

# 9 Soul Food

John 4:27-42



## Opening

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What is your favorite food?

OR

Some people get *so* into what they're doing that they can sometimes forget to stop and eat. Does this happen to you? What are you usually doing when this has happened to you?

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1. Read John 4:27–30 and 4:39-42. From your reading of this passage, do you think the Samaritan woman genuinely believed? What do you see in the passage that supports your position?

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2. Read verse 28 again. Does it seem significant to you that she left her water jar at the well? What does this tell you?

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Have you ever prayed for something, then realized later that God gave you something far greater than what you had asked?

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3. How is the disciples' confusion about food (vv. 31–33) similar to the woman's confusion about living water?

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4. Read 4:31-34. What does Jesus say his "food" is?

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For more about Jesus' purpose, see Luke 5:32, John 6:38, 8:29, and 10:45.

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Why do you think he uses the analogy of food? What does this teach us about Jesus, and about what he wants for us?

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5. After his encounter with the Samaritan woman, what specific lessons does Jesus apply to his disciples and to us (vv. 35–38)?

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**Question 5.** When Jesus told his disciples, "Open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest" (v. 35), he may have been pointing to the approaching crowd of Samaritans (vv. 39–40).

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6. Read 1 Cor. 3:5-8. What does this say about the process of the salvation witness?

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As you look back on your conversion experience, can you identify this process? Who were the people who broke the ground, planted the seed, watered, or reaped (led you to the Lord)? Have you ever thanked them for their part in your coming to Christ?

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How are you actively involved in this process?

If you are not actively involved in this process, what could you begin to do tomorrow that could make a difference a specific person(s) life?

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7. How did the Samaritan woman lead her countrymen to Christ? (v. 39-42)

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What does this tell us about our ability to share the Good News with others?

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### **The Savior of the World (4:42)**

We do well to remember this title. Jesus was not simply a prophet, who came with a message in words from God. He was not simply an expert psychologist with an uncanny faculty for seeing into the human mind. True, he showed that very skill in the case of the Samaritan woman, but he showed more than that. He was not simply an example. He did not come simply to show men the way in which life ought to be lived. A great example can be merely heart-breaking and frustrating when we find ourselves powerless to follow it.

Jesus was Saviour. He rescued men from the evil and hopeless situation in which they found themselves; he broke the chains that bound them to the past and gave them a power which enabled them to meet the future. The Samaritan woman is in fact the great example of his saving power. The town where she stayed would no doubt have labelled her a character beyond reformation; and she herself would no doubt have agreed that a respectable life was beyond her. But Jesus came and doubly rescued her; he enabled her to break away from the past and he opened a new future to her. There is no title adequate to describe Jesus except Saviour of the World.

The Gospel of John : Volume 1, ed. William Barclay, lecturer in the University of Glasgow, The Daily study Bible series, Rev. ed. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 2000), 171-72.

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