

Main Idea: In John 4:27-42 we learn that Jesus has a different kind of food, a food that we should hunger for and then share with others. There are three scenes in this text: an example, an explanation, and the effect of hungering for a different kind of food.

- I. Scene #1: We see an example of hungering for a different kind of food (27-30).
    - A. The woman left her water jar.
    - B. The woman talked to people about her sinful past.
    - C. The woman urged people to come to Jesus.
      1. Jesus doesn't condemn us for what we have done.
      2. Jesus came to rescue us and give us a new life.
  - II. Scene #2: We hear an explanation of hungering for a different kind of food (31-38).
    - A. Jesus' food is to do the Father's work (34).
    - B. The Father's work is to bring in a harvest of souls (35-38).
      1. Jesus tells us to look at the fields.
      2. Jesus tells us that the fields are ready to be harvested.
      3. Jesus tells us that the harvest is taking place right now.
      4. Jesus tells us that there is joy for those who participate in the harvest.
      5. Jesus tells us that we are reaping the benefits of the hard work of others.
  - III. Scene #3: We see the effect of hungering for a different kind of food (39-42).
    - A. Other Samaritans believed in Jesus.
      1. They believed because of the woman's words.
      2. They believed because of Jesus' words.
    - B. The Samaritans gave evidence that their faith was real.
      1. When your faith is real, you value Jesus' presence.
      2. When your faith is real, you value Jesus' words.
      3. When your faith is real, you are convinced that Jesus is the Savior of the world.
- Take Inventory: Ask yourself the following...
1. Are you hungry?
  2. Are you involved in the work of the harvest?
  3. Are you grateful for the hard work that's gone before you?

You've seen the pictures. Human beings with bones protruding from their skin, sunken and listless eyes, swollen stomachs. They're classic symptoms of a condition that will kill you if not addressed quickly, and you don't have to be a doctor to know the remedy. When you see a person dying of starvation, you know the person needs *food*.

But there's often a complicating factor. I remember having a conversation with our friend, Bob Litteral. We were sitting in his home at the mission station at Amanab in the jungles of Papua New Guinea. He told me that one of the great challenges they were facing in trying to extend the life expectancy of the Angors (who seldom lived past fifty) was their diet. They loved their sago, and they ate huge amounts of it, but they were sickly and died prematurely because their diet wasn't providing the necessary nutrients for physical life. To put it simply, they needed to eat a different kind of food.

In reality, the world is full of people who are eating a diet which doesn't provide adequate nourishment, and therefore they are starving themselves to death. And I'm not just talking now about physical death. When your soul is sick, my friend, you need a different kind of food, the kind of food that Jesus talked about in today's text.

I must hasten to say we're talking about a problem that is universal and as basic as it gets, with a solution that is freely available and guaranteed to work. Millions even billions of people are starving spiritually and yet are oblivious to their condition. They, like the Angors who were dying yet clung to their inadequate food source, desperately need a change in diet, again, the kind of diet that Jesus talked about in John 4.

But it's not just non-Christians. The sad reality is that we who have tasted the goodness of God and belong to Christ can become sickly. And a primary cause, once

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\*\*Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

again, is a faulty diet. We too can find ourselves in desperate need of a different kind of food, the kind of food Jesus talked about when He said in John 4:32, “I have food to eat that you know nothing about.”

What kind of food is this? What’s Jesus talking about? Is it available to us? And if so, where do we get it?

The context for today’s text is a conversation we began to probe three weeks ago, a conversation between Jesus and a woman He met at a well in Samaria. He was at the well because He was thirsty. But in reality, He was at the well because *she* was thirsty in her soul and needed the living water which He alone possesses.

The story begins with an important transition statement in verse 4, “Now he *had* to go through Samaria.” Why did Jesus have to go through Samaria? The answer is directly related to the kind of food that nourished His soul. He had to go through Samaria because He had to meet a woman there. That was His food. And He had to meet the people in her village. That too was His food. And not just meet them, but give them food for their sin-sick souls.

Let me set the stage for today’s study. In John 4:27-42 we learn that Jesus has a different kind of food, a food that we should hunger for and then share with others. There are three scenes in our text. We’re going to see an *example*, hear an *explanation*, and then see the *effect* of hungering for a different kind of food.

#### I. Scene #1: We see an example of hungering for a different kind of food (27-30).

Our story begins with these words in verse 27, “Just then.” Jesus has finished His conversation with the woman at the well. He began by asking her for a drink, which startled her, as she said, because Jews didn’t associate with Samaritans and they certainly didn’t drink from their water jars.

“If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink,” Jesus told her in verse 10, “you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.” That of course didn’t make sense to the woman. Jesus didn’t have rope nor bucket. How could He get water out of this well?

But He wasn’t talking about water from this well, as He clarified in verses 13-14, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

“Give me some of that water,” she responded.

Jesus responded by telling her to go and get her husband. She said she didn’t have a husband. To which Jesus replied in verses 17-18, “You are right when you say you have no husband. 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.”

At that point, she tried to change the subject. She doesn’t want to talk about her sinful past, so she asks Jesus a religion question.

And Jesus, the Master Teacher, redirected her question to teach her about her need to become a person that worships God in spirit and in truth. You can’t reach God from a mountain. To reach God you must experience His salvation, and His salvation, He emphasized, is from the Jews. But it’s not just for the Jews. Jesus announced to this needy, sinful Samaritan woman who had five blown marriages and was presently living in adultery that God the Father was seeking true worshipers who would worship Him inside out with lives built on the truth of His Word.

“Only the Messiah could make that happen in my life,” she must have that. “I know He’s coming,” she told Jesus.

At which point Jesus declared in verse 26, “I who speak to you am he.”

*Just then*, says our text. “Just then his disciples returned.” Verse 8 says they had gone into town to buy food. Don’t miss the Savior’s sovereignty in the timing. Had the disciples returned one minute sooner, they would have interrupted the Lord’s evangelistic efforts with this woman. Had they returned a moment later, the woman would have already been gone, and so would have been the teachable moment. But at just the right time, right after He told the woman, “I am the Christ,” and right before she returned to the village, the disciples arrived.

And they were quite shocked at what they saw. Verse 27 says, “Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, ‘What do you want?’ or ‘Why are you talking with her?’”

Remember, these are Jewish men. They know that the rabbis taught, “Let no one talk with a woman in the street, no, not with his own wife, on account of what men may say.”<sup>1</sup> What is this woman doing with Jesus, and why is He talking with her?

But they’ve learned, contrary to a fundamental tenet in every children’s Sunday School class, that not every question is a good question. Some questions are better left unasked, especially when the question pertains to the actions of your Lord. If His actions don’t make sense to you, you can be sure He has His reasons. So it might be best to just wait and watch. Which these men did.

We’re seeing an example of hungering for a different kind of food. We’re going to hear an explanation from Jesus in just a moment as to what that food is, but here’s an illustration of what it looks like when you’re eating it.

Look at Jesus. He’s spending time with a village outcast. He’s talking with a woman who has been living for herself all her life about becoming a God-pleaser, and He’s letting her know that through Him, she can become just that. And He’s not going to let public opinion stand in the way of reaching her. This is His food.

But there are actually two examples in this first scene. She too begins to eat this food. I’m not sure exactly when it happened, but somewhere between verse 26 and verse 28 this woman was born again. And as with every healthy new born baby, she gave immediate evidence that she was hungry and ready to start eating!

I see three evidences in the text that indicate she’s now a new creation. Notice verse 28, “Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town...” There’s the first evidence...

**A. The woman left her water jar.** Why’d she do that? She’d just walked a half mile or so to get water from this well, and now she’s leaving her jar behind? Why? Some say she was so excited she just forgot it. I prefer Hendriksen’s suggestion.<sup>2</sup> He says she left it intentionally, and points out that the Greek word for “leaving” is the same word we see earlier in 4:3 where we’re told that Jesus “left” Judea. Jesus didn’t *forget* Judea but rather He purposefully *left* it. That’s what this woman did. She left her jar behind deliberately.

But why? For starters, she left it because she knows she’s coming back. But more significantly, she’s taking to heart something she just learned from Jesus. Jesus just told her that the day was coming and had indeed come when true worshipers, Jew and Samaritan alike, would worship the Father in spirit and in truth. That meant that the ceremonial laws that divided Jews and Samaritans for centuries no longer applied. And that meant that a Jew could now drink from a Samaritan water jug.

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<sup>1</sup> Barclay, p. 162.; Morris, p. 274.

<sup>2</sup> William Hendriksen, pp. 171-2.

So she's obeying Jesus (remember, He asked her for a drink back in verse 7). She left her jar, for Jesus and His disciples. That's the kind of thing you do once you start eating a different kind of food.

There's a second evidence in verses 28-29, "Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, 'Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?'" Did you catch what the woman did? It's quite revealing...

**B. The woman talked to people about her sinful past.** Remember, as we discussed in an earlier message, this woman is an outcast in her village. She's had five husbands and she's currently living in adultery with a man who is not her husband. She came to this well in the heat of the day to avoid the scorn of the other women. Just an hour earlier she was doing what she'd been doing for years, looking for ways to avoid people and hide from her past. Now she's hurrying back into her village, looking for as many people as she can find. What's more, she's talking openly about the subject that had always been off limits. Her past.

Yet now she's announcing to the people who know her best, "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did." Let that sink in. *Everything I ever did.* They knew what she had done. That's the reason they had looked down their scornful noses at her, because of what she had done. What she'd done was an embarrassment to herself and to her community. They knew, alright.

But she's not hiding from them any longer, nor from her past.

What a difference it makes when you meet Jesus! Barclay said it well, "It often happens that the first thing Christ does for a man is to compel him to do what he has spent his life refusing to do—look at himself."<sup>3</sup>

That's not natural. As sinners, our nature is to hide and avoid and shift blame. But once we meet Jesus and experience the power of His love and forgiveness, we can begin to do what's not natural, to be honest about our sinful past and realize that He can use it to bring attention to His matchless grace.

Here's Barclay again, "A person may have some trouble which he is embarrassed to mention and which he tries to keep secret, but once he is cured he is often so filled with wonder and gratitude that he tells everyone about it. A man may hide his sin; but once he discovers Jesus Christ as Saviour, his first instinct is to say to men: 'Look at what I was and look at what I am; this is what Christ has done for me.'"<sup>4</sup>

Which leads us to a third evidence.

**C. The woman urged people to come to Jesus.** "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did." There's something about this man that's worthy of your attention. He knows everything. He actually told me everything I ever did.

And notice her question, "Could this be the Christ?" Is she not sure? I think she is. Why else would she risk the scorn of the community to bring up the subject of her past? Why then didn't she say, "Come, see the Christ!?" If she'd done that, it would have guaranteed that the men *didn't* come, and she knew it. A first century woman (and especially one with her reputation) didn't teach men. To do so would have come across as presumptuous and out of line. No, a question was her best option if she wanted to convince the people in her town to come and see Jesus. *Could this be the Christ?*

And so they started chatting. "What's this, woman? The Christ? You think you've met the Christ? We'd better check this out."

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<sup>3</sup> Barclay, p. 163.

<sup>4</sup> Barclay, p. 164.

I'm amazed when I look at this woman and ponder the evidences we're seeing. She left her water jar, talked to people about her shameful past, and urged them to come to Jesus. What prompted all this? It's what she knew about Jesus.

1. *Jesus doesn't condemn us for what we have done.* Yes, He told me everything I ever did. And yes, He forced me to face the implications of everything I ever did. But He didn't condemn me for it.

That's our Savior, beloved. He doesn't condemn us for what we have done. Face it, yes. Confess it, yes. Forsake it, yes. But condemn it, no. How can that be? How can the holy and righteous God-man *not* condemn us for our sinful past? Here's how...

2. *Jesus came to rescue us and give us a new life.* Take a look at John 3:17, "For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him." That's why Jesus came to earth, not to condemn sinners, but to take their place, save them from their sins, and give them a brand new life.

Yes, she became a new woman that day, the day Jesus Christ entered her life. She started drinking living water. Or to use the metaphor Jesus will introduce next, she started eating different food.

In fact, think about the contrast we're seeing here. The disciples went into the village to get what? Food. That was their agenda. They've got physical food on their mind. And so, when they saw the guy selling the produce in Sychar, that's all they saw, not a sinner in need of a Savior, but just a guy selling produce. But this woman did precisely what the Savior recruited these men to do, evangelize the lost. They went into Sychar to get food. She went there to tell them about Jesus.<sup>5</sup>

And God used her efforts, too. Verse 30 says, "They came out of the town and made their way toward him." The people came, and the tense of the verb is revealing. "They *kept on coming* to Jesus."

That brings us to scene two. We've seen an example, but just what is this food?

## II. Scene #2: We hear an explanation of hungering for a different kind of food (31-38).

Notice verse 31, "Meanwhile his disciples urged him, 'Rabbi, eat something.'" The text says they *urged* Him to eat, which would indicate they tried to give Him some food, but He declined. They knew He had been hungry. That's why He sent them into Sychar an hour ago, to get some bread. But now when they offer it to Him, He doesn't seem to be interested. Why not?

Verse 32—"But he said to them, 'I have food to eat that you know nothing about.'" Jesus never wasted a teachable moment. To a woman standing at a well, He talked about living water. To men with sacks of food, He talked about a different kind of food.

Notice initially, three things about this food. First, Jesus said He had it. Secondly, He said the disciples didn't know anything about it. And thirdly, He wants them to know about it. That's why He's telling them.

Of course, that went right over their heads. Notice verse 33, "Then his disciples said to each other, 'Could someone have brought him food?'" A logical question. He was hungry. He sent us to get food. Now He's not hungry because He says He has food. Did somebody else get here first?

But He's not talking about physical food. He's talking about a different kind of food, as He explains in verse 34, "'My food,' said Jesus, 'is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.'" So what precisely is this food? Hear His answer...

**A. Jesus' food is to do the Father's work (34).** Think about it. You read the four gospels and quickly learn that Jesus was always on task. The buzz word today is

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<sup>5</sup> I'm indebted to Wiersbe for this helpful insight.

*missional*. But He didn't do His own thing. He didn't create the mission. His Father did. And here He says He found His highest delight in fulfilling the will and work of His Father.

That was His food, and it was more important to Him than anything else, as He affirmed again and again. For instance, in John 5:30, "I seek not to please myself but him who sent me." And in John 6:38, "For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me." And in John 14:31, "The world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me."

Jesus said that doing His Father's will and work, in this case talking to a lost woman in Samaria, was the food that nourished His soul. I don't often think of God's will that way. I think of it as duty. Jesus said it was food. I think of it as giving. Jesus says it's a way to gain. That's what food does for us. We gain something when we take it in.

And what's the gain? Jesus says it's a *harvest*. This is critical to see.

**B. The Father's work is to bring in a harvest of souls (35-38).** That's what Jesus told His men in verses 35-38, "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. Even now 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. Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor."

Most of us aren't farmers and didn't grow up on a farm. Probably the majority don't even have a garden. If Jesus was having this conversation today, He'd probably be talking about cell phone towers and 3G signals. That's our world. But these men live in an agrarian world, so He uses an agrarian metaphor to illustrate His Father's work.

The Father is bringing in a harvest, He says. You want to know why I'm talking with a woman and not interested in your food right now. Here's why. It's all about the harvest. That's my food. And I want it to be yours, too.

Jesus revealed five things about this harvest of souls. Notice them.

1. *Jesus tells us to look at the fields.* That's verse 35, "I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields." That's not a suggestion, but a command. Open and look. There's something out there that Jesus wants His followers to see, something we're prone to miss. That's our problem, friends. We don't see what Jesus sees. We see bread, fish, houses, furniture, clothing, and so on. He sees that too, and He knows we need those things. But there's something we need more, something that He called His food. And we won't see it unless we heed His instruction, open our eyes, and look at the fields.

What's true of those fields? This is...

2. *Jesus tells us that the fields are ready to be harvested.* You say, "Four months and then the harvest." I'm not sure what Jesus meant by that. Some Bible scholars say He's referring to a first century proverb. I think He's talking about a common subject of conversation in any farming village. I heard it growing up all the time. It goes like this.

"Plants are looking good, aren't they?"

"Yep, it's the new fertilizer I'm trying this year. Good stuff. Course, we gotta have the rain, but no question about it. Things are looking good so far."

"Gotcha. Same here. Got the final field planted before that big rain hit. Now it's just wait and see. In another four months, we'll be bringing in the harvest."

"Yep, just wait and see."

To which Jesus says, "No. It's not wait and see, not with the Father's harvest." In fact...

3. *Jesus tells us that the harvest is taking place right now.* Verse 35—“Look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.” And verse 36, “Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life...”

Let’s put this in perspective. In Israel the harvest takes place in April or early May. It’s now December or early January. So in another four months the farmers will bring in the grain harvest. And while that may be the case with the grain harvest, no so the soul-harvest, says Jesus. It’s happening *right now*. The fields are “white already to harvest,” as the KJV puts it.

Several years back the Bible scholar, H. V. Morton, was sitting by this same well in Samaria and wrote the following observation, “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. 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.”<sup>6</sup>

Look! It’s happening right now, says Jesus as He points to the coming crowd. It’s harvest time!

4. *Jesus tells us that there is joy for those who participate in the harvest.* Notice how verse 36 ends, “So that the sower and the reaper may be glad together.” Not everyone participates in the same way. As Paul shared in 1 Corinthians 3:6, “I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow.” But everyone who participates in God’s harvest work receives the same benefit. They “rejoice together,” says the KJV and ESV.

Do you want joy in your life? Then get involved in God’s harvest. Look for ways to participate in bringing in the sheaves. We’re told in Psalm 126:6, “He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him.”

That’s what the woman at the well did. She went back home, perhaps with tears in her eyes but with gospel seed in her hands. She told her neighbors about Jesus, and as we’ll see shortly, returned with sheaves and joy in her heart!

That’s what I want for you, says Jesus to His disciples. “I sent you to reap,” He tells them in verse 38. That’s interesting. The verb is past tense, *sent*. The question is, *when*? What sending is Jesus’ talking about? He just called these men to follow Him. The Great Commission in Matthew 28:19 and John 20:21 is over two years away. Even the earlier training trips, like when Jesus sent them out to preach and heal in Mark 3:14-15, are still future. So what does Jesus have in mind when He says here, “I sent you to reap.”?

Apparently, He’s talking about what He just told them in verse 35. He just told them to stop saying the harvest is future, that they should open their eyes right now and see the harvest, and by implication, get out in the fields and start reaping the harvest.

That’s where the joy is. Get out of the pew and get into the harvest work and you’ll have joy you can’t contain. And here’s the best part of all. A farmer works but never knows for sure if the harvest is coming. One bad flood, or a drought, or disease, and all his labor is for naught. That never happens in God’s harvest. God always brings home His sheaves.

Listen to Jesus told His disciples in verse 38, “I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labors.”

It’s as good as in the barn, Jesus tells His men. Look! See those Samaritans coming down the path. You’re participating in their harvest right now, and you didn’t even do

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<sup>6</sup> H. V. Morton, quote taken from Kent Hughes, p. 134.

the hard work. Others did that.<sup>7</sup> What others? John the Baptist did, for John 3:23 says he ministered at Aenon near Salim (about twenty miles northeast of Sychar). Perhaps John planted some seed that ended up in Sychar. For sure, the woman at the well did.

“They did the hard work, men,” Jesus told His disciples. “Now it’s your privilege to go bring in the harvest.” By implication, this applies to us, too.

5. *Jesus tells us that we are reaping the benefits of the hard work of others.*

Of course, when it comes to *the hard work done by others*, we must talk about what Jesus did on the cross, for ultimately it is because of His hard work that there is a harvest of souls.

On the cross Jesus accomplished a work that He alone could accomplish, a hard work, the hardest of works, the very work His Father designed and for which He entered the world as a man. On the cross He became sin who knew no sin (2 Cor 5:21). He took the wrath of God in the place of sinners (Isa 53:6). He removed the curse of sin (Gal. 3:13). He provided an atonement to cover the sins of rebels (1 John 2:2). He reconciled alienated sinners to their Maker (2 Cor. 5:18-19). That was His work, and He did not breathe His last breath until He accomplished it, and then He cried in triumph, “It is finished (John 19:30).”

Yes, He did the hard work, and we who believe in Him reap the benefits.

I saw it happen last week. I’ve been meeting with a man for about a month. When I first met him, he was in turmoil, with family and personal problems eating him alive. So I told him about Jesus, and urged him to get to know Jesus by reading in John’s gospel. On Monday I asked him how things were. I already knew the answer for I could see the obvious change in his countenance.

“I don’t know how to put it into words,” he said, “but I feel like I’m a new person. I’ve still got problems, but everything is different now. I can’t explain it.”

“I think I can,” I told him, and then turned to John 3 and read what Jesus said, ‘No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.’ I think you’ve been born again!”

And he replied, “I think I have too!”

It’s true, dear friends. The hard work has been done. We’re reaping the benefits. Which brings us to the final scene. We’ve seen the example and heard the explanation.

### III. Scene #3: We see the effect of hungering for a different kind of food (39-42).

Notice verse 39, “Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him.” Incredible. First, one Samaritan woman with a shameful past believes, and now...

**A. Other Samaritans believed in Jesus.** Many, in fact. Listen to the account in verses 39-42, “Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, ‘He told me everything I ever did.’ So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers. 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.’”

Why did they believe? Because of miracles? No. Because of words. Initially...

1. *They believed because of the woman’s words.* But ultimately...

2. *They believed because of Jesus’ words.* “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ,” says Romans 10:17 (ESV).

You say, “Was their faith real?” I think it was. There’s evidence.

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<sup>7</sup> As Hendriksen explains, “*Right here* in Samaria the Lord had *just now* commissioned his disciples to reap that for which they had not labored. Others had labored among these Samaritans, and now the disciples have been commissioned to enter into their labor.” Hendriksen, p. 174.



**B. The Samaritans gave evidence that their faith was real.** What kind of evidence? Verse 40 says they urged Jesus to stay with them. Verse 42 indicates they wanted to hear Jesus for themselves and not depend on secondhand messages. And most importantly, they made a public announcement at the end of verse 42, “We know that this man really is the Savior of the world.” They’ve known Christ for less than two days, but they’ve already got a missionary heart. “He’s not just our Savior,” they affirm. “He’s for the whole world!”

You say, “How can you tell if faith is real?” Those are three good tests.

1. *When your faith is real, you value Jesus’ presence.* You don’t need your arm twisted to come to church. You want to come because you value His presence.

2. *When your faith is real, you value Jesus’ words.* Hearing a sermon, reading your Bible, these aren’t a burden but a delight...when your faith is real. And...

3. *When your faith is real, you are convinced that Jesus is the Savior of the world.*

It’s interesting to trace Jesus’ footsteps in this section of John’s gospel. As Wiersbe points out, Jesus was in Jerusalem in 2:23, then moved into Judea in 3:22, then into Samaria in 4:4, where the Samaritans proclaimed Him to be the Savior for the world (in 4:42). Sound familiar? “And you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).”

Do you see where the footsteps of Jesus are taking us, my friend? Right into the harvest field. We cannot follow Jesus and ignore the world...unless we’re starving ourselves to death. *My food is to do the will of Him who sent me and finish His work.*

Take Inventory: Ask yourself the following...

1. *Are you hungry?* I’m talking about your soul. Some of us are in desperate need for a change in diet. We’ve living on junk food and we need the food that Jesus offers. We weren’t created for job, or family, and certainly not for sinful pleasures. We were created for God and to do His will and work.

But we’ve fallen short, haven’t we? We’ve gone our own way instead of God’s. That’s why we need a Savior, and Jesus is His name. He went to the cross for us, then conquered death, so that through Him we could have new life, eternal life.

Are you hungry? Then stop living for your own agenda. Come to Jesus, put your trust in Him, and live for God’s agenda with all you’ve got.

2. *Are you involved in the work of the harvest?* We’ve just seen how the Lord used one woman to bring a village to Himself, and she was hardly a likely candidate to be a mighty evangelist. But then again, she was, for the Lord loves to use unlikely servants to accomplish His work.

The question is, are you available? G. Campbell Morgan said it well, “The trouble is not that the fields are not white. The trouble is that the labourers are not ready<sup>8,9</sup> Are you participating in the harvest work that the Father entrusted to His Son and for which the Son has in turn enlisted His followers? Who are the people in your life that the Lord is interested in reaching through you?

Start where you live, like the woman at the well did. Go tell the people who know you best what Jesus has done for you.

3. *Are you grateful for the hard work that’s gone before you?* For the Savior who gave His life for you. For the people the Savior used to sow the seed in your life, and water it, and bring in the harvest. Let’s thank give thanks.

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<sup>8</sup> See Matthew 9:37-38

<sup>9</sup> Morgan, p. 78.