grapes.  
**NLT [13]** "The time will come," says the LORD, "when the grain and grapes will grow faster than they can be harvested.
- e. Look around you. See the harvest.
- f. We need to see as Jesus sees. We need to see the thirsty heart.
- g. We live in a marvellous time for reaping.

We can learn from Jesus.

#### 6. Jesus' approach to her longing

- a. Jesus doesn't begin with blasting her for her sin
- b. Jesus doesn't begin with deep spiritual debate
- c. Jesus touches the longing of her heart

#### 7. Finding nourishment in God's purpose

- a. The disciples are concern about Jesus being tired and hungry  
 We read: <sup>31</sup>Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." <sup>32</sup>But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." <sup>33</sup>So the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought him something to eat?" <sup>34</sup>Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.
- b. Jesus finds energy, spiritual nourishment in accomplishing God's purpose, which brings the greatest joy.

That is Jesus, but I could never do that.

#### 8. The witness of our faith story

- a. Listen to the woman's story: **Vs 28** <sup>28</sup>Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, <sup>29</sup>"Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did.\* Could this be the Christ\*?"\* <sup>30</sup>They came out of the town and made their way toward him.
- b. All she could say is come and see
- c. She didn't even know for sure who this was
- d. She just knew that she had been changed.

- e. She even went public, all I ever did
- f. The response was the harvest Jesus had told his disciples about
  - i. <sup>39</sup>Many of the Samaritans from that town<sub>2</sub> believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did."<sub>2</sub> <sup>40</sup>So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. <sup>41</sup>And because of his words many more became believers.

### 9. Making our faith our own

- a. And when the people came, they heard and believed.
- b. It became their own faith
- c. **Vs 42** They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."<sub>2</sub>

### 10. The "divine appointment" in the ripe harvest field

- a. It was the pressure from the religious leaders in Jerusalem that made Jesus leave the city
- b. Going through Samaria was not the usual route to take in going from Jerusalem to Galilee – not even for Jesus. But we read, "<sup>4</sup>Now he **had to go through Samaria.**"
- c. It was God leading him
- d. Even his tiredness and weariness was led of the Lord.
  - i. He just couldn't go on any further.
  - ii. He stopped at Jacob's well.
  - iii. It was all down hill from here. But there he stopped.
  - iv. The discussion might not have gone so well with all of the disciples there. They all went to the town to buy food.
  - v. It was just at that time, on that day, that the Samaritan women came to get water.
- e. God's great timing
- f. If we don't have a renewed vision we miss seeing the opportunity God provides.

Let me say this to you who have a thirsty soul. Those who have been shaped by the abuse in the past. Jesus knows all about it. He is the one who can set you free from your past. You don't have to be the same.

Let me say this to all of us. No one is past the power of God to be saved and changed. It isn't your job to decide who. See the harvest field that is ripe. Pray that God will give you His vision. Tell your story of faith. Remember, it is God who works in the heart of the one who is thirsty.