

“How to Test What is Important”

John 4:27-38

Hello friend and welcome to *Hope for Today*. My name is J. Mark Horst; I'm your friend and Bible teacher. The program you're listening to is produced by Heralds of Hope, an international Gospel radio and literature ministry.

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How do you decide what is important in life? Do you look around at other people and see what they're doing and then follow that? But what if they're wrong? What if the things there pursuing in life aren't really important? Would you want to spend your whole life thinking something was important, only to learn when you die that you were wrong? That's not what I want.

Would you like to know how to find out what is really important? Well, I hope you can stay tuned because here now is Dr. Yoder with today's teaching, "How to Test What is Important."

Every one of us has a set of values by which we judge events and experiences. We also use this set of values to judge the quality of an object: a garment, a purchase of food. In a number of ways, we use this set of values. All of us have also learned that quality is not always determined by the price one has to pay. Some items are overpriced. Some items may be underpriced. So, we use our set of values to judge the quality of whatever item or object we may wish to buy at a reasonable price.

Then some values are priceless. Some ideas cannot be bought. For example, Jesus said once, "What will it profit a man if he should gain the whole world and lose his soul?" Do you see what I mean, that some values are priceless? All the wealth of the world is not worth as much as the soul.

The experience of Jesus in John 4:27-38 teaches us HOW TO TEST WHAT IS IMPORTANT.

27 *And upon this came his disciples, and marveled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?*

28 *The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,*

- 29 *Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?*
- 30 *Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.*
- 31 *In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.*
- 32 *But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.*
- 33 *Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him aught to eat?*
- 34 *Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.*
- 35 *Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.*
- 36 *And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both be that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.*
- 37 *And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.*
- 38 *I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.*

This is a very interesting experience in the life of Jesus, and from this scene we can discover the CLUES which should help us to test what is important. I want you to notice them.

First there is **The Woman's Invitation.**

This woman, who went into the city and invited the men to come and see the man who told her everything, was the woman that Jesus was talking with there at Jacob's well. The conversation between Him and the woman was a surprise to the disciples. They could not understand why Jesus would be talking with this Samaritan woman, but they would not ask Him.

The woman's invitation was to the men of the city. She said, "Come, see a man who told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ?" She was convinced. She had made a commitment unto this One who spoke with her. She understood that He knew all about her. In her statement to the men, she made a confession of Christ. "Is not this the Christ?" she asked. "Is this not the Messiah?" Then they went out of the city to meet Him.

In our set of values, we must do like this woman did; we must put Jesus Christ in His rightful place. In her invitation to these people of the city she did exactly that. She said, "I have

met Him; He has told me all things ever I did; surely this must be the Christ.” Yes, in your set of values you will need to place Jesus in His proper position.

There is a second clue which comes out of **The Disciples’ Supplication**.

When the disciples returned from the city where they had gone to buy food, they found Jesus talking with the woman. You know, hunger is a part of our existence. To keep alive, we must eat. Our physical bodies must have food. So naturally when the disciples came back with the food they had purchased in the village, they were expecting the Master to share it with them.

But He was unconcerned about food at that moment. They could not understand it. It was their second surprise. Even more was it a surprise to them when He said, “I have food to eat that you know not of.” By this He meant that there are considerations more important than the physical. Jesus saw and accepted that truth.

There are some considerations more important than food and the physical. The disciples had no answer for Him. They only wondered if somebody had given Him something to eat. Then Jesus made it clear. He said, “My food is to do the will of Him that sent me and to finish His work.” For Jesus, to do the will of God was more important than having lunch.

Now, my friend, in our sets of values we must see the relationship of the physical to the spiritual. Or may I say it the other way? We must see the relationship of the spiritual to the physical. Jesus understood that. His set of values put the spiritual above the physical. That is where you will need to put it in your set of values.

Then there is the third clue to help us test our sets of values: **The Master’s Evaluation**.

Jesus went on to say, “Say not ye, there are yet four months, and then cometh harvest?” He corrected the timetable of harvest. They thought there would be four months to harvest time. But He said, “Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.” Now surely, He was referring to a kind of harvest other than the wheat or barley harvest. As Jesus looked upon the conditions around Him, He saw that the harvest was now, not four months from now.

Jesus also understood the relation of sowing and reaping. “One sows and another reaps,” He said. They must go together. They are dependent one upon the other. Each is very important. You can’t have a harvest without somebody sowing the seed and you can’t have seed unless there is a harvest. So, Jesus helped them to understand the relation of sowing and reaping.

Jesus directed the disciples into their labor. He sent them to reap that on which they had not labored. Other men labored and they were to reap the harvest. Jesus put value on the harvest.

We must put the Master's order of priorities in our sets of values; the spiritual must be over the physical. We must see that the time is now; we should not put off what needs to be done now. Here in this scene, we note the necessity of putting Christ in His rightful place, like the woman inviting others to Him. We must value the necessity of putting God's will above personal comfort. That's what Jesus did. He put the Father's work above physical food. We must also see the necessity of laboring in the spiritual harvest NOW.

I would like to say, dear friend, that above all else to put Christ in His rightful place is most important for you right now. Have you done that?

Thank you, Dr. Yoder for teaching us from this portion of Holy Scripture about what is truly important. To give Jesus His proper place in your life is the most important thing you can ever do! His presence will transform your life.

My friend, were you blessed by this teaching by Dr. Yoder? If so, you can request an audio CD or a printed copy of this complete teaching, "How to Test What is Important."

The quickest way for you to contact me is to send an e-mail to mail@heraldsofhope.org. That e-mail address is mail@heraldsofhope.org. That email address again is, m-a-i-l@heraldsofhope.org. Or you may write to *Hope for Today*, Box 3, Breezewood, Pennsylvania 15533. Remember, you can request a printed manuscript or an audio CD of this teaching, "How to Test What is Important." I'd be happy to send one to you.

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Now friend, I urge you to tune in next week as we continue our study in John's Gospel. And until then, keep looking for that blessed HOPE.