

From Nobody to Everybody

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[0 : 00] Let's turn to read God's Word now in the Gospel of John, Chapter 4. The Gospel of John, Chapter 4.

Read from the beginning. When, therefore, the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, though Jesus himself baptized 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 Sychar, near to the partial 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 said unto her, Give me to drink. For his disciples were gone away into the city to buy meat.

[1 : 13] Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, ask drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? 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. The well is deep. From whence then hast thou this living water?

Art thou greater than our father Jacob, who 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 whoever drinks 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.

[2 : 21] 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.

In that saidst thou truly. The woman said unto him, Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain, and ye say that in Jerusalem is a 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.

Ye worship ye know not what. We know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

- [3 : 32] 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 cometh, who is called Christ.
- When he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he. And upon this came his disciples, and marveled that he talked with the woman.
- Yet no man said, What seekest thou? 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 ever I 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, Has any man brought him to eat? Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.
- [4 : 48] Say not ye, there are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest. 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, 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 sows, and another reaps. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour. Other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labour.
- Amen. And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in him. For the saying of the woman which testified, He told me all that ever I did.
- So 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.
- [5 : 47] Amen. Amen. And may God bless to us this reading of his own holy word. We're going to sing again from Psalm number 36. Psalm number 36. And singing from verse 5.
- Psalm 36. Thy mercy, Lord, is in the heavens. Thy truth doth reach the clouds. Thy justice is like mountains great.
- Thy judgments deep as floods. Lord, thou preservist man and beast. How precious is thy grace. Therefore in shadow of thy wings, men's sons, their trust shall place.
- They with the fatness of thy house shall be well satisfied. From rivers of thy pleasures thou will drink to them provide. Because of life the fountain pure remains alone with thee.
- And in that purest light of thine we clearly light shall see. And so on Psalm 36 from verse 5. Thy mercy, Lord, is in the heavens. Thy mercy, Lord, is in the heavens.
- [7 : 06] Thy truth doth reach the clouds. Thy justice, thy blood, is in the heavens. Thy justice, thy blood, is in the heavens.
- Thy justice, thy blood, is in the heavens. Thy judgment, because of the heavens.
- Lord, I will be serviced man and beast. Thy precious is my grace.
- Thy mercy, Lord, is in the heavens. Thou caesar, have risen.
- The way the madness of thy house shall be where satisfied.
- [8 : 24] From the birth of thy measures I will bring to them provide.
- Because all I have done, I will bring to them provide.
- I will bring to them, and in the good of mine, O mine, we clearly light shall see.

Amen. Let's turn for a little back to this chapter, John chapter 4, and I want us tonight to look at, really at this narrative, but if we could read from verse 7, John 4, verse 7, there cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water.

Jesus said unto her, Give me to drink, for his disciples were gone away into 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?

[9 : 56] 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.

We know that our lives, by and large, are full of meetings and partings. That's kind of the normal way of things. We are always meeting somebody, whether it's on the street, or somebody at home, or in the shop, or wherever.

And it's amazing how sometimes, what from our point of view, our chance meetings, or whatever, they can have quite an impact upon our lives. But any meeting with Jesus, always, always, had an impact.

Nobody ever went away the same, after meeting with Jesus. The meetings that any person, when we go through the Bible, had with Jesus, always had an impact, always had a profound effect, one way or another.

Of course, some of these meetings, people were, were turned very against Jesus, but there was kind of no neutrality in it. It's always, always, had quite an impact.

[11 : 18] And Jesus was able to meet with anybody, at their own level. Because in this chapter, chapter four, and in the previous chapter, we have Jesus meeting with two, incredibly different people.

In the previous chapter, Jesus meets with Nicodemus. Remember the ruler? He was a high-ranking, Jewish, religious man.

He would have been a pillar of society. He was somebody who, ticked all the right boxes. He was somebody that the people in the community, would have looked up to.

And he seemed to have it all. But he came to Jesus at night. And Jesus met with Nicodemus. And Jesus brought Nicodemus to the point where he realized that despite all his knowledge, and all his great understanding and teaching, that he actually knew nothing.

He displayed his spiritual ignorance before Jesus. In fact, when Jesus was speaking to him about the new birth, about being born again, this man, Nicodemus, thought he was talking medically.

[12 : 33] Didn't understand it. But of course, we know that Nicodemus eventually became a different man. And he, the man who crept in at night so that nobody would see him coming to Jesus, was the man who publicly sided with Joseph of Arimathea at the burial of Jesus.

And so that you see the great work that actually took place in his life. Then there's this woman, and she's completely different to Nicodemus.

As we said, Nicodemus would have been a pillar of society. This woman was an outcast in society. We believe that that's why she went to get her water at noon.

People didn't usually go to get her, to fill their water pots at that time of the day, because it would be roasting, really hot. It would be more in the evening, later on in the day they would come.

So she came at a time when nobody else would be around, because she had a bit of a reputation and not a good reputation. She was the kind of person that probably most people, or a lot of people, tended to avoid.

[13 : 46] But Jesus, being Jesus, he deals with her in the most beautiful and in the most tender way. And so we find that this is characteristic of the Lord Jesus, that he deals with people, and it doesn't matter who they are, doesn't matter their background, doesn't matter their culture, he deals with them exactly where they are.

And that's what he's able to do with you and with me tonight. He deals with us where we're at. And that's so important. Now, as we say, there are a lot of chance meetings in life.

And as far as this woman was concerned, this was a chance meeting. But there was no chance from the Lord's point. And there are no chances as far as God is concerned. And we find that Jesus has come through Samaria.

He's making his way to Galilee. And it tells us that, verse 4, he must needs go through Samaria. Now, at one level, this was the quickest route.

But he needs to go through. Because there's one particular soul to be saved. And as a result of the soul being saved, a lot of other people are going to come to believe in Jesus.

[15 : 08] So Jesus' great mission, which is to seek and to save, and that's what he was always about. Do you know what? That's what he's still always about. He hasn't stopped seeking and saving.

He's seeking and saving tonight. And he's able to seek and to save in here as well, for any who are still outside the kingdom. So we find here that Jesus, that he's weary.

And you know, that's part of the beauty of our Savior, is that he was so human. And indeed, the humanity he took, he continues to have.

He's still human. He's still in our nature. But it wasn't a specialized human nature he took. Some people tend to think that Jesus, as he went through this world, was oblivious to pain or suffering or at a personal level or anything like that.

No. He was sinless. But he experienced all that we did and all that we do. He knew what it was to be really, really thirsty.

[16 : 14] In fact, it was one of the very last words that he ever uttered, I thirst. And we find here that he is, that he's really thirsty. Because he asks for a drink.

But we also notice in verse 6, now Jacob's well was there, Jesus there for being wearied with his journey. Yeah, here's the Savior, here's the Son of God. And he's wearied, he's tired.

And he sits down by the well. The disciples go on to get some food. But Jesus stays put. So he is, this is the beauty of it, he's a Savior who understands.

And irrespective of how you feel tonight, he understands you. And if your pains and if your difficulties are physical, he knows them. If they are in their mind, he understands.

If it's emotional, if it's relationship, it doesn't matter in what sphere. If it is spiritual, he can identify with you and touch you in a way that nobody else can.

[17 : 15] That's part of the wonder of our Savior. And so, we see that Jesus initiates a conversation with this woman.

And the woman can't get over that Jesus has actually started to speak with her. Because in that culture of the day, you would never find the women and the men conversing on the street.

We can't understand that. Thankfully, we don't live in a day like that. But back then, the rabbinical teachings were actually really severe. And they would read through some of what they dictated from the religious point of view.

A man wasn't to give a woman a greeting on the street in case people would start gossiping. Can you imagine how that would be in our society today?

But that's how severe it was. And that's how Jesus was saying to them, you know, you have made, they see, they built law upon law upon law upon top of God's law.

[18 : 32] And they made it, it was an intolerable burden for people to live at the time of Jesus. So, at one level, this woman found it quite remarkable that Jesus was actually talking to her because he was breaking the taboo, but there was further than that.

She was a Samaritan. And the Jews and the Samaritans, particularly the Jews hated the Samaritans, the Jews and the Samaritans had no dealings.

And because the Jews looked on the Samaritans as being a mixed race, part Jewish and part Gentile, and as such they were unclean, they weren't fit for purpose in the pure Jewish eyes.

In fact, some Pharisees went as far, this is extraordinary, but it is recorded some Pharisees, not in the Bible, but when you go through the writings that have come down, prayed that no Samaritan would be raised at the resurrection.

You know, it's hard for us to understand, but there was so much hatred and animosity in the heart of so many of these religious Jews against those outside and particularly the likes of the Samaritans.

[19 : 48] So, this woman knew something of the background of the hostility and the enmity between the Jew and the Samaritan. So, she was amazed at every front that here's a Jewish man speaking to her and in the public to her, a Samaritan woman.

So, she really finds it quite extraordinary that this conversation is taking place at all. But, you know, as Jesus speaks with this woman, he can see very clearly that there is a big empty written all over her life.

The fuel gauge is that empty spiritually in her life. And he can see because this is a beautiful thing, Jesus can see right into her heart. And he knew this woman irrespective, and that was the beauty of Jesus because irrespective of what front people put on.

And very often people can put on a front. I suppose we all at one level or another sometimes, sometimes if you're really, say for instance you're down, you're feeling down, and you meet people.

You try to, you try to hide maybe the fact that you're feeling down. So in that way we sometimes, we will put on a front because if you're feeling really down you don't want to sort of say to, if somebody asks how are you today, oh I feel terrible and you like this.

[21 : 16] You don't, you don't show that. But irrespective of what front a person might put on, they could never put on a front for Jesus because he could see right in, right through how things really were.

And he could see this woman, that this woman, although she had lived life in the fast lane for years, she had gone down road after road, she had man after man after man, she was still somebody who never found what she was looking for.

And as we said, she had this like this great empty all over her life. And so Jesus initiates a conversation asking for water and he uses, and this is what we should do as well because in life we have loads of opportunities of speaking to people.

And whenever we get the opportunity to spiritualize something, not in a contrived way, but something that happens spontaneously and naturally, we should take hold of it.

And so Jesus goes from natural water and he talks to her now about spiritual water, which of course she doesn't understand to begin with and we don't blame her because he's talking in a way that is beyond her because she doesn't have faith just now.

[22 : 28] And he said to her, you know, he said, if you knew the gift of God and who it is that's saying to you, give me a drink, you would have asked of him and he would have given you living water.

water. And the woman said, sir, how can you do that? Because you don't have anything to draw water. And so on. And as Jesus begins to talk to her, there's a growing awareness in her life.

I'm speaking to somebody really different here. And there was a, I think this woman has a growing knowledge, first of all, of herself and her need. And there's this movement into where she's saying, you know, I would really like something of what this man is offering.

And you know, that's the way that salvation so often works, that we're on a journey. Probably you can follow that where you went on a journey yourself from nowhere to somewhere, from being outside to being inside.

Some of you may have happened very dramatically, others may have been gradual. But there was a growing awareness of where you were, what you needed, and who it was who had what you needed.

[23 : 43] And that's what was happening in the life of this woman, right here, right now. And so, Jesus is talking about this water that he could give her. And of course, it's a great picture of rest and refreshing.

You know, when you're really, if you're hot and out in the heat and you're busy and you're saying, oh, I would love a drink, and you stop for a moment and a drink, you get a wee bit of a rest and it's refreshing.

That's a spiritual picture of what Jesus does. Because you know, when you come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, he refreshes your soul.

He gives you a rest and a peace that you never had before. Life is different. Life is good. And so, Jesus is talking to this woman, and he's leading her on, and he's leading her on.

But you know, do you notice what she does? Very interesting, in verse 19, the woman is now at the realization, this man's a prophet. Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

[24 : 46] But notice what she does in verse 20, it's an age-old thing, because Jesus is beginning to get right in, and she's beginning to get maybe a wee bit uncomfortable, and she says, our fathers worshipped in this mountain, and ye say that in Jerusalem is a place where men ought to worship.

Isn't that an age-old ploy? You bring up a religious argument, you bring up something that is divisive, and she's saying, okay, she's beginning to maybe to feel a bit uncomfortable, and realize I'm becoming exposed here, so she says, ah, you say this is where we worship, well, we say this is where we worship.

She's trying to take Jesus off track. Through a religious divide. And you'll find that a lot of people, when you speak to people about Jesus, they will use any trick they can to take you off track.

They will bring up some division in the church, they will bring up something about a Christian, they will bring up this, bring up that. Don't be surprised by it, that's what they do, that's what this woman is doing.

She's trying to take Jesus off track, because it's beginning to get uncomfortable. And we will find that as well, and I'm sure you know it often, that people, when you've spoken to people about the straight away they come in with this, haha, but what about this and what about that?

[26 : 14] That's not the issue just now, and Jesus is not going to be sidetracked. Because you notice what Jesus says, the hour is when true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth.

And that's what Jesus, that's, so it's wonderful the way that Jesus is working. And so there's this growing awareness, it's growing, it's growing, it's growing.

And then it comes to the point, and she says, you know, she said the woman says, I know that the Messiah is coming, which is called Christ. And when he comes, he will, this is what she says, he will tell us all things.

And what Jesus said then is so simple, I that speak unto thee am he. This is me. And all of a sudden the woman realizes, what I said was, when the Christ comes, he'll tell us all things.

Here's this man, and he's just told me all things, and now he says it's the Christ, it all came together. And there's this wonderful realization in her, this is the Messiah.

[27 : 25] And you know the impact and the effect on it is wonderful, because here's a woman, right, who has come in the heat of the day when nobody will be around.

She doesn't want to see anybody, she doesn't want to confront anybody, she doesn't want to be seen by anybody. So that's why she's come now. All of a sudden when Jesus comes into her heart, what does she do?

she runs to tell everybody. The woman who didn't want to see anybody or meet anybody is now running to speak to everybody. Is that not the transforming power of Jesus?

And that's what Jesus does in our lives as well. And you know, you might look back in your life and you might say to yourself, you might be naturally quite a shy person and you say to yourself, you know that you might be here tonight and that might be holding you back from ever becoming or from putting your trust or taking that step in faith.

And you're saying to yourself, I could never really witness for Christ. If I ever become a follower of Jesus, I'll do so in the background. I could never stand up publicly for Jesus.

[28 : 49] I could never, you know, this church is full of people, Christians, office bearers, Sunday school teachers, leaders, ministers, who once thought like that.

What changed that? Jesus. You trust him and he will take you on. He enables you to do what you don't think you can do.

You think it's way beyond you. Well, that's what happened when this woman's life, and you know, she was very clever, this woman, because when she ran back into the city, she told them and she started declaring, then, come, she said, see a man which told me all things that ever I did.

Is not this the Christ? She didn't say, this is the Christ. She put a question over it. If she had said to everybody, I have found the Christ, people who said, oh, listen to her.

But she put the question back into them. I think it could be the Christ. Oh, we better go and find this out for ourselves. This is quite clever.

[29 : 59] So she didn't tell them, I have found him, go and see. But she said, this could be him, which leaves room for them themselves to go and to make this discovery.

And so away the people are all heading out, flooding out. And then the disciples come back and they couldn't get over that Jesus was talking to this woman.

And then they began in verse 31 urging Jesus to eat. And he's saying to them, they say in verse 31, master eat, but he said to them, I have meat to eat that you know not of.

And the disciples are scratching their heads and they're saying, who gave him something to eat? And then Jesus goes on to tell them very simply, and it's lovely what he says. He said, my meat is to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work.

In other words, Jesus is saying, this is why I came. What is just happening here, the hungry Jesus, the thirsty Jesus, the tired Jesus is no longer any of these things.

[31 : 08] Why? Because he is energized with the work of what he is doing in saving souls. You know, we can't go down and go exactly where Jesus is.

But you know, we too have been energized under the gospel. Can you think back to times when you very reluctantly because say maybe in a midweek or something you are really tired and you have said to yourself, you know, I don't know if I can go out, I'm so tired.

And you kind of struggle to go out. But you know, it was one of these services and the Lord was there. There was a presence. And as you were sat under the word, there was a power in the word.

What happened? Tiredness vanished. You became completely energized, revitalized, refreshed. And that's what the Spirit of God can do to us.

And so we find that Jesus is being fulfilled in what is happening here. And we've always got to remember that there is great rejoicing in heaven over every sinner that comes in repentance.

[32 : 24] You know, this is the joy that was set before Jesus. This is why he endured the cross. But just as we conclude, there's sermons, and I'm sure you've heard any amount of sermons in different parts of this chapter, because there's so much in it.

But Jesus then says, because you're seeing all these Samaritans coming out, and he says in verse 35, Say not ye that are yet four months, and in comes the harvest.

Behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white or ready to harvest. And as Jesus is seeing all these Samaritans coming out, with a hunger, with a need, he's saying to the disciples, look, you're blinkered, you're blinkered with prejudices you can't see.

There is a harvest field of souls, precious, never dying souls, ready to be saved. You know, Jesus is saying the same to us tonight.

And you know, we so often write off people the Jews had written off these Samaritans. I'm quite sure that if you had said, great man and all the John, the John, the Apostle John wore, oh yes, later on, further down the road, he would have looked at it differently.

[33 : 42] But then, and Peter and James, and they would say, look, look at all these lovely people ready to be saved. They say, whoa, hey, no, no, no, no, no. These are Samaritans.

I'm not going to have any dealings with them. Jesus said, no, that's not the way you think. These are precious, never dying souls. And the fields are white, they're ready to harvest.

Are we seeing it like that? Because there's gospel opportunities all around. We might write off many people in our head, in our heart. I might say, oh, you know, there's no point in saying anything to him or to her.

We don't know. Church is full of people that were written off. But they're now Christians. So we should always be ready to speak a word when the opportunity is given to us.

And let us pray. That's one of the things that you can do, is pray that the Lord will come in power in this community and that he will touch people's hearts and people's lives.

[34 : 46] That a light will begin to come on in different homes, homes tonight that are in darkness, that a spiritual light, the light, the saving power of the Lord will begin to work in people's lives.

Because sometimes we can become, we'll say, oh, what's the point? The Lord is saying the fields are white and ready to harvest. May we have that vision, may we have that prayer within our hearts.

Let us pray. Lord, our God, we ask that you will bless us tonight. We give thanks that as we come under your word, that you show us so many things.

It's important for us to lay hold upon and to grasp. You are a wonderful God and you are so patient with us. And we pray that you will continue to be so.

We pray, Lord, that you will bless this congregation richly. Lord, that great days were yet to come upon us and that you will enrich the lives of every single person here.

[35 : 47] Watch over us, we pray, take us to our home safely, do us good, forgiving us our sin, in Jesus' name we ask it. Amen. We're going to conclude singing in Psalm 126.

And indeed, if we had carried on, as I say, there's so much to say in this chapter about Jesus then went on to say about the sowing and the reaping, and one sows and another reaps.

And he said at the end of the day that both the one that soweth and the one that reaps, that they will rejoice together. You know, sowing is a difficult work.

Because if you're saying to yourself, you've got to prepare the field, you've got to clear it, you've got to sow it, you've got to water it, there's so much you've got to do. It's hard work.

And so it is spiritually. And the Lord is saying that sometimes there will be sowers and there will be reapers. And that's always the way it's been in the church. Sometimes somebody will come in and it will be a reaping ministry.

[36 : 52] Other people, it will be a sowing ministry. And we don't know, maybe seed is being sown tonight. We hope and pray it is. And we believe that every time the gospel is preached, that seed is being sown.

So that's what this Psalm 126 is about because it talks about the sowing in tears and often it's hard work. But it's a reaping in joy. Psalm 126, we sing the whole Psalm.

When Zion's bondage God turned back, as men had dreamed were we, then filled with laughter was our mouth, our tongue with melody. They among the heathen said, The Lord great things for them hath wrought.

The Lord hath done great things for us, whence joy to us is brought. As streams of water in the south, our bondage Lord recall, who sow in tears a reaping time of joy and joy they shall, that man who bearing precious seed and going forth doth mourn, he doubtless, bringing back his sheaves rejoicing, shall return.

126, when Zion's bondage God turned back. something would Galaxy when Zion's bondage for My on the osobest made up sigh Milled with Me fill dua■ the love ter laughter was around our tongue with melody in the heaven said the Lord great things are there my Lord my Lord hath done great things for us where joy to us is brought as dreams of water in the sky our bond will be all so in tears the reaping time of joy and joy they shall the man to bearing precious seed and going for the

[39 : 48] Lord he now has bringing back his she rejoicing shall return now may the grace mercy and peace of God the Father Son and Holy Spirit rest and abide upon each one of you now and forevermore Amen