

The Necessity of Mission

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[0 : 0 0] reading from his holy word we're going to consider particularly the first 15 verses that we read there where we read of what we might call the necessity or the must of mission in a few weeks time god willing we'll be going up to lewis for our annual break there it's going to involve an early wake-up call and thankfully the the usual 4am wake-up call that normally we get when we leave from the manse here in mid-calder to go straight up to allopool and then across to the store where andy is at this moment this time we're going to break our journey in invernness so the wake-up call is going to be 6am instead of 4am but nevertheless i'm not a morning person that's still going to be a jolt to my system at the 6am wake-up call to to make sure that we get to where we intend to be and you know in the context of of the church god gives us wake-up calls wake-up calls to to jolt our system to jolt us in our spiritual life so that we we truly do honor him and truly do serve him as we ought wake up calls we can certainly see the current crisis that we're still going through the all the many restrictions the the impact of the covid 19 crisis that god has given us as that wake-up call that wake-up call to jolt us to to bring us to see where our true priorities lie but our true values lie and that wake-up call that god's giving us it's showing us that truly our priority is to seek first the kingdom of god you know things that that had become so much part of our lives and these things now withdrawn as it were and done so for good reason bring us the more to see that's it that it's in christ alone that we find true satisfaction that it's in christ alone where in whom our true hope lies it's true it's in christ alone who quenches our spiritual thirst that nothing else can it can do and you know that one of the consequences of this wake-up call that god has given us through this through this pandemic is i believe a reawakening of our awareness of the necessity of mission i mentioned those of you some of you who were here i mentioned a few weeks ago a meeting that i was part of an online meeting of about 50 colleagues uh and i certainly firmly believe that meeting is one of the most important meetings that i've ever attended in that meeting our moderator donnie g mcdonald donnie spoke of the the crucial decisions that churches are having to make in response to the to the pandemic decisions that concern questions that we ask and questions that we answer and have to answer and particular questions concerning how we're going to best be a worshipping church and how best we're going to be a missional church and it's that latter aspect how we're going to be a missional church that that certainly uh this pandemic has has called us has called us to address in these critical times because we're living in critical times and that critical aspect of the times that we're living in bring an urgency to how we address these particular questions about how we're to be a worshipping church and how we're to be a missional

church and in that necessity to consider these questions and particularly to focus on this aspect of being a missional church then of course we have to look to the lord jesus we have that necessity at all times to be like christ and particularly as we you've read in the passage here to be like christ in being missional to have that mission focus to have that mission context to our lives to be that church that listens to that wake-up call that god's giving us to be like christ to go forth into a lost world because you know in so many ways as a church and i'm thinking of the wider church of course but even ourselves particularly we've been sleeping been sleeping we've so often been content to to keep our eyes shut when all around the world is there and needs to hear the the gospel of the lord jesus the world needs to hear and to hear from those who've given their lives to the lord jesus and who have that true desire to go out into the world to proclaim the good news of salvation in christ alone and so we have to respond to that wake-up call and not just slumber not just ignore that wake-up call that god is giving us at this time but to respond and respond actively and in doing that to look to jesus we might say this that in jesus we have a missionary christ a missionary savior and if we have a missionary christ a missionary savior and the church has to be a missionary church as we follow a missionary jesus and that missionary jesus what we see in jesus even in this story that we read of jesus witnessing to the women of samaria then isn't a remarkable story it's an amazing story it's an amazing story it's a story that we need to be reminded of again to encourage each one of us in the work that god has given us to do to be missionaries for christ so we're going to look at this conversation that jesus had with this unnamed woman of samaria and as we again we acquaint ourselves with the story that will treat yes the story as a wake-up call and yes to be firmly resolved to be more proactive in the world that god has placed us in a world that needs to hear the good news of the lord jesus and so we're going to look at the must of mission the necessity of mission to be like christ and to to show forth the love that the forgiveness the grace of the lord jesus you know these times that we're living in they are so very much defining things secular historians tell us that this pandemic in fact is a defining time in our nation's history the secular historians are telling us that you know in the same way that world war ii and so many events in world war ii were defining moments in our nation's history events such as the battle of britain d-day the d-day landings they define britain uh they define britain uh because of course britain was very much at the forefront of freeing europe from from totalitarian rule but for the church of christ these times that we're living in and these times that we're living through these are defining moments they're defining moments in the life of the church and in many ways how the church responds to this particular crisis is going to impact not just the

church of today but the church of tomorrow how the church of today has responded to the to this wake-up call that god is giving us will have an impact not just in the present but indeed in the future for future generations and so i hope that we'll see that as we again we reacquaint ourselves with this passage we'll see how crucial these words that we've read are in shaking us out of our complacency in relation to this whole aspect of mission because the challenges that we're facing as a church of course are remains we're living in many ways as a pagan society remember a number of years ago a colleague of mine speaking of edinburgh as a pagan city and he was absolutely correct thankfully i say thankfully we don't have the uh all these different aspects of the the festival this year in edinburgh and so much of of that aspect of of a godless society seem but we see it all around we see it in our homes we see it in our screens we see it in our media we are living in pagan times a time when when we need to address these times and to go forth with the gospel of the lord jesus and to have that vision to go out to go forth and to go in the name of jesus so let's look at the passage then the must of mission because of course proclaiming the good news of jesus is for any believer for every believer and not just for preachers of the word and because our whole lives have to be the mission of the mission of the holy of jesus and the holy of jesus is for the holy of jesus and as we see jesus here in that little samaritan village of siphon we see jesus on his mission part of his mission being even in that little village inside her in that village we see jesus speaking to this unnamed woman and jesus telling her of his love is for giving love for her showing her grace showing her words giving her words words of power words to change her life and the lives of others and so we're seeing jesus here reaching out to this woman that reaching out to this you must say this this outcast of society a woman for whom jews wouldn't have spoken to because of the historic divisions between jews and samaritans samaritans to the north the jews and judah to the south we're seeing a woman here who is very much an outcast within our own society because of her particular way of life but we're seeing jesus who addresses the outcasts who goes to those who for whom others consider as it were beyond hope even beyond forgiveness no jesus reaches out to the lost even as we see here in this passage and so we're seeing here that as jesus shows the necessity of mission to all and it's for us to follow the lord jesus and to go in that mission and to tell of the glorious gospel of the lord jesus and this is brought out so clearly in the words that we read so we see in verse four for example we read that jesus had to go through samaria he had to a little word that literally is just he must he must go through samaria in other words it was utterly necessary for jesus to go on that direct route from where he was in the south to go as he was going to galilee in the north and to pass through samaria in the middle he had to now at that time jews didn't go on that route jews had to

bypass samaria they had such hostility to the samaritans for different historic and theological reasons we're not going to go into details but ordinarily jews didn't take that direct route when some of us go up to to lewis we will take a direct route we go up the a9 and then straight across to allopool the direct route suppose we could go up a detour route we're going through glasgow loman forever fort william and up through great glen and then inverness and then allopool but no we go the direct route but in these days the jews took that kind of detour the very much the long route over the jordan and then across back again to avoid it samaria but jesus doesn't avoid samaria because we're told that he must go through it he must go from the south to the north through samaria he had to because it was absolutely necessary for jesus to go there because that was part of his foreordained mission to speak to this woman to address the loss it was part of god's perfect plan that jesus must go through samaria at that particular point in his mission he's going to encounter this unnamed woman the samaritan woman but jesus would lead her to salvation so you see then that jesus is showing us here that mission is a necessity it's a must jesus must go through samaria jesus must do that to preach the good news to this woman and we can might even say this that we must go through our samaria places that perhaps ordinarily we might not go through or to people whom we might not ordinarily go and meet and speak to but still god calls us to go through our samaria samaria these circumstances these situations that god gives to us that really are no option for us to take we must you must i must go through these particular samarias that god calls each one of us to go through to go to where god is building his church to be his mission is to be missionaries where wherever god sends you whether it's like david livingston to go to central africa juman megan to to benin to ourselves even in our uh our our immediate doorsteps as it were god calls each one of us to that particular sphere where many ways we we leave our comfort zones many ways where we leave what's comfortable for us but to go where god's sins and where we pray god it will give a blessing and god give the increase and so it's a necessity it's a must because for jesus he must go through samaria and so the church is a missionary church because we have and follow a missionary christ a missionary savior so there's that necessity that must of mission but then secondly what we see in the passage we see the marvel of mission the marvel of mission the wonder if you like the wonder of mission jesus is on his mission his mission to save his mission to bring lost sinners into the kingdom of god and yes jesus came first for his by his his human nature as his fellow jews jesus came from heaven to earth to preach the message of of salvation salvation found in jesus alone but jesus went to all for whom he would give his life jew and gentile jew

even the enemies of the jews the samaritan as we heard just a moment ago there was that mutual hatred between jew and and samaritan as we said his historical animosities that are just deepened through the years there was that despising of one race towards the other and that's important that when we recognize that there was that ancient hostility that deepened and deepened over the the generations between jew and gentile because that's what the passage in many ways is showing that jesus overrides overcomes in in the middle east at that time even women women themselves were were regarded as a second-class citizens women were regarded very much as as inferiors they were debarred from the kind of information education that that boys were given girls just didn't have the same educational opportunities that boys had at that time women couldn't hold positions of authority and particularly samaritan women certainly wouldn't have had a conversation with a jewish man it would have been utterly unthinkable in in that culture at that time but that's the background that we have to take account when we see this story and we see then that the wonder of mission the marvel of mission where mission as it were breaks down barriers breaks down divisions and we see the gospel that reaches over these divisions and they are in that in that little samaritan village the wonder the marvel we might even see the the sensational marvel of jesus talking to a woman talking to a samaritan woman in that village in samaria we're seeing jesus as it were going out with his comfort zone going from a place of what the jews would consider a place of comfort and going into that place of that place of hostility but jesus going out of his comfort zone in many ways the samaritan woman going out of her comfort zone out of samaritan respectability you see jesus overrides all these conventions because others must hear the good news of salvation whoever they are so let's look at the detail then of that meeting between jesus and the samaritan woman this meeting that changed her life and the lives of so many others what do we find well jesus jesus and his human nature jesus is tired he's reached this village obviously he's gone on foot he's reached this village and his human nature he's tired he's thirsty he needs to rest he needs to sit down uh this is a well that he reaches that his human ancestor jacob had built over many hundreds of years ago you can just picture jesus there resting at that well that time there were sort of wooden ledges around the the well or probability jesus is sitting on one of these ledges and well he's done that as his disciples have gone into town to buy food for them of course that would have been a difficult thing to do with all these uh these divisions between jew and gentile well jesus is there he's tired it's the midday sun and of course that's the the hottest part of the day but jesus is there and there because he must be there and at that time of course the hottest day time of the day it would have been very very unlikely for anyone to go to the well and face that middle east heat again this woman is there she goes to that well

[20 : 31] and she goes to that well alone again normally in that society the women would go in groups to the well it would have been utterly unthinkable for any woman to go to a well alone but there we are again in the providence of god this woman goes to that particular well in that little village of sychar the fact that she's on her own would certainly indicate that that she's been ostracized from samaritan society because of her lifestyle she's been shunned and so there she is on her own we find out of course in the passage that probably the reason why she's been shunned in society samaritan society is the fact that she's had multiple marriages five husbands and the man she's living with isn't her husband so we can certainly deduce that this woman is not considered to be part of the group of in that particular village she's an outcast you might say everything seems to be against her she's lonely she's been cast out by her own people as a woman she's been regarded as inferior and of course the jews she's regarded as inferior and contempt jesus doesn't regard her with scorn or contempt jesus is there to change that woman's life yes she's a woman yes she's a samaritan yes she has been living in a moral lifestyle but jesus is there to change that woman to give her the gospel to to give her new life to give her that water of life that truly and fully it quenches and so we see of course that another circumstance when jesus tells of his his mission to the lost his mission to the poor to the the the lonely to the to those whom society consider as outcasts jesus comes and jesus heals jesus restores jesus changes jesus brings the transforming grace of the gospel to those for whom his love is given respectable religious society at that time who regarded such a woman as even an outcast from the kingdom of god these self-religious self-righteous people who claimed righteousness by their own works like the like the the the the man in the temple who thanked god that he wasn't like the tax collector who who for whom he despised jesus hadn't come to call as it were as he says i've come to call the righteous but sinners to salvation to repentance and the samaritan woman of course was one such person someone whom jesus came to to call to himself to know him as savior and you know what we're reading here of jesus reaching out to this outcast 2000 years ago we can apply of course today because the same work of grace that saved that that individual that saved that woman is the same grace that changes lives today that saves sinners sinners who deserve nothing of of that great salvation and so we see then the marvel of mission the marvel of grace the marvel the wonder of grace that that brings salvation to to all irrespective of of who you are and you know when we realize that grace changes grace saves grace saves

even sinners who we know like like me like you who deserve nothing of that grace and yet receive the fullness of the the the wonder of the love of god for sinners this is this samaritan woman this woman who was well she was about to to know salvation in her life and receive it to her great shock to her great surprise from this man jesus jesus who who asked her a simple question give me a drink this encounter that this woman had that would change her life and change the lives of her fellow villagers because of the marvel of of god's grace towards sinners that grace seen in the words and witness of and work of our missionary jesus and so let's seek to be like christ to show forth the love of the lord jesus to to all who irrespective of who they are irrespective of whether whatever they are whoever they are and to be willing to yes to be willing to go alongside the so-called outcast of society even those for whom even our current religious establishments of the day might even cross to the other side of the road to avoid but no we're not in the business of avoiding others we're in the business of coming alongside others whoever they are and showing forth the love of the lord jesus us and telling them who jesus is and who jesus is who who's come to bring his salvation to save lives to save sinners to give the promise of eternal life so the must of mission the marvel of mission and then finally the message of mission particularly the the latter verses that we read in verse 7 to 15 the message of mission you see how jesus begins this the conversation that he has with her he doesn't launch straight into as it were a full-blown preaching a full-blown as it were theological treatise no and he doesn't even begin by questioning her her immorality he doesn't question her about samaritan theology for example his first very first words are our direct words words words that might seem very ordinary words you know give me a drink but words that were given by jesus to to have that approach to her to bring her alongside himself to show forth jesus true genuine love for this woman to bring her to that point because she'll recognize him as lord the savior you know when you meet somebody for the the first time particularly in a missional context you're getting alongside somebody you're a you're a christian you have a gospel the gospel to share and although we you know it's not always the case i know but so often your first approach is to get to know the person to to be interested in that person be interested in that person's life to be interested in the and who that person is yes at some point you will by word speak of your faith in the lord jesus yes at some point you will will challenge that their unbelief very often it's that gradual process that uh leading little by little to pointing others to the lord jesus the the savior your savior my savior of course even in your conversation it will be evident that you're different that you are a christian

you that christ is within you even by the very words you speak even by your very manner even by your very demeanor it'll be obvious it should be obvious that even in your very your very way of life as it were others see that there is that difference that only christ makes in a person's life this is what we're seeing jesus doing at the well there in samaria because before he even begins to speak about to speak about living water living water in the context of eternal life before he even discusses as it were true religion jesus begins with a simple direct question that's going to shape that woman's life the question give me a drink i mean this woman's come to the well because the question is given in context women's come to this well it's a deep well that jesus is tired jesus is thirsty this woman has the means to draw water from that well she's been doing it for for so long and jesus is meeting her at a particular point in that woman's life now everyday situation he's establishing as it were that bridge of contact between him and her through the simple means of asking her for a drink is that question or that statement is going to lead of course a greater question about that woman's soul so the very fact jesus as a man a jew has asked the samaritan woman for a drink obviously that that's gotten her attention she's obviously shocked stunned that this jewish man should ask her a samaritan woman for a drink and obviously she's curious about who this person is who this man is and you see how jesus moves from speaking well he's got her attention speaking from about physical water to speaking about that living water living water that she needs for her salvation jesus we can see here jesus is gently drawing this woman towards seeing him as the savior of the world and you see there in verse 10 jesus is telling her telling her that really that you've got no idea who you're speaking to and she hasn't at this point asked him about this living water and so this woman's puzzled what does he mean by living water is he speaking about the water right at the bottom of the well from the spring is that what jesus is talking about this man's talking about jesus this man has nothing to do to draw water from from the well is that what he's asking to do something that she's not going to be able to do to get this living water the spring of water from the very bottom of the well jesus tells her that the living water that he's offering means that she'll never thirst again again she's curious she hasn't quite grasped yet what the stranger is telling her she still thinks that he's offering her physical water you see how jesus is leading her gently by gently to the point where she'll realize where her true thirst lies and how that thirst that spiritual thirst can only be satisfied in the one who's addressing her in the lord jesus the promised christ the promised messiah so jesus little by little gently leading her to to to truth the truth of or the truth of of god's word the truth that tells us that her deepest need our deepest need your deepest need the deepest need to the that spiritual thirst that we have without christ jesus is telling her that the satisfaction of that thirst is finding him alone

and so she's been led to see that her greatest need isn't physical it's not what's going to satisfy her physically that their greatest need lies our greatest need is the lord jesus and jesus tells as we see in verse 14 jesus tells the woman that the water that he's offering her is something that's going to give her eternal life without physical water the body eventually the body will die and so with without that living water the living water that jesus promises the water of life the water of salvation without that living water yes the soul will perish in the old testament in jeremiah 2 verse 13 god described himself as that spring of living water in jeremiah's time as prophet so many in in judah had rejected god the spring of living water but here jesus now approaching this woman meeting this woman willing this woman to to receive that spring of living water and to receive it by faith to believe in the lord jesus as the one promise to come to bring salvation to his own can truly satisfy mankind and that's the message that's the message of mission that each one of us who knows the lord jesus has saved that's the message that we're to bring the world that's parched dry of that of living water the living water of eternal life and the message that we've been given that message speaks of eternal life everlasting life found in christ alone by faith alone in grace alone for the glory of god alone you've got a message you've got a message to give a message of life true life eternal life give that message proclaim that message and if you've got a message to give you've got a message to live we might even say a manner of mission the manner of mission is so important the manner of love the manner of showing forth the love of the lord jesus for sinners and so we are to be consistent they're not hypocrites to be consistent in living out that manner of mission to living out the message that god has given you to give but live out that message with a consistent walk with the savior be consistent in the words that you speak be consistent with the manner of life that you live and show forth that truly that living water is within you that the water of life is within you that truly satisfies you show it live it speak it of that the glorious grace the lord jesus that's given you that's important within you that living water but if there's anyone here this morning and you don't yet have that living water in your in your life you don't yet know that joy of salvation then listen to what jesus said to that woman whoever drinks the water i give him will never thirst whoever drinks the water i give him will never thirst you are thirsting you who yet don't know the lord jesus a savior you might not always admit it you are thirsting because you know that there's nothing in life that truly satisfies but come to the lord jesus accept his offer of salvation come to him and you will know that true quenching of all that is in you you'll know that that salvation you'll know that satisfaction that

nothing else can satisfy because only jesus truly satisfies so i pray that you will that all here this morning will have tasted that the lord is good that you'll have tasted even of that living water and that you'll know life everlasting through faith in the lord jesus and knowing that life everlasting to go forth and tell others the lord jesus the one and only savior the one who came from heaven to earth to give his life for you for me amen amen let us our lord our god we give praise and thanks to you for that living water that living water that truly satisfies that living water that it means that we will never thirst again but know that in christ we have that all in all that lord help each one who knows you to know the necessity the must of mission to rejoice in the marvel of mission and to go forth with the message of salvation in christ alone lord forgive us for the many times when we have failed you when even the manner of our lives have been so contradictory to the profession that we make give us lord we pray that strength to be consistent and to show forth the lord jesus in our lives and our witness in all that we are continue with us now lord we pray we pray these things in jesus name amen well now we're going to close in psalm