

Jesus Interrupts the Samaritan Woman  
John 4:1-42

Good morning! We've reached the end of **Divine Interruptions**. Did you notice? Since we started this series there have been interruptions? Like last week at the beginning of the service where you saw the video of the songs interrupting Christine while she was praying. Also, at the start of the series I know there was an interruption during my sermon and I had to stop and make adjustments. Even at our Outdoor Worship two weeks ago at Lake Accotink Park, there was an interruption.

Some of you are going, "No, there were no interruptions"! It went smoothly. There was, you just didn't notice it. But that's all right. We're cool. I just hope we don't get any interruptions today.

This is the last part of our series. The message is entitled, **"Jesus Interrupts the Samaritan Woman"**. Many of us are familiar with this story. We'll find this story in John 4. If you would please turn to that passage in your Bible. We're not going to read it right now. I'm going to refer to it as I go through this message.

Today, I'd like to talk about four truths about divine interruptions in our lives using the encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman as a backdrop. Interruptions are not always divine. Not all interruptions come from God. In this message, I essentially would like to share with you what divine interruptions are, why there are divine interruptions, and the effects of divine interruptions.

So, get your pens and paper and be ready to write down these four truths about divine interruptions. First let's read **John 4:1-6**.

**"Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John— although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. So, he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.**

Now he had to go through Samaria. So, he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon."

This passage points us to the first truth which is:

1. Divine Interruptions are D\_\_\_\_\_

A\_\_\_\_\_.

Can you guess? **Divine Appointments!**

In these beginning verses, we see the route that Jesus took. He was coming from Judea and he was going to Galilee. Verse 4 says "he had to go through Samaria". Let me show you the [map of ancient Israel](#). As you can see that's the only direct route from Judea to Galilee. Now, we've always heard it said that Jews avoid Samaritans or wouldn't dare get near them because they believe that they were half-breeds. You see, the Samaritans were a racially mixed society with Jewish and pagan ancestry. Although they worshiped Yahweh as did the Jews, their religion was not mainstream Judaism. They accepted only the first five books of the Bible as canonical, and their temple was on Mount Gerizim instead of on Mount Zion in Jerusalem. So, the Jews despised the Samaritans.

According to some commentators, Jews would avoid passing through Samaria if they were coming from Judea to Galilee and vice versa. And they would take a circuitous route crossing the Jordan River here then walk along the bank of the river and cross the river again in order to get to Galilee. All of this took one week on foot.

The question is, did the Jews really take that route? According to other commentators, such was not really the case. Although Jews did not look with favor on Samaritans, it wasn't such in a way that they took great lengths literally to go

from this place to this. Pharisees, being legalists, would do that but not the ordinary Jews. That's according to writers during that period including Josephus.

So, was there anything out of the ordinary when Jesus took that route? No. Every day Jews take that route. In fact, his disciples were walking with him and they separated themselves from him as they approached Sychar in order to look for food.

Now, there's no indication in this passage that the disciples asked Jesus why they were going through Samaria. That's why I agree with those commentators who said that passing through Samaria was a normal occurrence.

But in the second part of verse 27, John indicated that the disciples were surprised by what they saw. Jesus talking to a Samaritan woman. And that's the point of the earlier verse I pointed out, "he had to go through Samaria". John was emphasizing the fact that Jesus planned his meeting with the Samaritan woman. He knew that the Samaritan woman was going to be at that place and he knew that the woman had a need and, therefore, he must be there to meet that need. It was not circumstantial, neither was it coincidental that Jesus was at the right place at the right time. He had an appointment with the woman.

Folks, if you experience any unexplained interruption in your life, it could be Jesus is actually working in your circumstances. You may not recognize it because it's surprising, maybe even shocking, or confusing, or quite disturbing, but if you'd be sensitive enough, you'd realize God is working behind the scenes. He is trying to meet your need. **Matthew 6:8 says, "Your Father knows what you need before you ask him."**

I read the story about this guy named Harry. It was a rainy Sunday morning. As Harry turned into the main road, he saw ahead of him **three shivering figures** huddled under a single umbrella at the next bus stop. One was old Mrs. Fletcher. She still insisted on getting to church by herself, despite her arthritis which was

always worse in wet weather. There was Dr. Jones, the local doctor to whom he literally owed his life. And the third person was Judith. Harry had a crush on Judith for the past 6 months since she joined their church but had never had the courage or the opportunity to ask her out. Harry had about 3 seconds to decide what to do. It was an interruption but he knew he had to make a quick decision.

Now, there was only one spare seat. The back seat was full of his personal stuff. Who should he offer a ride to? But 3 seconds was enough. He pulled to a halt, jumped out, passed the keys to Dr. Jones, helped Mrs. Fletcher into the passenger seat, then modestly waved them good-bye as **he huddled close to Judith under the umbrella**. Mind you, it was cold. If that's not divine appointment, I don't know what it is. I just hope Judith didn't think that it was divine disappointment.

Divine interruptions are divine appointments. The second truth is

2. **Divine interruptions can take place a\_\_\_\_\_ a\_\_\_\_\_.**

Guess again. Anytime, Anywhere.

**“When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, ‘Will you give me a drink?’ (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, ‘You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?’ (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)” (John 4:7-9)**

Interruptions come unannounced. They surprise us. And usually, we don't welcome them. Just like what happened to this woman. It was just an ordinary day for her. She was fetching water and much to her surprise there was this unassuming, tired-looking individual who interrupted her day.

This was an encounter she didn't expect. First of all, it was noontime when things were quiet. Second of all, it happened at the well which was a common and ordinary place. Nothing really special. But what surprised her was that a man spoke to her and that the man was a Jew. Jews never mingle with Samaritans much less

speak to them. Thus, this was a totally different experience. It didn't occur on a holy day, like the Sabbath or she wasn't in a family gathering. It wasn't any familiar person who interrupted her.

We don't want interruptions but they come. They come anytime anywhere. That's a fact. They come when you least expect them. They catch you by surprise.

Like yesterday afternoon, I was taking a nap. My daughter Ally came to my room and woke me up and asked me to buy some eggs. We ran out of eggs. She was going to prepare a dessert to bring with her when she would meet her friends that evening. I was still sleepy I didn't get up right away. Then, I heard somebody entering the room again. It was my wife and immediately I woke up. And bought some eggs. In the process, I also bought a few groceries which we were missing. And inside the grocery I felt a sense of accomplishment because it didn't take me long and I brought home things we needed and, most of all, I got a good exercise walking around the grocery store. I almost missed the benefits of that interruption. It came at a time and place I least expected.

Was it divine or not? For me it was divine. Because God reminded me to always consider the needs of my family.

Divine interruptions are divine appointments. They can happen anytime anywhere.

3. Divine interruptions have a p\_\_\_\_\_.

This one is easy. What is it? Purpose.

Verses 10-18: Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?" Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again,

but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.” He told her, “Go, call your husband and come back.” “I have no husband,” she replied. Jesus said to her, “You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.”

Now, we see the reason why Jesus had to go to Samaria. There was this soul that needed to be saved. It looks like she didn’t have a purpose in life. Because she was going from one man to another. She was living in sin and it looked like she didn’t even know it. She was doing what she felt was right. She didn’t care what people said about her or how people treated her. She must be aware of all the talk going around about her or how people behave around her and that’s why she always came to draw water from the well every noontime, the hottest part of the day, where there were no people.

But Jesus knew that deep inside of her she had a spiritual yearning. Just like any person on earth. And so Jesus gave an analogy between the physical water and spiritual water and how the latter is much more satisfying. But the woman couldn’t get it at first. Because she didn’t recognize her sin. That’s when Jesus, gently and kindly, showed her the sin of promiscuity in her life. That’s when she became convicted of her sin and as you can see in verses 19 – 26, she began to converse with Jesus on spiritual things. In the end, she believed in Jesus as the Messiah they were waiting for.

In the world today, many people are like this woman who are living in sin, steeped in sin, but don’t admit they’re sinning. Because they don’t know that sin is offensive to a holy God. Only when they are made aware that they are dead in their sins and have no hope in this world and in the future that they would see their need

for a Savor and thirst for the Living Water that is Jesus. As followers of Jesus, we must witness to others the way Jesus did. Jesus led the woman to salvation by helping her see her sinful nature.

We must then present the good news of salvation not by telling people that Jesus can make them happy or better or make them feel good but by making them see that they cannot come to God unless they acknowledge sin in their lives and ask for God's forgiveness.

Now, when Jesus interrupted the woman's life, his purpose was to save her and to reveal himself to her.

When God interrupts your life, there is also a purpose. Because he doesn't do anything at random. Or he doesn't leave anything to chance. He doesn't go "Oops, sorry. Wrong number."

Some of us, when we're in deep trouble, scream at God and blame him and accuse him of being unfair. "God, this is just unfair. I don't deserve this." Or "I deserve better than this." Or we even think like God is punishing us. The truth is, God has a real purpose for your life. We all know Jeremiah 29:11 where it says, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

So, if you feel like, at this moment, God is interrupting your life, because of a sickness, or a job problem, or a difficult relationship, or trouble in school, or emotional pain, or panic attacks, whatever it is, just be assured that the Lord knows what he's doing. There's a reason why he's allowing you to go through that. You don't know because you don't see the big picture. Just wait on him. The Psalmist says, "Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord." (Psalm 27:14)

While waiting, do what Jesus said to the woman that she should do. First, worship God. Though you don't feel like it, worship God. Acknowledge he is your creator. He deserves your adoration. Second, recognize the Messiahship of Jesus. Meaning, he is your Savior. He saved you from your sins and he will save you from your situation. He is always faithful.

Divine interruptions are divine appointments. They can take place anytime anywhere. They have a purpose and finally

4. Divine interruptions bring about a c\_\_\_\_\_ in us and in others.

This one is easy, too. Changes.

Vs. 28, 39-42, "Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?" They came out of the town and made their way toward him. Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers.

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."

In this passage, we see an excited and joyful woman. In her excitement she even left her water jar. Why not? It would only be a burden carrying it around while she ran around spreading the good news about Jesus. The jar left behind could represent her former life of sin and recklessness. If we are going to truly follow Jesus we must completely drop anything that would be a distraction. Like our sinful ways, our regrets, our bad habits. Anything that is a baggage. As Paul says, "Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to

reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.” (Phil. 3:13-14 NIV)

There was a great change in that woman because of her encounter with Jesus. This woman was suddenly transformed. Jesus broke into her life and made her new again. That’s only possible because the woman was receptive to Jesus. You see, Jesus will not force himself on you.

You need to willingly accept his gift of salvation for you. The Bible says, “But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.” (John 1:12)

Jesus did for you what anyone couldn’t do. He died for your sins on the cross. He died for the Samaritan woman. He also died for you. Because he loves you. He doesn’t want you to die in your sins. The Bible says that the wages of sin is death. If you died without Jesus in your life, you’ll be separated from God forever and suffer in hell forever. But when you receive Jesus in your heart, believing he died for you, he gives you the gift of eternal life. A life forever in heaven with Jesus. As the Bible says, “...but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:23b)

Now, our passage says that aside from the woman, the other Samaritans in her town, became believers in Jesus as well. A great revival swept that town. It seemed like everyone jumped on the salvation bandwagon. The good news spread like wildfire and everyone was caught in it.

Folks, we are in the midst of this interruption in our lives that is pandemic in proportion. Let us not sulk and complain and give up. Let’s recognize that God is allowing it to happen. Let us acknowledge the fact that pandemics come and go anytime anywhere. Let us seek God and try to find the purpose of it all. I’m sure it will change us and others as well. I hope for the better.

To close, let me share with you a story through a video. I've shared this before many years back and so many of you might be seeing it the first time. This is truly an amazing story. A modern-day miracle caught on tape. I still get goose-bumps every time I listen to it. It is the story of a pastor whose life was interrupted by God in a big way. In the end, we would see how it brought glory and honor to God.

And before I show it, let me sum up this series with these words. **When God interrupts, you are changed, others are changed, and God gets the glory.** Amen?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PFWsqdALffY>