

Discussion Questions: John's Gospel (4:25-42)

Overview Question:

1. What are your questions, wonderings, disagreements, reflections, AND/OR connections, from the teaching this past Sunday on John 4:25-42, where the Samaritan woman testifies to her village about Jesus and the disciples are confronted by Jesus about true food?

Connection and Implication Questions:

One of the themes present in the story of the Samaritan woman at the well is that of vulnerability. The Samaritan woman, in order to come to know Jesus as Messiah and accept his gift, must be open to hearing the truth about herself from Jesus. As a result, she in turn is willing to share that truth about herself with others as she testifies about Jesus' identity to her fellow villagers.

1. Discuss this as it relates to your experience on the journey of faith.
 - a. Why is being vulnerable difficult for humans?
 - b. What benefits does being vulnerable have in our relationships with others?
 - c. Do you think it's true or false that our willingness to be vulnerable about ourselves with others is a hallmark of authentic faith? Explain why or why not, or what caveats you would add to make the statement more true.
 - d. Do you think it's true or false that our own vulnerability about ourselves with others is fundamental to our ability to witness to the truth about Jesus/God? Explain why or why not, or what caveats you would add to make the statement more true.

In the story, the truth about Jesus' identity as Messiah is inextricably linked to the truth about the woman's personal life because it is specifically Jesus' knowledge about the woman that causes her to "see" the truth about him.

2. Is this a dynamic that is naturally and unequivocally built into the fabric of how God works in everyone's life or not necessarily? Explain why or why not, or what caveats you would add to make the statement true.

The disciples are taught by Jesus, in this story, that they are to "recognize" that the work for which Jesus is commissioning them—to do the will of the Father—is always at hand and that someone has always begun that work in advance of them. They are to see themselves humbly as entering into others' labor.

3. What is the will of the Father that Jesus was about and that his disciples are being called to do also?
4. Are we called to do that work too? Explain
5. What should the story of what happened with the Samaritan woman and her village teach the disciples and US about the work of God?