

Jesus and the Woman of Samaria

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[0 : 00] John chapter 4. John chapter 4. John chapter 4.

Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples and 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, that was about noon. There came a woman of Samaria 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?

[1 : 27] For Jews have 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, as 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. 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 water. Jesus said to her, go, call your husband and come here.

[2 : 41] The woman answered him, I have no husband. Jesus said to her, you are right in saying I have no husband. For you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband.

What you have said is true. The woman said to him, sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is a 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 worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in 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 that Messiah is coming, he who is called Christ.

[3 : 59] When he comes, he will tell us all things. Jesus said to her, I who speak to you am he. Amen.

And may God bless to us this reading of his own holy word. Amen. We are going to sing again in Psalm 107. The tune is Peter Shum.

We are going to sing verses 1 to 9, Psalm 107. And we will stand to sing. That is on page 143.

June Peter Shum. Oh, thank the Lord, for he is good. His love endures always. Let those whom God redeemed say this, those rescued by his grace.

He saved them from their enemies and brought them from the lands, from east and west, from north and south, safe from oppressing hands. Some wandered in the desert wastes, not finding any way to reach a city where they might obtain a place to stay.

[5 : 06] Their life and strength were ebbing fast in thirst and emptiness. Then in despair they sought the Lord who saved them from distress. Straight was the path he led them on, a city to attain.

So for the Lord's unfailing love, let them give thanks again. And for the awesome deeds of power which he for them achieves. For hungry souls he fills with good, the thirsty he relieves.

These verses are Psalm 107, 1-9, the tune is Peter Shum. Oh, thank the Lord, for he is good. His love endures always.

His love endures always. He art, O hatte■■■■ the ground, it ■■■■■ is most shaman. His chosen soul, the■■ia of earth, a thriving mud, be ■■■ earth, thebig dese also.

Today's time is better. Here's a chorus here. How youngignner was savant and what he did? He consejered their love, he waited for the two men to come to do that, and he waited for one another man to get the certo healer. The West of Northampton, take from all pressing hands.

[6 : 28] A wonder in the desert which not find in any way.

Through each a city where they might opt in a place to stay. Their life and strength, their heading past, in first of empty hands.

The English buildings of the Lord, who saved them from this place. Through the port of the valley, the north, and city to attain.

So for the Lord's unfailing love, let them give thanks again. And for the awesome deeds of fire, which he for them achieved.

For hungry souls he felled with you, the thirsty he relieved. Amen. And let's turn again just for a little to the chapter we read in John's Gospel, John chapter 4.

[8 : 03] And just looking at this section that we read from verse 1 to verse 26. If we're going to read any part of it, we read where Jesus, when they came to this well, there came verse 7, there came a woman of Samaria to draw water.

Jesus said to her, give me a drink, for his disciples had gone away into the city. The Samaritan woman said to him, how is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?

So on. One of the wonderful things about Jesus is that he was always the master of the situation. He always seized the opportunity.

And I'm sure as we look back over our lives, and if you're here as a believer today, I'm sure it's something that often fills you with regret, is how often you've failed to grasp the opportunity, where there's this opportunity to witness for Jesus.

A door has been opened and somehow you just missed it. And afterwards you say, that was a really golden opportunity I had, and I didn't take it.

[9 : 18] I think we've all found ourselves in that situation. Well, it was never so for Jesus. He was always the master of the situation, always able to grasp the opportunity.

And John is showing us one of the wonderful things about Jesus' character and about his passion, is of how he deals with such different people.

For instance, you have in chapter 3, remember how we were looking at Nicodemus. And Nicodemus was one of the most righteous, upright, morally upstanding people that you could ever meet.

If in the community, if you wanted to say, can I show you a good man, a man who was so upright, who was so correct, who was so principled, in every way a religious leader, let's look at this man Nicodemus.

That's the kind of person Nicodemus was. And then you look at this woman, and this woman had loads of issues. She had an incredible amount of baggage. She was somebody who had questionable morals at the very best.

[10 : 27] And yet Jesus is able to deal with Nicodemus and with this woman with ease, and able to put them both at ease.

That was one of the wonderful things about Jesus. But he also, one of the things that chapter 3 and chapter 4 both highlight to us, is that both Nicodemus and this woman, the upright, upstanding, morally top of the drawer man, needed Jesus just as much as this woman, who as we say had questionable morals and so many issues and baggage and such like.

Both need Jesus just the same. And that's one of the lessons people find very hard to understand. Because there are a lot of people who think that they can look at, they look at some people in society and some people and they say, oh, they certainly need to get converted.

You know, it's possible there might be some, there might even be somebody in here today. And that's the way you're thinking. And you're saying to yourself, oh, I'll tell you, I can think of quite a few people in this town and they certainly need Jesus.

But you somehow think that because you've been coming to church and because of your background and because your moral standing and all these things, that somehow it's all right that you're okay with Jesus.

[11 : 54] Well, unless we come to our living, personal relationship with Jesus, unless we come and accept him by faith, then we're lost.

It doesn't matter how nice or how good or how many privileges we have, unless we take these privileges and accept Jesus, then we are lost.

And that's one of the difficult things for people to understand. That's why Jesus said to the Pharisees, to the religious leaders, who were religious people through and through, they were so upright and so outwardly, morally upstanding, he said to them, you know this, the tax gatherers and those prostitutes, all these people, they're going to bypass you into the kingdom because these were people who realized they had a need and they saw Jesus as the one who could meet that need.

Whereas the Pharisees, they didn't realize they had a need. They thought they were good enough. An awful lot of them were like the man that Jesus spoke about in the temple and his prayer was all about how good he was.

He actually said to the Lord, I thank you that I am not like other men are. Isn't that extraordinary? So Jesus is showing here that it doesn't matter our background or where we've come from or who we are, we all need to have him.

[13 : 27] And so we find here that it's one of the, I suppose, one of the most beautiful sections of God's word. We find this conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman.

And it's quite, it's a remarkable conversation. Now, in the day that we live in, we cannot understand just how remarkable it is. Because our culture, thankfully, is one where men and women meet one another as equals.

And we, it doesn't matter where we can meet in the street or in houses or shops or whatever. And we talk and we chat and everything just meet as equals.

And that's wonderful. And that's what we've been brought up with. But that's not how it is in many parts, even today of this world. And it certainly was not how it was in the days of Jesus.

I don't think people have come to understand how liberating the gospel of Jesus Christ is. Because it is through the gospel and through the teachings of Christ, that was the greatest liberation that women experienced.

[14 : 36] Because women were unbelievably, we don't understand how downtrodden. Because this woman would have been an uneducated. Women didn't, in this, at 2,000 years ago, they didn't receive education.

They were looked down on as a second-class citizen. Do you know how it was with the, do you know what the rabbis were saying? I'm going to quote here. One should not talk with a woman on the street.

Not even with his own wife. Certainly not someone else's wife because of the gossip of men. And another rabbi wrote, it is forbidden to give a woman any greeting.

That was the day that Jesus lived in. That's the way the rabbis looked. We can't understand that. And that's what makes this conversation that Jesus is having with this woman quite remarkable.

That's why when the disciples came back, it tells us they had gone into the city to buy food. They marveled when they saw Jesus having this conversation.

[15 : 41] Because Jesus, having this conversation with this woman, was breaking every barrier. And he was pushing aside every taboo. Jesus, and that's what he did.

Because there was nobody who honored the law like Jesus, God's law. He honored it. He kept it. He lived perfectly by God's law. But he had no place or time for all the man-made rules which were added on to God's law.

And had become a burden and a hindrance. And had blinded people to the truth. You see, if we add on, or if any religion adds on, it becomes a hindrance and a block and a blinding so that people aren't able to see the all essentials of Jesus.

And so that's one of the things that Jesus was always doing, was stripping away all these things so that the focus was always to be upon himself. And so we find that Jesus is talking to this Samaritan woman.

And again, it is quite remarkable because the Jews and the Samaritans didn't meet. We read there that's what this woman actually said. That for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

[17 : 05] You see, the Jews looked on the Samaritans as a mixed race. The Samaritans were partly Jew, partly Gentile. They were part of the northern tribes of Israel that had been taken away during the Assyrian captivity.

And they had intermarried with Gentiles so that they were, as we say, a really mixed group of people. And so the Jews looked on the Samaritans as racially inferior, as culturally inferior.

They looked on them as the religion as being way off. And they just, they hated them. And nobody, the Jews, had no dealings with the Samaritans.

That's how it was. Now the Samaritans, of course, they only, they adhered to the first five books of the Bible, Genesis to Deuteronomy. And they were looking for the Messiah.

This woman talks about that. But the Messiah, and they were basing it upon a passage in Deuteronomy, they were looking for the Messiah to restore the true worship, to bring back true belief.

[18 : 09] But they believed the Messiah would be a kind of a Moses-type character. And they did worship God, but it was a very mixed way of worship. And they had lost, they had lost the way.

They had lost the worship of the true God in a proper sense. So there was this hatred of the Jews with the Samaritans. But we find that Jesus, this is what it tells us, and he had to pass through Samaria.

Remember, he was up in Jerusalem. Remember, there was going up for the feast, and then there was the cleansing of the temple and so on. And now he's making his way back up north, back up to Galilee. And it tells us there, in verse 4, he had to pass through Samaria.

Well, he didn't have to. It was the shortest route. But it wasn't the route that most of the Jews took, because they would avoid going that way. They would prefer taking the longer route, so that they wouldn't have to go through Samaria.

But Jesus had to go through Samaria. He was keeping to a heavenly timetable. So, Jesus, remember, had come to seek and to save those who were lost.

[19 : 16] And in Samaria, there were people he was going to save, to begin with this woman. But it was going to multiply and multiply. See, God was at work.

God has his people everywhere. And God, this is what Jesus is doing. I just love the emphasis where it says, and he had to pass through Samaria.

And so, we find Jesus here in Samaria. And this is the Lord's guiding hand. And Jesus makes his way there, and he has this meeting with this woman.

Now, there are no chance meetings with the Lord. To us, a lot of the meetings that we have in life, they may just seem coincidences. And I'm sure as you look back over your life, many major things, big things happened on what may to you look like just a kind of a chance meeting.

But it was a meeting which opened a door or closed a door or turned things around and maybe had a huge impact on the rest of your life. And it was just this meeting.

[20 : 21] To you, it seemed kind of a casual meeting, a coincidental meeting. But it isn't. It wasn't. Because God's hand was on these things. And so it was for this woman here.

And we find in this chapter, again, we see very clearly the humanity of Jesus. Remember, that's God. He never slumbers nor sleeps. But here is Jesus, and he's in our nature.

No sin. But the effect of the fall on human nature was such that there's this tiredness and weariness and pain and all these things that we experience.

Jesus experienced all these things. Jesus experienced thirst. That's what he is. He's weary. We're told here that Jesus was weary. That's what it says in verse 6.

So Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. And in fact, he was so weary that he said that the disciples were going on in to buy food into the town.

[21 : 28] Now, I said, I'm staying here. So they went off. And you know, I actually think Jesus' influence upon them was so subtle. I don't think that if they had ever met with Jesus and had been with Jesus that they would have actually gone into the town to buy food.

Because the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. And I think it's even something of the way that Jesus had already begun to break down barriers. That they found themselves doing this very thing that they had gone in.

But anyway, here's Jesus and he's weary by the well. And this woman comes along to get water. And this well, of course, we read was quite a famous well.

It was a well that Jacob's well was there. So it was a well that was very much part of Samaritan life and very much part of Jewish life. And this woman comes at midday.

Now, nobody went for water. Going for water was an evening job. It was something that they would do maybe round about suppertime in the evening. In the height of the day and when the sun was blazing and you had to maybe carry water a distance.

[22 : 41] And it's obvious, too, that this woman, this well was a bit away from the town or the city. There were probably wells closer by. But this woman, because of who she was and kind of her past, I would imagine she was the kind of person who didn't, although attention was drawn to her because of her lifestyle, she was probably the source of, or I shouldn't say the source, but she would be the subject of a lot of gossip.

People would be talking about her. Because she had a very checkered past. She had five husbands. And the person that she was now with wasn't even a husband.

And so, when you look at it, she was somebody who, as we say, had obviously quite questionable morals. And she was saying to herself, well, I'll go for the water at midday because there won't be any, nobody goes for water at midday.

And I'll go there. And this will be a time where I'll be able to get away from all the funny looks from people. Because people, people no doubt were very critical of her.

But Jesus is there and he begins to, he initiates this conversation by asking her for a drink. And she's actually blown away by this.

[24 : 01] She couldn't, she couldn't understand how Jesus would ask her for a drink. Give me a drink, Jesus said. The Samaritan woman said to her, how is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?

Now, we've already mentioned how a religious man, a rabbi, and Jesus was a religious man. The religious men of the day, remember what we said?

They wouldn't even greet a woman in the street. Not even their own wife. And here is this religious man on his own with a woman that everybody talked about who had quite a history.

And he's there on his own. And she's a Samaritan woman. Every taboo of the day was being broken. And Jesus is speaking to her. Quite the thing.

And I think one of the beautiful things that we see here, and this was so characteristic of Jesus' life and his dealings with people, is that he never made people feel awkward.

[25 : 16] When Jesus was coming to deal graciously with somebody, yes, he would probe in, as he did with this woman. But he did it by way of compassion.

He did it gently. He did it graciously. Yes, he did it honestly. And he did it with a heart of love. And do you know, when you deal with people with a heart of love, people will soon know, this is a real deal.

This is real. There's something about love that disarms. You know, we can have all kinds of ideas about evangelism, and all kinds of ideas of dealing with people.

But do you know, unless we have a heart of love, unless we are driven by love, it is not going to succeed. We can turn people away. We can put people off so easily.

But if we have a heart of love, if we care for people, that's what's so important. You know, it's been said, and I believe this to be true.

[26 : 13] People want to know that we care before they care about what we know. Say that again.

People want to know that we care before they care about what we know. And that is so true.

Because so often we might say, you have this burning desire to tell people about Jesus and just go straight in. And we can actually put people off. But if we come and we show people, and we mean it.

It's not just, it's not, it can never be an act. Because people always see through an act. That was one of the things that drew people to Jesus.

That's why the outcasts, those that the rest of society had written off, that's why they were drawn to Jesus like a magnet. Because they knew he cared.

[27 : 11] It wasn't an act. He wasn't putting on a show. It was real. It was genuine. And love draws. Love conquers. And that was a wonderful thing about Jesus.

And as Jesus is dealing with this woman, he's dealing with her in love. And he's breaking down all her barriers. And he's putting her at ease. Because this woman wouldn't have felt at ease to begin with.

Because she'll be saying to herself, what's going on here? This shouldn't be happening. Even she is saying, this shouldn't be happening. But Jesus disarms her and puts her at ease.

And as we say, love and gentleness, it will always come through. And Jesus begins to draw out of the woman. And you know how he works the conversation around.

Jesus loves to save. And this is we find Jesus at work, saving. And although we may be moving on to what we'll see the next time we come.

[28 : 16] You'll notice what it says in verse 31 and 32. Meanwhile, the disciples were urging him, saying, Rabbi, eat. But he said to them, I have food to eat that you do not know about.

See, when the disciples went away, Jesus was tired. He was hungry and thirsty. When they came back, he was a different person. Didn't have anything to eat. And they couldn't understand.

They were saying, oh, somebody must have given him food. No. Jesus was doing what he came to do to save. Jesus had been saving a woman.

And this was the joy that was set before him. This is why he came. This is why he endured the cross. Jesus was at work. And this gave him a joy so that when the disciples came back and they were giving him food to eat, he said, I don't eat it.

Because he had been so thrilled in his own heart. Remember, my friend, that there's joy in the heart of the Savior in every person who comes to faith in him.

[29 : 18] So here he's dealing with this woman who's spiritually empty. She found nothing in her religion. She found nothing in her husband's. It would appear that every door that opened for her and she went through, that it ended up down some empty, dark, bleak alley that took her nowhere and left her void and empty.

And Jesus begins asking the woman about the most basic things in her life. And then he turns the conversation around to water. And he says, you know, he's using the whole thing about water here.

And he says to her very simply, you know, he says, I have water. And if you drink of this water, you will never thirst again. And the woman said, oh, I would love to have, cutting through all that's going on here.

And I would love, she said, to have some of that water. And of course, Jesus, as we're saying to the young folk, was speaking about himself. Now, you and I know that unless we have water, we have no life.

Life and water go together. And so it is with Jesus. And if you are here today without Jesus Christ as Savior, right now you do not have spiritual life.

[30 : 33] You are dead spiritually. Let me tell you this. If you are interested today, if there is within your heart a sort of a drawing, and you're saying to yourself, this is appealing.

I find a drawing in my soul. My friend, don't go against that. That's God's Spirit. God's Spirit is striving with you.

Remember what God says, my Spirit shall not always strive with man. God's Spirit is striving with you today. Please do not block that work. Because we're told in the Scripture, we can grieve the Spirit, we can quench the Spirit.

But rather say to the Lord, Lord, a lot of things I don't understand, but I really want you. Jesus in your heart and your life will be like fresh, running, living water.

Constantly flowing. That doesn't mean that every day you're going to be so invigorated and so lively, because as Christians we go through times where maybe that's not the case.

[31 : 41] But the fact is that that living water, once Jesus comes into our life, he comes in forever. He doesn't come in part time. He doesn't come in for a while. He comes in forever.

And that's why he says to the woman, If you take of me, or take of this living water, you will never thirst again. And that means very simply, you will have this eternal life.

You will have it. And this woman was ready to hear it, because her life had been filled with disappointments. You know, maybe there's somebody in here like that today.

And your life is filled with disappointments. You feel let down. Things that you built your dreams around, they've collapsed. And life is sore.

It's difficult. Well, Jesus says, look, I'm here for you. I'm here for you. I will help you in your hurt and so on.

[32 : 41] And so Jesus is probing into this woman's life. And he refuses to be sidetracked. You know, this woman is trying to sidetrack him. You know, if you enter into discussion with people about the Christian faith, one of the things that they will do their utmost is try and sidetrack you, take you off track.

And you know one of the things that this woman does, she tries to bring up the age-old thing, the old argument about religious division.

Have you ever come across that? Have you ever tried to speak to somebody about the Christian faith? And you've hardly started, and they'll start bringing up all the different churches, and they'll start taking up all the splits, and they'll take up this person and that person.

It's a masterstroke. Well, that's nothing new. That's exactly what this woman was doing to Jesus. And she said to Jesus, Oh, you worship one way, we worship another.

You worship in one place, we worship in another place. You know, this is what is going on. See, the woman says she begins to understand that Jesus, Oh, he's a prophet. She sees that.

[33 : 58] She said, I perceive, I understand. I can see you're a prophet, because Jesus is running through her past life. And that blew the woman away. And she realized this is not an ordinary man.

This is a prophet. But then, as Jesus is really homing in, she says, Oh, I perceive that you're a prophet. But our fathers worshipped on this mountain. But you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.

You see, she's bringing up the religious divide. We've met that so often. Often, when I've spoken to people, or tried to speak to somebody, or have a discussion with somebody, invariably, they come up with that.

The religious divide. Well, see what Jesus does. Jesus doesn't enter into that with her. He doesn't touch it. I say.

You know what's going to happen, he said? It's neither the way you're talking about, nor even the way the Jews are talking about it. You say it's on this mountain. Jews say it's in Jerusalem.

[35 : 05] But I'm telling you, it's going to come the time. And the time has now come. You worship that neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, will you worship the Father.

And that's exactly where we are. And what Jesus is focusing this woman upon is himself. And my friend, see when you're dealing with people, when you're discussing things with people, and they take you down the road of division or whatever, don't go down that road with them.

Keep on Christ. Keep on Christ. It's the only way. Otherwise, you'll be sidetracked, and you can spend hours and hours in needless, worthless, empty discussion.

That's really going nowhere. Because division never leads anywhere positive. Focus upon Christ. And that's what Jesus is teaching us here. And he's a master of that.

He was never sidetracked. He wouldn't be taken off. Of course. And so, bit by bit, Jesus brings this woman to talk about the Messiah.

[36 : 13] And the woman said to her, I know. I know the Messiah is coming. He was called Christ. When he comes, he will tell us all things. Jesus said to her, I who speak to you, am he.

You know, it's quite amazing. You would think that when Jesus was going to make the great declaration as to who he really was and is.

That it would be to a packed audience in the synagogue with all the religious hierarchy present. All the rabbis would be seated down, all the chief priests and all the religious rulers.

And he would say, I am the Messiah. But no, it's at a well in a part of the land that the Jews hated to a woman who was ostracized, really, by her community.

And he's making his great declaration, I am the Christ. See what Jesus is doing? Because some people think Christianity and salvation is only for, it's only if you've got a church background.

[37 : 32] It's only if you're this type of person. Jesus is saying, no, it's for everybody. I want to reveal myself to everybody. And that's what Jesus wants to do today is reveal himself to you.

And if you've never seen Jesus as Savior, I ask you, right here, right now, say to Jesus, Lord, open my eyes spiritually to see that I might be as persuaded as that woman in Samaria was, that you are the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the living God, who has come to seek and to save those who are lost.

Today, Lord, I am lost. And you're the only one who can save me. Will you save me? Let us pray. O Lord, our God, we give thanks for great gospel truths and we pray that this salvation that is in Jesus Christ might be the salvation we love and that we look to and trust in.

We pray that we might be blessed, each one of us with spiritual and temporal blessings. Guide us in all that we're about. Lead us in the way of truth. Be merciful to us and take us to our home safely.

In Jesus' name we ask all. Amen. Our concluding psalm is the 23rd psalm in the Scottish Psalter.

[38 : 58] I'm going to sing the whole psalm. Psalm 23. The Lord's my shepherd I'll not want.

He makes me down to lie in pastures green. He leadeth me the quiet waters by. My soul he doth restore again and me to walk doth make within the paths of righteousness even for his own name's sake.

Hatho I walk in death's dark vale yet will I fear none ill for thou art with me and thy rod and staff me comfort still. To the end goodness and mercy all my life shall surely follow me and in God's house forevermore my dwelling place shall be.

The tulis in Columba page 229 Psalm 23. The Lord's my shepherd. The Lord's my shepherd I'll not want He makes me down to lie in pastures green He leadeth me the quiet waters high But solely that we jone again Happy to walk the day Within the arms of righteousness

He's not his own will save If all I walk in death's dark vale yet will I fear not ill For thou art with me beyond thy thoughts And stand me comfort still My given love was furnishing In presence of my Lord by heaven or onda and thang and shaman

[41 : 55] Believe of my life All my life shall surely follow me.

And in God's land forevermore I dwelling place shall be.

Now may the grace and mercy and peace of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit rest and abide upon each one of you now and forevermore. Amen.

Amen.