

Soul Satisfying Water

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[0 : 00] Would you open up your Bibles to John chapter 4? Have you experienced a desperation of thirst?

By early afternoon, we had our packs on and we quickly went through our fresh water and we were starting to suffer these intensifying headaches, you know, the early signs of heat exhaustion. So we were tired and we were cranky and we were desperately thirsty. I remember my tongue sticking to the roof of my mouth. I remember just my head pounding, this growing anxiety. Are we going to find any water? Because we've been searching for hours. And then we came across a stagnant puddle of water in a putrid, marshy area, filled with decaying leaves, insects, smelled noxious.

But we were desperate. So I pulled out our water purifier and started pumping. Have you experienced desperation of thirst?

[1 : 42] Maybe upon hearing what you've heard this morning, you find your soul parched. This morning, we're encountering Jesus having a conversation with a woman at an ancient well.

Here are just the first few verses of John 4. Now, when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John, although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples, he left Judea and departed again for Galilee, and he had to pass through Samaria.

So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there. So Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well.

It was about the sixth hour. A woman from Samaria came to draw water. This historic well was given by the patriarch Jacob, as in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

And what's ironic about this moment, what we're about to look at, is that Jesus offers this woman a different kind of water. He calls it living water.

[2 : 55] However, Jesus knows that this woman is desperately thirsty, but it's a soul thirst. She's been trying to quench her soul through multiple relationships with multiple men, but those relationships had not filled her up.

It was quite the opposite. It hollowed her out. It left her soul thirsty. She hadn't been satisfied. And we all know the deep longing we have for relationships with other people.

Grief is an example of that. To be fully known, fully accepted, and fully loved. We're soul thirsty to be loved and to love.

But that deep longing to be loved and to love can become so desperate, so intense, so controlling, that we willingly drink from toxic sources.

And we suffer for it. This unnamed woman at the well had five marriages that ended in divorce, and the man that she currently had a relationship with, who she was sleeping with, she was an adulteress, well, wasn't her husband.

[4 : 19] She'd been drinking from a broken cistern. How many of us in the room have pursued relationships with disastrous effects because we were so desperate to be loved or to love that we compromised?

We want to be filled up, but we get hollowed out. We're left saying, surely there's more. You feel empty. You feel numb. The water from Jacob's well isn't going to quench that kind of thirst.

There's no other wells that you can make on your own that will quench that thirst. Are you asking this question?

What is life all about? Is this all that there is? If there is a good life, what is the good life?

Maybe you're bumping into hopelessness. Like, what is the point? You have an unsatisfied soul.

[5 : 30] You're thirsty. This first century conversation between Jesus and this Samaritan woman is good news for us living in 2026. Because Jesus alone can satisfy your thirsty soul.

That's what this well side conversation is all about. So let me just ask you, are you thirsty? We're going to walk through this conversation. And there are going to be three parts for you to see and to consider.

The offer. The obstacle. And the result. The offer. The obstacle. And the result.

On the day this conversation happened, this woman brought her empty water jug to Jacob's well. Having no idea that God incarnate was waiting for her there.

Could you have come into this building this morning with an empty soul, not realizing Jesus Christ, the risen King, has been waiting for you?

[6 : 37] And he wants to fill you up in a way you've never been filled up before. So let's look at the offer. And we're going to be looking at verses 7 through 15.

Jesus offers this woman living water. But let's just look at 1 through 6 for a little bit to set the scene of this conversation. In verse 1, Jesus, who was in Judea, which is in southern Israel, he learns that he has popped up on the Pharisees' radar, which concerns him.

And so he makes a decision to return to Galilee, which is up in northern Israel. Now this is a significant detail because what lies between southern Israel, Judea, and northern Israel, Galilee, is a region called Samaria.

And many Jews would never step foot in Samaria. Jews considered Samaritans morally impure half-breeds.

It was a strong prejudice. The Samaritans historically were a people with mixed blood.

[7 : 51] Jewish blood and non-Jewish blood. The blood of the nations. And the Jews resented them for that. And the Samaritans resented the Jews for resenting them for that.

Samaritans had established their own view of the Bible. They just used the first five books of the Old Testament. They had their own view of the Messiah. And they had their own place of worship. They had their own mountain they worshipped at. Mount Gerizim. But instead of Jesus traveling around Samaria, we see in verse 4 that he had to pass through Samaria.

He had an appointment with a Samaritan woman at Jacob's well that he's going to keep. She just doesn't know it. In verse 6, dirty, tired, and thirsty after traveling by foot for hours, Jesus arrives in Sychar, this Samaritan town where there is this Jacob's well.

This was the parcel of land that Jacob had purchased back in Genesis 33. And this well was on that land. What had taken place is after Jacob purchased the land and passed it on to Joseph, this well remained there.

[9 : 09] And this land, this area, eventually was called Samaria. Did you notice the time marker in verse 6? It was about the sixth hour.

This woman came to the well at the sixth hour, which is noon, which is very unusual.

It's the hottest time of day. Most women at that time in that culture would come out to fill their water jars in groups of women, and they would come out either early in the morning or early in the evening when the temperature was cooling.

But this woman was by herself at this well at the hottest point of day. And you've got to ask yourself, what is going on here?

Jesus knows, and that's why he's there. We learn in verse 8 that Jesus alone is with her, and he initiates a conversation with her.

[10 : 18] Let me read from 7 through 15. A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, Give me a drink, for his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

The Samaritan woman said to him, How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?

For Jews had no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered her, If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, Give me a drink, you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.

The woman said to him, Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself.

He did his sons and his livestock. Jesus said to her, Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again.

[11:17] The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life. The woman said to him, Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw, or have to come here to draw water.

Jesus is alone with her. Verse 8, disciples have gone to get something to eat, and he initiates the conversation. It's a major crossing of a cultural boundary, and we're seeing our king do it. We see how unusual it is by the way it registers with the Samaritan woman. Look again at verse 9. He says, Give me a drink. She's like, How is it that you, a Jew, are asking me, a woman of Samaria, for a drink?

What is going on? The prevailing belief was that Samaritans, and Samaritan women in particular, were in a constant state of defilement, unclean in God's eyes because of their mixed race. So for a Jew, let alone a male Jew, let alone a male rabbi Jew, to talk with, and even possibly share the same drinking vessel with a Samaritan woman was absolutely unheard of.

[12:40] You know what she's asking Jesus? Why are you crossing the line? Why are you doing this? This is getting weird. In verse 10, we read, Jesus responds, this is why it's weird.

This is why he's initiating. If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, give me a drink, you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water. This is the first time in this passage we read of living water, but in this passage itself, the word water is repeated multiple times, and what is becoming evident is that there are two kinds of water being talked about in this section.

what Jesus is telling her is that, hey, you have no idea who it is that is talking to you and what I have to offer.

Again, Jesus is doing his third person talking about himself kind of a thing. And what I want you to notice is that when he says the gift of God in verse 10, if you knew the gift of God, and then he, at the end of verse 10, he says, he would give you living water.

Jesus is using gift of God and living water, two different ways of talking about the same thing. Are you starting to get interested in what this living water is?

[14:08] In verse 11, she thinks that he is offering her literal H₂O. Because, look at what she says. She's like, you don't even have a bucket. You don't even have a rope.

You don't have the stuff you need in order to get down into a well to get the water. And by the way, where do you get this living water anyway? I don't see any other wells around.

Furthermore, she goes on to say, is the water you offer better than Jacob's water? I mean, think about it.

She's making this case. This well has a pretty good namesake. This is Jacob's well. And it's got a pretty good track record of supplying fresh, life-sustaining water from generation to generation. It's working just fine, mister, sir. No living water needed here. Maybe you're in the room and Jesus' offer of this living water sounds like all the other religious offers out there.

[15:13] Maybe you're thinking, I don't know who Jesus is or what this living water is, but my life is just fine without it. Maybe you're even a little sympathetic. Maybe you're like, you know, everybody needs something to lean on and if Jesus works for you, that's great.

You know, if Tibetan monk chanting! works for you, great! If Zumba works for you, great! But I don't see the need for what Jesus is offering when my self-made wells are working just fine.

If that's you, let's just pause here for a second. What I really want to ask you is, are you really satisfied?

Are you anxious? Are you depressed? Is your inner being chasing something that can't satisfy it? How are you sleeping? Are you turning to chemicals to settle your inner being? Maybe you're not as fine as you think you are.

[16:25] Because all of those are descriptions of soul thirst. There's a difference between Jacob's well water and the living water Jesus offers.

In 13 and 14, Jesus says this, everyone who drinks of this water. Now imagine Jesus is there and he's pointing to Jacob's well. Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again because it only addresses physical thirst.

But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him that comes from me will never be thirsty again. Jesus is talking about two different kinds of water for dew, two different kinds of thirst. His water, the water that Jesus provides, quenches soul thirst permanently and forever.

Soul thirst is a spiritual condition of being empty inside. Hollowed out, without purpose, anxious, depressed, incredibly bored, sleepless.

[17 : 35] You have no compelling reason for being. There's nothing that seems to satisfy you. What that means is you're thirsty, soul thirsty, inner being thirsty, you just haven't realized it yet.

The living water that Jesus provides will fill up your empty soul forever. And the question becomes, how does that work? We see it in the end of verse 14.

The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life. He pictures a spring, this internal spring in a human being that wells up to eternal life.

If you've been to Petrifying Springs park, chances are you have taken a drink from the natural spring adjacent to the parking lot right across from the beer garden. A lot of people get their water there.

But Jesus is saying here, the water that I will give him will become in him, in her, a spring of water welling up to eternal life.

[18 : 44] The spring Jesus speaks of is a supernatural spring that forever satisfies your soul thirst by constantly filling you with eternal life.

Soul satisfied. when Jesus gives you this living water it takes up permanent residence in you as a supernatural spring constantly welling up eternal life abundant life a quality of life that starts now in relationship to the living God.

In verse 15 she says sir, sir she's very polite sir sir give me this water so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water.

She still thinks that she needs her water jug. She still thinks that this is about physical H₂O. She's not getting it.

If you look to chapter earlier in John 3 when Jesus is speaking at night with Nicodemus Nicodemus didn't get it. So Nicodemus didn't get it at first this Samaritan woman didn't get it at first let me ask you are you getting what Jesus is saying here?

[20 : 07] What is this living water? This living water is not an it but a who. if you flip in your Bibles to John chapter 7 in verses 37 through 39 Jesus tells us what this living water is.

On the last day of the feast the great day Jesus stood up and cried out if anyone thirsts he's not talking about physical thirst if anyone thirsts let him come to me and drink whoever believes in me as the scripture has said out of his heart will flow rivers of living water verse 39 now this he said about the spirit the holy spirit you see this living water that Jesus is promising to give is none other than the holy spirit the third person of the trinity you see the giving of the holy spirit in his fullness is the distinct!

mark of a new era the new era of the new covenant and that's where I want you to turn back to Ezekiel chapter 36 we looked at this a couple weeks ago it's on page 860 of your pew bible this is a promise God is making to his people and he says in verse 26 and I will give you a new heart and a new spirit I will put within you and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh and I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules this is what Jesus is actually talking about that that if this Samaritan woman would just receive this gift of the Holy Spirit this gift of a new way of relating with God this new covenant she would be forever changed the new covenant is a new era when

God gathers to himself a new people from every tribe and nation a new people in Christ and they live for God in a new way what Jesus is offering this Samaritan woman is the Holy Spirit he's offering her salvation he's offering her eternal life something that Jacob's well wasn't able to give no man made well can give salvation in fact our own self made wells become obstacles to receiving this gift and there was something in this woman's life keeping her from quenching her thirst in Christ and that's where we turn next we've we've looked at the offer this living water the Holy Spirit salvation and now we turn to the obstacle in verses 16 and 18 notice when I read it the word husband Jesus said to her go call your husband and come here the woman answered him I have no husband Jesus said to her you are right in saying I have no husband for you have five husbands and the one you now have is not your husband what you have said is true seemingly out of nowhere Jesus tells the Samaritan woman to go get her husband what's up with what he's doing here is an act of love and if you remember from John 3 20 for everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to light lest his work should be exposed what Jesus is doing is out of love for her he is exposing a wicked work in her he's exposing an obstacle to her drinking deep from the waters of the Holy Spirit she says I have no husband to which

[24 : 12] Jesus replies you are right in saying that I have no husband you have five husbands and the one you have now is not your husband the one you are sleeping with what you've said is true Jesus is exposing this woman's chronic moving from one man to the next he's exposing the broken cistern that she has made for herself to satisfy what she thinks is her greatest need a cistern is an underground water container and in this region of the world in which this was originally written which is arid and dry and lacking water cisterns are really important it's a way to store water it's a way to preserve life in Jeremiah 2 13 God says this to his people for my people have committed two evils they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters that's how

God is describing himself the fountain of living waters the fountain of life and hewed out cisterns for themselves broken cisterns that cannot hold water do you see what Jesus is doing here this woman doesn't think she needs living water but she does she just doesn't see that this man pursuit is a broken cistern of her own making and so by exposing her obstacle Jesus is loving her and opening her to receive the gift of God he's loving her from empty cistern to the living waters of salvation here's how we apply it what broken cisterns has Jesus been trying to show you this woman 2000 years ago in Sychar isn't the only one who makes broken cisterns life are are you pursuing a relationship as though it's going to give you life are you pursuing wealth as though in wealth is life in the acquisition of knowledge or the preservation of order at all costs you know how you can identify a broken cistern it's what happens when you don't get what you want it doesn't satisfy and they can't because they are by nature unable to give you what you really crave eternal life there's no living water in broken cisterns living water is found only in the well of

Jesus so what is making you anxious what is the cause of your depression why are you fearful or angry be on the lookout for a broken cistern what is the broken cistern in the way of you finding soul satisfaction in Jesus what I want you to see is Jesus brings up husband because he wants to remove an obstacle from this woman having her soul quenched in Christ it's the most loving thing he can do but you know what she doesn't like it we typically don't like having our broken cisterns exposed so she tries to change the subject on Jesus by opening up a debate but Jesus knows exactly what she's doing she's actually playing right into his hands and now we turn to verses 19 through 26 the result the result of receiving the living water is a new way of worship let me read it for you the woman said to him sir

I perceive I perceive that you are a prophet our fathers worshipped on this mountain but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship Jesus said to her woman believe me the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the father you worship what you do not know we worship what we know for salvation is from the Jews but the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshipers will worship the father in spirit and truth for the father is seeking such people to worship him God is spirit and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth the woman said to him I know the Messiah is coming he was called the Christ when he comes he will tell us everything Jesus said to her I who speak to you am he if you were just to take a look at verses 19 through 26 just to look over it quickly you will see the word worship repeated again and again in verse 19 she responds to his little poke by saying

I see that you're a prophet she's acknowledging that Jesus has a knowledge of her life that only God could have revealed to him what she doesn't realize is that Jesus is God revealing himself to her in verse 20 she opens the debate she says our fathers the Samaritans worshipped on this mountain and she's likely pointing to Mount Gerizim which Sikhar was at the very base of you could see it but you say speaking of Jesus and the Jews that in Jerusalem Mount Zion is the place where people ought to worship so she's saying we've got a problem worship either at your mountain or mine which one is it and so what she's doing is a redirection tactic to take the pressure off her but [30 : 22] Jesus doesn't bite in 21 through 24 he explains to her a new way to worship God in verse 21 Jesus asserts there's coming an hour when a new way to worship will make Mount Gerizim and make Mount Zion utterly obsolete in the worship of God totally irrelevant there was a time when those mountains were relevant but that's no longer the case Jesus is saying in verse 22 Jesus clarifies he says you Samaritans worship what you do not know they've only got five books of the Bible you only know so much about God with that we Jews worship what we do know for salvation is from the Jews Jesus is claiming that God's gift of salvation for all people and all time has a Jewish origin not a Samaritan origin just don't miss what's going on here

Jesus a Jew is offering salvation to an adulteress while in Samaria this is remarkable verse 23 he takes things a step further in this argument he's making he's saying an hour is coming and is now

here when the true worshipers will worship the father in spirit and truth for the father is seeking such people to worship him he goes on to say God is spirit and he's not talking about the Holy Spirit but speaking of God's unseen!

nature God is spirit and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth so what Jesus is doing here is he's explaining the new way to worship God in the new era of the new covenant we worship in spirit and in truth John Piper writes a very helpful article on this passage and he explains what it means to worship God in spirit and truth spirit is how you worship God truth is what you worship about God regarding spirit Jesus is talking about your inner being to worship in spirit means to worship God from our hearts not just going through the motions not just giving lip service but genuinely sincerely worshiping from the very core of who you are worshiping God with fullness of heart all of your heart do you remember Ezekiel chapter 36 let me just you don't need to turn later let me just read you it again and

I will give you a new heart and a new spirit I will put within you and I will remove your heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh God gives us a new spirit to worship him fully not just to hit lip service not eye candy but from our hearts new affections new desires a want to regarding truth God has truly and fully revealed himself in all of the Old Testament and all of the new if you think about the Bible all 66 books of the Bible as one series long series of God selfies God revealing himself making himself known to us it is the sum total of truth of who God is in his revealing himself to us and it doesn't stop with the Bible because we believe the ultimate revelation of the invisible God is the God made visible Jesus John 1 18 says that God has never been seen but the only God who is at the Father's right side he has explained him Jesus says of himself I am the way the truth and the life no one comes to the Father but through me the truth is that Jesus is the only well from which sinners can drink the soul satisfying living water he provides the truth is that Jesus is the controlling center of our lives and the Holy Spirit is seeking to spotlight Jesus to help us to see the truth of who he is and how glorious and wonderful he is in verse 25 the woman says that when the [35 : 08] Messiah comes he'll explain everything and Jesus says something stunning in verse 26 I who speak to you am he I'm the Messiah I'm here and I'm explaining to you what it means to worship God in spirit and truth in order for you to worship God in this new way spirit and truth head and heart together all of us all of who you are you need to be made new and the way that you're made new is by receiving the gift of God the spring that wells up unto eternal life the Holy Spirit and you receive the Holy Spirit the moment you believe in Jesus the Messiah that's the result let me just summarize where we've been the offer Jesus purposely cross cultural borders boundaries to offer this woman living water and think about it he offered eternal life to Nicodemus male

Jew powerful righteous and he offered eternal life to this Samaritan woman female Samaritan powerless and unrighteous he's an adulteress here's what this is getting at God offers this living water salvation to all people including you including me would you like to receive the gift of God you know what you do you say sir give me this water sir give me this water that springs up to eternal life the offer the obstacle Jesus lovingly exposes the biggest obstacle this woman had to receiving eternal life she had made relationships with men into a broken cistern what is the broken cistern getting in the way of you drinking deep from the well of living water ask

God God show me what I have hewed out for myself thinking that it's going to give life but it only hollows me out ask God to show you that the result receiving the living water brings new life and new life that worships the one true God in a new way in spirit the how fullness of heart and in truth the what with clarity of mind Jesus sought this Samaritan woman to make her a true worshiper and he's seeking you out today he's after you here's the point of this passage renounce your broken cisterns and be satisfied by the living water that Jesus alone offers to wrap up in verse 28 we see something interesting after his disciples kind of come back with food this woman woman leaves and in verse 29 she goes and tells her

Samaritan town folk come see a man who told me all that I ever had she's not ashamed now of what she's done can this man be the Christ but I want you to notice in verse 26 she left her water jar she wasn't thirsty for Jacob's water anymore you know why she had gotten a taste of the goodness of Jesus come and be filled with the soul satisfying water that only Jesus provides make it your prayer to Jesus sir give me this water in times of goodness and in times of difficulty let's pray together Lord Jesus you are the giver of living water you are the one who gives us the Holy Spirit the moment we believe and you are the one who continually fills us with the Holy Spirit after we have believed would you fill us afresh with your life that we would live for you and would

you remove any obstacles that are getting in the way pray this in Jesus name amen