

# Water of Life

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 08 March 2026

Preacher: Simon Jackson

[0:00] May the words of my mouth, the meditation of my heart, be expectable to you, O my Lord.

! Jacob all have their first meeting at a well. The Samaritan woman meets Jesus at Jacob's well. And that's the most famous of all. And it's situated actually to this day in modern Palestine on the West Bank. And apparently it's now in an Eastern Orthodox church.

Or a monastery. It's constructed in the rock, not like that film clip that we saw. It is 41 meters deep in the solid rock. So it's no wonder that the Samaritan woman was astonished Jesus didn't have a bucket. And you'd also need quite a long rope as well.

That's not the kind of well that you could just pass and dip your hand in for a refreshing drink. That was a well that was a life-giving source in a very dry and arid area. It required work. It required dedication to receive a benefit from it.

So now I want to take you to another part of the world and look at fetching water. There's a lady called Maria. And she lives in a very small island on the estuary of Bahia de Sol, which is in El Salvador. The island has no mains water. It has no electricity. It has no sewerage or gas. Families cook on wood fires, use a generator when they need electricity, and they dig their own latrines. They make a living by catching shrimp and fish and selling it to the rich locals and the wealthy tourists on the mainland. And there is one, one tiny school.

[2:54] In the rainy season, they collect water into concrete tanks and into barrels. But you know this, it's never enough. It's never enough. In the dry season, Maria takes her canoe across the river every morning. She's got ten barrels on board. And she's going to the mainland to get water, to fetch water. There's no mains water there, interestingly enough. But the hotels, the restaurants, the rich people's houses have their own private wells and they have their own pumps. And she has an arrangement with one of the hotels. But she has to paddle quite hard, quite a bit upstream, to this restaurant and hotel that allows her to land and pump water into these barrels that she's got. And in return, these neighbors look after her children and her chickens while she's away.

I wonder what it would mean to be. I wonder what it would mean to Maria and her family to have a well in their backyard.

Just imagine what that would do to her life. But in the encounter that I read to you earlier and you saw the video, Jesus and the Samaritan woman are thirsty. And they both have to act to quench their thirst, don't they?

That woman has to work hard in the heat of the day to raise heavy water jugs from 41 meters below. She has to ask questions at the same time of Jesus and she learns from his answers. And Jesus has to ask for assistance to get water from the well. He takes time when he's pretty tired. It's hot. And he explains to her the gift that God wants her to have.

[5:47] So it's a kind of a mutual relationship, isn't it, if you think about it? The physical and the spiritual, they're kind of intertwined. Now, Francis of Assisi welcomed all creation as our brother and our sister.

I wonder how we feel about the two waters in today's story. That's the water of the well and the water of life. How do we feel about them? Do we value them both as essential to our life and our well-being?

And what do they do, what do they teach us about recognizing and accepting everyone as a brother and a sister?

Now, one of the questions I have for you today is, are we thirsty for the water of life? Are we thirsty for that? So, I just want to have a wee talk about diversity just now.

I've got some grapes here. I'm going to offer you a grape and please don't eat it. Please don't eat it. Have a grape.

[7:23] Just hold it there. I'm going to ask if you can recognize that later on. Okay. Jim? Just hold on to that for now.

Just smell it if you need to. Okay. Look at it. See if you can identify it. Okay. They're just grapes. Have a grape. Have a grape. Okay. You've got one. Have a grape. Right. So, can you see that? Just smell it. Look at it. See if you can identify it. Right. I'm going to ask you to put that grape back in this bowl. Have you eaten it?

You've eaten it. Right. You've. I'll give you the whole bowl if you want. There we go. You've got your grape. You didn't get one.

[8:29] That's okay. That's okay. There we go. There we go. Marina. There we go. Right. Have you.

Oh, Gene. Sorry. Sorry. Jim. Right, Gene. Right. Big question for you. Do you think you could identify your grape?

You could. Okay. That's the wrong bowl. I was trying to get you. Right. Which one's yours? That one.

Are you sure? Right. I'll let you keep it. Do you think anybody else can identify their grape? Sure. Sure.

Okay. I think you're into my life. Oh, is that right? Okay. Okay. Well, that's great that you actually studied it.

[9:36] That's great that you can recognize it. But what that grape tells us, okay, that wee piece of fruit, is that if we take time to get to know someone, we take time to get to know someone, as an individual, we can find out that everyone is unique, but different.

Unique. And they're also special as well. And if you think about it with a story that we've heard and seen, that's exactly what Jesus did with the woman at the well, isn't it?

He spent time with her. He already knew her. Let's be honest, he knew her. But it was only by talking and interacting with her that he could really identify her uniqueness.

And then we've got to ask the question, what did Jesus mean by living water? What did he mean by that?

Well, in the Old Testament, in the Old Testament, there are many verses that speak of thirsting. Thirsting for God as one thirsts for water.

[11:05] God is called the fountain of life and the spring of living water. These are Old Testament references.

So by saying he would bring living water, living water that could forever quench a person's thirst for God, Jesus was claiming to be the Messiah.

He was claiming that. Because only the Messiah could give this gift that satisfies the soul's desires. You get where I'm coming? Only the Messiah could do that. But that woman mistakenly believed that if she received the water Jesus was offering her, she wouldn't have to return to that well every day.

She wouldn't have that time-consuming ritual of going to get water every day. She was interested in Jesus' message because she thought it could make her life easier.

[12:29] It could make her life easier. And you know, I get that an awful lot. I really do. People say to me, and this happened quite a lot when I was a street pastor, but people say to me that by being a Christian, you'll have no troubles in life.

No troubles in life at all. You're on easy street. Engage cruise control. And I want to tell you, that's a lie.

That's a lie from the pit of hell. Because by being Christians, we choose the difficult path.

We choose to make the hard choices and the decisions based on God's teachings. So it's not an easy life.

Christ didn't come to take away our challenges, but to make changes from the inside. And basically to empower us, you and me, to deal with the problems that we face daily from a God perspective. [13:56] Now many spiritual functions parallel physical functions. Thirst. Thirst for the world. Thirst for water.

And as our bodies hunger and they thirst, so do our souls. Okay?

The two are in parallel. Our souls need spiritual food and water. And the women at the well confuse the two kinds.

The two kinds of water. And that's perhaps, I think because no one had ever talked with her about her spiritual hunger.

Nobody had ever talked to her about her spiritual thirst until Jesus came along. We wouldn't want to think of depriving our bodies of food or water when they hunger or thirst.

[15:05] Why? Because our souls would be deprived as well. So the living word, that's Jesus, and the written word, the Bible, can really satisfy our hungry and our thirsty souls.

And there's a really interesting point. There's an interesting point out of all of this that I want you to think about. And it's just based on observation that on John's story of the Samaritan woman, after one encounter, one encounter with Jesus, she abandons her jars and runs, runs with news of the living water.

Think about that. One encounter. The Samaritan woman is the first, and I really do mean this, she is the first to bring others to believe in Jesus.

Martha is the first to acknowledge him as the Son of God, and Mary Magdalene the first to proclaim his resurrection.

But thus, the story of the Samaritan woman, if you read further on, actually ends with her neighbors telling her this, it is no longer because of what you have said that we believe.

[16:52] It is no longer because of what you have said that we believe. How do we react to that?

It's faith in action, isn't it? Faith, it's a doing word. A doing word. Now, I want you to remember, you've probably heard this before, but to put things into context, that Samaritan woman was actually, at the current time, was a member of a hated, mixed race.

She was known to be living in sin, and was in a public place where no respectable Jewish man would talk to a woman under those circumstances.

But Jesus did. Jesus did. And what that tells me is that gospel, that gospel that we hold so dear to our hearts is for every person, no matter what his or her race, social position, or past sins.

We must be prepared to share this gospel, gospel, good news, at any time and at any place.

[18:35] Jesus crossed all those barriers to share the gospel with that Samaritan woman. And I would say to you as followers, we must do no less.

now the Samaritan woman comes out of this story or this episode better, actually better than the disciples.

She is the first person to whom Jesus discloses that he is the Messiah. She quickly recognizes him as a teacher.

and asks him very pointed and if you think about it, very, very intelligent questions. She grasps the importance of what he is saying and rushes off to tell members of her village.

So she demonstrates to us that she is a very, very effective missionary to her own people as they believe in her.

[20:03] Even before they've heard from Jesus himself, the townspeople trust our word because they know her.

I'll leave you with this question. How is your mission doing today with your families?

How is it doing? Amen. Amen. Amen.