

1. Intro
 - a. Idol Factory
 - b. Huge problem in America: Comfort
 - c. HGTV, Pinterest, vacations galore, foodies, hobbies, etc
 - d. We are a nation that has the option to dream about and pursue these things
 - e. We can dream about retiring in Montana on a ranch free from door to door salesmen, people walking on our lawn, neighbors that are too loud...
 - f. We can escape, protect ourselves from external stimuli, strive for comfort
 - g. But, is it godly? Is it God honoring? What would God have us do?
2. The Story from John 4
 - a. John 4:4, "he had to pass" → not geographically, an uncomfortable detour
 - b. John 4:5-6, Samaria & the Samaritans → not buddies
 - i. At noon (hottest time of the day)
 - c. John 4:7-9, breaking the cultural norms asking a Samaritan & a woman for help
 - d. John 4:10, Jesus tries to talk with her about himself
 - e. John 4:15ff, She dodges the spiritual conversation so Jesus makes it real
 - i. She had five husbands before, was scandalously living with a guy now
 1. Five divorces is a lot in today's world → then it was whoredom
 - ii. This is why she is here drawing water in the middle of the day - shame
 - f. They go back and forth b/c Jesus wants to talk to her about spiritual things
 - g. This is Jesus - willing to..
 - i. Take a detour → through Samaria → talk about spiritual things when he was thirsty → with a Samaritan woman → at noon → who also happened to be less than appropriate → and do it all for the Gospel
 - ii. Jesus didn't avoid stress, demands, interruptions, or discomfort
 1. The woman wasn't in his way
 2. He wasn't restless to get on with his trip
 - iii. This is the Jesus we are called to worship
 1. When we worship him, we become more like him
 2. When we worship other things, we become less like him and more like our idol → more like what we pursue
 - iv. **Jesus didn't pursue comfort, he pursued God's kingdom**
 - h. But we aren't like Jesus. We are like us. And we often don't worship God, we worship an idol of comfort. Let me show you what I mean...
3. *Just then his disciples came back. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you seek?" or, "Why are you talking with her?" So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?" They went out of the town and were coming to him. (John 4:27-30)*
 - a. Here is Jesus, doing God's will → reaching out to black hearted, broken people desperately in need of God's grace, love, and forgiveness and what do his followers do? They size him up
 - i. "What does SHE want?" // "Why are you talking with HER?"

1. How uncomfortable it must have been for them to see Jesus...
- ii. This I can relate to. That's what we do, isn't it?
 1. We like to help people just so long as it isn't someone we approve
 2. ex: Going to work with Muslims, different economic class, etc
- iii. **We like to be obedient on our terms**
 - b. They don't say anything, but then she starts bringing people back with her...
4. *Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." So the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought him something to eat?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work. (John 4:31-34)*
 - a. Rabbi, we don't have time for these Samaritans. You need to eat something
 - i. Send them away so we can eat in peace
 - ii. Notice it's not like they are standing there with a sack of Mc Donald's
 - b. Jesus' response is brilliant → this is a subtle, yet masterful way of rebuking them
 - i. It isn't their concern for his welfare that he rebukes → not their concern
 - ii. He rebukes their their 9–5, punch-a-clock, compartmentalize, business-as-usual mentality
 - iii. He wants to dislodge THEIR schedule and create disequilibrium in their balanced approach to life. What is he trying to dethrone? Comfort
 1. "Now isn't ministry time, it's I'M HUNGRY time, Jesus"
 2. "It's not Samaritan time, it's let's hurry up and get out of here and get back to our own people time."
 3. "It's not preach a sermon time, it's 'it's 120 degrees outside' let's get in the shade time"
 - c. What Jesus shows them is that you can't pursue comfort and God's will.
 - i. **If you pursue comfort, you will follow God only if it is comfortable.**
 1. Write that on a post it note and put it on your face
 - ii. Jesus pursued the will of God (God's kingdom). The disciples are currently pursuing their comfort first, God's kingdom second
 1. This is what we do too - Follow Jesus on my terms
 2. And it's idolatry - an idol of comfort
 - d. And that's what the idol of comfort is all about, so what does it look like for us?
 - i. STUFF: Earn and spend money to insulate ourselves from the needs of others and the demands of life → Avoid boredom at all costs
 1. Tyranny of things → constantly looking to buy, spend, invest in hobbies and other distractions to escape
 2. This DOESN'T mean having money is wrong, but it's what you do/ with your money → is it your god or is it used for your God?
 3. Food, drink, entertainment → Our idolatry is revealed when we seek for comfort here instead of in God
 - a. **Is your default, "I need a drink" or "I need to pray!"**
 4. **Things can't comfort you, only God can**

- ii. FREEDOM: I don't want anything tying me down, holding me back, I want to be able to do what I want to do, when I want to do it, how I want to do it
 - 1. Fear of commitment in relationship, church
 - 2. My schedule, my routine, my way of life, my freedom
 - a. Don't go to the opposite extreme, that's not honoring either
 - b. A directionless life will accomplish nothing, be intentional
 - 3. BUT the point is that the NT calls us slaves of Christ
 - a. A slave has no rights, no vote, no say → obedience
 - b. But we are also called Christ's friend → He doesn't force us with a whip
 - 4. Jesus calls us to die to ourselves → to lay our freedom down and to pick up his cross, follow him, lose our lives for him
 - 5. And he gets it → Garden of Gethsemane
 - 6. This is you if you hate it when your life gets disrupted for the sake of God and you put yourself in positions where that can't happen
 - 7. This is you if you run whenever things get hot
 - 8. You need to realize that **the best ministry often happens in the interruptions and when you are uncomfortable**
- iii. Lack of Stress
 - 1. We don't like being pulled out of our comfort zone
 - a. Jesus wants me to do what? That sounds uncomfortable
 - i. forgive, love, give, sacrifice, commit
 - b. Fear of commitment in relationships, church
 - i. Lack of commitment often reveals a fear of stress → "I don't want to get hurt"
 - ii. **You can't love without being willing to get hurt.**
 - 2. Stress and being pulled out of your comfort zone makes you more like Jesus → like a muscle, "when it burns it grows"
 - 3. If your whole goal in life is to have a Christian life that is comfortable, without XYZ, then you won't be like Christ
 - 4. This DOESN'T mean that it's godly to be a glutton for punishment and take pride and glory in how sacrificial you are
 - 5. It does mean that although you might not be called to move to the projects of Detroit, would you be willing to go if God said, "Move"
 - 6. It also means that would you be willing to stay if God said stay (my big problem for years)
 - 7. This is you if you are afraid God might call you to do X so you just try to cover your ears and go about your life.
 - 8. It means **we are called to obey God even when it is stressful**
- e. *Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, then comes the harvest'? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. (John 4:35)*
- f. You say, "I'll get uncomfortable when the time is right. When push comes to shove, I'll step it up. God just has to let me know when and I'll do it."

- i. Now is the time. NOW. Like right now.
 - ii. Now is the time to sacrifice finances for the sake of the kingdom
 - iii. Now is the time to invite your friends to church
 - iv. Now is the time to share your faith even when you're super awkward
 - v. Now is the time to prioritize devouring the Word of God over your exercise regiment, hobbies, kid's sports, your TV shows, facebook, the news
 - vi. Now is the time to commit to obeying the Word of God, to commit to a body of Christ, to commit to the cause of the Gospel even if it makes you feel uncomfortable, vulnerable, open to be wounded, taps into your time, costs you money, and might even make you feel slightly stressed out.
 - vii. Now is the time to get baptized and identify with Jesus **b/c** it's a stretch
 - viii. **NOW is the time to pursue God's will, not comfort.**
- g. So how do you know if you have worship an idol of comfort?
- i. Your nightmare is stress, demands, responsibility, commitment - what Jesus might ask you to do → Jesus stands in the way of your vacation, your second home, your boat, your hobbies
 - ii. People around you feel neglected because they are just in the way of your agenda, your enjoyment of life, your freedom, your pleasure
 - iii. It's about your little bubble of comfort and protection
 - 1. Your insatiable appetite for gadgets and gizmos
 - 2. Your schedule that nobody better darn interrupt
 - 3. Your perfect little world, with everything in place
 - iv. And as you build YOUR perfect little kingdom on earth, you quite possible neglect the building of God's kingdom.
- h. So what do people like you and I do? We repent and replace.
- i. If this is you, pursuing all the wrong things, make the decision today to repent, to turn and to follow Jesus instead
- i. He promises forgiveness, eternal life, love without fail, and trials, tribulations, and persecutions
 - ii. No guarantees, no first class tickets, no creature comforts
 - iii. But pursuing the calling of God, the building of God's kingdom is worth it because HE is worthy.
 - iv. Jesus calls us to DIE to ourselves → Carry our CROSS
 - 1. None of that is comfortable
 - v. What's your comfort addiction? Your house, food, your boat, your schedule, your hobbies, your money, alcohol, TV, fear of committing?
 - 1. Lay it at the foot of the cross - it's not about what we want
 - vi. You can't pursue comfort and God's kingdom.
 - vii. I beg you, I implore you **Pursue God, not comfort.**
 - viii. Lay down your life for the work of the Gospel and the building of God's kingdom because HE IS WORTHY