

## The Gospel of John – Living Water

Today we're going to continue this series by looking at John 4:1-42. This scripture says:

- (1) When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,
- (2) (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)
- (3) He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee.
- (4) And he must needs go through Samaria.
- (5) Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.
- (6) 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.
- (7) There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.
- (8) (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)
- (9) 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? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.
- (10) 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.
- (11) The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?
- (12) Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?
- (13) Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:
- (14) But whosoever drinketh 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.
- (15) The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

- (16) Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.
- (17) The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:
- (18) For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.
- (19) The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.
- (20) Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.
- (21) Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.
- (22) Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.
- (23) But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.
- (24) God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.
- (25) The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.
- (26) Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.
- (27) And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?
- (28) The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,
- (29) Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?
- (30) Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.
- (31) In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.
- (32) But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.

- (33) Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat?
- (34) Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.
- (35) Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.
- (36) And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.
- (37) And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.
- (38) I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.
- (39) And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.
- (40) So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days.
- (41) And many more believed because of his own word;
- (42) And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

OK, I realize that was a rather lengthy Scripture, and we're probably not going to be able to cover ever little bit of it in detail. I think, though, that this is a story where we must look at the whole or we can't understand any of it.

With that being said let's first talk about a little history. After the reign of Solomon the kingdom of Israel was divided, with the northern kingdom being Israel and consisting of all but the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which made up the nation called Judea. Israel, which was also called Samaria, fell into total apostacy. They set up a worship of God separate from Jerusalem, but it was more of a way to stick it in the eyes of Judea than it was true worship.

In Christ's day a Jew looked down upon a Samaritan to the point that they wouldn't even talk to them. That's what is so intriguing about Christ's parable of the Good Samaritan – the one who was thought to be no better than a dog was the one who was the neighbor.

In any event Jesus chose this opportunity to deliver the message to the Samaritans that the Messiah had come. This poor adulterous woman I'm sure thought that she was cared for only for her body. Having been married so many times, and now living with a man,

she had most likely been used as a plaything by the men in her life. She likely felt trapped in life. It seems, though, that she found something different about this man at the well. He wasn't looking upon her physical beauty with lust as other men did. He was treating her with respect, although she didn't feel that she deserved it. It seems, though, that she was questioning his motives. She kept thinking that she was going to catch him in something, but instead he revealed to her “everything that she had ever done.”

It is at this point when he really had her attention. She knew that she was a sinner. She knew that the Jews worshiped in Jerusalem, but that the Samaritans worshiped in the mountain. She couldn't understand, though, how Jesus knew so much about her. Jesus then tells her that it isn't where you worship that matters. It is the condition of the heart. We cannot worship Jesus in ritual – we have to worship him in spirit and in truth.

But what does that mean? Well, let's take the last part first. We know that Jesus Christ is the Truth. We know that the truth is revealed in the word of God. We can safely say, then, that anything that doesn't line up with the word of God is not true worship. Ritualistic worship, for instance, doesn't line up with the word of God. Worship that changes the character of God doesn't line up with the word of God. Worship that denies the present working of the Holy Ghost “even until the end of the world” doesn't line up with the word of God. The list could go on.

The other part of the equation is spirit. You see, the spirit is the innermost being of man. The spirit is really what determines who we are. When our spirit is at enmity with God we commit sin – we cannot worship him. It is only when our spirit is lined up right that we can truly worship God. When our spirit is in order it will be following the direction of the Spirit of God.

Jesus then used this opportunity to teach the disciples a lesson in evangelism. You see, it was time to reach out to those who were in need of a Savior. Today the harvest is still ripe, and there are too many laborers who are unwilling to enter the field. Too many people are ashamed to take the stand that this poor woman took and go and tell the town about the Messiah, the Savior.

What about you today? Are you willing to tell others about what Christ has done for you? Are you being a good witness? Are you worshipping God in Spirit and in truth?

I see that I need to bring this lesson to a close. I do ask that if you have any questions about this lesson, or anything that I have failed to cover from these verses, please don't hesitate to contact me at [john@intotheword.org](mailto:john@intotheword.org).

Yours in Christ,

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