

Glorious Grace and Truth at the Well

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[0 : 0 0] my warmest greetings to all of you who are watching or listening today i'm excited to dig into god's word together with you let's pray and ask the lord to speak to us through his word father in heaven in these moments we ask that you would open our eyes open our ears enable us to see and to hear what you would say to us enable us to see the glory of jesus we ask this in his name amen well we're continuing on in our series through the gospel of john the series we began as a church before easter and um if you're just joining in with us now i encourage you to to grab your bible and to open it up to john chapter 4 john chapter 4 is where we're at the last thing that we heard in the story was that people were going out to jesus in the judean countryside to be baptized people were also going to john the baptizer and john's followers were troubled because more people are now starting to go to jesus than are going to john and of course john was thrilled to hear this news because this was his whole purpose his whole assignment from god was to point people to jesus so now as we come to chapter 4 we find out that not only do has have john's disciples noticed that the attention is now shifting to jesus but the religious leaders have also uh are also starting to see this so let's read it in john chapter 4 now jesus learned that the pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than john although in fact it was not jesus who baptized but his disciples so jesus left judea and went back once more to galilee so here we have jesus on the move and he's been in the judean countryside which is kind of in the southern part of israel and he's going to go back to galilee now which is in the northern part of israel john tells us this in verse 4 now he had to go through samaria so if judea is kind of the southern and galilee is in the northern part of israel samaria is right in the middle and so geographically topographically this is the most natural route to take to go through samaria verse 5 so jesus came to a town in samaria called sychar near the plot of ground jacob had given to his son joseph jacob's well was there and jesus tired as he was from the journey sat down by the well it was about noon when a samaritan woman came to draw water jesus said to her will you give me a drink his disciples had gone into the town to buy food the samaritan woman said to him you are a jew and i am a samaritan woman how can you ask me for a drink for jews do not associate with samaritans all right so here jesus is on his way back to galilee and he stops by this well just outside of sychar his disciples go into the town to buy some food and jesus tired as he was says john sits down by the well it's about noon it's hot and jesus is thirsty and so when as this samaritan woman comes out to draw water from the well jesus asks for a drink probably right from her bucket

and the response he gets is quite something the woman says this to jesus you are a jew and i am a samaritan woman how can you ask me for a drink for jews do not associate with samaritans and even as we read that we get the sense that there's a bit of a backstory here between the jews and the samaritans and and and there is um we could go all the way back to the the time when the northern and southern kingdom were divided there was a king of the northern kingdom of israel then who um built a city he called it samaria and that city and the surrounding area came to be known as samaria and sometimes samaria was later used to refer to the whole northern kingdom well after the northern kingdom was conquered by the assyrians many of the people the israelites who lived there were taken off and deported they were taken into exile and foreigners were brought in to settle the the land there so these foreigners intermarried with the the survivors the israelites who had survived the attack and the conquering and the samaritans were born so when the jews down in the southern kingdom which would later be conquered and then the people would come back um when they when they came back uh they they suddenly saw that there was kind of this new group of people that was kind of distantly related to the israelites um but there were some major differences there and animosity and suspicion and tension very quickly grew between the people down in judea and the people in samaria the people uh down in judea they they really looked down on the people of samaria because of the intermarriage they considered them to be half-breeds uh to be impure um as well the samaria the samaritan people also kind of they diverted a little bit in their religion because of the intermarriage but also um just because of their disconnect with jerusalem and so they ended up building their own temple there about 400 years before christ came and and uh on on mount gerizim that temple was later destroyed but they kind of went back to the earliest form of judaism and they were um they followed the the the first five books of the bible and uh the law basically the what moses had given them from the scriptures and they kind of really stuck close to the patriarchs and the faith of the patriarchs so there were some major differences and the jews considered them to be unclean and this comes right up to the time of jesus this tension is still there this animosity this suspicion is still there so they are neighbors but they are not on friendly terms if you were a jew in jesus day to sit at the same table and eat at the same table as a samaritan was to defile yourself to become unclean um they considered that to be true of eating with the gentiles as well um so things were were not on good terms between the jews and the gentiles but jesus he just plows right through all of the social customs and goes ahead and asks this woman for a drink from her cup from her bucket whatever she used to to get the water out of the well so you can imagine her surprise how do you being a jew ask me a samaritan woman for a drink

like aren't you too good for that aren't you gonna defile yourself by drinking from the same bucket as me the jews very much had a condescending attitude towards the samaritans and so right about here we imagine that if this was just a conversation between this woman and an ordinary jew this conversation would be over but of course jesus is no ordinary person and he presses on in the conversation and and continues it look at what he says in verse 10 jesus answered her if you knew the gift of god and who it is that asks you for a drink you would ask him and he would give you living water what a thing to say to this woman if you knew the gift of god and who it is that asks you for a drink you would ask him and he would give you living water jesus is a master when it comes to conversation he knows exactly what to say to draw this woman in and there's a whole bunch of things just in this statement alone the first thing that we noticed is this big if if you knew it's like he's just sowing a little seed putting out a little hook there's something that you don't know and that something is the gift of god it's a good thing there's something else you don't know if you knew the gift of god and who it is that asks you for a drink you don't know just who i am and if that wasn't enough to draw this woman in jesus offer says that if if she knew she would ask him and he would give her living water well what's that what's that all about living water and that's the thing that the woman really latches on to she says sir verse 11 you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep where can you get this living water the first thing that she wants to know is is when it comes to this living water jesus what are you talking about where can you get this living water now living water sounds a little strange to us but to someone with some of the hebrew language roots it was it was pretty ordinary way to refer to fresh water or running water or flowing water which is usually the freshest kind as opposed to kind of water that's just been sitting or stagnant so they use this to refer to water that would come from you know springs and things like that um she's looking around and and and wondering so so where is the living water i don't see any water here except the water down in the well and why would i ask you for a drink when i'm the one who has the pail to draw with and you've got nothing so what are you talking about where where are you going to get this living water as she's saying this i think she realizes that jesus has said even more to her she said jesus said if you knew who it is that asks you you would ask him and so that's kind of the

next thing that the woman latches on to in verse 12 she says are you greater than our father jacob who gave us the well and drank from it himself as did also his sons and his livestock and we don't see this in our english translations but in the original language it comes through a little more clearly this is a rhetorical question and the answer is no it's it's kind of implied in the way that it's written literally not are you greater than our father jacob who gave us the well and drank from it himself as did also his sons and his livestock so there's a bit of a statement buried in there i don't know who you think you are sir but certainly you're not greater than our our father jacob the grandson of abraham so this woman is really almost kind of um pushing back with a little bit of a challenge of her own uh i don't know who you are but who who do you think you are that that are i don't think you're greater than the person who gave us this well and the second thing she pushes back on whether or not jesus really has better water to offer i mean this well was given to us from jacob himself and so uh this is this is good water it's that well is still there today and it's actually fed from a spring probably from one of the the the nearby hills and uh so kind of the sense we get here is i mean if if this water was good enough for jacob abraham's grandson then i don't know really why you feel the need to to offer us me something better we've got good water here this isn't some dirty unclean samaritan well well jesus answers in verse 13 and he says this he says everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again but whoever drinks the water i give them will never thirst indeed indeed the water i give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life wow what a thing to say to this woman you see this water down here in the well as good as it is everyone who drinks this water is going to get thirsty again but whoever drinks the water that i give them will never thirst again and it doesn't come through in the english again here but literally he says the water i give them will never thirst unto eternity like not ever will they be thirsty again never indeed the water i give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life this is quite the thing to say to the woman i mean we all know that life depends on water water is it's it's so critical for life here on earth but jesus is offering water in a whole nother way water that when you drink it when you receive it it will it will give you life eternal life forever i wonder at this moment just what the woman was thinking i wish we could just kind of get into her head a little bit and and and hear her thoughts like are you crazy are you a lunatic or are you a con man are you

trying to sell me something are you about to pull out a little bottle of water that if i drink it i'll become immortal you're gonna sell this to me or are you serious is there is there a chance that she thinks perhaps he can really give her this we don't know her exact thoughts but we do know that she goes ahead and asks jesus for the water verse 15 the woman said to him sir give me this water so that i won't get thirsty so that i won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water she does the very thing that jesus told her she would do if she knew just who he was she asks her she asks him for the water sir give me this water and jesus does though it probably didn't come in just the way that she expected of course jesus is not talking about literal water or even physical thirst he's talking about something else so this is how it goes jesus tells her in verse 16 go call your husband and come back the woman responds i have no husband she replied jesus said to her you are right when you say you have no husband the fact is you have had five husbands and the man you now have is not your husband what you have just said is quite true sir the woman said i can see that you are a prophet well this is quite the turn in the conversation the woman asks for living water and jesus tells her to do something which leads to this this moment where i think really this is the grace of of jesus on display here he gives her a sign a confirmation that he really is someone special and that he can give this to her he tells her about her past he tells her that he knows about the five previous marriages that she's had and even that the the relationship that she's in right now is is not within the context of marriage as it probably should be the woman says i can see you are a prophet at this point she's acknowledging at the very least that she she recognizes that jesus speaks from god i mean that's what a prophet does and how else could you know this you being a stranger how could you know my past how could you know what i've been doing on the sly with this guy from there the woman changes the subject and she goes on to ask jesus about worship and we're not going to look at that this morning we may look at it in a future message on a different sunday the tone of it is very similar though um jesus kind of makes it clear there are things that you and your fellow samaritans do not know but i the one who speak to you do know and have have much to say the conversation ends in verses 25 and 26 with the woman saying this i know that messiah is coming when he comes he will explain everything to us so i i don't really fully understand everything

[20 : 35] seems as though she's saying but one thing i do know i know that messiah is coming and she has hope she has expectation that when he comes he will clarify he will explain things for her whatever she needs to know but this is when this wonderful moment comes in verse 26 i know that messiah is coming when he comes he will explain everything to us then jesus declared i the one speaking to you am he this is amazing i am the messiah i am the messiah i know that messiah is coming when he comes he will explain everything to us then jesus declared i who speak to you am he this is amazing jesus has not spoken this directly to anyone else that we've seen so far in the gospel of john not to the crowds not to the religious leaders not to nicodemus and yet he graciously reveals the truth of who he is to this woman right there on the spot she asked for living water she asked to have that thing from jesus which would give her life that lasts forever which would give her which would quench her thirst permanently and jesus reveals to her his true identity so that she is no longer ignorant as she was before not only that but jesus gives her a sign to confirm that he truly is the messiah the question is will this woman believe what jesus has just said how will she respond and we'll get to that in another message maybe next sunday but for us today what can we take from these words well i think as we think of our own lives the first place to to go is to realize why john has written these words he says later on in his gospel these things these signs are written that you may believe that jesus is the messiah the son of god and that by believing you may have life in his name so that's why this is recorded here so that we too may see the truth of who jesus is that he is the messiah he he knows things about this woman that that are impossible any other way and this is really what john's whole account of jesus is pointing towards he wants us to see what he has seen do you remember back to chapter 1 verse 14 where john says we have seen his glory referring to jesus glory as of the only son from the father full of grace and truth well this is one of the places in john's account where we definitely do see that jesus is full of grace and full of truth do you see it we see very much that jesus is full of grace in the way that he interacts with this woman she is a samaritan he is a jew even just the fact that he crosses the ethnic divide and initiates with this woman itself is a gracious act

he treats her with dignity and respect and kindness and even though initially her tone and her attitude is i guess i guess less than respectful especially considering who he is Jesus just presses right on he graciously continues to draw her in in conversation so that he can offer her the amazing gift of living water the amazing gift of life that lasts forever not only that but graciously he goes on to reveal himself to her powerfully giving her this confirmation that he knows her and then telling her very directly as he has scarcely told anyone else that he is the messiah so we definitely see in this account that Jesus is full of grace and i wondered how this might have felt for the woman can't help but think of that here here you are being told about your own past from a stranger and about this relationship that you are in that you know is not right from a stranger i mean how could he know that and yet he does Jesus is full of truth he knows he understands he sees things that no ordinary person could see and yet even though he knew this about me it didn't stop him from drawing near to me from asking to drink from my bucket from speaking with kindness to me and for offering me this this living water that he's talking about who would do that what Jew would do that if this was the religious leaders or the pharisees there's another account where it's basically here's the stone Jesus you be the first to cast it you know what kind of woman she is but we see the grace of Jesus and how he is full of grace and and this is such a wonderful message for us today it doesn't matter what your past is it doesn't matter what sins you have committed or are continuing to commit today do you know that Jesus has a heart full of grace and love for you despite your past Jesus doesn't wait for this woman to be pleasant to be kind to her or to get her act together to become righteous before he will associate with her and offer her this good gift of God no he offers it even with the stuff that's going on in her life right now isn't that wonderful this is the signature of God's love he loves us us even while we were still sinners it says he sent Christ to die for us Christ died for us so we see that Jesus is full of grace but he's also full of truth and i love how we see this in this passage too Jesus is not afraid to offend this woman he's not worried about what this woman might think of him or say about him he shoots straight with her right from the get-go he's even with the the response he got

from her he's already hinting well there's something you need to know there's a gift of god there's and and if you knew just who was asking you you'd ask him you know he's he's sowing seeds of truth right from the get-go in this conversation and he's totally unashamed to make it clear to her to offer her this good gift of god this living water that if you drink you'll never be thirsty again it will become in you a spring that wells up to eternal life he's not worried what she thinks if she thinks that sounds crazy or ridiculous or absurd he just says it like it is same with what he knows about her past he doesn't gloss over that he doesn't minimize it he just says it like it is and graciously the conversation continues on from there he speaks truth about worship in the place of worship and he goes on and so i guess today what i just want to encourage us with what we see so so so much in this passage is that jesus is full of grace and truth this is the truth that that john wants us to see he wants us to see the glory of jesus how he is full of grace he's gracious and full of truth and i want to encourage us to know from this story that if it was us there at the well jesus would deal with us the same way he would be gracious to us the son came not to condemn the world but so that the world might be saved through him not only that but jesus has words of truth to speak to you and to me we have his words right here words which he expects us to take seriously to take to heart to respond to what will your response be to the gracious words of truth that jesus brings and what i love about this story is that this is just the beginning john said that he's full of grace and truth this is just a little glimpse that we get in this in the way that he interacts with this woman so graciously speaking the truth of god to her but he's going to go on to say much more and to do much more many more acts of kindness and of love and the greatest act of kindness and love as he gives his life for people for sinners like you and me to be saved and that's what we just celebrated at good friday and at easter and so i hope that you are eager to continue with us in this series and to continue to see more of the glory of jesus for yourself let's pray father in heaven we thank you that you have sent your son into this world and we thank you that he is the embodiment of your graciousness to us and your words your truth to us we ask that you would just help us to see more and more of how much you love us and of just what you have to say to us because we do believe lord that it will make all the difference in our lives we commit ourselves to you and to your word and we ask that you'd seal it in our hearts by the power of your holy spirit we ask this in jesus name amen you