

Title: He Came to Give You Life

ill. Its amazing how simple it is to tell a story. We do this thing in our house occasionally called Louie and Juicy....
 Seems to me that the basic well to tell a story is:
 Start at A....
 Then deep trouble
 Then glorious resolution
 Then arrive at B....

We have the first two parts of that this morning:
 Jesus begins a journey.....
 He goes and finds a complete mess of a woman....

Read John 4:1-18

1. He Came on Purpose

In John 4, Jesus is on a mission. He **will have this woman in the kingdom of God**. He is purposeful....that's not strong enough....he is unrelenting. He is after her. He will have her for his own.

And you see it in verse 4, "**he had to pass** through Samaria".

Now some will say this is **just a matter of geography**—the shortest way to get out of Judea (in the south) where the Pharisees were stirring up trouble and to Galilee (in the north), where things would have been a bit quieter, was going through Samaria.

Its worth noting that **many Jews would actually travel around Samaria** on their way from Judea to Galilee simply because of their hatred for Samaritans. Jesus chooses to NOT do that.

But that's **not the most compelling reason** to see divine intention in that little phrase—"he had to pass through..."

The main reason to know that the words show that Jesus is very purposeful here; that he has a divine appointment with this woman, is because **every time the Greek word behind "had"** refers to Jesus in the gospel of John (it only happens 4 other times), it's a reference to divine necessity—it's a reference to the mission of Jesus.

John 10:16 is an excellent example, "I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I MUST (that's our word) bring them also, and they will listen to my voice."

So Jesus leaves Judea for Galilee with **one of his sheep in his mind**, and the divine appointment he has set for her.

Now, if we just **step away** from that for a moment, and **consider the scope of this thing**. For **every sheep** that is out there, who is not yet a part of God's family (but who will one day be in his family), **there is a divine appointment** coming.

Their **lives are unfolding toward this intersection** where they'll meet Jesus.

Ephesians 1:5 is the **doctrinal explanation** of the narrative in John 4:4. Here is **Ephesians 1:5**, "he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will."

The "he" there is the Father. We are not getting our Trinity messed up. **Jesus mission is in direct response** to what the Father has set out for him to do.

But the point is the same—he **predestined the moment that you would be adopted** into his family. That means that he pre-determined the **time when you would become a child of God**. The date, as it were, **had been set** for a long time.

So think about this for a minute. In **infinite eternal past**, for every Christian (or every eventual Christian) there has been a **calendar** that God has been keeping that had your name on a certain day—a day that you would meet Jesus.

And unbeknownst to you, the machinations of life and history have been coursing along in just such a way that your life will intersect with Jesus on that day; at that time....that God had set from eternity past.

And we get a little picture of the wonder of that in the life of this Samaritan woman from the little known town of Sychar. Jesus had to go to Samaria so that he could make her his own.

We see the same thing happen in the life of Saul in Acts 9 on his way to kill more Christians. Jesus had set an appointment for him that he did not know about on that Damascus Rd.

It happened for me on a rainy Friday night the second semester of my sophomore year in high school.

At the young adult Christmas Party, Matt Holtom, who co-leads the group, told the story of the divine appointment Jesus had set for him about 20 years ago. Matt was sitting alone and depressed in his apartment, and the Spirit of God began to open up his mind....Jesus broke in, and saved him.

At the Youth Christmas party Lucas West told us the story of the divine appointment Jesus had set for him about 2 years ago as he was reading through Romans, and came to chapter 8, verse 1, "there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus...." There....not really by his own doing.....Lucas met his maker and his king.

I wonder—have you had your divine appointment yet? Have you met the Messiah on some intersection that you weren't expecting? Has he come for you yet?

If not, than why couldn't that be today? Maybe, from eternity past, there has been a little flag on this day, on heaven's calendar with your name on it. The Bible says that now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. 6.2)

Jesus will come to you today through his Word; and he will have you for his own. Just call on him today. Believe in him today. Repent of the way you have been living life w/o him, and believe that he took your punishment on that cross. You can be brought into his family today, by a sovereign act of his love.

 Christian, I just want for a moment for you to soak in the goodness of this little truth. Hebrews 1:3 says that Jesus is upholding the universe by the word of his power. Which means that the universe carries along as it does moment by moment by the sustaining power of the words of Jesus. Breathtaking. But I say that to point out that Jesus has a busy schedule.

And then all of history is coursing along—the history of 7 billion people's lives is unfolding at this very moment. Jesus is overseeing that. He is either directly or indirectly governing every step of that, every atom's movement within that unfolding history is governed by the one who "upholds the universe by the word of his power".

But none of that got in the way of him keeping his appointment.

He had to go to Samaria.

ill. Maybe to illustrate this on an almost embarrassingly small scale. One of the things that Kristy loves to do is follow people's adoption blogs. Its sort of like deciding what kind of movie you are in the mood for—adventure; suspense; romantic comedy. If you are in the mood for a heart warming drama....just google, "adoption blog".

Anyway, its really fun to read the adoption blog and how the people planned, and prayed, and saved, and were interviewed, and vetted, etc., etc., etc. All of this action that was taking place way before the child had any clue that there was anything better than the squalor of their orphanage; long before the child heard of any place called America, or any person named Jesus; and ever dreamed that he would have his very own parents to love HIM, and feed HIM.

And you read on the blog as that unfolds, and then what do you get to....the moment they meet. That's when the tears flow....especially if they bring their niece to do the video taping of the moment. That is the appointment those parents had been planning and praying toward for YEARS, and had made great sacrifices to see accomplished. But for that child...it started off like any other day. And then utterly, completely changed his life forever.

Christian—Jesus came for you. Nothing could stop him. He came. He made you his own. And you will be forever his.

I hope, in all the **turmoil that is your life**, that this truth gives you a great sense of **security and confidence** knowing that God planned for your salvation, and in the **fullness of his time, he brought it about** according to the purpose of his will.

Now-- in **human adoption miles and money are often the greatest challenges** to bringing the would be family together. In our case, the **great challenge is our sin**. That is the great hurdle. And now, as we continue in this passage, we see **this illustrated so well** in the case of the Samaritan Woman.

2. He Came FOR (even) YOU

What I want to do for you in this second point is show you **how wide the cavern was** that Jesus had to cross in order to **gain this woman for himself**. And what I want you to **see and cherish is that the cavern** he had to cross to gain you for himself is just as large.

And maybe it will help you, if I **mention something first**. **Most sermons on this text are preached as how-to's or encouragements toward evangelism**. So we observe Jesus and how he approaches this woman, and that inspires and instructs us in our own EV. Ok, I can see that. You could preach a Biblically faithful sermon like that. But, I think the first thing we have to gain from this text is to realize that we are the woman. We are not Jesus the evangelist. We are outcast, adulterous, half-breeds that Jesus came and rescued....just like this woman is. So before looking to learn from Jesus example in John 4....worship Jesus for rescuing you in the same way that he rescued this woman. (JP)

Now, let's notice how **wide the cavern in between the woman and Jesus, and I think that will illustrate for us, how wide the cavern is between us and Jesus**. Or to say it another way—how much Jesus had to overcome and breakthrough in order to gain us for himself.

Read 4:7-9. So we see the tension here. The **woman knows how culturally inappropriate** and unexpected what Jesus is doing, is.

But we have to ask—what's the big deal?

The big deal is that **Jews considered Samaritans unclean people**—religiously defiled and dirty people. **Just to eat food** prepared by a Samaritan person would have been revolting for many Jews.

Jewish leaders actually created a law saying, **"the daughters of the Samaritans are menstruants from their cradle"** and therefore in a perpetual state of ceremonial uncleanness.

If that was the typical Jewish mindset about **Samaritans you can understand the woman's surprise** that Jesus (who is w/o a cup to drink with) would ask for a drink from her jar.

And **John does make note of this**, probably in verse 9. That phrase **"have no dealings with"** that John adds can also be translated something to the effect of, **"do not share use with"**. The **context** would seem to indicate that maybe what John is wanting us to see was that it was highly unusual for a Jewish man to request to share dishes with a Samaritan.

Now, its worth noting the **HISTORY BETWEEN JEWS AND SAMARITANS AND HOW**, historically, they got to the place of so despising one another.

The region of Samaria had been a part of the Israelite Northern Kingdom (ie, Samaria used to be a Jewish region), but when the Assyrians invaded and conquered the northern kingdom, they deported all of the Jews of any standing from Samaria, and then imported a bunch of foreigners. The foreigners intermarried with the remaining Jews, and adhered to some Jewish religious practice but intermingled it with their own practices. Thus an ethnic group called Samaritans was created. There are actually surviving Samaritans to this day.

Years later when deported Jews returned to their homeland, they viewed this new ethnic group not only as the children of political rebels but as racial half-breeds whose religion was tainted by various unacceptable elements.

So we have all of these barriers of history and religion and politics and gender that would keep Jesus from this woman.

And there are more. At least 2 more:

1. She is a sinner in the first degree. She has been divorced 5 times; she is living in an adulterous relationship. And because of this no one likes her—that's why she is at this second rate out of town well by herself in the hottest part of the day. The normal practice would be for women to go to the well in town together in the early morning. But because she basically lives her life with a Scarlet Letter on her chest, she is alone.

If you need convincing that you are this woman, just stop here and consider this question of adultery. That was her big sin. If you think in OT terms than what you find is that idolatry—prizing other things or people above God (even good things) is equated with adultery....because idolatry is basically a matter of unfaithfulness to our God. And so her form of idolatry just happened to be the most classic example of unfaithfulness--adultery. Your form of idolatry may have been something else....but at the end of the day, both are adultery against God—both are a form of unfaithfulness toward God.

2. Spiritually speaking, she is utterly clueless. I mean isn't that one of the things that you noticed as we read through the conversation between she and Jesus?

He uses water to launch into a conversation about soul satisfaction—but she never really gets that.

Read 10 and 11. When Jesus says "living water" in verse 10 he means the water of eternal life that he can give. He's talking about the Holy Spirit. She thinks that he's talking about a flowing brook, a gurgling spring, rather than well water.

And then in 14 and 15 she still does not get it. Read 14 and 15. Jesus is speaking in spiritual terms. She is still looking for good water to drink.

She is utterly clueless.

So here we have this woman: a syncretistic; adulterous; spiritually clueless; ethnic outcast.

That's who Jesus came for. And that's who you are.

When you read John 4—see yourself in this woman. And then see the beauty of the Savior who came for you. That's the way to read John 4.

And don't make any mistake. In light of his holiness and your sinfulness, he had to cross just as many barriers to gain you, as he did in order to gain this woman.

But he has come for us. Listen to Ephesians 2 describe how much Jesus overcame in order to win us for himself:

"[12] remember that you were at that time separated from Christ....having no hope and without God in the world. [13] But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. [14] For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility...And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near...[19] So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God." (Ephesians 2:12-14, 17, 19)

Now, just in case, you are not buying the idea that you are that Woman...maybe you weren't so bad before becoming a Christian...maybe you were a pretty decent person. OK, fine. Thank God for that.

Than you go back and read the beginning of John 3. There we have a respectable, religious, educated, good guy....who is NOT yet in the kingdom of God. And he is as utterly clueless as this woman about what matters most. And he shares the same desperate need for Jesus. Maybe you'll find yourself more in him, than in her.

And that is fine.

The **basic point is the same**. Jesus **has come for you**.....and it was a **great gulf that he crossed** in order to gain you.

Now maybe it seems like my aim here is to get everyone to **feel dumb, and bad, and guilty and ee-or-ish** for being such sinners. Not true.

My aim is that you fall at the feet of the great Hero who has come for you—even you!

ill. what makes any hero tale worth telling is what lengths the hero goes to rescue.

If **Frodo only had to take the Ring to the recycling center** on the outskirts of the shire, we wouldn't have had much of a story.

If **Luke Skywalker could have stayed on TA-two-eeen**, and rescued the Galactic Empire from there, we would not have ended up with 6 movies.

And if you are **just an alright, decent guy that Jesus decided to let come on**, then there is not a lot of worship in that.

But if Jesus left his majestic, glorious home of splendor in heaven, and walked across and dessert in order to gain for himself a **clueless, syncretistic, adulterer**...if that basically tells your story.....well, that is something that **stirs worship** in your heart.

Its also the **appropriate starting place for growing in Christ-likeness**. We all **need the humility** comes from believing that there is **nothing we have that we did not receive**; that apart from Christ I have nothing to offer God that will gain any traction with him.

Jesus went to great **lengths to rescue you**, at great cost to himself, with out any contribution from you other than cluelessness.

Let's worship Jesus because he came for us; even us.

3. He Came to Give (Even) You Life

We have already noticed that during their conversation **Jesus is talking about the thirst that the soul feels**, and that the woman continued to think he was talking about the **thirst that the mouth feels**.

Your body was made to live on water. **Your soul was made to live on God**. That is Jesus' point. But up until verse 15, the woman does not see it.

Jesus does a **surprising thing to help her see...**

He makes a **sudden shift in verse 15 and 16** from water to husbands. Its jarring if you pay attention as you are reading.

Jesus knew that the spiritual **well that this woman was drinking from was men**. She was looking toward men to provide the **deep soul satisfaction** that only Christ can give.

And so Jesus **has to expose that idolatry in her**, so that she can repent and change, drink from his fountain, and be truly satisfied.

So we could come to this **summary sentence about our text**: Jesus came to rescue this sinful woman from the idolatry of looking for life and fulfillment outside of Jesus himself.

And that is the **main take away for you as well**. Jesus has come to you, even you, to rescue you from the pursuit of peace and joy and contentment in things other than God himself. That's why he came.

Now, your well might not be men....it might be **wealth**, or **sports**, or **grades**, or **people liking you**, or **comfort**, or **security**, or **physical appearance**, or **influence**, or the **perfect family**, or **freedom**, or **independence**, or whatever.

Jesus came to rescue you from that.

And that is a big deal. This is **not optional Christianity**. This is the **essence of Christianity**.

Why did God save you? If we answer that question from **John 3:16-17**, we have one answer—he came to rescue you from condemnation. He is your ticket to heaven, and out of hell. Very true. And thank God for that.

But that is **not the only answer to the question**—why did God save you? Consider the answer that Jesus gives over in **John 7**:

“[37] On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. [38] Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’”
[39] Now this he said about the Spirit.” (John 7:37-39a)

I love how this text sets up. Jesus is at this **huge multi-day party**. And on the last day—the great day (the **Grand Finale**)—ie with the most people, and the most food, and the most to drink, he gets up and says:
“If after you have drunk all, ate all...if you are still thirsty....**if there is still something lacking**...than come to me....and I will give you LIVING WATER....which is his own Spirit.”

What’s he doing there? He’s taking people who have tasted in full things they looked to for soul satisfaction, and he is saying: STILL THIRSTY?

And so Jesus says, **“come and drink.”**

Why did he save you according to his own words in John 7? So that you **won’t be thirsty anymore**. The answer in **John 6** is so that you won’t be **hungry or thirsty** anymore:

“[35] Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.”

To answer it from John 4 would be to say—he saved this Samaritan woman so that she would quit drinking the well water of relationship with men, and start drinking from the fountain of water that is relationship with Jesus, through His Spirit.

So to **summarize that point**: you are **not just saved from hell. You are saved in order to be satisfied by Jesus**. He is not just your ticket into heaven. He is your life.

Here is a **horrendous sort of life**: one that professes to trust in Jesus for forgiveness, but that does not look to Jesus for joy. I use the word horrendous because of how strong the words in **Jeremiah 2** are:

[12] Be appalled, O heavens, at this;
be shocked, be utterly desolate,
declares the LORD,
[13] for my people have committed two evils:
they have forsaken me,
the fountain of living waters,
and hewed out cisterns for themselves,
broken cisterns that can hold no water.

Notice there....this is a **horrendous evil for people who already have the ticket to heaven punched** (its “my people” that are doing this thing that causes all of the heavenly host to stand back and gape at).....they are drinking well water.

So, Christian, **what is your well water?** What’s the water that you drink to quench your soul thirst? What is that thing you look to, in order to make all things well (no pun intended)?

It is a great evil.

This **truth that we are circling around** is the truth that brings forth all of the talk in the Bible about the **jealousy of God**. We think about jealousy as a vice. But when a husband is jealous for his wife’s love, it is a noble thing. And when we talk about **God’s jealousy for his people it is a pure, and righteous thing**.

It provokes God when you try drink from other wells. It shocks heaven for you to do that. To use the language of other places in the NT—**it grieves and quenches his Holy Spirit**. When the Spirit of Jesus is grieved and quenched you lack his fullness. And **if you lack his fullness, than you lack the joy** that can only be found in him.

This **relates to everything in your life.**

If you have Jesus...

than you **don't need money, so you can share it**.....

you don't need **people's approval**, so you can serve them and love them w/o fear of being rejected....

you can bear with **disappointments**, and keep your joy.....

you can **take a risk**, and not fear that failure utterly dooms you....

because you **already have what you most want**: Jesus in you; filling you up; giving you true life.