**The Mission**

1. Today we are talking about the mission. My favorite story to illustrate the Mission is the story of the woman at the well in John chapter 4. There we see how we can continue the mission of Jesus by sharing our story with the people that God has placed in our lives. In the first half of the Chapter, we see how Jesus Christ met and revealed himself to her as the Messiah. And, her life was changed by that interaction. In the second half of the Chapter, we see how she responded to that life changing encounter and how we too can respond and carry on the mission of Jesus. **Her response is what we are going to focus on and it can be summed up in one Word “Testimony” in verse 39.**

**39**Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I ever did.”

Looking at her Testimony, we will see that it was subjective true, objectively true and that she shared it: transparency, simplicity and bravery and see how we too can have a testimony that carries on the mission of Jesus.

1. So what was her testimony? What did she say?

**29**“Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?”

1. It’s subjective “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did.” She had a personal experience with Jesus. At first glance, the story may appear coincidental, but meeting wasn’t by chance. Notice how Jesus orchestrates the encounter. He sits at the well and sends all 12 disciples to get food. Sending a few would have been normal. When it came to preparing the Passover, Jesus sends Peter and John and that is a big meal. Here they are just looking for a little something to eat and Jesus send all 12. Why? Jesus knew that she was coming and wanted to talk with her.
2. **Culturally we may not realize how significant this is.** Why is she drawing water at noon? Because she is a social outcast. You don’t draw water at noon. You draw it in the morning when it is cool. You draw it so that you can get about doing the cooking and cleaning and washing that you need to do that day. In talking to her, Jesus breaks all of the cultural barriers of the social ladder. The racial barrier. Jews didn’t talk to Samaritans. The Gender Barrier. Men didn’t talk to women outside of their own family. And the moral barrier, as a Rabbi Jesus was in a position of High respect… she was drawing water at noon to avoid the leers and whispers of her towns people. She is ignored. Talked about but not talked to, but Jesus talks to her. In her conversation with Jesus, she is experiencing grace. Somewhere in the conversation she is probably thinking, “This is amazing, I can’t believe that He is talking to me and offering me the thing that my soul thirsts for. Good thing He doesn’t know about my sordid past because then he wouldn’t be talking to me.” And then Jesus calls her out.

**16**… “Go, call your husband and come back.”

**17**“I have no husband,” she replied.

Jesus said to her, “You are right when you say you have no husband.**18**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.”

Her heart must have sunk in that moment because she immediately changes the subject… But at some point it must have dawned on her, “He knew. He knew the whole time and he is still here for me. He has seen all of me and He still loves me. She shared with them her experience with Jesus. How has Jesus changed your life?

1. **In verse 29 it’s posed as a question, “Could this be the Messiah?” in verse 42, we see that she was saying that he was:**

**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.”

They are saying, you said it, but we didn’t believe it. But now we do. Notice that she is not saying. She is not saying, “this is true for me, but it may not be true for you, or that he is savior for some people, but not others.” She is making an objective truth claim. This man, this Jesus, is the Messiah. How does she know that he is Savior of the world? He came for her, the least likely, the least deserving.

1. **She shares her story with transparency.** “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did.” She simply shares her experience with Jesus. She doesn’t try to pretend that she is or has done something great somehow earn his favor. Rather she says, “He knows everything I have ever done even the depths of my brokenness. How I have been searching for meaning and satisfaction in my men and He still loves me to the skies. In Him, I have found what I have been looking for.
2. This past week I was reading in my devotional Love does by Bob Goff and I learned that really expensive art, classics, master-pieces. You get two copies. The original and an inexpensive copy. So that you can store your priceless art in a safe place in a vault where it cannot be damaged by the sun or dirt or 100 other things that could go wrong. And put the copy on display.
3. I think we do that in life sometimes. **We hang a copy, a version, of ourselves out there for the world to see, not who we really are**. We can put out different versions of ourselves in different environments changing ourselves to fit the crowd that we are with so that no one really knows who we are. It happens in subtle ways. In college, I told everyone at school and church that my name was Nathan and everyone at the restaurant and bar where I worked that I was Nate. It was of course so I could figure out who they were based on the name they called me by. But I wonder if there was more to it. If there were parts of my character that I altered depending on whose company I was keeping.
4. It also happens in significant ways. Where we pretend to be someone who we are not. Where we put out a copy of ourselves omitting faults and flaws. And we can leave people thinking that Christianity is about following all the rules, doing everything right or at least pretending they are. Or we put out a version of ourselves that keeps Jesus hidden. But as followers of Jesus, He should be central to who we are, how we face your problems, how we make your decisions, how we set life priorities. As we grow in relationship with others sharing about Him should be nothing but natural. If that is not the case, you are hiding part of who you are.
   1. To be loved and not know is superficial and unsatisfying.There is always this fear, “That if they really knew who I was, they wouldn’t love me. Respect me, want to be around me.”
   2. Yet to be known… and rejected for it is our greatest nightmare.

We all have a hole in our heart and our desperately searching for something that can fill it and every rejection reminds us that it is there. They we aren’t the people we want to be.

Putting the real version of ourselves out there for the world to see takes real bravery, (we will come back to where to find the bravery in a minute) but we also know that is where we find the most satisfaction.

1. First simplicity. I find this story so amazing. She has no formal education. Probably knows less than most if not all of the disciples. Certainly there are significant things she doesn’t know, like that Jesus was going to die on the cross and rise again even though he hinted at it when he said, “The hour is coming,” which in John’s gospel is always referring to His crucifixion. **Yet she is grabbing hold of the very core of the gospel.**  We have a tendency to make everything so complicated. I am pretty sure that we would have put her thru at least a seven week course if not some formal education before letting her go. Yet she gets it right. “Come see a man.” Come to Jesus. Meet Jesus. Rely on Jesus. Nothing to do. No five steps to Christian living. Just meet Jesus. Every other religion says, do this, believe that, for this path. And Jesus says I am the way the truth and the life. In a way, she is saying to the people that phrase from children’s song we all know by heart.

Jesus loves me this I know.

He knows me and he still loves me. You got to meet him.

She was known completely and still loved endlessly infallibly and it is heaven.

1. **That’s what makes her brave**. She sees something so beautiful that nothing else matters. She leaves water jar and runs to the very people she was avoiding. It is the way that the heart works. Whenever we see something beautiful, we want to grab somebody and say look. It didn’t matter anymore that she was a social outcast. It didn’t matter that she might get ridiculed, “Why would he come to you?” She has seen the most beautiful thing she has ever seen and she has to share it.
2. After this whole encounter the disciples want Jesus to take something to eat and he responds.

“I have food to eat that you know nothing about.”

There is nothing more filling, satisfying, enriching then to see someone’s life change as you have shared a testimony about the grace of Jesus Christ. Hanging the real version out there for the world to see with transparency and simplicity at times seems too much to ask, like more bravery than we can muster. But the Father did when he hung Jesus out there on the cross for us and it is the most beautiful thing the world has ever seen. May that make you brave to share the good news of Jesus with transparency and simplicity.