

Series: John

Title: Demonstration of Power

Text: John 4: 39-42

Date: March 14, 2021

Place: SGBC, NJ

John 4: 25: The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. 26: Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am *he*...27: And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her? 28: The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, 29: Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?...39: And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did. 40: So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days. 41: And many more believed because of his own word; 42: And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard *him* ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

Here we have a known sinner saved by grace who bears witness of Christ to other sinners. She speaks a very simple message testifying of Christ and what he did for her. The result is a group of sinful, idolatrous Samaritans believed on Christ in spirit and in truth. What can we glean from this?

Proposition: We see here a demonstration of an absolute necessity: only the gospel going forth by the Holy Spirit in the power of God gives dead sinners life and faith and willingness to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

The power is not in the outward appearance of the vessel used to preach. The power is not in excellency of speech or wisdom of words spoken. The power is not in those who hear. The power that makes the gospel effectual is of God. Right now, may the Spirit of God make this word enter our hearts in the power of God so that we cast all our care on Christ our Lord.

NOT OUTWARD APPEARANCE

The power that gives sinners life by the gospel is not in the outward appearance of the vessel used. The Lord had just spoken effectually into this woman's heart and she went straight to this audience in the city and testified of Christ. She had no time to do anything outwardly to make up for her past. This saved sinner had no time to make herself to appear changed outwardly. She did nothing to make herself appear outwardly religious. There was nothing outward about her that made her appear as a credible witness to her hearers. Everyone knew she was a sinner, a known adulteress. Yet, when she testified of Christ many who heard believed on him.

Consider our Master himself. He is the GodMan. Christ is himself the very power of God who is God! Yet, naturally, physically, by all outward appearance, we read:

Isaiah 53:2: he grew up a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, *there is* no beauty that we should desire him.

Multitudes saw him and did not believe on him. Most spoke evil of him. They said things like "We know his father and his mother; they were so poor he was born in a cow stable; nothing good comes out of Nazareth!" Outwardly the Son of God appeared to these Samaritans as just another Jewish man. The Jews despised Samaritans and the Samaritans despised the Jews. What better way for our Lord to manifest that the power of the gospel is not in the outward appearance of the vessel used to preach but the power is of God!

Without a doubt when the Spirit of God sanctifies a sinner and brings us to believe on Christ, the creation of a new man within will have an effect on the outward. The love wherewith Christ loved his own constrains us within "to adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things" (Ti 2: 10). We never want to bring reproach on the gospel.

Nor do we ever want to do anything outwardly simply to be seen of men so as to make ourselves the attraction. This is what most do in religion. Many so-called churches advertise their ministries and prayer meetings and benevolent deeds which is exactly what the Lord Jesus told his people not to do. We want the only attraction to be Christ declared through his gospel, not us.

In love to our Redeemer and our brethren it breaks our heart if we do anything to turn needy sinners to us. There is no greater burden for a child of God than to do something that makes ourselves the focus rather than Christ.

But in this Samaritan woman we see the glorious-good news to strengthen our weak hands and our feeble knees. That good news is that it is not the outward appearance of the vessel that will help or hinder the gospel when Christ speaks in power. The power is of God not of us.

This woman went out of that city a known adulteress and returned to that city a known adulteress. The difference was made by God our Savior. She went out of the city carrying an empty earthen vessel to draw physical water. But by the power of God she returned to the city being, herself, an earthen vessel filled with living water. She went out empty and returned filled with the priceless treasure. It was not the outward appearance of our Redeemer nor her outward appearance but his own Power that made the word effectual in her heart and those to whom she spoke. The power is of God and not of us.

2 Corinthians 4: 7: But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

NOT EXCELLENCY OF SPEECH

The power to make the gospel effectual in spiritually dead sinners is not excellency of speech in the vessel used to proclaim Christ. This woman had not been to seminary to learn how to be a soul-winner. Thankfully! She was not eloquent and did not declare a system of theology. She simply, plainly testified of Christ and what he did for her, saying, "*come see a man that told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ?*"

Many use a passage like this as an excuse to take the offense out of the gospel. You've heard folks say things like "The woman at the well, the thief on the cross, they didn't hear the doctrine of depravity or election or particular redemption." Brethren, Christ is the Truth! When he revealed himself in her heart she knew all things—"The woman saith unto him, *I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am.*" Then her testimony to her friends was, "*Come see a man that told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ?*"

When the unction of the Holy Spirit is given in the heart, the sinner knows all things because we behold Christ who is All!

John 14: 26: But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you....16: 14: He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine and shall shew it unto you

At Corinthian they were trying to impress their hearers with their gift of speaking in languages that the Spirit gifted them to speak which they had never learned. Paul told them that instead of that, if all simply preach the gospel of Christ,

1 Corinthians 14:24:...and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned; he is convinced of all, he is judged of all;

By the Spirit and power of God revealing Christ in the heart,

1 Corinthians 14: 25: And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest,

The word is the sharp two-edged sword discerning the thoughts and intents of his heart. The Spirit convinces sinners that all they ever did is sin. This is given by making us behold that Christ alone the Righteousness of God. He makes it personal to the elect sinner that Christ is our only Righteousness.

1 Corinthians 14:25...and so falling down on his face: he will worship God and report: that God is in you of a truth:

That is why the woman at the well went reporting that God is in Christ of a truth. That is why she declared is this not the Christ? Christ spoke in power into her heart, “*I Am!*” Beholding Christ in all his Righteousness, her sinful heart was manifest to her. At that moment she knew all she ever did was sin and he alone was her Righteousness. We see this work done in sinners repeatedly in scripture.

Isaiah 6:5: Then said [Isaiah], Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

Job said, Job 42: 5: I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. 6 Wherefore I abhor *myself*, and repent in dust and ashes.

The elect Samaritan woman was given “the unction from the Holy One and knew all things.” The sure effect is always the same. In her broken and contrite spirit she hit her face and worshipped him. By the same power, Christ blessed her word to her friends in their hearts and they worshipped him.

Here is the point. Christ must be preached in truth. But faith does not stand in the excellency of our speech or the wisdom of our words or even knowing T.U.L.I.P. Faith comes by the power of God revealing Christ our Righteousness in the heart in Spirit and in truth.

NOT OF THE ONE HEARING

The power to hear and believe is not of those who hear the gospel preached. The woman at the well did not make herself hear. Her friends did not make themselves hear. Not even one who the Lord has already called can make ourselves hear in power.

There stood the Lord’s apostles: the Lord had already called them, they believed on him. They heard the same word that he spoke to her. But they only stood marvelling that he spoke to such a sinner and that he allowed her to speak to him. They had their focus on another sinner rather than Christ. They did not hear.

Yet, the same word came into her heart with power. Many in Samaria did not believe her word. Others did. Why? Christ was speaking particularly to her. When she bore witness Christ was speaking particularly to his elect among her friends. Therefore, they heard effectually in spirit and in truth.

The general call goes forth as the gospel is preached. But every sinner needs the Spirit to make us hear, even we who believe. Yet, while one believer is not hearing, others may be blessed in spirit and in power. It does not mean the Spirit of God is not blessing the word to others simply because some may not hear. Christ said, “Take heed how ye hear.” We need the Spirit of God to make us hear inwardly in spirit. The power is of God. The apostle Paul declares this in 1Corinthians 1 and 2.

1 Corinthians 1: 5: That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and *in* all knowledge; 6: Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you...17: For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. 18: For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. 19: For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. 20: Where *is* the wise? where *is* the scribe? where *is* the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 21: For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. 22: For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: 23: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; 24: But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. [nor is it our outward appearance] 26: For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*: 27: But God hath

chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28: And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29: That no flesh should glory in his presence. 30: But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 31: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

1 Corinthians 2: 1: And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. 2: For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 3: And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. 4: And my speech and my preaching *was* not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

1 Corinthians 2: 11: For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 12: Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13: Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14: But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. 15: But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. 16: For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

Amen!