

Title:           **IF YOU KNEW...**

Text:           John 4:10

Reading:       *Romans 10:1-17*

Subject:       *Saving Knowledge*

Date:           Sunday Morning – October 5, 2008

Tape #          John #25

Introduction:

(John 4:1-10) “When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (2) (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) (3) He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee. (4) And he must needs go through Samaria. (5) Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. (6) Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with *his* journey, sat thus on the well: *and* it was about the sixth hour. (7) There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (8) (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) (9) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. (10) Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.”

Our Lord Jesus might have said the same thing to this poor, Samaritan adulteress that he did to the rich young ruler – “*One thing thou lackest.*” Like the rich young ruler, this Samaritan woman lacked just one thing. Just one thing kept her from being a believer.

She was an object of electing love. God chose her as such from eternity. She was one of those whose names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life before the world began. She was predestined to eternal life in Christ. Yet, she was lost. She was still a rebel. She was still an unbeliever. The Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to lay down his life for this woman, to put away her sin by the sacrifice of himself as her Substitute. Yet, she did not trust him.

There was with her, as with many of you, one thing missing. Just like you...

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- She knew her Bible history.
- She knew her religious dogma. She knew what her church believed, and defended her denomination with a vengeance.
- She knew that Messiah was coming and that salvation could be found only in him.
- She knew that Christ alone was the Savior of men.

Yet, just like you, she was still lost, lost because of one thing. What one thing was missing. Read our text again, and you will see. — *“Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water”* (v. 10).

**Proposition:** The one thing which kept this poor sinner out of the kingdom of God, the one thing which keeps you out of the kingdom of God, was just this – She did not know the Lord Jesus Christ.

If you knew, if only you knew the Lord Jesus Christ, you would trust him. It is your ignorance of Christ that holds you in unbelief. Did not our Lord himself say, “If you knew me, you would know my Father also” (John 8:19; 14:7)? He wept over Jerusalem, saying, “If only you had known” (Luke 19:42). In fact, the Holy Spirit tells us that if the rulers of this world had just known who he was, they would never have crucified the Lord of Glory (1 Corinthians 2:8).

It is your spiritual ignorance, the blindness of your soul, that holds you still in unbelief, just as it did this Samaritan adulteress. But, blessed be God, when the Light of the World shone upon her, when the Sun of Righteousness arose within her, she saw and she believed. So it is my prayer today, as I preach the gospel to you, that God the Holy Spirit will be pleased, by the almighty power of his invincible grace, to make the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ shine in your heart, and give you life and faith in him.

**Divisions:** There are three things in this verse of Scripture to which I want to direct your attention. Hold you Bibles open on your laps. My outline is in our text.

1. *“If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink...”*
2. *“Thou wouldest have asked of him...”*

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3. “*And he would have given thee living water.*”

**SAVING KNOWLEDGE**

First, the Lord Jesus spoke to this woman about saving knowledge. He said, — “*If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink...*” I hope you will hear and understand what I am about to say. I recognize that **doctrinal knowledge is not salvation**. Grace is not gained by learning. Righteousness is not the reward of study. Salvation is not the successor of research. You can have all the right doctrine and miss Christ altogether.

Calvinism is no more beneficial to a man’s soul than Arminianism. I have no more interest in converting men from Arminianism to Calvinism, than I do in converting men from Hinduism to Catholicism. Salvation is not found in a religious system. Salvation is not in...

- A System of Works
- A System of Rituals
- A System of Doctrine

**Salvation is in a Person**. Salvation is in Christ. In fact, salvation is a Person. Christ is Salvation! Is that not what the Book says? – Luke 2:30.

(Exodus 15:1-2) “Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. (2) The LORD *is* my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he *is* my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father’s God, and I will exalt him.”

(2 Samuel 22:1-3) “And David spake unto the LORD the words of this song in the day *that* the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul: (2) And he said, The LORD *is* my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; (3) The God of my rock; in him will I trust: *he is* my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence.”

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(Psalms 27:1) “The LORD *is* my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD *is* the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?”

(Psalms 35:3) “Say unto my soul, I *am* thy salvation.”

(Luke 2:29-30) “Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: (30) For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,”

**Salvation is not what you know, but who you know.** — “*And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent*” (John 17:3). What you know, or don’t know is really irrelevant. But that does not mean that a person can be saved without knowing Christ, without knowing the gospel. Not on your life! **Knowledge is as essential to faith in Christ as oxygen is to breathing.** But understand this: – **It is not what we know that saves us, but WHO!**

Our Lord said told this Samaritan woman that she would be saved, she would be a believer, if she knew, if she knew the gift of God, if she knew who he was. Is that what you see in the text? — “*Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water*” (John 4:10).

Let me just stay with our text. **Gospel knowledge is essential to saving faith.** Let men rattle on all they want about people being saved who do not know God, do not know Christ, and do not know the gospel. It just ain’t so. It makes just as much sense to talk about Mormons and Russellites being saved as it does to talk about Arminians, will-worshippers, and work mongers being saved.

- Those who deny the gospel do not know God.
- Those who despise the character of God do not love the Lord.
- Those who trample the blood of Christ under their feet as a useless waste, are not born of God.
- Those who despise the Spirit of grace, do not know the God of grace.

**Gospel knowledge is essential to saving faith. It is impossible to trust an unknown Savior** (Rom. 10:13-17).

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(Romans 10:13-17) “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. (14) How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? (15) And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! (16) But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? (17) So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

**FOUR IMPOSSIBILITIES**

1. It is utterly impossible for anyone to call upon and worship the Lord if they do not trust him.
2. It is utterly impossible for anyone to trust Christ until they know him.
3. It is utterly impossible for anyone to know Christ without a preacher.
4. It is utterly impossible for anyone to preach Christ, unless he is sent of God.

**Faith is not a leap in the dark. Faith is walking in the light. There is no saving faith without saving knowledge.** I could say many things about this saving knowledge. Indeed, much needs to be said. But our text speaks of two things specifically, which this woman had to know, if she would be saved, two things which no one knows by nature, but two things which we must know if we are to be saved. Without the knowledge of these two things, there is no faith in Christ. Without the knowledge of these two things there is no salvation. Are you listening?

1. **All who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, all who are taught of God and born of God, know “the gift of God.”**

Be sure you do not miss the definite article. Our Lord does not say, — *If you knew a gift of God.* He says, “*If thou knewest **THE** gift of God.*” You might say, “Well, pastor, what is he talking about?” I am glad you asked. Let’s see if he tells us in his Word.

(Romans 6:23) “For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

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(2 Corinthians 9:15) “Thanks *be* unto God for his unspeakable gift.”

(Ephesians 2:8-9) “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: (9) Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

**The gift of God is Christ himself and the salvation that God gives to sinners in him, as a matter of pure, free, undeserved, sovereign grace.** Most all religious people, almost all who claim to be worshippers of Christ, like Simon Magus, vainly imagine that the gift of God can be purchased with money, or human effort, or human merit of some kind (Acts 8:20). All believers know and rejoice in the fact that salvation is the gift of God.

- Not a Present – A Gift!
- Not an Offer – A Gift!
- Not a Proposition – A Gift!

**Saving faith involves knowledge, knowing the gift of God, and it involves knowing him by whom the gift comes.** There is no saving faith in Christ without a saving knowledge of Christ. No one is saved who does not know who Christ is and what he has done. — “*And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent*” (John 17:3).

When our Lord Jesus put the question to the man who had been blind, “*Dost thou believe on the Son of God? he answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?*” Then, the Savior made himself known unto him. “*Jesus said unto him, Thou hast seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.*” His eyes were opened to see him, and his ears now heard him, and both being true in a spiritual sense he immediately expressed his faith in him, saying, “*Lord, I believe,*” and as a proof and evidence of his faith in Christ, he “*worshipped him*” – (John 9:35-38).

**Before there can be any faith in Christ as our Savior, there must be some knowledge of him and of our need of him as such.**

“A man must be made sensible of the sinfulness of his nature, of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, of the just demerit of it, and of the miserable state and condition it has brought him into, out of which none but Christ the Savior can deliver him.”

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– John Gill

We then call upon Christ, crying for mercy, as the apostles in distress did, saying, “*Lord, save us, we perish*” (Matthew 8:25). But no man will ever call upon Christ to save him, until he is acquainted with his own impotence, until he sees that he cannot save himself, that he cannot contribute anything to his salvation, and that no one else can help him but Christ.

No sinner will ever fall out to Christ, until he is made to see that if ever he is saved it must be by the grace of God alone, through the blood and righteousness of Christ alone, and not by the work of his own hands or the power of his own will.

There can be no faith in Christ apart from the knowledge of the fulness and ability of Christ as the sinners’ Substitute, Surety, and Savior. We cannot trust him until we see him as the Christ of God, full of grace and truth. We will never trust Christ until we are made to know that he is a Savior suitable to our souls needs.

- We cannot trust him as our Redeemer, until he makes us to know something about the redemption he accomplished for sinners at Calvary.
- We cannot trust Christ alone for righteousness, until we are convinced of the righteousness of God which is in him, which he established.
- We cannot trust him for the forgiveness of sin, until we are convinced by the Spirit of God that he has put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself.
- We cannot trust the Son of God as our Savior, until we see him at the right hand of the Majesty on High, with saving power in his hands.
- No sinner will ever trust Christ alone as his Savior until he sees that all salvation is in him (1 Corinthians 1:30).

**It is absurd to talk about saving faith without saving knowledge.** Knowledge and faith are joined together as inseparable companions, and as expressing the same thing. It is written, “*We have known and believed the love that God hath to us.*” We are firmly persuaded of it (1 John 4:16). The strongest acts of faith in God’s saints are sometimes expressed by words of knowledge. — “*I know that my Redeemer liveth... I know in whom I have believed*” (Job 19:25; 2 Tim. 1:12).

2. **This knowledge comes to sinners only by divine revelation.**

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I am talking about something more than a notion, an idea, or even a fact. I am talking about a personal, experimental knowledge of the living God, — not an academic knowledge, — not a second hand knowledge, — not a textbook knowledge – **A PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE**. – “*I know whom I have believed!*”

- By the Preaching of the Gospel.
- By the Spirit of God.
- By the Gift of Faith.

(Romans 1:16-17) “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. (17) For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”

(Ephesians 1:13-14) “In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, (14) Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”

**FAITH’S REQUEST**

Next, our Lord Jesus speaks about a request. Look at John 4:10 again. — “*Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; **thou wouldest have asked of him**, and he would have given thee living water.*”

That which is sure to follow the knowledge of Christ, the knowledge of God’s free grace gift of salvation and eternal life in him is faith, faith expressed in a request. If you only knew the gift of God, if only you knew my Savior, you would ask of him...

- “*God, be merciful to me, a sinner!*”
- “*If thou wilt, thou canst make me whole!*”
- “*That I might receive my sight!*”
- “*Remember me!*”

**CHRIST’S PROMISE**



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Now, look at our text one more time, and see what it is that the Lord Jesus Christ promises to poor, needy sinners who ask of him. — *“Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and **he would have given thee living water.**”*

*“Ask, and ye shall receive!” — “Believe, and you shall live!”— “Look, and you shall be saved!”* Ask of Christ, and he will give you living water!

Do you wonder – **Why does the Lord here refer to his great salvation as “living water?”** Because...

- Water is the gift of God.
- Water is absolutely essential to life.
- Water meets a universal need.
- Water comes down from heaven.
- Water cleanses and refreshes.
- Water is free.
- Water is something no one ever gets tired of having.

**TWO VIEWS OF CHRIST**

*“If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.”* — Here are two sweet, precious, instructive views of our Lord Jesus Christ which he held before the Samaritan woman, by which he graciously and effectually endeared himself to her. Let us ever behold our Savior in these two aspects of his character as our God-man Mediator: (1.) all that he is in himself, and (2.) the fact that he is the gift of God.

- These two things give poor, needy sinners both a reason to trust our Lord Jesus Christ and a divine warrant for faith in him.
- Ignorance of these two great things is the cause of much misery in those poor souls tortured with the guilt of sin, and the cause of much discomfort in believing sinners.
- Ignorance of these two, sweet revelations of grace greatly hinders our enjoyment of our interest in and union with the Lord Jesus Christ.

*“If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.”* — May God the Holy Spirit give us grace to prove these words of our Savior to ourselves.

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**CHRIST'S PERSON AND WORK**

I ask you to consider who and what the Lord Jesus is in himself. Consider his magnificent Person and his mediatorial work as the God-man, our Savior. In all that he is, in all that he performed, in all that he accomplished, and in all that he obtained as the God-man, he acted the Surety of his elect. And by virtue of all the fulness that is treasured up in him we have all things. None of the virtue, merit, and power of his work or being as the God-man is for himself, but for us. He does not and cannot need it. We do!

“So that,” as **Robert Hawker** wrote, “a poor sinner is as much suited to Jesus for him to give out of his fulness, as Jesus is suited for a poor sinner to supply his emptiness.”

If we thus know him and come to him, we find that he is as eager and anxious to receive every poor, needy sinner and to give out of his fulness, as that poor, needy sinner is to come and take!

**THE GIFT OF GOD**

Our Lord Jesus declares that he is, in all his mediatorial work and being, “*the gift of God.*” Here we are given a warrant from God to come to Christ. God himself gives sinners command to believe on his Son (1 John 3:23). That is the warrant of faith. That is the sinner’s right and authority to trust Christ!

Do you know who Christ is and what he has done for sinners? If you know that Jesus Christ the Savior is the gift of God, make use of him as such. **Use him for every need of your poor soul.** Christ is the only Sacrament there is. We receive grace only in and by him. He is the only Way sinners can come to God and find acceptance with him.

May God the Holy Spirit enable us ever to keep in view that Christ is the gift of God and that God is honored by us when we honor his dear Son, by believing “*the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.*”

The thirst of our souls cannot be quenched from any pool that depends upon dry or wet seasons; but only from the Lord Jesus Christ himself, who gives

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living water and is himself that everlasting living spring of water in our souls, springing up into everlasting life.

**Application:** If the one thing which prevents sinners from being saved is their ignorance of Christ, let us make it our life's business to make him known. Go, tell your neighbors, your families, your friends, and your enemies if they will hear you, who Christ is and what he has done for you.

- Tell it in the city.
- Tell it on the mountain top.
- Tell in the worker's house.
- Tell it in the harlot's house.
- Tell it in the drunk's house.
- Tell it in the religious man's house.
- Tell it in the invalid's house.
- Tell it in the dying man's house.
- Tell it in your own house!
- Tell it everywhere to everybody!

**Illustration:** *The Chief and the Worm*

Amen.