

Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

John 4:1-45 Part III

INTRODUCTION:

This morning, we are going to dive into one of the most popular and revealing passages of Scripture about Jesus. In this text, we are going to see cultural clashes, gender clashes, religious clashes, ethical clashes, and most of all, we are going to see the example of how Jesus dealt with all these matters. This is one of the most encouraging and intriguing passages from within Scripture in dealing with people.

Many Christians today do evangelism a bit suspect. Many try to sneak up on the individual, while others bring down the hammer of God's judgment (according to their own ideas) with their own force. What we are about to see in this text for the next couple of Sundays is a clinic dealing with people you have nothing in common regarding the Gospel. Jesus gives us great insight if we only read closely and pay attention.

John 4:1-42

When Jesus knew that the Pharisees heard He was making and baptizing more disciples than John (though Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were), He left Judea and went again to Galilee. He had to travel through Samaria, so He came to a town of Samaria called Sychar near the property that Jacob had given his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, worn out from His journey, sat down at the well. It was about six in the evening.

A woman of Samaria came to draw water.

"Give Me a drink," Jesus said to her, for His disciples had gone into town to buy food.

"How is it that You, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" she asked Him. For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.

Jesus answered, "If you knew the gift of God, and who is saying to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would ask Him, and He would give you living water."

"Sir," said the woman, "You don't even have a bucket, and the well is deep. So where do You get this 'living water'? You aren't greater than our father Jacob, are You? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and livestock."

Jesus said, "Everyone who drinks from this water will get thirsty again. But whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will never get thirsty again—

ever! In fact, the water I will give him will become a well of water springing up within him for eternal life.”

“Sir,” the woman said to Him, “give me this water so I won’t get thirsty and come here to draw water.”

“Go call your husband,” He told her, “and come back here.”

“I don’t have a husband,” she answered.

“You have correctly said, ‘I don’t have a husband,’ ” Jesus said. “For you’ve had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true.”

“Sir,” the woman replied, “I see that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, yet you Jews say that the place to worship is in Jerusalem.” Jesus told her, “Believe Me, woman, an hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know. We worship what we do know, because salvation is from the Jews. But an hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. Yes, the Father wants 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” (who is called Christ).

“When He comes, He will explain everything to us.”

“I am He,” Jesus told her, “the One speaking to you.”

Just then His disciples arrived, and they were amazed that He was talking with a woman. Yet no one said, “What do You want?” or “Why are You talking with her?”

Then the woman left her water jar, went into town, and told the men, “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could this be the Messiah?” They left the town and made their way to Him.

In the meantime the disciples kept urging Him, “Rabbi, eat something.”

But He said, “I have food to eat that you don’t know about.”

The disciples said to one another, “Could someone have brought Him something to eat?”

“My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work,” Jesus told them. “Don’t you say, ‘There are still four more months, then comes the harvest’? Listen to what I’m telling you: Open your eyes and look at the fields, for they are ready for harvest. The reaper is already receiving pay and gathering fruit for eternal life, so the sower and reaper can rejoice together. For in this case the saying is true: ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap what you didn’t labor for; others have labored, and you have benefited from their labor.”

Now many Samaritans from that town believed in Him because of what the woman said when she testified, “He told me everything I ever did.” Therefore, when the Samaritans came to Him, they asked Him to stay with them, and He stayed there two days. Many more believed because of what He said. And they told the woman, “We no longer believe because of what you said, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this really is the Savior of the world.”¹

This morning, we are going to be doing some background work. I hope as we study John 4:1-42 we learn from the text, but we also learn how to approach a text. This background work will give be our focus today.

A Seeking Savior

- A. One begins to understand why “he had to travel through Samaria.”
- B. We live in a day and time where the divides are many, and they are deep, and we use them to isolate and vilify.
- C. Jesus came to stand within the division.
- D. Jesus came to bring unity through truth, not just for unity’s sake.
- E. There are a lot of people who can bring unity, but it is at the expense of truth.
- F. True unity is powerful because it stands in the truth, and the truth can bridge gaps if both parties in the division are open to the truth.
- G. The major issue in our society is that we see the truth as a product of our own lives rather than objective from God.
- H. Jesus came to meet her where she was in our brokenness. We often say this, but we forget that brokenness is the product of division. For example, if a pot is broken, you can tell its brokenness by how it is divided.

¹ [*The Holy Bible: Holman Christian standard version*](#). (Jn 4:1–42). (2009). Holman Bible Publishers.

Luke 19:10

For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost.”

Jesus Pursues The Lost by Steve Brown

Jesus is persistent in his pursuit. I love C.S. Lewis’ comment that when he received Christ, he was the most reluctant convert in all of England. Lewis said that he was being chased. Every time Lewis sat down to write, he sensed a presence behind him: “To say that I was seeking God is like saying that a mouse was searching for a cat.”

Little Dickie was a boy in the camp where my wife Anna and I worked one summer. He was one of the meanest kids I’ve ever known. They didn’t allow spanking at the camp and, after meeting Dickie, I understood why. I would have killed him! My wife, though, decided that no matter what Dickie did, she was going to love him...and she did. Anna pursued him with her love. On the last day of camp, Dickie gave my wife a flower. It was like saying, “I give up. Your love has won.”

The Father is like that in his pursuit of us. If you are his, your running is to no avail. You are simply wasting your time and energy. Give up. A man once told me, “I don’t like you very much, but I’m determined to like you until we’re friends...if that’s the last thing I do.” The Shepherd never gives up. That is why you feel guilty, why you can’t sleep at night, why you just can’t turn your back. He will pursue you until you give up and you are his.

The Conversation

- A. The context of how Jesus does “evangelism” in this passage is within a conversation.
- B. Christ is not interested in statistics but in people.
- C. Notice that Jesus didn’t jump straight to her sinfulness or who He is. He asked a simple question to see if a conversation could be held.
- D. He simply asked her a reasonable question because he was thirsty, they were at a well, and she had a bucket.
- E. Think, as I have said before, how many of us have been taught to do evangelism. Asking questions such as “Do you know where you are going when you die?”

- F. Most people don't need to be constantly confirmed about how sinful their actions have been. They need to find someone who is actually concerned for them and from that concern reveals God's grace.
- G. As we shall see in this text, people will allow you to discuss difficult issues about their lives once they know you are in it for them and not to patronize or simply prove a point.
- H. Jesus naturally finds common ground and does not approach with some cooky gimmick or sales pitch.
- I. He asks her for a drink which is a common question at a well. We need to learn how to be able to enter conversations using the contexts we are given, and not become inauthentic in trying to start up a spiritual conversation.
- J. More than an angle, we need honesty and authenticity of concern.
- K. I'm sure after reading the text, Jesus had a lot of perceptions concerning the situation, which led to how he navigated the conversation. We must learn to be aware. Not everyone is ready for the whole bale of hay that we want to give them because we feel confident in what we know.
- L. When Jesus did bring up the spiritual, he made a statement, "If you knew the gift of God, and who is saying to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would ask Him, and He would give you living water."² This was a statement to make her think and open her up within herself. He didn't go for the jugular as I have seen some do in "drawing the net."
- M. His statement put her in a place where she was intrigued to engage because she replied, "You don't even have a bucket..." Now the conversation is off to the races.
- N. Notice how she began to drive the conversation.
- O. Notice how the conversation is gentle but with direction. Not forceful and haphazard.

² [The Holy Bible: Holman Christian standard version](#). (Jn 4:10). (2009). Holman Bible Publishers.

- P. Jesus' response back gives just enough to pique her interest, producing more questions from her.
- Q. When a person begins to ask you questions, it reveals their investment in the conversation. If they answer in simple, short declarative statements, they may be waiting for you to leave. Sometimes at that point, it is best to leave, knowing a seed is planted, and possibly the chance will arrive to return later.
- R. If questions are being raised understand that interest has been raised but also your responsibility to the person in giving an answer.
- S. Jesus answers her questions as they arise for her, some practical to later theological.
- T. Jesus went at her pace but always with a direction. Jesus simply helped her to see herself, which helped her see her spiritual bankruptcy.
- U. Be aware of the conversation in that sometimes, if we are not aware, we will speak past each other. As Jesus begins to address spiritual thirst, the woman is still considering her physical thirst. She, as I have said before, is still in the practical.
- V. We will notice the evolution of the conversation from how the woman sees Jesus.
- First, she sees Jesus as suspicious.
 - Second, she sees Jesus as intriguing.
 - Third, she sees Jesus at least as a prophet.
 - Finally, she sees Jesus as the Messiah.
- W. We must give people space to come to believe in Jesus. It may take one conversation or years. We must provide space for the Holy Spirit to soften the soul and bring the person to Himself.
- X. Jesus surpasses traditions and theological differences and brings her to Himself.
- Y. We must learn to have conversations that count.

CONCLUSION

Charles Spurgeon

A winner of souls must first be a weeper of souls”

We must learn to be “incarnational” in our approach. Meaning that we are to meet people where they are, not where they should be or where we think they should be. That is the way of Jesus.