

Could This be the Christ?

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Date: 20 February 2022

[0:00] Well, thank you for your warm welcome. It's good to be with you this evening. I bring the warm greetings from both the congregations of North Uist and of South Uist, and thank you always for your prayerful support for the congregation and the ministry there. We're here to worship God this evening. We're going to begin by singing to his praise. We sing in Psalm 42, the Scottish Psalter version. Psalm 42 on page 262 of the Psalm books. We're going to sing from verse 1 to verse 5. Like as the heart for water brooks and thirst doth pant and bray, so pants my longing soul, O God, that come to thee I may. My soul for God, the living God, doth thirst when shall I near, unto thy countenance approach, and in God's sight appear. We'll sing from verse 1 to 5 to God's praise.

Like as the heart for water bloom, then thirst doth pant and bray, so pants my longing soul, O God, O God, that come to thee I may.

My soul, Lord God, the learning call, that thirst when shall I near.

Unto thy countenance approach, and in no sight appear.

My tears have unto me, O death and night and day.

[2:18] Why unto thee continually, where is thy God this day?

My soul is poured out in me, when this I think upon.

Because that with the multitude I'm here to pour along.

With their men to God's house I went, with voice of joy and grace.

Yea, with the voltage you have kept the solemn holy days.

[3:43] O why art thou cast thou my soul? Why in thee so dismay?

Trust, O Lord, for I shall praise him yet. This countenance is my name.

Well, we come to God in prayer. Let's bow our heads in prayer.

Herr. Our gracious Father in heaven, we do rejoice to be able to come and worship you as a living and a true God. We thank you that in a world in which we live, where there are so many idols made by man, so many images that people worship, so many things in this world that take our attention and take our thoughts, take our minds away from what our minds should be focused upon, to worship you, which is the purpose for which we were made.

We recognize that there are so many distractions around us, but we thank you for your word and for your spirit and for the joy that there is in coming, to know that we come not just to hear words from the pages of scripture, but to hear words from your very voice speaking to us.

[5:25] We thank you that it's a word that's living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, that is a powerful word and a mighty word. And we thank you that as we read in it, we are reminded of ourselves in so many ways.

Even in the psalm that we've been singing together, we are reminded of the many thoughts that we can have as we come to worship you and to approach you. We maybe have many memories from our past experience of joying and delighting and coming with great multitudes of people.

Many may be no longer with us. We have joy of times of revival and great blessing. We maybe look back on these thoughts, O Lord, and wonder will we ever see such times and days again.

But we thank you that your word reminds us of so much more to come, that you are a God who is always at work, that you are a God who is building his kingdom, and that the gates of hell will not prevail against it.

And we thank you that in our eyes, despite things maybe seeming at a low ebb, and so many discouragements around us, maybe in our own personal lives or the lives of people around us, discouragements in the midst of the pandemic we've been enduring these past few years, worries

and anxieties and fears of the way our world is going, with tensions and wars and rumours of war, we recognise that there are so many problems and issues around us.

[7:02] But yet we give you thanks, O Lord, that we can trust you, that we can say with a psalmist, Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why are you so dismayed?

Trust God, for I shall praise him yet. His countenance is mine aid. And we thank you that you are the one who is with us, the one who even as we come to worship you anew this evening, the one in whose very presence we come.

And we thank you that we can come in and through the name, above every other name, the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. So we pray as we begin our worship and as we continue in worship this day, that we will have our minds drawn towards the one who is the living and through God, not an idol made by man, but the one who you sent into this world to seek and to save sinners.

We thank you that we come to worship the one who describes the word that became flesh and dwelt among us, the one who has all authority and power, the one who even to this very day is ruling on high, the one through whom we come to pray before your very throne, for he is interceding for us.

We thank you that we can come through his name, praying all things and asking that your will be done. So may you bless us in our time together here this evening and bless all that's been done on this year day and here in this place.

[8:37] We thank you for the great joy of a communion season once again after so long without it. We thank you for the great encouragement it has been to so many to sit at the Lord's table, to be refreshed by word and sacrament, to be encouraged and strengthened in faith.

We thank you for those who came to sit at the table for the first time, for the spirit of courage you gave to them, and that they will be blessed in it, Lord, that they will be strengthened by it, and that would be an encouragement to many others may be looking on, to see a need of Christ in this day. So we pray, Lord, that you will build your people up in the faith here, that you will strengthen and encourage the ministry of your word. Through the minister here and through elders and deacons and members and adherents alike, Lord, that truly your spirit will be at work in power to see great and glorious things happening.

May we, O Lord, rejoice in your goodness to us, that you are God and there is no other. And so we pray, direct our thoughts towards you, take away the distractions of our hearts and our minds, and help us to see Jesus and to know him as Messiah and as Savior, not just of the world, but of our soul.

We pray that you will minister to us all here. We thank you for every individual here. We thank you for every family, for every home represented. May your blessing and peace be upon each one.

[10:15] You know us in all our different needs, for there is nothing that is hidden from you. Any worries or anxieties that we are carrying by ourselves, we thank you that they are already known to you.

And we thank you that your word tells us to cast our cares upon you, cast our burdens upon you, for you are a God who cares for us. So help us, Lord. Help us to be able to bring our prayers and one another's prayers to you, knowing that you are a God who is able to help, a God who is able to do abundantly more than we ask or imagine.

So we pray, Lord, that you will bless where there are needs of particular kinds, where there are those who are mourning and grieving the loss of loved ones, recently or in the past.

Lord, we know that hearts are broken day after day in this world with the loss of loved ones. We thank you that you are a God of comfort. We pray that you will draw near to those who need you in that particular way just now.

May you be a comfort, a refuge, and a strength to all who are brokenhearted. Remember those who are unwell, those who are in old age and infirm, those for whom coming out to churches is no longer an option.

[11:30] We thank you that the gospel is not contained in any way, but goes out in so many different forms. Even through the live streaming, we thank you for it. Through ministries of CDs being shared or sermons downloaded, we are spoiled for choice so often.

And so we thank you, Lord, for every means that we have available to us to hear the gospel proclaimed. And may your word reach into homes and hearts, even at this time.

May you bless each one as they hear your word and that they hear your voice speaking to them. Remember those who are unwell just now, and we especially pray for both young and old alike, those who are in hospital for different reasons, those who are going through difficult trials at this time, those who are concerned for loved ones.

Lord, we pray surround them and shield them and be with them. We do pray, Lord, for the gospel ministry throughout the town here and throughout our islands, throughout our nation and to all the ends of the earth.

We thank you that you are a God whose realm is beyond ours, whose eyes roam upon this world. You know your people in all corners and all the suffering and all the needs that your people experience.

[12:57] We know that throughout the world there are those who are persecuted for their faith, who suffer for proclaiming the name of Jesus. We thank you that still in the midst of their suffering, that they boldly proclaim their faith in Christ.

We pray that you will honor them, that you will be with them, that you will bless them and be near to them in all their different needs. Remember missionaries who have gone to all corners of our world, near and far alike.

We thank you that you are a God who sends and who calls and who equips. We pray that you will bless the ministry of your word to all ends of the earth. You are the one who calls your people from north, south, east and west.

You are gathering them in, gathering them to yourself. And as we see such a harvest around us, the fields white for harvest, as the word says, we pray, Lord, send forth laborers to gather the harvest in.

We ask all things, knowing our inadequacies, knowing our failings, knowing that we cannot do it of ourselves. But we thank you that you are a God who has promised that you are with us always, even to the end of the age.

[14:14] So bless your church, Lord, and build it up for your glory throughout this world. Remember those in authority over us as well in the royal family and in government throughout our land.

We pray your blessing on them in all their different needs. Give wisdom, give help, give guidance. And especially in these days, Lord, when we struggle to find a way forward in so many issues of life, we pray that those who rule over us would rule well and by your word, by the power of your spirit, that you would work, O Lord, to change the course of our nation, the course of this world, which is so rapidly drifting away from you, turning its back.

May you restore us again in a day of your power. May you revive us and quicken us. May you hear a praying people calling upon your name and saying, Lord, come, come in your power.

So bless us now as we continue in our worship. Bless your word to us as we read from it and as we share together this evening around it. May we bless to all here and far and wide, Lord, may your word accomplish great things.

For you promise it will not return to you empty or void, but accomplish every purpose. So bless us in the singing of your praise. May we sing from our very hearts, offering our praise to you and hear our prayers spoken and uttered in our hearts and in our minds at this time as we share with one another, as we fellowship with one another, as we pray as one.

[15:56] Lord, have mercy upon us, forgive our sins, cleanse us anew, we pray, and guard us in our hearts and mind now as we continue to worship you as our Lord and as our God.

So be with us, go before us, and pardon all our sin. For all we ask, we ask in Jesus' precious name. Amen. We're going to turn together to read in God's word now in the Gospel of John, reading in chapter 4.

The Gospel of John, chapter 4. We take our reading at the beginning of the chapter and we read down to verse 42.

John chapter 4. I'm reading at the beginning of the chapter. Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John, although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples, he left Judea and departed again for Galilee.

And he had to pass through Samaria. So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.

[17:17] Jacob's well was there. So Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.

There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, give me a drink. For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

The Samaritan woman said to him, how is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria? For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

Jesus answered her, if you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, give me a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.

The woman said to him, sir, you have nothing to draw water with and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob?

[18:20] He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock. Jesus said to her, everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again.

But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water I will give him will become in him a spring of water, welling up to eternal life.

The woman said to him, sir, give me this water so that I will not be thirsty but have to come here to draw water. Jesus said to her, go, call your husband and come here.

The woman answered him, I have no husband. Jesus said to her, you are right in saying I have no husband for you have had five husbands and the one you now have is not your husband.

What you have said is true. The woman said to him, sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.

[19:31] Jesus said to her, woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the father. You worship what you do not know.

We worship what we know for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshippers will worship the father in spirit and truth.

For the father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth. The woman said to him, I know that Messiah is coming, he who is called Christ.

When he comes, he will tell us all things. Jesus said to her, I who speak to you am he. Just then his disciples came back.

They marveled that he was talking with a woman but no one said, what do you seek? Or why are you talking with her? So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, come, see a man who told me all that I ever did.

[20:44] Can this be the Christ? They went out of the town and were coming to him. Meanwhile, the disciples were urging him saying, Rabbi, eat.

But he said to them, I have food to eat that you did not know about. So the disciples said to one another, has anyone brought him something to eat? Jesus said to them, my food is to do the will of him who sent me.

And to accomplish his work. Do you not say there are four months, then comes the harvest. Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes and see that the fields are white for harvest.

Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life. So that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here, the saying holds true.

One sows and another reaps. I sent you to reap for that which you did not labor. Others have labored and you have entered into their labor.

[21:47] Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony. He told me all that I ever did. So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them.

And he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, it is no longer because of what you said that we believe.

For we have heard for ourselves and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world. And so on. And may God bless that reading from his word.

Before we turn back to that passage, we're going to sing again to God's praise in Psalm 107. The Scottish Psalter version. Psalm 107.

Singing at the beginning of the Psalm, verse 1 down to verse 9. Psalm 107, page 382. Praise God, for he is good, for still his mercy's lasting be.

[22:53] Let God's redeemed say so, whom he from the enemy's hand did free. And gathered them out of the lands from north, south, east, and west. They strayed in deserts pathless way.

No city found to rest. We'll sing from verse 1 to verse 9 to God's praise. Amen. Praise God, for he is good, for still and conservation.

This is what he does, the mercy Officer that sliced it free. Let God's Soft The colocanical templar by the SA about the cookbook of the fish land from the droppingeken.

From here be stand it be. And gather them all of the land.

From our sun, east, and west. They spread in desert, father's made.

[24:17] No city found to rest. For first, not now, that in them face.

Their soul went straight and pressed. They cry unto the Lord of thee.

And free from their distress. Then walk so in our way to all.

That pride is needed kind. That they mine to a city home.

Where in they hide my eye. Oh, that name to the Lord who came.

[25:45] Praise for his goodness, name. And for his words upon their ground.

And to the sons of men. For he does so alone he is.

That fully satisfy. When goodness in the hungry soul.

That fill the heart of thee. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Well, if you can turn back with me to the passage which we read in John chapter 4.

Where we have this wonderful encounter that the woman of Samaria has with the Lord Jesus. We are going to read again at verse 25.

[27:09] Two verses. And then verse 29. Verse 25 it says, The woman said to him, I know that Messiah is coming. He who is called Christ.

When he comes, he will tell us all things. Jesus said to her, I who speak to you, I'm he. And then in verse 29 again we have the woman speaking there.

She goes back to the town and says, Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ? In this passage there is a sense of longing and searching for something in life.

Where we see this woman who is obviously missing something in her life. And she meets with the Lord Jesus.

But it would seem at first she doesn't quite recognize him for who he is. And this is a common problem that we can have in life as well.

[28:15] Not just about recognizing the Lord Jesus, but even at times just now we struggle to recognize one another. Have you ever found yourself looking at someone and thinking, I think I know that person.

I'm just not quite sure if it is who I think it is. Maybe you've been walking around a shop in these past couple of years when we've had to wear masks.

And because part of our face is hidden, we're just looking and wondering, I wonder if that is so and so. Or perhaps over the years you've been attending a school reunion.

Maybe a 40th or a 50th or a 60th reunion. And you're meeting there with people you maybe haven't seen for years. And you're looking at this face in front and you're thinking, I'm sure that's so and so. But I'm almost scared to ask in case it's not. It's a kind of recognition, a recognizing who it is, but you're just not sure. But what about when it comes to Jesus?

[29:24] I'm sure many of you here have heard about Jesus for a long time in your life. And you have a sense of recognizing him in some way or other.

There's some kind of understanding that there is this man, Messiah. This man who is called the Christ. But is he here?

And is this the Christ that I should be looking for? Is this the one who can really change my life and change this world? Have you recognized him in part or have you recognized him fully?

Well, in this passage that we're looking at together this evening, maybe it resonates in our lives too. Maybe it speaks about our past, the way we were living once.

Or maybe it speaks in our present just now, how we're living in the moment just now. We're finding our way through life, but not really knowing the direction we should be going.

[30:33] Looking for this one who is called Messiah, who we've heard so much about, but we haven't experienced ourselves. And we just want to know, is he there?

Is he real? This woman of Samaria that we read about in this passage, as you read about her, you recognize that her life has been turmoil for a long time.

She's tired in life. She's jaded by life. It's almost like she's been going round in circles in her life. Going from one thing to the next, and it's just not fulfilling her life. She's wearied, she's burdened, she's worn out from it all.

And what's interesting about her is that she knows something of this Messiah. She says there in verse 25, I know that Messiah is coming.

[31:32] And when he comes, he will tell us all things. But in the moment she's just carrying on, just waiting for this Messiah to come.

But lost in her life. She's tried drinking from every well around her. Every well the world has to offer. She's tried to drink from it. But all the time she's just finding herself thirsty again and again. Her thirst is not being satisfied at all.

And so here she is just going round in this circle of life, without direction, without hope. But then, Messiah comes.

Jesus Christ comes her way. She meets with him. And he opens her eyes to the fact that there is hope in this life now.

[32:37] It's not just about waiting for Messiah to come. Jesus says, I who speak to you, am here. And today, as you have been in church, or as you are here tonight, you can say that too.

He is here. As you were here in the morning, maybe you were sitting at the Lord's table after an absence of a couple of years because of everything that's been going on.

And we've longed to come and sit at the Lord's table again. To fulfill that command to do this in remembrance of me until I come. And you come and you take the bread and the wine.

And you meet with Jesus in a real and a personal way there. But even if you weren't sitting at the Lord's table, maybe you're behind the Lord's table, you were sitting watching on.

Jesus was here. And Jesus is here every time the word is preached. He is here to be met with through his word and through his spirit.

[33:46] And it's like in this passage we're seeing Jesus being revealed to this woman bit by bit. It's like the mask is slowly coming off. And she begins to ask questions.

She begins to look more intently. She begins to listen. And then she finally realizes this is the Christ.

It's a wonderful encounter and one that gives us great encouragement ourselves. Jesus here takes this jaded, worn out woman.

And he leads her to a place of trust. He leads her to take a drink of living water from the well of faith. And when she drinks this water, she discovers there's so much more in this well than I ever dreamed of.

This is a fountain that's full of blessing. It's full of joy. It gives me life and gives me life to the full.

[34:51] So here we want to see how this encounter encourages us to seek the Lord while he may be found. To call upon him while he is near.

And these verses, they remind us of two things. It reminds us that if you are saved, if you have come to trust in the Lord Jesus, we are reminded how blessed we are to know his redeeming love. To know what he has done for us. That he came to give his life as a ransom for our sin.

What you have remembered here today. It reminds us again of his great love. But another thing it reminds us of too is if you are lost.

If you are thirsty, if you are weary in life, if you are looking for the answer of going round and round in this circle. And never being satisfied.

[35:57] That there is a well for you. A well to come to. That can quench that thirst. So I want us to take three things from this passage in light of those two reminders that we have.

And the first is this lonely life that this woman has. The second is the loving saviour. And the third thing is the longing heart.

So the first thing we have is this lonely life. We read that Jesus left Judea. And he had to go through Galilee.

He had to pass this way. And on his way, he and his disciples, they stop on the outskirts of this small town called Sychar.

And Jesus stays at the well here called Jacob's well. And his disciples, they go on further into the town to go and buy some food.

[37:03] And it's while he's at this well that this woman comes. This woman of Samaria, as she's commonly called. We don't know her name. But we're given insight to her that tells us a little of her life.

And the kind of experience of life that she had. And where she was in life at this point. What kind of woman was she?

She was a troubled soul. She was a lonely woman. We can see that from the information that we're given about her.

There are certain things we are told in this passage that reveal to us the kind of life that she was living. The first thing of interest is we are told that it was about the sixth hour she came to the well. That's noon, midday. This reveals to us that there was an issue here. Because it wasn't the normal time for anyone to come and draw water at the well.

[38:07] It was the hottest part of the day. And to come and draw water and fill a large jar of water and take it back to the town. It was a difficult enough task without doing it in the midday sun.

So this was unusual. Because it would normally be early morning or late evening when it was cooler. So why was this? Well, we read more about her.

We read she came alone. There was no one else with her. And again, this is unusual. Because normally in these times the woman would come out to draw water from the well as a group. They would come not just by themselves but as a large group. Encouraging one another. Helping one another. And yet here she is. She comes by herself.

So this is unusual too. And then Jesus reveals to us something about her life as well. Where she has had five husbands.

[39:14] And the man she is now with is not her husband he says. So again we are getting this revelation of her life. It is a lonely life.

It is a sad life. It is a life that has had sorrow and grief and heartache along the way. And part of the reasons why she is coming alone is because she has obviously been someone who has had multiple partners in her life.

And maybe caused offence to other women in the town. She has been shunned. She has been put away. She has been spoken of as one who you do not keep company with.

So there seems to be little in her life of joy and any happiness. Instead we see someone who is downcast.

Who is sorrowful. Who is lonely. And it is almost like she has no one to help. There is an advert on the television just now.

[40:22] Maybe you have seen it. An NHS advert. And it is highlighting the stigma of addiction. And they are very powerful adverts. They are very moving adverts.

And there is one where there is a lady sitting in a house by herself. A broken woman. And she is speaking about the stigma of drug addiction.

And she says at one point. You won't think I am worth the time of day. Because of my addiction. Because of my problem. Because of my problem.

That is the way she views the world. This is what they are going to think of me. They won't give me the time of day. And that is the kind of woman this was.

The people around her would look at her and turn away. Shun her. They wouldn't give her the time of day. And there are so many people who feel that in this world.

[41:21] That I am not worthy. No one will accept me because of who I am. Or what I have done. Or the kind of life I have had.

And the sad thing is that people will look on the church. And say they won't accept me. They won't give me the time of day.

Because of the kind of person I am. And that is why this is so amazing this passage. Not only does someone come to speak to her.

Not only does he have time for her. And you see there is another issue here. She is a Samaritan. He is a Jew.

They don't get on. She is a woman. He is a man. They shouldn't be talking to each other. But not just that. It is the Messiah.

[42:23] It is the Lord Jesus himself. Who is taking time. To speak to this woman. To give hope to this woman.

To give help to this woman. He knows her needs. And he knows all our needs.

He knows everything about her. He knows her past. He knows her present. He knows everything about her.

And yet he has time. To speak to her. And to offer her hope. This woman has many issues in her life.

But she meets with a wonderful Savior. And that reminds us today. That no matter our experience in this world.

[43:23] No matter where we are tonight. No matter what we have come through. No matter what we have experienced. No matter what we have done. That we can still meet with this Messiah.

Because he already knows everything. He knows everything about us. And yet he shows such love. I have heard many people sharing their testimony.

And it's wonderful to hear people sharing. Of how the Lord worked in their lives. And an aspect that so often comes up.

Again and again. Is a sense of lacking. That when the Lord starts to work in your life. You realize that there's something missing.

There's something lacking. There's a thirst there. That no matter what you try. It just will not quench it. We are always missing something.

[44:27] As Pascal once famously said. There's a God shaped void in the heart of each man. Which cannot be satisfied by any created thing.

But only by God the creator. Made known through Jesus Christ. We all have a God shaped void. And we can try and fill it with everything.

That this world has to offer. But it will not fit. It's like working on a jigsaw puzzle. And the most frustrating thing.

About doing a jigsaw puzzle. Is when you can't find a piece. A piece. There's a piece missing. And you're looking high and low. And you just cannot find it.

And the puzzle is. It's not complete. Until that piece is found. And that's what this woman's life was like. So many bits of the puzzle were put together.

[45:30] There was so much there. But there was that piece missing. And her life was never going to be complete. And her life was never going to be complete. Without it. And is that your life tonight?

Do you feel that's the kind of situation you're in? You're lonely. You're afraid. Your life is just going round in a circle.

Trying to quench a thirst. Trying to fill a void. But it just cannot be done. The empty wells of this world.

Will never satisfy. Because there's only one thing that can. And that is the person that she meets with. And that's the person that you need to meet with too.

To meet and see this loving saviour. The one who has time for her. The one who speaks to her. And that's where we move now.

[46:34] We move to see this loving saviour. Having seen the loneliness of the woman. We're showing what a loving saviour. This Messiah. This Christ is. And it begins even before he meets her.

He had to go this way. He had to come and meet with this woman. It was an appointed time.

An appointed place. An appointed moment. When he was going to meet with this woman of Samaria. To transform her life. It's amazing just how God works.

In so many different ways. Providence of God. Is so often hard for us to understand. Why is God doing it like this?

Why is God allowing this in my life? Why am I having to experience all of these trials? All of this pain? I cannot understand.

[47:41] Many of us have gone through. Maybe many of us are going through that experience just now. Asking these questions. Why?

And God's providence. We so often don't have the answers. But we can trust that God does. And often it's when we look back.

Maybe in many years time. We'll look back and see God's hand. All along the way. How he allowed these things. But how he helped us through. How he allowed these things into our lives for a time. They were difficult. They were hard. They brought us pain. But ultimately they brought us closer to him. I remember speaking to a minister.

Who was dealing with some refugees. That had come to Scotland. And this was in one of the cities in Scotland. And he'd met this refugee. And he was a broken man.

[48:43] He'd had to flee from his homeland. And he had nothing. And he'd been a shepherd back in his homeland. And he just longed to be among sheep.

Shepherding his sheep once again. He was far from home. He had nothing. He couldn't understand what was happening in his life.

And yet God used all that had happened. To bring him to a point where that minister was able to share to him. To him about another shepherd. The good shepherd.

The good shepherd. The good shepherd who calls his sheep to follow him. And that man's eyes were opened to see Jesus. And to know him.

Perhaps there are things that have happened. Or are happening in our lives tonight. But there are these things that had to happen. There are experiences you have to go through.

[49:48] You maybe don't understand just now. But maybe one day you'll look back and say. God was in control. Joseph in the Old Testament.

Joseph in the Old Testament. When you look at his life. And all that he went through. The ups and downs in his life. How his brothers shunned him. They wanted to kill him. And they sold him as a slave.

But years later. But years later. Joseph is able to stand before his brothers. And say. You meant it for evil.

But God meant it for good. Now he was only able to say that much later. But he could look back and see. The goodness of God in it all.

And Jesus works in the midst of things. That seemingly are going wrong in our life. Our life can seemingly be falling apart.

[50:48] In so many ways. But God is still working. And he's working it together for good. For those who love him. And when you look at this woman.

And how she meets this loving savior. And you see. This connection between them. And Jesus just slowly but surely. Revealing himself to her.

In verse 17. We realize. Just the knowledge that Jesus had offer. It says the woman answered him. I have no husband. Jesus said to her.

You are right. And saying. I have no husband. For you have had five husbands. And the one. That you now have. Is not your husband. He knows. He knows.

Everything about her. But he doesn't judge her. He doesn't just condemn her.

[51:49] Instead. He offers her hope. And hope is a wonderful thing. But so often. When we're looking for hope. We're looking in the wrong place.

And we feel. We're finding hope. And going along. But our hope is then squashed. It's taken away. But with Jesus.

We have one. We can hope. In all our days. So that no matter what comes our way. And it's not that everything. Is suddenly going to go well with us. Is not that suddenly.

Everything might fall into place. And our lives are perfect. It can be far from it. But it's a hope that reminds us. That he is holding on to us.

And that he will never. Let us go. This woman. Listened to Jesus. Speaking to her. And there's this hope. That's welling up within her.

[52:50] And it says in verse 25. I know that Messiah is coming. He who is called the Christ. When he comes. He will tell us all things. I have some hope. Looking forward here.

But Jesus says. I who speak to you. Am he. Here is the hope. That she needs. Bit by bit. This mask is being taken off.

And Jesus is revealing himself to her. And she's asking questions. She's seeking purpose in her life. Looking for direction.

And I encourage you tonight. If you have questions. Come and ask. Engage with the issues of life. Engage with the direction you're going in. And you want to go in. Give it serious consideration. The matters of eternity. The matters of eternity.

[53:48] Cannot be ignored or put away. You need to face up to them. That there is an eternity before us all. And what hope do we have for that eternity?

What will give us satisfaction now. And for eternity. Well it's not the wells of this world. But it's the wells.

The springs of living water. That Christ has to offer. He says. I who speak to you. Am he. I am real. I am here for you. I can help you. And is he speaking to you today? And is he speaking to you today? Has he spoken to you today?

Has the communion table spoken and ministered to you today? Has the word preached spoken to you today? Well Jesus is reminding you in that.

[54:53] That he is real. That he is here. That he is here. That he is there for you. To call upon. To come. And put your trust.

In him. He is a loving. Savior. God. Sent his son. Into this world. That the world might be saved. Through him. Because there's no other way. There's no other hope. As you heard this morning. In Isaiah 53. We all. Like sheep.

Have gone astray. We are all. Like this woman. We maybe look at her and think. Oh. Well we can look at her. And say. Look at her. How bad she was.

The bad choices she made. But we're all in the same boat. We all. Have gone astray. We all have.

[55:50] Turned away. From the shepherd of her soul. But Jesus came in. To this world. As a shepherd. To gather his people.

To call his sheep. So if you're hearing his voice. Follow. Come. And follow him. I want us just to conclude.

By seeing. The transformation. In this woman's life. From a lonely life. We see her now. With a longing heart. A longing heart.

Towards her saviour. And a longing heart. Towards the lost. How lonely. She had been. With broken relationships. All her life.

And yet the amazing thing is. Jesus saw. Good in her. And now she's. Longing for more. As she meets him.

[56:52] Suddenly her life. Is transformed. One that she has heard about. I who speak to you. Am he. What is she going to do.

With this. Well she shows. She shows that she's longing. For him. She left her jar.

She dropped it. And she ran back. To the town. It's an amazing. Picture this. Of how she had come. By herself. Lonely. Broken.

Downcast. Afraid. And yet here. We see her heart. Transformed. Filled with life. Bursting with joy. Knowing this. Messiah. Who she had. Known in part. But now she is seeing. Revealed in all his fullness. This is.

[57:46] The Christ. And what does she do. She says. To others in the town. In verse 29. Come. See a man. Who told me. All that I ever did.

Can this be. The Christ. Christ. This woman. Is transformed. And what does Jesus.

Do for you today. Are you excited. About Jesus. Does Jesus. Jesus. Fill your heart.

To bursting. Just longing. For others. To know. This Christ. This woman. Overcame.

So much. So many fears. Remember. When she came out. She was all alone. By herself. She was. Obviously. Avoiding. Seeing anyone. But here she is now.

[58:45] She runs back. To the town. She runs. Before the people. To see them. Bursting with joy. Joy of Christ. In her heart. Wanting to share it.

With everyone. Come. And see. This man. Could this be. The Christ. Could this be. The missing part. Of your life. She is saying. To others. This woman. Of Samaria. Her life. Is transformed.

Totally. Changed. And that is what. Christ. Can do. For us all. Her excitement.

And her joy. In her savior. Transforms. The fears. To excitement. The question. The question.

[59:42] For you. Today. Are you. Saved. Do you have. The joy.

Of this woman. She was drinking. From the wells. Of this world. And still. Going thirsty. But here. Now. She has met. With Christ. And her thirst. Is satisfied. She can rejoice. In her savior.

Are you. Rejoicing. In your savior. Tonight. There are two things. A day. Like today. Should do.

If you are saved. And if you sat. At the Lord's table. Rejoice. Rejoice.

[60:41] And give thanks. That God gave. His son. For you. That you would be. Saved. From your sin. But. Don't be selfish.

This is not a joy. Just for you. To keep to yourself. It is a joy. To be shared. Because we live. In a world. That is perishing. Among a people. Who are perishing. Among a people. Who are drinking. From the wells. Of this world.

And are going thirsty. Day after day. Whose lives. Are just going round. And round. In a circle. And you have the greatest news. To tell.

Come. And see a man. Who knows everything. About me. He knows all the sin. Of my heart. But still.

[61:40] He loves me. Come. And see this man. If you are saved. Rejoice. And share. With others. It says something else.

To us too. Though. If you are lost. If you are lonely. If you feel your life. Is just going round. And round.

In this circle. And thinking. Well they wouldn't care. For me. They wouldn't give me. The time of day. Remember.

Jesus. And his words. When he says. Come to me. All you. Who labor. And are heavy laden. And I. Will give you. Rest. There is a void. In us all. Without Christ. There is an unquenchable. Thirst.

[62:35] In us all. Without Christ. That what we have here. Is the Messiah. And maybe the mask. Of Jesus.

That you used to see. Is coming down. And your eyes. Are being opened. Bit by bit. To see this Christ. To see this Messiah.

God. So that even. In the trials. Of life. Even the difficulties. And the challenges. You could say. God meant it. For good. Keep praying.

Keep seeking. Keep asking. Lord. Will you not come. And abide. In my heart. Give me that rest. Quench. My thirst. That I might know. The joy. Of salvation. That is the hope. That this passage.

[63:32] Gives us. A lonely woman. Who met with Jesus. At the well. Not just of. Jacob's well. But at the well. Of salvation.

And who went on. In the joy of the Lord. Saying come. See this man. For yourself. May we come. And see Jesus.

But more than that. May we come. And know this Christ. As our Lord. As our shepherd. As our saviour.

As our Messiah. Let us pray. Our Father in heaven. We do rejoice. In the revelation.

That you give to us. That you have revealed. The sin of our heart. To us. Through your spirit. That you remind us. So often. Of our shortcomings. And of our failings.

[64:29] But not in a way. That just condemns us. But in a way. That leads us. To see. That there is hope. In Christ. The Messiah. Who came. To seek. And to save the lost.

And we pray. Lord. That we will hear. And know. And experience. More of this Christ. That we will be able. To rejoice. In him. May you bless us. And go before us.

Each and every day. Of our lives. Quench our thirst. And fill us. With a joy. That only you can give. For we ask it all. In Jesus name. Amen.

Amen. We are going to. Conclude by singing. To God's praise. In Psalm 34.

In the sing psalms version. Psalm 34. We are going to sing. From verse 8. To 11. Three stanzas.

[65:27] Again. It is a great invitation. Of this psalm. In verse 8. Come. Taste and see. The Lord is good. Who trusts in him. Is blessed. Oh fear the Lord.

You saints with need. You will not. Be oppressed. We'll sing from verse 8. To 11. Three stanzas. To God's praise. Amen. Come.

Taste and see. The Lord is good. You trust in him.

You trust in him. It's blessed. Oh fear the Lord. You saints with need.

You will not be oppressed. The young man who is Phi■la.

[66:25] You for the attitude. The young man who isah. And hunt for their foot.

But you will not be ready for the host. The Lord's good way upon the Lord, will all have any good.

Come here, my children, gather up and listen to my word.

And I will help you understand how you live near the Lord.

May grace, mercy and peace from God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit rest upon and abide with you all now and forevermore. Amen.

[68:01] Amen.