

What Is Your Soul Longing For?

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[0 : 0 0] A good morning and a very warm welcome to our service today. It's lovely to be with you today as we gather to worship God, seeking His blessing on His word to us.

We're going to begin by singing to His praise in Psalm 103. Psalm 103. If you have the blue psalm books, it's page 369. Psalm 103. We're going to sing from verse 1 to verse 5.

O thou my soul, bless God the Lord, and all that in me is, bestowed up His holy name to magnify and bless. Bless, O my soul, the Lord thy God, and not forgetful be of all His gracious benefits He hath bestowed on me.

Let's sing verse 1 to 5 to God's presence. O thou my soul, bless God the Lord, and all that in me is, He hath bestowed on me.

[illegible]

[2 : 43] Who can we be glad like God's love to death?

Who can we be glad like God's love?

Who can we be glad like God's love? So that even us, we can see, we do it beside you.

We're going to come near to God in prayer now. We'll call upon God in prayer. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. gather to worship and praise you today. We thank you for the freedom that is ours. We thank you for the health and the strength you've given to us to be here. We thank you for all who have gathered, young and old alike. We thank you that we come together under the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. We pray that we will come to worship and adore him. We do praise you for your word.

[5 : 04] We do give thanks to you that we have it before us as our guide, as our help, not just to read and study today, but that every day of our lives we have what is our living word, your word spoken long ago through many people, but by your spirit, but your word that continues to this day to bless us, to enrich us, to guide us, to help us in a world that's so often full of many things that leave us confused and wondering what's happening. But yet your word tells us that you are God who is in control, God who is watching over all his people near and far, that you are building your church, gathering your people to yourself. And we pray today that you would bless that word to us as we hear it together here and as the young ones go out to the Sunday school, that together we would praise you and hear what you have to say to us. We know that we can come with many things that distract us and keep us from hearing you. And we just pray today that you will take away these distractions from us and help us to be still and to know that you are God and to know that you are with us.

So may you guide us in our worship and help all who gather in your name today to do so with that joy of the Lord as their strength. Whatever your people are, remember them, Lord, draw near to them and call people to yourself as well, that people would come to recognize that the greatest need this world has is to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. And so we pray, Lord, that to all ends of the earth today, from the rising of the sun to its setting, that your name would be praised and glorified. We ask all seeking the forgiveness of our sins in Jesus' precious name. Amen.

Well, maybe some of the younger ones here, maybe you don't know who I am or where I'm from. So my name is Calamurdo and I've been ministering in Stornoway just now. That's not where I'm from.

Originally, I'm from Shabbos. Does anybody know? Hands up if you know where Shabbos is. Yeah? You ever gone through, passed through Shabbos? Did anybody pass through Shabbos on Friday night going to Barras? Yeah? Did anybody watch the football on Friday night? Oh, good. Great result, wasn't it? Very dangerous coming as a Shabbos boy to Kalanish today, maybe. And you think that's the best thing that there is to talk about today, the football result. But it's not, and that's not what I'm going to talk about. I'm not going to rub it in at all. I want to talk to you about something that's even better. What can that be? Well, it's about God's word. That God speaks to us through his word. That he remembers us in all our different needs, whether it's the highs, the joys, or the lows when we're sad. God remembers us. Has anybody been busy lambing the last few weeks? Anybody got lots of lambs around the house? Not so many people do now, do they? Is there anybody at all in Kalanish with lambs? There's bound to be somebody here with some lambs. Yeah. There's a few hands going up. Well, behind our house in Stornoway, we stay just outside Stornoway up in Plasterfield. There's a big field out behind the house. And there's been sheep lambing in that field the last few weeks, and they're all now running around the field, bouncing around. But we've got a dog, a collie dog called Benji. And what Benji loves to do every day is sit outside the back of our house and just look out at the field and just watch the lambs. He sits for ages just looking at the field, watching the lambs.

Sometimes he's just sitting. Other times, if they're coming close, he goes up on the wall just to look at them, just stare at them. And the funny thing is, they don't seem to be scared. They'll come quite close. And he just looks at them. He doesn't bark. Just very quietly, just looking at them.

[9 : 22] And he's always just like gazing so intently. He's just focused on that. And what it reminds me of is how important it is that we have that same look at God's word. That we don't just open it up quickly, just a quick glance and then put it away. But that we gaze at it, that we look at it, stare at it, read it, take it all in. For example, in Psalm 27, in verse 4, it says this, One thing I of the Lord desired and will seek to obtain, that all days of my life I may within God's house remain. So the psalmist wants to just come and draw near to God. But then he says this, that I, the beauty of the Lord, behold me and admire. He wants to come and to see God and to admire God and to gaze at God in that way. The same way as our Benji just loves looking out of the field to see the lambs and the sheep there. That's the way that we are to come to God's word. To gaze, to stare, to look intently, to just have our eyes fixed on what it's saying to us and to see God's love to us in that he has given us Jesus, his own son. And the Bible says that we are to fix our eyes on him, on Jesus. To look at him and he will guide us all along the way, all our days. So today as we gather, may we look at, like that, like Benji looking at the lambs and the sheep, may we look at God's word and see a God who loves us and who has given us his son Jesus, that we might fix our eyes on him. May God bless these thoughts to us. We're going to sing again in Psalm 27.

Psalm 62. If you have a psalm, it's page 295. Psalm 62. We're going to sing from verse 8 down to the end of the psalm. Psalm 62 at verse 8. Ye people, place your confidence in him continually. Before him pour ye out your heart. God is your refuge high. We'll sing from verse 8 to 12. To God's peace.

verse 9. Ye people, place your confidence in him continually. Before him pour ye out your heart. God is the rest. God is the rest.

And Him chewing chewing chewing Behold in hope, lay out your heart, God is a refuge.

To remain in the land of vanity, our great men are alive.

[12 : 41] In a balance, lay the holy earth, more like the land of steam.

The scheme of sin, no pressure, in robbery, be not being.

On wealth it now, your heart's renders, in peace it is, you King.

God has his soul and one is to me, in this I help again.

That God, your almighty God, alone does have her sin.

[14 : 12] Give mercy also unto thee, in the heart's heart alone.

For the love of God, in purest word, reward us to everyone.

We're going to turn to read God's word together now. The Gospel of John, chapter 4. John, chapter 4, we'll read from the beginning of the chapter.

We're going to read down to verse 42. As we take up our reading here, we see Jesus coming, left Judea, departing towards Galilee.

But he goes through a wee town called Seichar. And then he meets with this woman at the well. And it's an amazing encounter that Jesus has with her. So we're going to be looking at that together this morning.

[15 : 32] So we read from John's Gospel, chapter 4, at the beginning. It's here, the word of God. And therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptised more disciples than John.

Though Jesus himself baptised not, but his disciples. He left Judea and departed again into Galilee. And he must needs go through Samaria.

Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Seichar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. 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. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water.

Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat. 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?

[16 : 38] For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. 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.

The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. From whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself and his children and his cattle?

Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again. But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst.

But the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life. The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband, for thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband.

[18 : 04] In that saidest thou truly. The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain, and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship ye know not what.

We know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and is now, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

For the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah is cometh, which is called Christ.

When he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

[19 : 14] And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman. Yet no man said, What seekest thou? Or, Why talkest thou with her?

The woman then left her water pot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man which told me all things that I ever did.

Is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city, and came unto him. In the meanwhile his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.

But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. Therefore said the disciples one to another, Have any man brought him aught to eat?

Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that has sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye, there are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest.

[20 : 11] Behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth, and he that reapeth, receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal, that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

And herein is that saying, Through one soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestow no labour. Other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labour.

Many of the Samaritans of the city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that I ever did. When the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them, and he abode there two days.

And many more believed because of his own word. And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves, and know that he is, that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

Amen, and may God bless that. Reading from his word. It's again just a bow of heads and a word of prayer. Let us pray. Our Father in heaven, as we read your word together, we are reminded of the variety of people that you have in this world.

[21 : 45] That there are people from all different places and backgrounds, all different needs and all different circumstances in life. And your word is a reflection of our day as well.

For the same is true today, that all around us, even within the walls here, we have people from different places and backgrounds, different needs, whether joys or sorrows, challenges or exciting times.

Lord, we know that there is a multitude of experiences in life, and yet none are hidden from you. Just as this woman who Jesus met at the well was known unto him in so many different ways, we thank you that we are known unto you as well, that you know everything about us.

You know every care and concern we have. You know every prayer that we offer up. And we thank you that you hear and are able to answer. And so we ask, Lord, that you will draw near to us in this time of worship, that you would speak to us through your word, and that you would help us to come to be a people who recognize who it is that is before us in this word.

Just as the woman was brought to realize that the Christ, the Messiah, the Saviour of the world was before her, just as she went to tell others, and just as others came to believe, we pray that your Spirit will move among us in that same way today, that we would come and see and behold the wonder of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world.

[23 : 25] And we thank you that to all ends of the earth your name is praised. And that from here in this community, Lord, to all ends of the earth, your Spirit goes and your Spirit knows.

We thank you that as we think of all the homes and families represented here and all around us in the community, that each one is known to you. And in all the different needs that there are, Lord, whether it's ill health or grief or sorrow or anxieties and worries for people or situations, we thank you that your word says to come and cast all our cares upon you, for you are one who cares for us.

And so we pray for all around us in that way, that you would come in a day of your power. We ask that you will remember our islands, our communities at large, remember your church here throughout our islands.

We think of all the different vacancies, even as it is here in Calanish, we know in other places too. And we pray, Lord, for your leading and guiding to help in these vacancies being filled, that you would be calling those who would labour, those who would minister to the people of these communities.

And Lord, that you would make it so clear to them who you are and that you are Lord and God and one who calls people to come, to come and minister, to come and hear, to come and believe.

[24 : 57] We thank you that that call is powerful and effective. And so we pray for all our different needs throughout our congregations and throughout our denomination as a whole as well.

As we reflect on a General Assembly just passed, we remember the new moderator there, the Reverend Alston McLeod. We ask for your help and blessing towards him as he carries out his duties in this coming year.

[26 : 12] That your word is upholding a people and that prayer keeps them going in so many ways. We think of other parts of the world and such difficult situations, whether it's the Middle East or many parts of Africa, the Far East, we think of North Korea and the persecution that your people suffer in so many different parts of the world.

Even in the midst of war, Lord, we think of the Ukraine and how long that conflict's been going on and yet how your church is still active and powerful there.

And yet we thank you that your people are faithful and secure in Christ. And we thank you that they are so faithful even in the midst of that persecution. That they will not deny their Lord, that they will stand firm in him.

That you would bless it to all our hearts. Hear our prayers. And as we come, we confess our sins anew. Thankful for the great forgiveness and the wonder of it that you are able to give.

[27 : 35] But that he rose again. And that we are reminded today that he is a risen Savior. So hear our prayers. Pardon our sins. And all we ask, we ask for the sake and glory of your precious name.

Psalm 107, we'll sing from verse 1 to verse 9. Praise God, for he is good, for still his mercy's lasting be. Let God's redeemed say so, whom he from the enemy's hand did free.

This great in the church A blessed which No city's bound to rest For thirst shall hunger In
an embrace Their soul and swift And press They cry unto The Lord and thee And be
strong Their distress Them also When I will

For he was all that long in his, that would be satisfied.

Amen. Jesus spoke these words and said, I that speak unto thee am he.

He was there before her. And there's this wonder of her seeing the one that she was longing for and looking for. And then in verse 29, she goes back into the town or into the city as it says, come see a man which told me all things that I ever did.

[32 : 58] Is not this the Christ? She has that question then for others to consider as well. And in that psalm that we just sang, Psalm 107, the last verse we sang, it speaks there in verse 9 of a longing soul.

He that, for he the soul that longing is, doth fully satisfy. And so what is your soul longing for today? As you come here today to hear God's word, what is your soul longing for?

Are you longing to hear of Jesus? Are you longing to know of Jesus? There are many different passages in scripture where we see Jesus encountering people in different circumstances.

And Jesus wasn't just one who met with those who were popular or famous or rich. He met with all people in all kinds of circumstances. And so many of these encounters we find are with people who were in society pushed away.

They were on the outside. They were people who weren't mixing with others in many different ways. Bartimaeus is another one, blind Bartimaeus. He was one who was sitting by the roadside begging and being dismissed by so many people.

[34 : 21] And yet when Jesus was passing by, as he called out with that longing soul, Jesus met him and his life was transformed. And here we have another of these encounters where Jesus meets with this woman of Samaria.

We don't even know her name. At any point this week, have you come to a point where you've met somebody, maybe just in the passing out on the street or someone's come for a visit, and you've come away from that thinking, that did me good.

There was just something in that occasion, in the midst of the hustle bustle of life, when things are busy, that we maybe just get a conversation with someone that leaves her soul refreshed.

And you come away thinking, I'm glad I met with that person. It's just done me the power of good. It's great when these things happen. And our passage today shows us a woman who was in such circumstances, where she met with someone who didn't just do her good, but someone who transformed her life.

She met with Jesus. And this woman of Samaria, as we find her in this passage, she was tired and jaded in life.

[35 : 45] That's obvious as we read through this chapter. In many ways, her life was going round in circles, and she was worn out from it. We would describe it, as many people do, drinking from all the different wells around, trying to find satisfaction in life from so many different places in so many different ways, and yet each time still finding herself thirsty.

That longing for their soul to be quenched, it's just not happening. Nothing is satisfying her. And it's leaving her jaded and worn out.

And that's the story of so many people in this world. Maybe it's your story today. Maybe it's your story right now, where you're thinking, In my life, I just seem to be going round and round in circles.

I know there's something missing. I know I'm longing for something. Something that will satisfy my soul, but it's just not happening. It's just not coming to me.

Well, this woman of Samaria, what changed her life was when Jesus appeared outside her town. She meets with him, and he opens her eyes to the fact that there is hope in life.

[37 : 10] That there is something that can fully satisfy her. It's not going to remove all the cares and burdens of this life, but it's going to give her that hope that he is there with her.

The Messiah that she's longing for, looking for, as he says, I am he. It transforms her life. And so Jesus takes this jaded, this hardened woman, and he leads her to a place of trust.

A place of drinking, as he describes, the living water that he has to offer. So that she will no longer thirst. Her thirst will be quenched.

Because there's more than water in the well that he offers. And so these verses that we're looking at, this passage that we're looking at today, they remind us of two things, depending where you are today.

The first is, if you are saved, we are reminded of just how gracious God has been to us. To bring us to that point where we have drunk from the waters of living water.

[38 : 22] The living water of eternal life that Jesus offers. How gracious he has been to redeem us. To redeem our soul. To refresh our soul.

And to give us that longing to keep coming back to him, trusting in him. So if you are believing, if you're saved, we have so much to rejoice in, that we are reminded of in this passage.

But if you haven't believed, and if you're thirsty in this life, if you're weary in this life, if you're longing for something to satisfy, we are reminded in this passage that this is where you are to look.

To come and to see Jesus. To come and put your trust in him. And that he is able to transform a soul that is longing and lost in so many different ways, to be satisfied.

And to know that joy of salvation that there is in him. We see it in this woman of Samaria. We're going to think of three things from this passage.

[39 : 31] The first thing is we see the lonely woman. And then secondly, we see the loving Savior. And then thirdly, we see the longing heart.

So first of all, we have the lonely woman. Jesus is here. He's leaving Judea and heading to Galilee. You see that in verse 3.

And he's heading again towards Galilee. And on this journey, it takes him through Samaria. And there he stops at this town.

A small town called Saicha. And here Jesus stops for a bit of time. We don't know that they were intending to stop for any length of time.

But the disciples had gone away to get some food. But Jesus is by himself at the well called Jacob's well. And it's here that he meets this woman of Samaria.

[40 : 32] And I'm calling her the lonely woman at first. Because what you see initially about her would describe a life that has so much emptiness and hurt and pain in it.

She's a lonely woman in many different ways. The first thing we are told about her is that while Jesus was at the well there in verse 6, he was wearied of his journey.

It was about the sixth hour when this woman appeared. Now the sixth hour is basically midday. And so this is unusual.

And this tells us a lot about this woman. Because normally the work of the woman of this town would be to gather the water from the well.

But it would be early in the morning and late in the evening. You can think for yourself in that kind of Middle East climate. Midday is when the sun is at its highest.

[41 : 31] It's at its hottest. So it would be hard to be out carrying heavy water jars back and forth in the middle of the hottest part of the day. They just didn't do it.

So this was not normal. It was the sixth hour. And she's coming there to do this work. But we also see that she came alone.

And again, this is not normal. Normally the woman would all go out together. So they'd be talking with each other. There'd be a group of them. Helping and encouraging one another.

Making sure that they were getting on okay. But here she comes, the middle of the day. And she's by herself. And then we're also told that this woman's life, it was full of pain.

She's not married now. The man she's with is not her husband. But she's had five husbands. We're not told what happened with them. Whether they passed away or whether they left her.

[42 : 34] We don't know. But whatever it was, it's caused her pain. And it may have been that this was part of the reason why she's coming by herself. And so this woman's life, it is full of pain and grief.

There's little in her life that would seem to indicate joy and happiness. She's lonely. And it's often the case in our lives that if we find ourselves in that place where we don't know where to turn.

Where we feel just lost and abandoned in so many different ways. If we've got no one around us to help us or who we feel understands us. That we start looking for answers in the wrong place.

And that's what's happened with this woman. That's what's leaving her isolated. And for ourselves today, it doesn't have to be the same situation as this woman.

But we can find ourselves just turning in the wrong direction. Making the wrong choices. Where we're looking for satisfaction. Where we're looking for joy.

[43 : 45] But we're doing it in the wrong way. We're looking for it in the wrong places. And there's so many choices in life that we can make. So many things that we can turn to that promise us joy.

Promise us hope. Hope a future. For example, do you do the lottery? Do you often think, oh, I'll just do it once. And then you're doing it every week. Because there's that hope of joy.

Of the big win. Of money that will be life changing. And so often you find that people, even when they do win, there's no joy. Because it's not the ultimate thing that we need in life.

People turn to drink or drugs. They think this is going to give me some boost, some help. And again it just leads to a downward spiral.

There's so many choices that we make in life. And they're often the wrong choices. It's because we're looking for joy and satisfaction in the wrong place. We all have that kind of need within us.

[44 : 55] A great need, a hunger for joy in life. But we miss it. Now the amazing thing with this woman is, in her situation, she meets with the very one who is able to give her joy that is complete.

It's amazing how he came to her. And what you see there in verse 25 and 26, it's so remarkable when she says, I know that Messiah cometh.

And when he comes, he will tell us all things. She has this understanding to a point. But when Jesus speaks to her and says, I that speak unto thee am he.

It's a remarkable moment. A moment of realization. A moment of dawning where suddenly everything that she's been trying in life, looking for satisfaction, here is the fulfillment of everything and anything.

Jesus. We often miss out because we think that's not going to satisfy. But it was Pascal who said once, there's a God-shaped void in the heart of every one of us, which can only be satisfied by God, the Creator through Jesus Christ.

[46 : 21] There is that void. There is that longing. But until we realize that it can only be satisfied by Jesus Christ, we are going to go on feeling that loneliness, that emptiness, that something missing in our life.

Is that what's missing in your life today? Are you in that situation where you just feel your life is just going round and round?

No direction. No satisfaction. No joy that's complete. No joy that's complete. Well, it's a time to realize that it's found in Jesus.

The lonely woman we see here. The second thing we see is that her life is transformed by a loving Saviour.

We read in this passage, and it's quite clear, especially there in verse 9, at the end of verse 9, the Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

[47 : 30] And yet here is Jesus, a Jew, who meets with a woman who is a Samaritan, the woman of Samaria. And in many ways, it shouldn't happen.

And you see that when the disciples return towards the end of the verses that we read, they were surprised that Jesus was talking to this woman. It's one of these encounters that really shouldn't happen.

And yet it's a life-changing encounter. And what makes the difference? Well, it's that Jesus has a heart that's full of compassion.

And not just for his own, not just for the Jews, but for all. And that's true to this very day as well.

When you think about this encounter of Jesus with the woman from Samaria, it may be seen as far removed from us. Far removed in terms of the years that have passed, 2,000 years later, and far removed in the distance.

[48 : 40] In Samaria, miles away from where we are. But yet what we find here is that this Jesus, even though the years have passed, he is still the same Jesus today.

And even though the distance seems so far removed, that's the same Jesus that is able to meet us here today. Here in Kalanish in 2025, Jesus is able to say to us, I who speak to you am he.

The Messiah, the Christ, the Saviour of the world, is the very one who is speaking to us today. Through his word, by his Spirit, he ministers.

He speaks to us. He convicts us in our heart. He brings us to that point where we start to struggle and realise there's something missing.

Because the Spirit is working in us. And the Spirit brings us towards him. And that is what we need to see this loving Saviour.

[49 : 48] He had to pass through Samaria, it says in verse 4, he must need to go through Samaria. Now, why?

It wasn't because that was the only way to go. There was other options for them. And many Jews passing from Judea to Galilee would not go through Samaria.

They would avoid it just because, like it says in verse 9, they had no dealing with Samaritans. But it says there, follows in verse 4, he must needs go through Samaria.

And so why? Well, it's because he must meet with this woman. He must come to this town, a town that is transformed by this encounter with this woman who suddenly brings the word of God to others.

And we ask ourselves, what must happen in our lives that we might meet Jesus? There will be many things we probably don't understand.

[50 : 54] Many things that maybe for a time turn us away from the idea of God or Jesus as a Saviour. We say, what kind of God would allow this in my life? There can be hard experiences.

There can be difficult things that we go through. There can also be just everything's going well. Everything's going fine. We don't need Jesus.

We're doing well without him. Everything's going okay. And yet, we still see that Jesus must need go through colonies, as it were.

He comes to his people in all kinds of different situations. nations. I was speaking to a minister, it was a couple of years ago now, he was ministering in Edinburgh and he was working alongside many people who were coming from different countries, from foreign lands.

They'd been forced out of their own homes. And this one man he was speaking to had come from a far off place, come to Edinburgh and just felt so lost and so isolated, so lonely.

[52 : 07] He had been a shepherd back in his own homeland. And here he was in Edinburgh, miles away from his own home, but he had to come there to hear this minister tell him about Jesus, the good shepherd.

Now you can imagine that man arriving in Edinburgh thinking, what good is there in my life? What kind of God would make me have to flee from my own home, my own people and come to a fallen land where nobody knows me or understands me?

But he had to. He had to come there to hear about Jesus, the good shepherd. And Jesus works in the midst of all that seems to be going wrong in our lives or even all that seems to be going right in our lives.

And so often he just uses all of these things to remind us that there is hope in him, that he is a loving saviour.

Why did God give his son? Why did God show such love towards us? Because we need it. Because we are lost without him.

[53 : 25] And so here we see this loving saviour. And this woman who had so many questions and she had this longing that she knew something of Messiah that was going to come, he who is called the Christ.

She knew of it but she didn't have the answer. And you know maybe a little or maybe a lot about God. You know a little or a lot about Jesus.

But do you know his love for you? Do you know it in a personal, in an intimate way where you see that he is speaking to you?

I that speak to you am he. He spoke to this woman with such love and care and compassion that maybe no one had ever shown to her in the past.

He is a loving saviour. And what he offers is this living water. This living water that you read of in verse 13 and 14.

[54 : 36] Whoever drinks this water from the well will thirst again but whosoever drinketh of the water that I will give him will never thirst again. that that water will well up to a spring of everlasting life.

That is what this woman finds. And that is what is on offer to all of us today. To you and to me to come to this living water.

This living water that wells up inside us. That fills us. That void that is there just now is filled with this water that springs up to everlasting life.

So we are called to come to Jesus. To come and find in this loving saviour the one who says I who speak to you am he the saviour of the world.

The final thing we want to see here is the longing heart. this woman meeting Jesus completely changed her life.

[55 : 46] She goes from being away from everybody avoiding everybody out of the middle of the day out alone having all these husbands in the past looking for all these things that she would try and find satisfaction in but losing so many people around her.

She goes from that to her whole life being transformed. She left her water jar it says in verse 28. That is telling because that would be one of the most precious things in her life a water jar.

Sounds simple to us but it was so important for their lives then. She leaves it behind returns to the city and says to them come see a man who told me all I ever did is not this the Christ from a fear of people suddenly she is telling everyone come and see this man there is this longing now in our heart to share with others of this loving saviour and do we still have that longing if you are a believer today that longing in your heart to say to others come see a man who told me everything I ever did could this be the Christ we need to call people to come to this well this well of living water we need that longing in our hearts that others would be saved are you excited about

Jesus today does Jesus fill your heart with that joy and excitement that there is life in him and that this life is on offer to all so many people see and speak of the Christian in a stereotype way where it's all just judgement the do's and the don'ts old fashioned backwards thinking and sometimes people are right because that's the way we come across when the reality is in the gospel we have something that should fill us with joy the joy of salvation the joy of everlasting life when you look at this woman her life is transformed from being downcast to being full of delight and longing to tell others she overcomes all the negativity that surrounded her life that being rejected by others that surprise of Jesus speaking to her the attitude of the disciples as they return and see her see Jesus talking to her and yet they don't say but they've got these questions what's he doing speaking to her you know maybe there's people that you would be seen speaking to and people would say why is he speaking to him why is he speaking to her well it's because we should have a longing to speak to all and everyone that we see around us this woman has a longing heart and her excitement and her longing causes a stir in this city of Sychar where others come to hear of

Jesus it stirs them up when they come listening to what she has to say and then at the end it says in verse 41 many more believe because of his own word and they said unto the woman now we believe not because of thy saying for we have heard him ourselves and know that this is indeed the Christ the saviour of the world it's your longing today to come and hear of this Christ there was a man called Thomas Huxley he was an agnostic he didn't dismiss God entirely but he didn't believe in God either and he was a very educated man a very well spoken man he was involved in many debates in his day and to go up against him would have been difficult for anyone because he could out talk anybody but there was this time where there were a group of men gathered for a weekend a group of educated men in different ways some more than others but on the

[60 : 29] Sunday many of them were going to go to church but Thomas Huxley said to this one Christian man he said will you stay at home and tell me why you're a Christian and this Christian man he hesitated at first he thought well I can't debate with him he's going to just have me go round in circles and then Thomas Huxley could tell that this man was worried that it was going to be a debate so he said I'm not going to argue with you I just want you to tell me what Christ means to you and so the man agreed he didn't go to church that morning and he agreed to sit with Thomas Huxley and just tell him why Christ was so precious to him when the man had finished telling Thomas Huxley about his saviour Jesus Christ there were tears in Thomas Huxley's eyes but he said this I would give my right hand if only

I could believe that he heard it it affected him but he put it away and so often that's what we do as well we hear of this saviour we can be moved by this saviour but we put him away because for whatever reason we say I don't need him maybe it's because you think I've done so much in my life you can never forgive I'm not good enough for or maybe it's you feel I don't need him I'm getting along fine whatever situation it is we all need him and here's a loving saviour the saviour of the world who says today again I who speak to you am he are you longing for that saviour because if you're longing you can come and put your trust in him and take from this water of life that fills us up to that spring of everlasting life here is

Christ what will you do with it let us pray our gracious God we thank you for how you love us with a greater love than anything else in this world that steadfast love that despite what we are and what we do that still you love us and long for us to come and so we pray today that you will help us to see Jesus to understand all that he has done for us and to see that here is the one who is the saviour of the world so we ask Lord that you will guide us in our thoughts guide us in our desire and our longings in this life but above everything else we would desire to know Jesus as our Lord we ask it all in his precious name Amen We're going to conclude by singing to God's praise in

Psalm 73 at verse 23 Psalm 73 at verse 23 page 316 of the blue psalm books in these verses we have that longing of the psalmist to know the wonder of the Lord nevertheless continually O Lord I am with thee thou dost me hold by my right hand and still upholdest me then in verse 26 my flesh and heart have flint and failed but God have failed me never for of my heart God is a strength and portion forever we sing verse 23 to 26 to God's praise verse 23 Yes, Yes, Yes, Yes Yes Yes O Lord, thou youngest dream, thou dost me hold thy right hand, and still abhorrent me.

Though with thy counsel while I live, will be on touch and guide.

[65 : 28] And to thy glory afterward, receive me to my body.

Whom have I in the heavens, I, but thee, O Lord, thou know.

And in the earth, though by his eye, besides the heaven's sun.

My flesh and heart does end and fail, but it was the film in heaven.

For all my heart, God is a strength and portion forever.

[66 : 51] Amen.