

Sermon Notes & References

Lost Sheep of Israel

John 4:27-42

February 21, 2016

- A. Jesus in Samaria. 4:22-27
 - 1. A Flock of Lost Sheep (v 22) ^A.

 - 2. A Lone Lost Sheep (vv 25-26)

 - 3. The Disciples Arrive Back (v 27) ^B.

- B. Testimony: Telling Her Experience 4:28-30
 - 1. The Woman Leaves (v 28a)

 - 2. Her Simple Message (vv 28b-29)

 - 3. The Men Listen (v 30)

- C. Meanwhile, Back at the Well 4:31-38
 - 1. Physical and Spiritual Vision (vv 31-34) ^C.

 - 2. Opportunity Now Approaching (vv 35-38) ^D.

- D. Many Sheep Believe 4:39-42
 - 1. The Arriving Samaritans (v 39)

 - 2. The Come to Jesus (vv 40-42) ^E.

- E. Conclusion

^A Matthew 10:5-6; Acts 1:8

^B Galatians 3:28

^C Matthew 4:4

^D Psalm 126:6

^E Acts 8:5-8

A. Jesus in Samaria 4:22-27

1. A Flock of Lost Sheep (v 22)

a. in thinking about the title for our message today, we can recollect that after summoning His twelve apostles, he gave them power to heal every kind of disease and sickness and to cast out unclean spirits:

(A) 5 These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them, saying, "Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; 6 but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matthew 10:5-6)

(B) there Jesus used the expression, "lost sheep of Israel" in a more restricted than it is used in our title

(C) for there He explicitly excluded the Samaritans from the ministry in which His disciples were engaged

b. but in this fourth chapter of John we are focussing particularly upon that people –although their heredity from Israel was much diluted

(A) 700 years before, Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, had removed the strong and rich – principally men of military age and their leaders – from the land of Samaria

(B) then had replaced them with people from other heathen nations of His empire

(C) so that they were a mongrel people with a mongrel religion

c. yet there were still a remnant within that nation who sought in some fashion to worship the one, true God – but without knowledge

(A) for as Jesus said to the Samaritan woman, "4:22 You worship that which you do not know; we worship that which we know, for salvation is from the Jews."– they were, in truth, lost sheep

(B) yet this people still had a special place in God's plan, as when Jesus gave the great commission in Acts 1:8, "but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

(C) so Jesus came here deliberately, not to evangelize the province of Samaria, but to bring the gospel of salvation to one sinful woman, to one small town; the Good Shepherd was seeking His lost sheep

2. A Lone Lost Sheep (vv 25-26)

a. the Samaritan woman

b. came to the well to draw water for herself

c. found herself speaking with a Jewish rabbi, Jesus

d. He had but a few moments to be with her before the disciples' return

- e. He revealed that He knew her character: a sinful woman
- f. He revealed that He knew the answer to her need: to know God
- g. so then that expressed to Jesus the hope that she and her people had in common with the rest of Israel, saying, "4:25 The woman * said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us.""
- h. but the One seated in front of her is that one who can declare all things: "4:26 Jesus *said to her, "I who speak to you am He.""
- i. Jesus had had just the right length of time to make Himself fully known to her, to plant the seed; and at that instant, ...

3. The Disciples Arrive Back (v 27)

- a. "4:27 And at this point His disciples came, and they marvelled that He had been speaking with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why do You speak with her?""
- b. they are coming back with the food they had purchased, and as they approached the well a strange and unconventional situation meets their eyes that sets them wondering even before they arrive
 - (A) there is their Rabbi, in conversation with a woman; and not just any woman, but a woman of the Samaritans
 - (B) there are a lot of quotations in the Talmud and elsewhere that show the disrespect with which Rabbis held women
 - (1) "Let no one talk with a woman in the street, not with his own wife" ^{-{2}}.
 - (2) A very ancient prayer (still found in the Jewish prayer book) runs, "Blessed art thou, O Lord ... who hast not made me a woman." The equivalent prayer for a woman was "Blessed art thou, O Lord, who hast fashioned me according to thy will." ^{-{3}}.
 - (3) but not so, our Lord Jesus: "...there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28)
 - (C) but it is a mark of their respect and abiding trust in Jesus, that none of the disciples interrupted with the questions on their minds

B. Testimony: Telling Her Experience 4:28-30

1. The Woman Leaves (v 28a)

- a. "4:28a So the woman left her waterpot, and went into the city, ..."
- b. the waterpot is left

- (A) was it empty or full? ... probably full, as it would have been more in keeping with Jesus' waiting until the water was drawn before asking of her to drink – but it is left
- (B) forgotten? ... maybe; maybe not –
 - (1) but in any case it no longer was a priority item: she had just met Messiah!
 - (2) it can furnish Messiah – and His disciples – with water
 - (3) she will return; her departure is temporary, as is soon seen
- c. she came with one task, left with another
 - (A) she came to draw water
 - (B) Jesus has instructed her to fetch her husband – but of course the one with whom she lived was not her husband
 - (C) but, nonetheless, she did have a mission back in the city

2. Her Simple Message (vv 28b-29)

- a. knowing who she was, what her character was like, who normally would have paid much attention to what this woman said?
- b. but she had experienced something marvellous and the excited words of the woman who had met Messiah carried conviction
- c. "4:28b So the woman ... *said to the men, 29 "Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is it?"
- d. her question is both doubtful ("I'm not sure; maybe you men will be able to assure me?") and wistful ("It seems true; I hope its true; please show me its true?") – that this man she has met is Messiah
- e. what is her only evidence? Messiah can declare all things . This man has declared to her the things she would hide from all if she could: her sinful life; if He knew that, what could He not know about her?
- f. what simple words; but words based upon experience
- g. do you want to be a witness to your Saviour? Just recount what He has done for you: the forgiveness of your sin, taking away your guilt.
- h. and it was effective for ...

3. The Men Listen (v 30)

- a. "4:30 They went out of the city, and were coming to Him."
- b. her voice was convincing and her words were convicting
- c. for it sent men of the city away from possible meals and from talking with one another, on a 10-15 minute hike

out of the city to the well

- d. John Bunyan said on this verse, "That word, 'He told me all things that ever I did,' was a great argument; for by that they gathered, that though He knew her to be vile, yet He did not despise her, nor refuse to show how willing He was to communicate His grace unto her; and this fetched over first her, then them."
- e. the disciples went to town and brought back bread; the woman went to town and brought back men

C. Meanwhile Back at the Well 4:31-38

1. Physical and Spiritual Vision (vv 31-34)

- a. in many ways, the conversation that follows between Jesus and His disciples parallels that between Jesus and the Samaritan woman
 - (A) instead of water there is food
 - (B) they are thinking materially; Jesus is thinking spiritually
- b. "4:31 In the meanwhile the disciples were requesting Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." 32 But He said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." 33 The disciples therefore were saying to one another, "No one brought Him anything to eat, did he?" 34 Jesus *said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work."
- c. the disciples are concerned that Jesus should eat
 - (A) they have done their task, bought and brought food, and now it is not being consumed
 - (B) they keep beseeching Him, urging Him: Rabbi ... please eat!
 - (C) why is He not interested? No one has come along, not here in Samaria, have they, to give Him food?
- d. Jesus: yes he was fatigued; his physical thirst may or may not have been quenched; he probably felt physical hunger
 - (A) but something more important was on his mind
 - (B) He had faced that same hunger when He fasted 40 days in the wilderness, but had an answer to Satan's temptation,
 - (1) why not change these stones into bread and eat?
 - (2) "But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'" (Matthew 4:4)
 - (C) Jesus set His will to follow the directions of His Father
 - (1) Jesus set His travels according to the Father's road map; the use of His time according to the Father's time-table
 - (2) He had come this way to meet the Samaritan woman

- (3) He had set the in motion the events which were in God's plan
- (4) the gospel was to be proclaimed to these lost sheep of Israel
- (D) the result of this obedience was the ...

2. Opportunity Now Approaching (vv 35-38)

- a. "4:35a "Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest'?"
- b. there is another place, says Jesus, in which the spiritual viewpoint differs widely from the physical viewpoint
 - (A) that is in the matter of sowing seed and reaping a harvest
 - (B) in the farmer's eyes, there is this period during which the seed must be left in the ground, he must exercise patience and faith, and then comes the time when the harvesting has begun
 - (C) in the spiritual realm, this is not necessarily the same – harvest time cannot be predicted but the harvester must always be alert
- c. H. V. Morton wrote these words, ^{—{4}}.
 - (A) Reading St. John beside Jacob's Well, one realises how the conversation grew out of the surroundings and could not have been imagined by anyone. The water, the mountain, the road to Sychar on which the Samaritans soon appear, drawn by the news which the woman has carried to the village, are all so life-like, so vivid. And Jesus bade His disciples:
 - (B) "4:35b Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."
 - (C) Critics have written learned dissertations to prove that the fields could not have been white with the harvest: it was too early in the year. And others have provided all, kinds of explanations to force this episode into Gospel chronology. But as I sat by Jacob's Well a crowd of Arabs came along the road from the direction in which Jesus was looking, and I saw their white garments shining in the sun.
 - (D) Surely Jesus was speaking not of the earthly but of the heavenly harvest, and as He spoke I think it likely that He pointed along the road where the Samaritans in their white robes were assembling to hear His words.
- d. Jesus now prepares His disciples for that spiritual harvest
 - (A) "4:36 Already he who reaps is receiving wages, and is gathering fruit for life eternal; that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. 37 For in this case the saying is true, 'One sows, and another reaps.' 38 I sent you to reap that for which you have not laboured; others have laboured, and you have entered into their labour." – ("Already" can be at end of v. 35, or start of v. 36.)
 - (B) regardless, those who have done the sowing have completed their work, and are even now receiving their reward for their toil

- (1) Jesus in his words to the Samaritan woman
- (2) the Samaritan woman to the men of Sychar
- (C) and, when Jesus called His disciples to be fishers of men, even then He has commissioned them to take up this part in the work
- (D) they shall now rejoice together – sowers and reapers – in the harvesting; “He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying his bag of seed, Shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.” (Psalms 126:6)

D. Many Sheep Believe..... 4:39-42

1. The Arriving Samaritans (v 39)

- a. “4:39 And from that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, “He told me all the things that I have done.”¹⁶
 - (A) the power of her simple testimony is now made fully evident
 - (B) they believed in Him because of the word
 - (1) many times the Jews believed because of His signs
 - (2) and would have made Him to be king to lead against Rome
 - (C) but these came ready to accept Him for what He is, the fulfilment of the promise of God: Messiah
- b. but to this point it had been hearsay; they had heard what the woman had to say about Jesus, and had believed in him; now, ...

2. They Come to Jesus (vv 40-42)

- a. “4:40 So when the Samaritans came to Him, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. 41 And many more believed because of His word; 42 and they were saying to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Saviour of the world.”
- b. because of the testimony of the woman
 - (A) they travelled a couple of kilometres out to see Jesus
 - (B) they had assurance that if He, a Jewish Rabbi, was willing to talk to and to accept her, a sinful woman and a Samaritan, then they could feel free to urge Him to stay with them – Samaritans
 - (C) and they were not disappointed
- c. now their knowledge of Jesus the Messiah was not second-hand; now they believed because of His word; they had heard Him themselves

- d. what had they heard?
 - (A) they learned of a spiritual Saviour, one who would deal with sin
 - (B) they learned of a Saviour of not just the Jews, but of the world
- e. was this perhaps that same Samaritan city of which we read in Acts 8:5-8? "5 And Philip went down to the city of Samaria and [began] proclaiming Christ to them. 6 And the multitudes with one accord were giving attention to what was said by Philip, as they heard and saw the signs which he was performing. 7 For [in the case of] many who had unclean spirits, they were coming out [of them] shouting with a loud voice; and many who had been paralyzed and lame were healed. 8 And there was much rejoicing in that city." – if so, what a follow-up!

E. Conclusion

1. what a precious opportunity God gives to us, simply to bear witness of all that Jesus means to us, and thereby other will know not only that Jesus is indeed the Saviour of the world, but that He is their Saviour. – that they, too, can sing the truth of our closing hymn ... At Calvary

1. © 2016 by Garth Hutchinson, Faith Fellowship Baptist Church of Aurora (Ontario): may be distributed or quoted freely, only let this be done to the glory “of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ” (Titus ii.13). Except as noted otherwise, quotations are from the New American Standard version, used by permission. Various other English versions of the Holy Bible may be used in this sermon. Explanatory additions to the Bible text are shown in (*braces*). Version identifiers are:

ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version of 1769
NAS	New American Standard version © 1960, 1995 The Lockman Foundation (usually the 1995 edition)
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NLT	New Living Translation © 1996 Tyndale Charitable Trust
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version © 1989 National Council of Churches of Christ
RSV	Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 National Council of Churches of Christ; Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

Some of the commentaries and resources used in the preparation of this message are identified as follow:

Bruce	--	<i>The Gospel & Epistles of John</i> , by F. F. Bruce, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, MI; 1983
BM	-	<i>Biblical Museum</i> , Editor James Comper Gray, ca 1870
EBC	-	<i>The Expositor's Bible Commentary</i> , © 1986 Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 49530, MI: <i>John</i> , by Merrill C. Tenney
EGT	-	<i>The Expositor's Greek Testament</i> , Hodder & Stoughton; 1903 <i>John</i> , by Marcus Dods
Kerux	-	The sermon & illustration data base compiled by Rev. David Holwick at the web-site, www.holwick.com .
NICNT	-	<i>The New International Commentary on the New Testament</i> <i>The Gospel according to John</i> , by Leon Morris
NTC	-	<i>New Testament Commentary</i> , by William Hendriksen; Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI; 1954
RWP	-	<i>Robertson's Word Pictures of the New Testament</i> , by Dr. A. T. Robertson
TEC	--	<i>The Gospel according to John</i> , by George Allen Turner & Julius R. Mantey, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, MI; ca 1965

2. John Lightfoot, quoted in EGT, *in loc*.

3. NICNT, footnote, *in loc*.

4. '*In the Steps of the Master*,' by H. V. Morton, Rich & Cowan Ltd., 1934, pp 153-4.