

Gospel of John Study Notes

John 4b – The Disciples Return

Chapter 4 provides insight into Jesus' mission on earth. First, the woman at the well, followed by a brief encounter with a royal official.

- John 4:1-26, Jesus Talks With a Samaritan Woman
- John 4:27-42, The Disciples Return
- John 4:43-54, Jesus Heals an Official's Son



The Disciples Return: The Food of Jesus

Jesus has just revealed himself as the “I am” as his disciples return. The woman is still there as the group converges. The surprise on their faces reveal their confusion and concern, but the woman was now on a mission.

- Confusion: Jesus is talking to a woman and the subject is that of theology¹
- The woman leaves the jar in her excitement to share the news
- The conversation turns to the subject of food and the disciples are confused even further, so Jesus explains (?):
 - His food is to do the will of the father
 - The field are ripe for the harvest, right before your eyes
 - The sower and the reaper are glad together
 - Others have done the hard work for us, it's time to reap

Evangelism: Our Mission

- We've been commissioned to go and make disciples

“...Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”—Matthew 28:19-20

- What holds us back?

¹ But they may also have been intrigued that Jesus would engage a woman theologically. The rabbis taught that theological education, that is, instruction in the law, was for men alone. To teach women or girls not only was a waste of time, but a profaning of sacred things. Jesus disregards such custom and here is talking to a singularly irreligious woman about matters of utmost spiritual profundity. Source: Wilkins, Michael J.; Garland, David E.; Bock, Darrell L.; Burge, Gary M.; Fernando, Ajith. NIVAC Bundle 6: Gospels, Acts (The NIV Application Commentary). Zondervan Academic. Kindle Edition.

John 4:27-42

New International Version

The Disciples Rejoin Jesus

²⁷ 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?"

²⁸ Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, ²⁹ "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?" ³⁰ They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

³¹ Meanwhile his disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat something."

³² But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about."

³³ Then his disciples said to each other, "Could someone have brought him food?"

³⁴ "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. ³⁵ Don't you have a saying, 'It's still four months until harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. ³⁶ Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. ³⁷ Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true. 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 labor."

Many Samaritans Believe

³⁹ Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. ⁴¹ And because of his words many more became believers.

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."