

The Seeking Savior

John 4:1-26

Pastor John Miller

We're in John 4:1. "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." The first three verses that I just read really are the setting of the stage. Actually, the stage is set for the interview in verses 1-6, but the background is verses 1-3. At the end of chapter 3, we remember Jesus was down by the Jordan River baptizing. The Pharisees actually were trying to get John the Baptist jealous of Jesus because people were leaving him and his baptism and going to Jesus to be baptized. They came to John and said to his disciples, "Men are leaving us and are going to Jesus and being baptized down there by His disciples." John said, "No one can receive anything except it be given to him from above."

And then John said, "He must increase, but I must decrease." How important that is. Every one of us needs to have that same philosophy—more of Jesus and less of me—that others might see Christ in me, that I might be hidden behind the cross and others might see Jesus Christ. Amen? That's the background for what we read here in these first few verses, that in verse 1, "...the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John," notice this parenthetical statement in verse 2, "(Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples.)" I referred to that last week, but here it is in the text. Jesus wasn't baptizing. If you just read chapter 3, you would conclude Jesus was baptizing, that's why it's good to read the whole Bible. Jesus wasn't actually doing the baptizing, His disciples were the ones baptizing.

Verse 3, "He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee." Why did He do that? Because He didn't want to cause any problems, but it says in verse 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," that's Genesis 33 and 48. "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." The sixth hour, most likely—not Roman reckoning for time, but Jewish—would be high noon. It would be a hot, high noon kind of a moment as Jesus sat thus on the well.

Go back with me to verse 3. "He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee. 4 And he must needs go through Samaria." It's interesting that we have, again here, "He must needs go through Samaria." The reason that's interesting is because technically, geographically, He didn't have to go through Samaria. (I actually haven't seen it on the screen, but if we can throw the map up on the screen.) I want to kind of show you...I don't have a pointer, but in the southern part there that's kind of green, you see it says Judea and you see the city of Jerusalem. Off to the right is the city of Jericho, and the river that runs north and south off to the right of Jericho, as you take it all the way north upwards, is the Jordan River and goes up to the Sea of Galilee. Jesus is down probably at the Jordan River just north of Jericho, and it

says, "And he must needs go through Samaria," the purple area in the middle of the map, to get up to the area of Galilee in the north. Those are the three main regions. They would be like what we call counties today, like San Diego County, Riverside County, Los Angeles County, San Bernardino County, Santa Barbara County, or Ventura County. They are large areas that have cities inside of them. This is kind of just a simple overview of the land of Israel. To the north, you have Galilee; in the central area, you have Samaria; and at the southern area where Jerusalem is, you have Judea. He's on the Jordan River down just to the right or east of Jericho. He's baptizing and wants to go up to the area of Galilee. He's probably going to go up to the north of the Sea of Galilee, which is Capernaum.

Normally, an orthodox Jew would go up the Jordan River, he would, by passing over the east side, the right-hand side...and you see that gray area in the bottom corner? That's called Perea. That's on the eastern side. That's what the Bible uses the phrase "beyond Jordan," so they would go over to Perea, up Perea into Decapolis, and then they would cut over into Galilee. He didn't have to go through Samaria, you can see that. You could go around Samaria by going through Perea and Decapolis, so why does it say, "And he must needs go through Samaria," when most orthodox Jews would actually go through Perea and around Decapolis and would avoid Samaria? I'll talk more about why in just a moment, but the Jews hated Samaritans. They were basically half-Jew, half-Gentile. They were mixed Gentile-Jewish. There was great racial prejudice, and they didn't want to go through that area. If they did go through the area, when they would leave the area, they would take their sandals off and knock the dirt off before going into a Jewish area of Judea because they didn't want to take any Samaritan cooties into Judea. They didn't really like to go through this area, but Jesus had a mission. The point I want to make is that He was under divine compulsion. He had a meeting all planned. Not only did He have a meeting planned, but it was planned before the foundations of the world.

You know, I believe that while we're still in the womb that God actually has all of our days planned out. Psalm 139 says while I was still in the womb, before my days were ever out, You plotted out all of my days before there was any of them. So, in eternity past, God knew that the Son of God would come and that there would be, at high noon at Jacob's well, this woman who would be there to draw water. Jesus, the Son of God, and this woman would actually come together at the same time, and she would come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. The point is that He is under divine compulsion. He's doing the Father's will. He didn't want to avoid Samaria because He wants to reach out to this woman.

I think that if we're going to be used by God, then we need to have a divine compulsion. We need to know that God ordains those who we encounter. I wish I was more regular in doing this, but whenever in the morning when I pray and say, "Lord, lead me to someone to talk to about You today," it always happens. Get up in the morning and say, "Lord, just cross my paths with someone that You preordained, and give me the opportunity to be able to talk to them about You and to share the gospel." God always brings it about. Here we have the seeking Savior. He's been ministering to multitudes, but now He's concerned for the one individual.

Verse 5, "Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph." You know the story of Jacob, his twelve sons, and his son Joseph. He had a well there and gave it to his son Joseph. "Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey," He was on that long journey going north to Galilee, "sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour," a really important point here, and there's lots of them. I can't go into everything, but I want you to take notice here. This is a clear indication of the humanity of Jesus Christ. Remember in John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," and we talked about His deity. Down in John 1:14, we have, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory," so what we have here is the Word in flesh, the Word incarnate, and He is every bit truly human. Guess what happens to human beings? They get tired, right? The older you get, the more tired you get.

My youngest child was born when I was 40, so when he was about 10 years old, he was very active. He would say, "Come on, Dad, let's go play!" And I remember, "Well, let's just sit down and talk for a while." I thought, Here I am a dad. I've got these active kids, and I need to be involved with them, but it's like all I want to do is sit and talk. "Come on, Dad, let's go play football!" "Listen, why don't we go lay on the bed and talk or something," you know. I find myself the more and more the older I get, "Let's just sit down and talk. Let's not just stand around." If you know weakness, tiredness, or exhaustion, Jesus understands. Isn't that great? Whenever you're weary, tired, or worn out, but because Jesus had a sympathetic heart, because He had a compassionate heart, because He cared about people, He gave Himself. He was exhausted, tired, He was at the end of Himself. He was weary. You say, "Well, wasn't He the Son of God? Couldn't He just call on His divine power and supernatural strength?" He could, but He came to do the Father's will, to conquer sin, to die for sin as a human being; so He had to submit to all the infirmities. The Bible says, "...but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." I'm so thankful He's a compassionate and understanding High Priest.

Jesus was weary, and "sat thus on the well." The woman came to Him in verse 7, and now begins the interview, "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."

The dialogue begins in verse 7. Another indication of the humanity of Jesus that I forgot to mention in verse 6, is verse 7, "Give me to drink." He sits on the well, tired and weary, and yes, even the Son of God went, (big sigh) and "Whew." He probably wiped the sweat off His brow, and the woman approaches. When she was approaching the well, some feel (and it's just a theory, it might be a good one) that she was coming at noon, which was abnormal. Mainly, the women would come to draw water, and it was the woman's job to bring their water pots. They'd have a big water pot and walked with it on their heads. Then, they would fill their water and go back to their homes. It was their job to fill water pots, but they would do it in the afternoon when

it was cooler. It was kind of like a social event. All the ladies would gather around the well and would laugh, giggle, and talk, you know, spread gossip or whatever it was. I guess I shouldn't have said that, right? They would talk, okay? Whatever women do at the well when they kind of get together and hang out. It's believed that because of the sinful lifestyle of this woman, that she was actually a social outcast and couldn't be around the other women, so she came at noon to be by herself. If that's the case, when she was approaching the well, she would've seen Jesus sitting on the well.

Just a simple but humble thought, it struck me today as I was studying. Just think. She goes to draw water avoiding the other women because she's a social outcast, yet God in flesh is waiting to get ahold of her heart. Isn't that a beautiful picture? That God cared about her, and to think that as she approaches, she sees this man who is obviously a rabbi, a teacher. The male Jews would have a blue piece of ribbon on their robes to distinguish them as being of the tribe of Israel or Israelites or Jews. When she walked up, she saw there was a Jewish man in broad daylight sitting on the well, and she thought, Oh, no. He's going to despise me or say something mean to me, or kind of give me a cold shoulder or be cruel to me, as the Jews would often do to the people of Samaria. What she wasn't expecting is that He would turn to her and say, "Give Me a drink," (verse 7). I want you to think about this: God in flesh, tired and thirsty, asking a sinful Samaritan woman, "Give Me a drink."

There is a contrast that I missed, and I don't want to forget. In chapter three we had a man by the name of Nicodemus, and he was a Pharisee. He was also probably a member of the Sanhedrin. He was a ruler of the Jews, a teacher of the law, very religious, and very righteous. Now we have a woman who is a despised Samaritan, and she was also very sinful and a social outcast. You can't get two more extreme people than Nicodemus and this woman I call the bad Samaritan, who was ostracized from her community because of her sinful life that she had been living. The idea that the Creator of all the universe, the One who made heaven and earth, all the seas and all the fountains of water, would be thirsty. Remember when Jesus was hanging on the cross and uttered that statement, "I thirst," again, speaking of His humanity, but the Son of God thirsty? So He says, "Can you give me a drink?"

Here's my first point in evangelism. Actually, you can call it the second point. The first point is that you should have a divine compulsion and a sense of God leading and guiding you to people that He wants you to witness to and that God's concerned about the individual. Secondly, Jesus makes contact with her. He asks her a favor. You know, one of the great ways to get conversation started with an individual, and I found this to be true, is to ask somebody a question, "Wow, where did you get that?" or "I like the clothes you're wearing," or make a compliment. "Where are you from?" Ask them a question, get them speaking, and you listen to them. You just kind of start a conversation praying that the conversation can be turned to the things of God. Jesus made contact. Let's remember this: He's the Son of God on divine mission. He's tired, thirsty, and sits on the well. He sees the woman coming, and if it were me, not Jesus, I would be thinking, Oh no! I'm gonna have to talk to this woman. She's probably really wicked, too. I picked the wrong well.

I can't tell you how many times I got on an airplane after preaching, teaching, or traveling, and I'm tired. I'm thinking, Lord, I just want peace and quiet. I get on a plane, sit down, and somebody sits next to me. All it takes is someone saying, "Where are you going? What have you been doing? What do you do for a living?" I could just say, "I'm a teacher," you know, but the minute I tell them I'm a minister or pastor, everyone on the plane surrounds me. Sometimes they get mad at me, sometimes they're glad that I'm on the plane. It's kind of a Jonah syndrome, you know, it's like, "We're glad you're on the plane. It won't crash as long as there's a pastor on the plane," kind of a deal. Sometimes it's like a 13-hour trip and there's question after question after question after question, you know, "How many angels can stand on the head of a pin?" and all that kind of stuff, all those deep theological questions. It's like, Lord, I just want to sleep. I want to rest. I want to have peace and quiet, but this story really convicts me that Jesus was tired, exhausted, thirsty, but took the time to give of Himself to minister to this one individual.

Jesus asks the woman, this is the point of contact, and you can use that to ask somebody a question to get the conversation going, "Give me to drink." 8 (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat), in a nearby village. "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?" and here's the point, "for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." What I haven't explained yet is why. Why was there hostility between the Jews and the Samaritans, and where did they come from? Just real quickly, in the Old Testament the nation of Israel was divided into two areas: the kingdom in the north, the ten tribes in the north; and the tribes of Judah and Benjamin in the south. There's the Northern Kingdom and the Southern Kingdom. It's known as the time of the Divided Kingdom. The ten tribes in the north were taken captive because of their sin by the Assyrian Empire, and what the Assyrians used to do was when they would capture a people group, they would actually leave some of them in the land that they captured and would conquer another land and take some of those people and transfer them over back into that land. They would mix up the people groups. The Jews that were left in the land from the taking away of Assyria intermarried with the Gentiles that were brought in by Assyria in the land.

The Southern Kingdom was taken away captive by Babylon, and when the Southern Kingdom (after the Babylonian captivity) returned back to Judah in the south and decided they wanted to rebuild the temple. Under Nehemiah, Ezra and so forth, they were building the temple, so the Samaritans came down from the north into Judea and Jerusalem and said, "We want to help build the temple. We want to worship God with you. We want to help build the temple." The Jews said, "No. You can't have any part with us. We're not going to worship with you. We're not going to have any part with you," so they rejected them. Then they went to the north, back into Samaria, and went to Mount Gerizim. It's going to come into play in the text tonight when she says, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." They found Mount Gerizim, which is by Jacob's well, built their own temple, and had their own worship. They only took the first five books of the Bible, developed their own religious system, and worshipped on Mount Gerizim. From that time forward, there was this great prejudice and hatred and rift between the Samaritans and the

Jews. Though, "...the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans," verse 9, Jesus Christ does.

A point I would like to make is that the gospel is universal. You never say to yourself, "Well, they're the wrong race," or "They're the wrong colored skin," or "They're of the wrong ethnic background." The gospel is for everyone. Remember John 3:16? "For God so loved the world," that's everyone, whosoever, remember. Jesus loves even the despised race of the Samaritan people. Jesus realizes that she needs the salvation of her soul, so He first asks her a favor, then refused to debate or argue with her. She says, "You're a Jew. I'm a Samaritan. Jews don't have any dealings with us. Why did you ask me for a drink?" I love what Jesus said as He, third step, aroused interest. "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." Jesus starts to zero in on this woman's heart. He doesn't want to argue with her about the Jewish-Samaritan prejudice or the issues there. He says, "If thou knewest," the problem is she didn't know Who she was talking to. Can you imagine dialoging with the Son of God, God in the flesh? He's sitting on the well there and asks you for a drink, and you start dialoguing with Him. You have no comprehension of who He is?

I want you to note some things that are important in verse 10. We learned that salvation is a gift from God, "If thou knewest the gift of God." Salvation is a gift from God. Many Bible students believe that this "gift of God" is a reference to the Son of God Himself. God's gift is found in God's Son. Secondly, I want you to notice that it's found in Jesus Christ. "If thou knewest...who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink," salvation is a gift, and salvation is found in Jesus Christ. It's knowing who He is. Thirdly, notice, "...thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." Salvation is by asking in faith. It's that simple. Salvation is a gift. Salvation is found in the Person of Jesus Christ, He's God manifested in the flesh, and it comes by simple faith believing you would've asked and "he would have given thee living water."

What is this "living water?" Living water in the physical sense was water that was moving. It wasn't stagnant, it was like a stream. If you're going to drink water from a stream, you want it to be a busy stream. You want it to be an active stream. I was on a hike one time and found an Artesian well. It was so cool to just drink water bubbling right up out of the ground. It was one of the freshest streams I'd ever drank from, but you don't want stagnant water. Living water is moving. This isn't physical water. All through the Old Testament Scriptures, multiple verses talk about drinking of the water of life and the fountains that God has. One that comes to mind is Isaiah 55, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat." In the book of Revelation, it closes with, "And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." In the Old Testament there's a lot of references to being washed in the water, to be drinking the water.

We'll close with John 7. There's a reference to the living water, and it makes it very clear that it's a reference to the Holy Spirit. I believe that it's a reference to the Word of God, washed in the water of the Word; it's a reference to the Spirit of God, which inspired God's Word and speaks through God's Word; it's talking about the eternal life that comes through the work of the

Holy Spirit in our hearts, “If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee...thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water,” you would have eternal life. In verse 11, “The woman saith unto him, Sir,” a title of respect, “thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?” Obviously, she isn’t understanding what Jesus is saying, and there’s progression here of Him revealing Himself to her. She thinks He’s talking about physical water, “You don’t really have a rope. You don’t have a bucket. This well is very deep.” Some say it was about 78 feet deep.

You can go to this same well today, but it’s in what’s called the West Bank, so American tourists can’t go into that area—don’t go into that area—which is unfortunate, but it still exists there between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal. She says, “This well is deep. Where are you going to get this living water? You’re sitting here. You don’t have a rope or a bucket.” Then she says this (verse 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,” and I’m laughing as I read it because if I were Jesus I would be laughing. You just said to the Son of God, the eternal second Person of the Trinity, the One in Genesis 1:1 who created the heavens and the earth, “Are you greater than Jacob?” “Yeah, I think so.” “Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well? 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.” That’s another description of “living water.” Living water is the same as everlasting life.

In verse 15, “The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.” She thought, Wow! Super water, living water, I’ll never thirst again. I won’t have to come to this well again? That sounds pretty great. “...give me this water.” Think about this (verse 12), “Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well,” to his son Joseph. Interesting. Remember the story when Jacob in Genesis was going back to reconcile with his brother Esau and was camping on the far side of the brook Jabbok? At night, he went out to pray all alone, and he was there wrestling with God. The Angel of the Lord, it says, came to him and grabbed ahold of him, and he spent the whole night wrestling with this Angel? Guess what? I believe that Angel was none other than the same individual sitting on this well, Jesus Christ. Now, that was His preincarnate state. It wasn’t Him in a body, but it was Him coming to earth in what’s called a Christophany, an appearance of Christ in the Old Testament. Jesus showed up in the Old Testament. He wasn’t incarnate until Bethlehem, but He did show up, and that was Jacob wrestling with Him.

Remember the Lord said to Jacob, “Let me go. Let me go. The daylight is coming.” Jacob said, “I’m not going to let You go unless You bless me.” I want you to understand in that wrestling match, Jesus was not getting whooped by Jacob. Jacob didn’t have Him in a headlock, and Jesus, “Let me go. Let me go. Let me go.” No. Jesus was bringing him to a place of submission, and He wanted Jacob to come to the point where, “I want You to bless me.” You know, in the story, what the Lord did to bless Jacob? He crippled him. Is that how God blesses us? Sometimes He does. F. B. Meyer calls it: the crippling that crowns. The next morning,

when Jacob met his brother Esau, he had a limp; but all his cunning was gone, all his pride was gone, and he was a broken, humble man. His name was changed from Jacob to Israel, one who is governed or controlled by God. I love that story. How many times God has to break us in order to make us what He wants us to be.

When I read that (verse 12), “Art thou greater than our father Jacob,” I thought, Yeah, you forgot who Jacob wrestled with in the Old Testament. Certainly, she had read the story. Can you imagine if Jesus would’ve said that to her? “Heck yeah! You read about Me in the Old Testament, sure I’m better than Jacob. I actually crippled him.” “Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again,” mark that in your Bible. Worldly pleasures don’t satisfy. All earthly pleasures bring you to emptiness. All of your earthly pursuits and pleasures will come to nothing. There’s emptiness. You’ll thirst again. If you try to accumulate lots of money, you’ll thirst again. If you follow pleasure, you’ll thirst again. If you yield your life to hedonistic pursuits, you’ll thirst again. Power, position, materialism, you will thirst again. Relationships can never fully satisfy what God alone can do in your heart, so it’s an application that I think we need to understand—whatever we drink of will leave us empty, thirsty, and will not satisfy.

Notice the contrast, “But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him,” here’s the promise, “shall never thirst.” Isn’t that great? That’s why when you come to Jesus Christ, He satisfies the deep longing of your heart. “...but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” Jerusalem had this spring. It’s called the Gihon Spring, and it fed into Jerusalem and fed the Pool of Siloam. Whenever they were in a war and being laid siege, they always had that fresh water supply. That’s what it’s like to have a relationship with God, the Holy Spirit providing all that we need to sustain us. The woman didn’t understand. She said, “Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw. 16 Jesus saith unto her,” and this is where it really gets heavy, “Go, call thy husband, and come hither,” don’t just call your husband, but then come back.

In verse 17, “The woman answered and said,” and this is the shortest response she has to anything Jesus says to her. She doesn’t want to talk about it. “I have no husband.” She just wanted to change the subject, “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.” Jesus could’ve said, “You got that right, sweetheart. You betcha, I am.” It’s not in the text, but if I were writing a gospel, I would have that in there. Jesus now puts His finger on the sin in this woman’s life. Let me tell you something: God knows your sin, “...all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.” There are no thoughts, attitudes, actions, nothing that you can ever do that you can hide from God. God sees and God knows, so can you imagine how freaked out she must’ve been. She never met this man, did not know this man, and later on when she runs into Samaria and brings the others to hear Jesus, she said, “Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did,” this guy knows things that no one else could know.

We saw the humanity of Jesus—He was weary and thirsty—now we see the deity of Jesus. He knew this woman's life. He knew this woman's heart. What is He trying to do? And, by the way, this is the fourth step in personal evangelism, awakening her conscience, talking about the sin issue, getting to the real problem. Why do we need a Savior? Because we're sinners, "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God...There is none righteous, no, not one." There had to be conviction of sin, then confession on her part of her sin, and then there would become cleansing of her sin. She said, "I have no husband." Now, that was true, at that moment she wasn't married, but Jesus said, "Yeah, that's true, you have no husband, but you have had five husbands." It doesn't actually say that she was divorced from these five husbands, and I suppose that it's possible that some of them died and maybe she was widowed and married; but the tenor of the text and the focus of Jesus pointing out her sin all seem to support the idea (it's inferred) that she was married and divorced, married and divorced, married and divorced five times. She was looking for something. She was seeking something.

Remember Jesus said, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again." So many times people think, "Well, if I just had a new husband," or "If I just had a new wife," or "If I was just married," or "If I just weren't married," or "If I just had kids," or "If I just didn't have kids," or "If I had a better job," or "If I had a nicer house," or whatever it might be. "If I just had this," you can drink of the water, but you'll thirst again.

In verse 18, "For thou hast had five husbands," Jesus knew. Then, He says, "...and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly." She was living with a man out of wedlock. She'd been married five times and was living with a guy she wasn't married to. Before a person comes to Christ, they have to deal with their sin. They have to confront their sin and be willing to admit that, "I'm a sinner, and I need a Savior." The woman realized, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet." The deep fountains of her heart were broken up. She realized she's in the presence of at least a Prophet, a Man sent by God.

Now she has a religious question (verse 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," that is, Mount Gerizim in Samaria, "nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. 22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of," or from "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," or God a Spirit, "and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. 25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. 26 Jesus saith unto her," this is absolutely amazing, "I that speak unto thee am," the word "he" is italicized. I have drawn a line through it in my Bible. It's just, "I that speak unto thee am." He just said, "Ego eimi," I am.

This far in the gospel of John, this is the first time Jesus has clearly and openly and powerfully revealed, "I am the Messiah;" and He reveals Himself to this Samaritan woman. I didn't even really make a big deal about it, but first she was a reject as far as her race. She was a woman,

and no male Jew would ever talk to a woman in public, He talked to a woman. She was a sinful woman to boot, and Jesus ministered and reached out to her. Then, Jesus reveals Himself to her, "You are talking to the Messiah," "I am," *ego eimi*.

Go back with me as we wrap this up. She says, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain," what is she talking about? Jacob's well was between two mountains. There was one called Mount Ebal and the other was called Mount Gerizim. By the way, these are the two mountains in the Old Testament that they pronounced the blessings and the cursing from. Israel would get in the valley below and would pronounce the blessing and the cursing, and they would listen to the law being read. She's pointing to Mount Gerizim because that's the mountain...remember I said the Samaritans weren't allowed to build a temple with the Jews? So, they went back up to Samaria, went upon Mount Gerizim, and built their own temple. She's pointing to the temple on Mount Gerizim, which, by this time, had been destroyed, but they still worshipped there. They had their own sacrifices. There's a small sect of Samaritans that still do that to this day. They have animal sacrifices up there. She points to Mount Gerizim and said, "Our fathers say this is the mountain, this is the place," underline that word place, "this is the spot where we're supposed to worship. You Jews say that Jerusalem is the place, the spot, where we are to worship."

Worship is not about a place. You don't just come to this building tonight to worship God. I hope you worship God all day. I hope you worship God tomorrow. I hope you worship God when you're on the freeway—just keep your eyes open while you're driving. Worship God on the job. Worship God when you're out doing fun things—just constantly worshipping. It's not a place, but they were hung up on this mountain, "Is this the place we want to worship?" She's asking this religious question. How many times when you're witnessing to somebody they'll say, "Well, what's the right religion? What church do we go to? Who are the real Christians?" They want to get into debating which is the right religion and which isn't.

In verse 21, "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain," Mount Gerizim, "nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father." Worship is not a place, worship is a Person. Noted in verse 21, we're worshipping the Father. It's not about worshipping in a place. It's not about rites or rituals, it's about a relationship with God. You're worshipping the Father.

Jesus said to her (verse 22), "Ye worship ye know not what: we," that is, the Jews, "know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews." I'll go back over this next week, I don't have enough time; but in verse 22, I want you to note Jesus actually says, "You Samaritans have a false religion," and I say that because in today's culture there's a lot of political correctness in the church where we get this idea that we're not to actually say, "Well, that's false. That's true. That's false. They're in error," or "That religion is a false religion." "Well, you can't say that. That's not right. All religions are equally valid." No. Jesus said, "You don't even know what you're worshipping." It's another way of Jesus saying, "You have a false religious system. It's not even a legitimate religion. It's not something that God has brought. You go up on your mountain and do what you want to do, how you want to do it. It's not even a true religious

system.” Don’t be afraid to label that “false religions,” which is what they are, false religions.

Jesus says, “...we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.” Salvation comes to us through the Jewish people. Our Savior is a Jew. Messiah is a Jew. Your Bible was written by Jewish people, and these are the Jewish Scriptures. It’s so important, so now we have the true religion. Christianity, of course, comes on the scene, which is a completion of what Judaism is in the Old Testament. Jesus was the Messiah, and He came to die for our sins.

In verse 23, “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth,” so it’s not about a place, it’s about a Person; and now that the Holy Spirit has come and the church has been instituted, it is not about a building. You don’t have to come to this building to worship God, but we should gather together in worship. It’s an overflow of our daily worship. Notice first, we “worship the Father,” and how do we worship? “in spirit and in truth;” thirdly, “for the Father seeketh such to worship him.” Again, we could spend a whole night on these verses about worship, but let me point out that the true worship of God is worshipping God the Father, and it’s worshipping “in spirit and in truth.” I want you to notice that He says that (verse 24), “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”

What does it mean to worship God in spirit? It’s not talking about the Holy Spirit. True, that we should worship in the energy and the power of the Spirit, and we can’t worship God if we haven’t been born again of the Spirit, but that’s not what it means. It should be a small “s”. It’s talking about the human spirit. In other words, it’s not a rite, it’s not a ritual, it’s not outward, it’s the heart. It’s another way of saying, “from the heart.” When you worship God, it may express itself outwardly—you may clap, you may lift your hands, you may kneel down, you may shout, you may jump, you can worship in different ways—but if it doesn’t come from your heart, if it’s not in your spirit that you’re communing with God, then it’s not true worship. Worship is the spirit, that immaterial part of man, which is made alive at conversion, meeting with God, worshipping God, adoring God for who He is and what He has done.

I love what William Barclay said about this. He said, “The true, the genuine worship is when man, through his spirit, attains to friendship and intimacy with God. True and genuine worship is not to come to a certain place; it is not to go through a certain ritual or liturgy; it is not even to bring certain gifts. True worship is when the spirit, the immortal and invisible part of man, speaks to and meets with God, who is immortal and invisible.” So, it’s not about the external, and today we get it so mixed up. We think that worship is outward or it’s just emotion. No, it’s the heart and the spirit that we worship God.

Then, we worship in truth. What does that mean? It means that we worship God as He has revealed Himself truthfully in His Word. You cannot worship a god of your own making. You can’t invent your own god. You can’t create your own god. You discover God in the Bible for who He is in truth and what He does, you praise Him for what He is, and you worship and thank Him for what He does. You need to worship Him in truth, the true God, who is holy and righteous and just and all-knowing and all-powerful. You’ve got to worship God as He’s chosen

to reveal Himself—His truth in the Word. You can't just worship God however you so choose, it must be done according to His Word.

An important verse on the nature of God, verse 24, "God is a Spirit," and actually the word "is" there is italicized as well. It's actually, "God a Spirit," which is interesting. Talking about false religions, I'm sorry I couldn't resist. I need to wrap this up, and I can't resist. The Mormons actually believe that God is material. They believe that God has hands, feet, and eyes; and God has a body just like you and I. They believe that God is temporal and physical. Here the Bible says that, "God is Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

In closing, "The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh," even as a Samaritan, she had a Messianic hope. It was a deluded, misunderstood one, but it was a hope. "...which is called Christ," He's the anointed One, "when he is come, he will tell us all things." Then, Jesus totally, openly, blatantly discloses who He is, "I that speak unto thee am he," I am the Messiah. Remember when God spoke to Moses in the burning bush and said, "I Am." "Whom shall I say sent me?" He said, "Tell them, I Am." Every time in the gospel of John, we haven't got the "I Am" statements yet, but there'll be seven of them. Remember them? Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," "I am the good shepherd," "I am the door," "I am the bread of life," "I am the resurrection, and the life," He used the same phrase, ego eimi, I Am. What this is saying is Jesus is Jehovah, that He's the God of the Old Testament.

Now, if you go back to verse 10 of our study, "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." Now, she knows. She knows that He is the Messiah. She knows that He is Jehovah or Yahweh, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

He's the seeking Savior, so the story isn't over yet. We're going to finish it next week. She runs off and leaves her water pot. She goes into Samaria and tells everyone, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did." They come back, and there's a revival in Samaria. They receive Him. His own town, Nazareth, rejects Him; Judah was having problems with Him, but these people who were outcasts receive Him.

Write down John 7:37-9. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. 38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." John says, "(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)" Jesus wants to give you living water. He wants to give you the Holy Spirit. You can drink of the things of the world, you'll be empty; but if you come to Jesus, and you drink of Him, He will satisfy the deep longing of your soul. If anyone is thirsty, come to Jesus and drink by believing in Him. Amen?