

The Power to Give Life
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John 4:1-26

How can prejudice affect a Christians witness?

A weary Jesus; a well; and a woman hardened by her sin and thirsty for more than just water. That's the setting where Jesus chose to reveal for the first time who He really IS and what it means.

Here's the BIG IDEA of this passage: Verse 14 tells us: Whoever drinks of the LIVING WATER that Jesus gives will have ETERNAL LIFE in Heaven, and ABUNDANT LIFE here on earth. First, we need to ACCEPT this "gift of God" ourselves, then TELL others about it no matter who they are; what they are like; or where they live. Let's begin with verses 1-3:

1 Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John 2(although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples), 3 he left Judea and departed again for Galilee.

- Jesus' ministry was making a stir. Even in that day they were counting and comparing how many baptisms his disciples and John the Baptist's disciples were having.
- The Pharisees tried to create division because of this.
- So, Jesus moved back to home turf in Galilee. We could speculate it was because His time (time for His death and glorification) had not come.

4 And he had to pass through Samaria.

- To get from Jerusalem to Galilee you could go straight through Samaria.
- Most Jews took the long way AROUND to avoid Samaria. **Do you know why?**
- **Why did the Jews of that day DESPISE Samaritans?** (Info:<http://goo.gl/CSIBM9>)
- **Verse 4: If Jesus could have gone around Samaria, what else might John mean by, "he had to" pass through Samaria?**

5 So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. 6 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.

- It's "high noon" in the heat of the day and Jesus sits by Jacob's well.
- **Jesus is "wearied," what does that remind us about Jesus?**

7 A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."

8 (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) 9 The Samaritan woman

said to him, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?” (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)

- **By speaking to her, Jesus was violating some cultural “rules” of that day.**
- **Based on verse 8, what were they? What was another based on verse 18?**
- Verse 9: “Jews have no dealings with Samaritans” yet verse 7 says “...his disciples had gone” into the city to buy food. Not a contradiction...about translation.
- **Before the mid-1960s, what was different about public drinking fountains here in the south?**
- **What does Jesus breaking these cultural restrictions say about sharing the Gospel?**

10 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.”

- This is a key verse. **What is the “gift of God?”** (See Romans 6:23)
- Notice something: Jesus engaged with people right where they were. We’re sitting by a well...let’s talk about water!
- Remember last week with Nicodemus? Unless a person is born again they cannot SEE.
- This woman’s Spiritual eyes had not yet been opened. If she knew about the promise of eternal life and who Jesus was, she would have been begging for it!
- In her Spiritual blindness, she’s focused on the task at hand...drawing water.

11 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? 12 Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock.”

“Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob?” Was that a little defensiveness, or was she beginning to sense something about this Jewish man?

13 Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, 14 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.”

- Everyone breathing air is trying to quench a thirst of some kind. **What are some ways people try to fill that void...quench that thirst?**
- **No matter where we turn to quench our thirst, what happens?**
- Jesus says I will not only quench your thirst today, I’ll give you a limitless supply forever!
- Not temporary relief...but ETERNAL LIFE!
- The sad thing is before our Spiritual eyes are opened all we feel is our human craving.

15 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.”

She had good reason to want to avoid coming to this well in front of the wagging tongues of Sychar. Jesus abruptly changes the subject to get to the heart of the matter.

16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." 17 The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; 18 for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true."

- **What did Jesus just do when he said go call your husband? How is that essential to someone accessing the living water of salvation?**
- **What stands out about how Jesus addresses this subject?**

Warren Wiersbe put it this way:

"The only way to prepare the soil of the heart for the seed is to plow it up with conviction. That was why Jesus told her to go get her husband: He forced her to admit her sin. There can be no conversion without conviction."

"Never does a person see any beauty in Christ as a Savior, until they discover that they are a lost and ruined sinner." - J.C. Ryle

How is a Samaritan woman to respond? She just met this Jewish man who talks about this strange water, and now He knows all about her sordid past and sinful present!

19 The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet.

20 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship."

- **What did she just do in the conversation?**
- **What did Jesus do?**

21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.

22 You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23 But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. 24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

- Jesus didn't back down on what the Jews believed about where to worship God.
- Verse 22: "...salvation is from the Jews" -- the Messiah would come from the Jews.
- **However, in verse 21 what did He say about this controversy?**
- The woman wanted to debate WHERE to worship; Jesus focused on HOW we worship.
- **Verse 24 says, "God is spirit." (note "spirit" is not capitalized). What does that tell us about God? What are the benefits of God NOT being a physical being?**
- **What do we mean when we talk about OUR "spirit"?**

• What does it mean to worship God with our spirit?

Jesus is saying, "It's no longer about worshiping on that mountain or at the temple in Jerusalem." He's saying, "I came to MOVE the dwelling place of God to a NEW temple." "God is spirit...stop trying to worship Him in the flesh, worship Him from your SPIRIT. Your heart. Your deepest, inside SELF. He wants to live IN you not around you."

The woman says, "I sure will be glad when Messiah gets here so we can understand all this!" Jesus said, "He's here! I AM!"

Then the light comes on, her eyes are opened. Like the Samaritan woman once we see our sin, then we see Jesus as the solution for our sin, that living water begins flowing inside. Now that we know the TRUTH and our SPIRIT has been reborn in Christ, we CAN worship in SPIRIT and in TRUTH.

So what did this immoral, hardened woman do? She ran and told everyone she could find what had happened. She didn't sign up for evangelism training...she just told them what had happened. No doubt, they could see the change in this harlot. So they too came to the well.

John 4:39 (ESV)

39 Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me all that I ever did."

John 4:42 (ESV)

42 They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world."

So, What's The Takeaway?

- Everyone breathing is thirsty for satisfaction. They try, and try, but they're still thirsty.
- People aren't looking for Jesus. They're looking for SATISFACTION.
- The good news is Jesus is looking for PEOPLE. Two lessons this morning:
- Have you been to the well? If not, He's waiting right now with living water to quench that thirst you just can't get rid of. Not a "quick fix" but a change in your deepest spirit.
- For those of us who HAVE tasted that LIVING WATER, our lesson is to break through any barrier or prejudice to point people to that well, to the source, to Jesus. He's waiting by the well...THIRSTY?