

Series: Friends Indeed

Week 4: "Friendfluence"

John 4

August 4, 2002 • Sunday 9:15 AM • Dr. David McKinley

[Praise and worship led by Todd Bell]

[Dr. McKinley, Prayer]

[Soft music] Would you join me in prayer?

Lord Jesus we do worship you as King of kings and Lord of lords. We devote this moment and each of our lives to the divine work upon that which You and You alone can accomplish in this place. Father there are many needs that are here today and You know everyone, You see every heart and I pray that where there is weakness You would bring strength. I pray Lord that where there has been failure You would bring grace. I pray Lord where there er., where there is a person who is without Christ, who is lost and seeking that today they would find Salvation in Jesus Christ who is the King and Lord we give You our praise and we celebrate the victory that we have in You as we gather today Lord indeed engage our hearts, our tongues, our minds, our all that You may be glorified in this place, in this hour. For it is in the name of Jesus that we do pray. Amen.

Would you be seated and together we witness the testimony of Believer's Baptism.

[Baptism by Neal Jeffrey]

[Dr. McKinley, Welcome]

[Soft music] But how incredible is it on the first Sunday in August to see adults, students and children all following Christ in baptism. What a wonderful picture this is of the blessing of God of, in our lives through our church and in the lives of these individual believers and their families and we are so thankful for what God is doing and has done in each of these lives. I try so often to say this to you, please know that at the close of the service today there will be an invitation and at that time if you have received Christ but have never followed Him in the waters of Believer's Baptism we would invite you to come to present yourself as a candidate for baptism and at the next scheduled service we would be glad to include you and to share your testimony of faith in Christ as you follow Him in the obedience of Believer's Baptism. It's so good to welcome you here to Prestonwood today. I'm so thankful that you've come to be a part of this gathering of worship and in particular I just want to extend a very special word of greeting to all of those of you who are guests with us today. It may be that you're just traveling through the city of Dallas

and wanted to see and check out Prestonwood. We're thankful you've come. It may be that you live here in the city and for some reason you just felt impressed to get up and come to church today. We're thankful that you've come. It may be that this has become a habit for you, you're visiting here on a regular basis. Thank you for coming again. But, to each and every one of you who are guests I want to ask that you take the worship guide, open it to the inner portion, you'll find a guest registration, please take just a moment to fill out that information, tear it off and then return it in the offering plate just to let us know a little bit more about you and how you happened to come our way today. I also wanta point out on the inner portion of that worship guide that a next Sunday following the 11 o'clock service we are going to have a luncheon and then a dedication and open house of our new Prestonwood Christian Academy and Preschool and Children's Ministry Building out here on our property and we've been waiting and preparing all summer for this and are so excited about it, want you to be involved and included in this time of dedication it is a phenomenal new facility and you need to see it and be aware of it and so let me just be sure to point you're attention to that in the worship guide today and while I'm bringing greetings I must just take a moment and say, isn't it wonderful to welcome Todd and Sheri Bell back to the platform of Prestonwood today? [pause for applause] Todd and Sheri we love you dearly, we've missed you, we've born the burden and the care of the hours that you've walked through in your life. We've embraced God's promise of a living hope in Jesus Christ and we are so thankful for the faith that we share that not only walks us through the days of this life but gives us the hope and the assurance of the life to come and the Bible says, "*Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, neither is it entered into the heart of man all the things that God has prepared for those who believe Him.*" And we've shared that promise with you in these days but we are so glad to have you back. I also want to mention that next Sunday our Pastor is going to back in the pulpit and I know that you're excited and ready to see him back after this time away and a I'm certainly grateful that he's gonna to be back and I'm just hoping that when he steps here next Sunday you will just envelope him in your love and in your encouragement as he comes back and continues his series out of the book of Genesis. It's gonna be a great fall together, we're looking forward to it. Right now however I wanta ask you to get your hands clear, if you will, ask you to stand to your feet because I want every person in this building to receive a personal word of greeting. So would you help me to say, "Good Morning and God Bless You" and "Welcome" to those around you this morning?

[Dr. McKinley, Offertory prayer]

[Soft music] Father, based on Your promise we come near to You in this moment bringing tithes and offerings as gifts of faith and we pray that this moment would be a moment of exchange, that we would exchange our limited resource for Your abundance, that we would exchange O Lord, greediness for obedience, Lord that we would make an exchange of all of our weakness and Lord all of that which so often distracts, to put our focus on You and that which satisfies and lasts forever and so Father in this moment we pray that in each heart and in each life as each of us takes hold of the plate that the holding of the plate would be a reminder

that we exchange ourselves for You, for Your strength, for Your sufficiency and we glorify You through our obedience and through our worship in giving in Jesus name we pray. Amen. Would you be seated?

[Musical Praise, Celebration Choir & Orchestra, *My Life Is In Your Hands*]

[Dr. McKinley, message "*Friendfluence*"]

A very special thank you to you Todd Bell, our choir, our instrumentalists, our vocalists today, what a tremendous encouragement all of the music has been to every one of us who've come to this place this morning. You know from a childhood to adulthood we all engage in an interesting practice of establishing, of enlarging and ultimately utilizing a personal vocabulary and every day all of these words that we learn come and go in and out of our minds and our mouths and many times without any thought from whence these words may have come or how they happened to become a part of our everyday language. And while I don't have time this morning to engage in any sort of a significant a, a, regression into the background of the history of words I did find it interesting this week to learn that over 1,600 words came in to the English language through the creative gifts of William Shakespeare. He literally coined 1,600 words. I wonder if you use any of these in your vocabulary? Countless! Critical! Lonely! Majestic! Obscene! Excellent! You know the next time that something's great and you say excellent you can look and say, "And I'm quoting Shakespeare on that!" Ha! [pause for congregation laughter] It's a word, one of many words that came into the English language because of his gifts. From Sir Isaac Newton we got the word centrifugal. From Thomas Moore the words explain and exact and words are fascinating to see how they simply have been coined and originated and brought into the language. We also know that words not only have interesting origins but words also create interesting images in our minds. Many times to hear a word is to make an immediate association. Let's just see how that works! What happens when I say the word pilot? There's an association. Dentist? Definitely an association. [pause slight congregation laughter] Sumo wrestler? Don't think about that in church. Ha! [pause for congregation laughter] I mean there's an immediate picture that comes to mind when you hear certain words and not only images but even experiences. When you hear the word fire it can either be a warm thing or a ravenous thing that you consider but there's an image, almost an experience that associates with the word. Darkness! Buffet! Ha and you can't go until I do, so, just the same that all of these things create pictures and images in life. Well, just as words have come into the course of life and vocabulary and they have interesting origins and interesting images so it is that this morning I want to introduce you to a brand new word that I trust when you leave here today will be a word that will carry from this day forward a unique origin in this place and an image that you will never forget and that word is found on the front of your worship guide today. It is not a misspelling, it's a new word. I brought it to you today and it's called friendfluence. Friendfluence! It literally is a word that captures the idea of what friendship is depicted as being in the Bible. Because, in the Bible, the Bible indicates that friends have great influence on our lives, hence we have friendfluence.

In the book of Proverbs chapter 27 and verse 17 the Bible tells us that:

"As iron sharpens iron so a friend sharpens a friend."

And one of the most positive things that you can engage in, in life are those relationships with people who sharpen, who strengthen, who help to bring an edge to your life. But, at the same time just as the Bible talks about the positive aspects of friendfluence, like iron sharpening iron, the Bible also speaks about the negative aspect of friendfluence. For in 1 Corinthians 15 and verse 33 the Bible says:

"Bad company corrupts good character."

And just as friends can help to lift us to new heights, friends can be the cause of being drug down to lows in life because of our associations and that's why the Bible warns us about how we conduct our lives and our activities and those relationships of life because they either build us up or they tear us down. All of these are the ideas of friendfluence as we find them in the Scripture. Well, today I want us to examine a wonderful, a rather lengthy passage of Scripture dealing with the subject of friendfluence and it's found in John chapter 4 and so I want to invite you to turn there. Now those of you who've been here over the last few weeks know that of the course of the summer these weeks that I've been with you we've been studying together a subject that we've called *Friends Indeed*. In fact we've used the common human proverb that simply says, *"A Friend in need is a friend indeed."* And each week we've been looking at a, a aspect of friendship as it's provided in the Bible.

The first week we looked at, ***Friendships Matter***, in John chapter 15 and how the Bible relates the fact that God is allowed us to enter into a relationship of friendship with Him so that we in turn can become the channel through which He is introduced to our friends and they become friends of God and so we talked about, *Friendships Matter*.

Then the next week we studied together the second message and it was, ***Divine Appointments***, and we talked in that message looking at the passage of Scripture of the Good Samaritan in Luke chapter 10 about how God directs the steps of our lives, the pathway on which we journey in order to accomplish His divine purposes through our lives in the lives of other people.

And then last week we talked about, ***Life Links***. We looked at that beautiful picture of that day there in [pause] Capernaum when four friends brought their friend, their paralytic friend to Jesus and brought him down through the roof, determined that they would be a life link to get this man with his need to Christ and to see his need met.

But, today in John 4 we examine a passage that will really close off this whole idea of being friends indeed and it is this idea of friendfluence. And because there are 42 verses engaged in this dialog, this narrative that we are going to see today I want us to look at each aspect of this as

though we were working our way through sequences, through scenes as though it were in a play and one by one I want us to glean from each of these scenes the truth that God would have us to embrace about friendfluence. Lets begin reading in John chapter 4 and verse 1:

¹Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John ²(though Jesus Himself did not baptize but His disciples), ³He left Judea and departed again to Galilee.

Look at verse 4 very carefully!

⁴But He needed to go through Samaria. ⁵So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. ⁶Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. And it was the sixth hour of the day. ⁷And a woman from Samaria came to draw water and Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink."

Now the secret to understanding what is being presented in the opening portion of this text is to understand that the Bible was very specific about a geographical redirection of the steps of Jesus to come to this place at this hour for a specific purpose.

I like to think of the opening scene as though it were the detour, **The Detour**. That's what we're going to begin to frame our thoughts around. Now for you to understand the idea of the detour you need to understand something of the custom and of the tension that existed in the day and that time in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. Judea is the region of the land of Israel where the city of Jerusalem and Bethlehem are located. Galilee where much of Jesus' ministry occurred is in the northern portion of the land of Israel and the land between Judea and Galilee was know as the region of Samaria. But, there was a great problem and that was that there was a prejudice, a hatred that existed between the Jews in Judea and Galilee and the half-breed Jews and the mixtures of people who lived in the region of Samaria and so in order to avoid any interaction or contact or intermingling the traditional Jewish pathway, when traveling from the south to the north would be to follow one of the courses that I want to provide for you on the screen. Typically a Jew would either go out toward the coast of the Mediterranean and would move up along the coastline and go to Galilee or they would frequently go down from Jerusalem through Jericho, across the Jordan River and back around and up through the region of Galilee again. This was almost a, this was the most common practice, it was almost as though it were an unwritten law, Jews, true Jews did not pass through the region of Samaria. But the Bible tells us in John 4, verse 4 that Jesus clearly said, "He needed to go through Samaria." And how did Jesus go? Well, let's just simply follow His course. He moved not across or around but, right through the city of Sychar and He went there not only because it was a geographical change of direction be...because in that geographical change there is a theological, a spiritual truth and that is simply this, that Jesus was doing what He was always doing in His life and ministry, He was doing the work of the Father. One of the

greatest things that we learn in life is simply that God is active and moving and working in our world and He's working in and through our lives and just as the Son of Man on that day made His way to a unlikely place and met a very unusual person in the woman that He met at that well, so it is that God orchestrates our lives to fulfill His purposes. In fact the purpose in the life and the ministry of Jesus Christ can be completely summarized in Luke chapter 19 and verse 10 and here it is.

"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

I submit to you this morning ladies and gentlemen that Jesus was not lost, Jesus was on a mission. But He met a woman at that well that day though she was a native of the region of Samaria but she was a lost woman and so we open the scene with a detour, He needed to go through Samaria.

But that takes us to the 2nd step that unfolds here and that is **The Dialog**. Because the interesting thing that [turned tape] ...that Jesus did something that was out of step with the custom of His day, He did something that even more was a surprise and that is here in verse 7:

⁷A woman of Samaria came to draw water and Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." ⁸For the disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. ⁹And then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. ¹⁰And Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." And the woman said, "Sir, You don't have anything to draw with, the well is deep. Where do you think You will get that living water?"

The dialog begins to unfold and Jesus not only went to an unlikely place but Jesus did something that totally shocked this woman. Now as we will continue to read and discover this woman did not exactly have a good reputation. She came to the well at an unusual hour and she came to the well alone. Meaning that she probably was not finding favor in the women in the community around her. So here she has wandered out to this well all by herself, she meets Jesus, she's already sort of a low life in her own community and then some Jew engages her in a conversation and she is absolutely taken back by the fact that Jesus would even think of speaking to her being a Jewish man. It was a complete eh...unusual turn of events that, that took place in this place and moment. But, while Jesus was casual and while he was conversational, Jesus had a purpose and though He engaged the conversation by asking her for a drink of water He ended this section of the dialog talking about a water that He had to offer from which she would never thirst again.

That takes us to the 3rd scene. Not only do we see the detour and the dialog but very quickly we step in to **The Desire**. Because when this woman heard Jesus talking about a water that He had to give I want you to notice how she responded to Him. In verse 13 He said to her:

¹³...*Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again,* ¹⁴*but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. Because the water that I give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting water, into everlasting life.* ¹⁵And the woman said to Him, "Sir" why don't you say it with me? What did she say? "Sir, give me, give me this water, that I may drink it and that I may never come here again."

How amazing it is in this moment that Jesus touched a deep desire in the heart and in the life of this woman and interestingly enough she immediately, when she heard Him talking didn't think anymore about a Jew talking to a Samaritan but she simply as a person of need looked at Him and said, "I've got a need, give me this water." What was the need? Well, obviously there was a physical need. Obviously it was difficult to go out and draw water and do all of those things and if you've been out any day right now you know it's just easier to avoid the heat than to get out in it and deal with all the thirst that goes with it. And she was thirsty and she was weary physically. But, I want you to know that the Bible makes it clear and we'll see as we continue that she was also thirsty and empty emotionally. She was a woman who was guilty and who was ashamed of her life and of her lifestyle and when Jesus said, to her I can give you water that'll be like a fountain in you, when she said, "Give me" she was not only speaking of that which would be physical but she was echoing that which was deep in her heart something that was emotional and even more something that was spiritual. Spiritually she was a woman who was confused. Spiritually she was a woman who was seeking, she was a woman like so many people in the world around us today, she was running on empty and just the thought, the suggestion that maybe she could have an internal fountain that would change your life from the inside-out was an incredible thought and in her desperation she looked at Jesus and said, "Sir, give me this drink." This desire has been echoed throughout history.

It was Sigmund Freud, the acclaimed psychologist who said:

"The meager satisfaction man can extract from life, from the, from reality leaves him starving."

The meager satisfaction you can extract from reality leaves you starving and many people have tried a variety of experiences and indulgences to try to get something out of the reality of life and yet their hungry.

Blaise Pascal, the French philosopher said it this way:

"There is a God shaped vacuum in every heart that only God can fill."

[pause] And Augustine the theologian said:

"We are made for thee O God and our souls are restless until we find rest in Thee."

You see ladies and gentlemen in every one of these statements we see what is being echoed in the life of this woman. There was a desire. She was

running on empty. She wanted something more in life and yet her life just seemed to be lacking and so now instead of Jesus asking her for water she's pleading saying, "Sir, give me something to drink." The Detour! The Dialog! The Desire!

Number 4 I want you to see what happens and that is **The Discomfort**. Ha! The discomfort what do I mean by that? Well let's just continue to read here. The Bible says that after she looked at Him in verse 15 and said:

¹⁵..."Sir give me this water..." ¹⁶Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."

Well, that was interesting, total change of subject.

¹⁶..."Go, call your husband..." ¹⁷And the woman answered and said, "I have no husband." And Jesus said to her, "You have said well 'I have no husband.' ¹⁸for you have had five husbands, and the one with which you are now is not your husband and in that you truly spoke."

Ha! In other words lady you're just shackin up and I know it. Ha! How would you have felt? It was bad enough that He'd already broken the custom of a Jew speaking to a Samaritan she already felt like somehow this was out of order but then she feels as though she is absolutely exposed in His presence and Jesus says to her your right, you've had 5 husbands, in fact you've made a pattern in life of moving from one relationship to another relationship trying to fill the emptiness of your life and it was an incredibly uncomfortable moment and I want you to see how she responded. She said to Him in verse 19:

..."Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet."

Ha! I think you see and know things that other people don't know [pause] and it was a very uncomfortable moment and yet ladies and gentlemen in every persons life for us to ever know the satisfaction that comes from a right relationship with God we have to deal with the discomfort of realizing that there are things that have separated, violated and ultimately distanced our relationship with God and it is an uncomfortable thing and it is not necessarily a palatable thing but it was a necessary thing for this woman to come to terms with. Two weeks ago we talked about the Good Samaritan, but there's no doubt about it this is the bad Samaritan and she's ashamed and yet it was coming to terms with what were the issues of her life that she would ever begin to realize the power of Christ in her. Ladies and gentlemen I have to be honest and tell you today that no matter who we are or what we are if we are gonna be true friends to our friends in need there are gonna ma... moments in times where not only do we speak to them about the good things that Christ has done but where we have to be uncomfortable and enter into seasons of discomfort to tell the truth. I want you to know that if all the preaching and teaching that we hear and share simply makes us more comfortable there's something seriously wrong with it because the message of Christ always made people uncomfortable. As a pastor I've always seen it as my mission in ministry

to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comfortable. Ha! [pause for slight congregation laughter] and if that doesn't happen I'm not doing my job because the reality is that the truth of God penetrates into the heart and it presses to the place of deepest need and we have to be true to a message that at times is uncomfortable and creates discomfort in people. Just a few day ago I received an e-mail from Michael Clarke our Executive Director of PowerPoint Ministries and it was about an article that had appeared in the Los Angeles Times this summer and this is what it said, it said:

"Hell is being frozen out by many preachers who downplay damnations in their summers, in their sermons."

Not just in the summer but in the ser...sermons. [pause for slight congregation laughter] I think it's a great time to preach on Hell in the summer I think people get the idea. [pause for congregation laughter] It goes on to say:

"The mention of Hell from pulpits is at an all time low."

A leading researcher at Harvard Divinity School said:

"There's been a shift in religion from focusing on what happens in the next life to asking, 'What is the quality of this life that we're leading.' You can go to a whole lot of churches week after week and you'd be startled to never hear the mention of Hell."

And then he went on to say:

"Churches are under enormous pressure to be consumer oriented. Churches today feel the need to be appealing rather than demanding."

Well, I want you to know what Jesus ask of this woman was demanding. It was uncomfortable and it put her on the spot but it was the very thing that she needed because it engaged in her a need to recognize that there was a spiritual issue in her life and interestingly enough over the next 10 verses she began to ask Jesus questions about, well we Samaritans worship here at Mount Gerizim and you Jews worship down in Jerusalem where is the right place, how do we get right with God and Jesus talked to her about worship. But I want you to see the outcome of that discussion because the outcome led to a discovery and here is the discovery, chapter 4 in verse 25:

²⁵And the woman said to Him, "Sir, I know that Messiah is coming who is called the Christ. When He comes He will tells us all things." ²⁶And Jesus said to her, *"I who speak to you am He."*

Right there in that moment she made the discovery. This wasn't just a prophet. This was the Messiah! This was the Christ who had been promised and it was in that discovery that everything in her life was to be changed. Every other part of her life had resulted in an influence that

was for the bad, but, suddenly with this encounter her life was changing because she realized that she had met Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the One who takes away guilt and gives forgiveness, the One who brings us out of darkness and brings us to light, the One who takes away isolation and leads us to fellowship, the One who changes us from the inside-out and I want you to notice what Jesus said and don't you ever again let someone say to you, "Jesus never said that He was the Messiah." That's something the, the followers put on Him in the 1st Century. I want you to see what Jesus said. I want you to underline it in your Bible, verse 26.

Jesus said to her, "*I who speak to you am He.*"

Actually if you'll notice on the screen here and in the text that you have the "He" is in italics, it's actually added in our English translations in order to help us to be able to read this gramat...in a grammatical fashion that is correct in English but the reality is, is that Jesus said, "*I who speak to you AM.*" And that is significant because all through the gospel of John this is the echo of the writer of John. Over and over Jesus said:

"I am the door, no one can enter apart from Me."

"I am the Good Shepherd."

"I am the living water."

"I am the bread."

"I am the way, the truth and the life."

"I am the resurrection and the life."

You see it's Christ and Christ alone and that's what every person needs is the discovery of a moment of transformation in the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And just as Moses stood at the burning bush in fear and said:

"Lord, who will I say to Pharaoh has sent me?" and the voice of God rumbled and said, "You say that I AM has sent you."

So it is that Jesus is the I AM, the one and only Messiah, the Savior of the world.

Well, that leads us to the next scene and the next scene begins in verse 27. Jesus said to her,

²⁶*..."I...speak to you am He."* ²⁷*And at this point, the Bible says, His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman;*

Ha! You can only imagine. It was bad enough He wanted to go through Samaria and now He's sitting out there talking to the woman of ill repute and I'm sure they walked up thinking, "What in the world is He doing?" But I love the fact that the Bible says, but they did not say a word. Now I'm convinced Peter wasn't there. Ha! [pause for congregation laughter] absolutely convinced Peter wasn't' there. I think he must have been trailing behind or something. They didn't, they didn't say anything, what do you seek, or why are you talking to her? But, look at verse 28:

²⁸*The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city and said*

to the men, ²⁹“Come, and see a man who told me all the things I ever did. Could this be the Christ?” ³⁰And they went out of the city and came to Him. ³¹And in the meantime His disciples urged him saying, “Rabbi eat.” ³²And He said to them, *“I have food to eat of which you do not know.”* ³³And therefore the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?” ³⁴Jesus said to them, *“My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.”* ³⁵Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and then comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! ³⁶And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.”

Then look in verse 38:

“I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors.”

Now this is an interesting shift again. Here we’ve seen this progression but then suddenly the disciples enter and yet Jesus used this moment as a teachable moment to tell every single one of us something about the demand of discipleship. What is it? Discipleship is not spiritual feeding.

Discipleship is friendfluence, leading other people to Jesus. Please don’t miss that! You see the disciples came back and said, Jesus we went and got You some food and we’ve had something to eat and we’re feeling better and we want You to feel better and Jesus said, wait a minute I’ve already had something and they said, well, who brought You something, He said, no *“My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me..”* and then I want to remind you that my purpose for you is to go out into the harvest, the purpose is not for you to get food it’s for you to go and reap the harvest and present it to me. Spiritually this is what discipleship is all about. Ladies and gentlemen that’s what God wants in our lives. Billy Graham has said it so well, he said:

“The evangelistic harvest is always urgent. The destiny of men and of nations is always being decided. Every generation is strategic. We are not responsible for the past generation and we cannot bear full responsibility for the next one. But we do have our generation and, God has told us, God will hold us responsible as to how well we fulfill our responsibilities to this age and take advantage of our opportunities.”

Men and women this is discipleship and may I mention to you that that same Billy Graham is coming to Dallas in October and we’re gonna have a Metroplex mi...mission a mission to reach people in the Dallas, Fort Worth area. Now, there’ll be a lot of, of interest in the fact that Billy Graham is coming and a lot of debate about whether or not this’ll be his last Crusade and all kinds of things like that but listen to me, God wants us to lift up our eyes and to see the harvest that is around us and to be true disciples of Jesus Christ.

One final scene, **The Dynamic**, the dynamic, what do I mean by that? Look in verse 30. [misquote, really verse 39]

And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman...

Suddenly a woman whose reputation had only been of ill repute became a woman whose friendfluence changed the lives of the people in her community and the Bible says that:

³⁹...she testified to them, "He told me all that I did." ⁴⁰So the Samaritans came to Him and they urged Him to stay with them and He stayed there 2 days. ⁴¹And many more believed because of His own word. ⁴²Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."

What was the dynamic? The dynamic of all of this was that this woman's life change impacted the lives of people all around her [pause] and I believe the dynamic that closes this portion of Scripture is a dynamic that we need to take away from this place this morning, it is a **dynamic of significance**, of significance. If this text tells us anything it tells us that everybody is somebody to God. It doesn't matter who you are, what you've done, where you've been, God takes broken things and blesses them and uses them for His glory and I want every person who can hear my voice this morning to hear me clearly. "You matter to God!" He loves you. He cares about you. He has a plan for your life and it's not an accident that you're here, it is a significant moment because God wants you to discover the significance of your life in Christ

There's another dynamic and it's the **dynamic of friendfluence**, this word that we've talked about, because changed lives change lives and the amazing thing is to see what God did in this woman's life and through her life and just as God did something through her to the people around her God wants to do something through you. Beyond the doors of this building there is a person who has like interests, who has like tastes, who has like [pause] background, who has like sense of humor or lack there of there that you have. [pause for slight congregation laughter] Somebody who is like you in so many ways in whose life only your witness can make a difference and ladies and gentlemen every one of us need to seize the dynamic principle of friendfluence and use it for the glory of God.

And finally there's the **dynamic of experience**. I love verse 42.

..."Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we have heard for ourselves and know that indeed the Christ, this is the Christ, the Savior of the world."

They were now making the confession, Jesus is the One and only Savior of the world and to ever meet and experience the transforming power of Christ is to know that He's not just some religious figurehead to a movement called Christianity. He's not just one of many prophets and teachers. He is the Christ, the One and only Savior and Deliverer of the world. Is

there any wonder that the apostle Paul said,

"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and then also to the Greek."

You know that word power is the Greek word *dunamis*, that means dynamite or dynamic and what they were saying here is that we have experienced a dynamic that has changed everything in our lives. To meet Christ is to be changed by Him personally and to be changed in the purpose of your life so that one-thing matters to you [pause] to be a friend of God and in that friendship to bear much fruit for His glory.

Several times since his inauguration as president, President Bush has referred to a painting that hangs on the wall in his office. It's a painting that carries the title, *A Charge To Keep*. It's a picture of some riders who are moving up a steep and a rough trail, some horsemen charging to the top of the hill and he said it's a constant reminder to him to stay the course, to keep moving and pressing on in the face of opposition and ultimately a call to give his highest and his best to the office of president. But he also has remarked numerous times that this painting captures the essence of a hymn, a hymn that was written in the 17 hundreds by Charles Wesley and I want to leave you with those words this morning.

*A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify,
A never dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky.*

*To serve this present age,
My calling to fulfill;
O may it all my pow'rs engage
To do my Master's will!*

May that be our prayer today using our friendfluence that people may know our best friend, Jesus.

Father, today I thank You for Your word for it's power and it's authority. I pray that in this moment beyond all of the things that we've discussed and emphasized that there would just be a settling in this moment of the still, small voice of the [soft music begins] Holy Spirit speaking in the hearts of men and women and boys and girls today to know the true condition of their life inwardly and spiritually. Lord, I pray that if there's any person in this building today who is thirsty, who is empty that this would be that moment of experiencing Christ, of confessing Him. Lord, maybe they've even been religious people but simply have had religion without Christ and I pray that today they would know Him as the Savior of the world. If you're in this building and hear my voice while heads are bowed and eyes are closed and you've never done so I want to encourage you in the quietness of this moment to simply pray and say, 'Dear Lord Jesus I believe that You are the Savior of the world. Jesus I'm

empty, Jesus I'm stained, Jesus I want to be forgiven and I wanta be changed. Come into my heart Lord Jesus. Let me leave the waterpots of my past and begin to live a new life in You today. Lord help me to never be ashamed of You at any time, any place, any moment. Father I thank You for people across this building who may have prayed that prayer in this moment and Lord I ask you to give them the courage to go out and to tell their friends, but first to give them the courage to let it be know in this place today. Father, I pray for other men and women who are here today who have often come to this church and other churches, who've been fed and encouraged but who need to become partners in ministry and to use their friendfluence personally and the influence of this ministry for the sake of Christ in this generation. I pray that You would call families and single adults and students to come and unite with Prestonwood today and Lord that You would move and work in our hearts. Pray for anyone Lord today who may need to be baptized that You would give them courage to come and present themselves not feeling that they have to add their works but just to celebrate Your grace touching their lives. So Father in this moment we look for the work of Your Spirit for it is in Jesus name we pray. Amen

I want you to look up and as you look up I want you to stand with me. I wanta ask that no one be leaving at this moment. This is such a vital, important moment in this service. Whether you're there in the balcony or in the terrace region or right here on the lower floor we're simply going to take a few moments and sing a song of invitation and invite men, women, boys and girls to come today to receive Christ, to come today in order to express that they have trusted Christ, to come and unite with us in fellowship and partnership for the sake of the gospel. Up in the balcony there are 3 banners and at each banner one of our pastors is standing there, at each of the heads of the aisles here there'll be a pastor standing here and the reason that we are here is to meet you, to encourage you, to pray for you and to help to settle and seal any commitment in your heart that Christ is leading you to make today. I don't know who you are or don't know what your background may be, don't know what God may have said to you but I believe that the Spirit of God is moving and working and there was a must to you coming to Prestonwood this morning and so don't miss this moment. Let this be a moment where the Spirit of God moves and works in your life and simply come, that when you come we're gonna take just a moment to celebrate what Christ has done, to give you some materials, to encourage you in your walk with Christ, to get some information that we need and we'll send you on your way. If you need a Bible we'll give you one of those to help you to begin the journey of following Christ, but whatever it is and whatever He's speaking to your heart I encourage you and urge you one by one, friend by friend to come and follow Christ right now. Let's sing! Let's pray! Let's come and honor the Lord in this moment.