

THE MOTIVE

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John 4:1-9

1. Not wanting a confrontation with the Jewish leadership early on in His ministry, Jesus left Judea and departed for Galilee.
2. Normally Jewish travelers avoided Samaria, but we are told that Jesus “had to pass through Samaria.”
3. Understanding why Jesus had to pass through Samaria is important if we are going to fully fulfill our ministry as the Body of Christ.
4. We live in a divided world, but as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ we are to manifest God’s love, and proclaim the Gospel, to all people.
5. In this passage we are given a powerful example to follow.

I. The Jews had no dealings with Samaritans.

- A. The truth is they hated each other. (Prejudice is a two-way street.)
- B. What was behind their hatred?
 1. In 975 BC the Northern Kingdom of Israel was established under a king named Jeroboam with Samaria as its capital.
 2. In 722 BC Israel was conquered by the Assyrians and ceased to exist as a nation.
 3. The Assyrians exiled many of the Jews and replaced them with conquered people from other nations.
 4. The Jews that remained intermarried with the newcomers resulting in a new race of people who became known as Samaritans.
 5. They preserved the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible with some corruptions, as their scriptures.
 6. Between 605 BC and 586 BC Judah was first subjugated and then defeated totally by the Babylonians, and in the process many Jews were exiled to Babylon.
 7. In 536 BC the Babylonians were conquered by the Medes and Persians, and Cyrus, king of Persia, allowed a contingent of Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple.
 8. The Jews refused to allow the Samaritans to participate in rebuilding the Temple.
 9. The Samaritans eventually built their own temple on Mt. Gerizim, but it was burned by the Jews around 128 BC.
 10. Even though their temple was burned the Samaritans still viewed Mt. Gerizim as a holy place.
- C. I am sure that the Jews and the Samaritans managed to justify the prejudice and racial hatred that existed between the two people groups.
- D. One of the ways sin manifests itself is through the many forms of prejudice that we see all around us.
- E. Some examples of prejudice would be racial, religious, political, economic, class, moral, and gender.
- F. While prejudice will always exist in the culture it should have no place in the true church.
- G. Jesus made it a point to confront racial, religious, and gender prejudice early on in His ministry.

II. Jesus had to pass through Samaria.

A. The inclusiveness of the Gospel should be manifested in the Church regardless of what nation or culture is involved.

1. In John 3:16 we read Jesus' words, "For God so loved the world," a statement that embraces all peoples of the world.
2. After His resurrection He commanded the Apostles, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20
3. Just prior to His ascension Jesus promised His followers, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." Acts 1:8
4. Paul pointed out the inclusiveness of the Gospel when he wrote, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." Romans 1:16

B. Here we find Jesus sitting by Jacob's well, which was located near Sychar in Samaria, weary from the day's journey.

C. The woman who approached the well around noontime had several strikes against her from a Jewish perspective.

1. She was a Samaritan.
2. She was a woman.
3. She had a moral problem—had been married five times and was currently living with a man to whom she was not married.

D. Jesus ignored the racial, religious, and gender prejudices of the day:

1. By not ignoring the woman.
2. By speaking to her.
3. By asking a favor of her.
4. By sharing the Gospel with her.

III. The Church, like Jesus its Head, should manifest the same all-encompassing love that He exemplified.

A. Let me share a few passages of Scripture that set the standard for us.

1. Galatians 3:27-29

For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.

2. Colossians 3:9-11

Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, 10 and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him — 11 a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian (a savage people from what is now Russia), slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.

3. James 2:1-4

My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism. 2 For if a man comes into your assembly with a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes, and there also comes in a poor man in dirty clothes, 3 and you

pay special attention to the one who is wearing the fine clothes, and say, "You sit here in a good place," and you say to the poor man, "You stand over there, or sit down by my footstool," 4 have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives?

4. Revelation 5:9-10

And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. 10 "You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth."

B. I think we all understand that there are language barriers and other issues that require different churches and denominations to exist, but the prejudices and hatreds that divide people, cultures and countries should not divide the Church.

APPLICATION

1. The Apostle Peter took a huge step forward when he went to Cornelius' house and said to those assembled, "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a man who is a Jew to associate with a foreigner or to visit him; and yet God has shown me that I should not call any man unholy or unclean." Acts 10:28-29
2. In John 12:26 Jesus said, "If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him."
3. There are many places that Jesus has to go today in order to accomplish His redemptive purposes.
4. He goes where He wants to go in and through us, so we must not only go where He leads, but we must also manifest His all-encompassing love and message.
5. Ask yourself, "Is there anything in my heart that would prevent me from going to anyone anywhere?"