

JOHN 4 | *The Samaritan Woman*

Jesus Passes through Samaria

1 Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptising more disciples than John 2 (although Jesus himself did not baptise, but only his disciples), 3 he left Judea and departed again for Galilee.¹ 4 And he had (δεῖ) to pass through Samaria.² 5 So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.³ 6 Jacob's well was there. So Jesus, wearied⁴ as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.⁵

Living Water

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.)⁶ 10 Jesus answered her,

If you knew the gift (δωρεά) 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 (ῥῶδον ζῶν).⁷

¹ Jesus withdrew from conflict with the Jewish leaders until the right hour (Jn 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20; 12:23; 13:1; 17:1) (E. A. Blum, *BKC*, 2:284).

² In Jesus' day the Jews, because of their hatred for the Samaritans, normally avoided Samaria (Blum, *BKC*, 2:284).

³ **Ge 33:19** 19 ...From the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father, [Jacob] bought for a hundred pieces of money the piece of land on which he had pitched his tent. **Ge 48:22** 22 ...I [Jacob] have given to you [Joseph] rather than to your brothers one mountain slope that I took from the hand of the Amorites with my sword and with my bow. **Jos 24:32** 32 As for the bones of Joseph, which the people of Israel brought up from Egypt, they buried them at Shechem, in the piece of land that Jacob bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for a hundred pieces of money. It became an inheritance of the descendants of Joseph.

⁴ As the God-man, Jesus experienced weariness, thirst (Jn 19:28; Mt 8:24), and hunger (Mt 4:2; 21:18).

⁵ Noon. Jesus came here very much on purpose.

⁶ See *Samaritans*. The normal prejudices of the day prohibited public conversation between men and women, between Jews and Samaritans, and especially between strangers. A Rabbinic law of ad 66 stated that Samaritan women were considered as continually menstruating and thus unclean. Therefore a Jew who drank from a Samaritan woman's vessel would become ceremonially unclean (Blum, *BKC*, 2:285).

⁷ **Jn 7:38-39** 38 Whoever believes in me [Jesus], as the Scripture has said, Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. 39 Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. **Je 2:13** 13 ...My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water. **Je 17:13** 13 Yahweh, the hope of Israel, all who forsake you shall be put to shame. Those who turn away from you shall be written in the earth, for they have forsaken Yahweh, the fountain of living water.

11 The woman said to him,

Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep.⁸ Where do you get that living water? 12 Are you greater than our father Jacob?⁹ He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock.

13 Jesus said to her,

Everyone who drinks (πίνω, pres.) of this water will be thirsty again, 14 but whoever drinks (πίνω, aor. subj.) of the water that I will give him certainly won't be thirsty forever (οὐ μὴ ἴδιψῆσει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα).¹⁰ The water that I will give him will become in him a spring (πηγή)¹¹ of water welling up (ἄλλομαι, pres.)¹² to eternal life.

15 The woman said to him, Sir, give (δίδωμι, imper.) me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water.

True Worship

16 Jesus said to her, Go, call your husband, and come here.¹³ 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,¹⁴ and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true.¹⁵

19 The woman said to him,

⁸ This well is identified by archeologists as one of the deepest in Palestine (Blum, *BKC*, 2:285).

⁹ Jesus is greater than Abraham (Jn 8:53), Isaac (Jn 3:16), and Jacob (Jn 1:51).

¹⁰ **Jn 6:35** 35 ...Whoever believes in me shall never thirst. **Jn 7:37** 37 On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. **Is 49:10** 10 ...They shall not hunger or thirst, neither scorching wind nor sun shall strike them, for he who has pity on them will lead them, and by springs of water will guide them. **Is 55:1-2** 1 Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters. And he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. 2 Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. **Re 7:16** 16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore.

¹¹ “[O]rdinarily of water *spring, fountain*” (*BDAG*, 810).

¹² “[L]it. to make a quick leaping movement, *leap, spring up*...: of the lame man when healed (Is 35:6)...fig., of the quick movement of inanimate things...: to spring up from a source, of water *well up, bubble up*” (*BDAG*, 46).

¹³ **Jn 16:8** 8 ...[The Spirit] will convict the world concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment.

¹⁴ Maybe she had lost five husbands to tragic deaths.

¹⁵ Jesus knows everything about us, including the skeletons in the closet (Jn 2:24-25).

Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet.¹⁶ 20 Our fathers worshiped (προσκυνέω, aor.) on this mountain,¹⁷ but you (sing.) say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.¹⁸

21 Jesus said to her,

Woman, believe (πιστεύω, pres. imp.) me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.¹⁹ 22 You worship (pres.) what you do not know.²⁰ We worship (pres.) what we know, for salvation (ἡ σωτηρία) is from the Jews.²¹ 23 But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers (οἱ ἀληθινοὶ προσκυνηταὶ) will worship (fut.) the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking (ζητέω, pres.) such people to worship (pres.) him. 24 God is spirit (πνεῦμα ὁ θεός), and those who worship (pres.) him must worship (pres.) in spirit and truth.

25 The woman said to him,

I know that Messiah (Μεσσίας)²² is coming (he who is called Christ (Χριστός)). When he comes, he will tell us all things.²³

26 Jesus said to her, I Am (Ἐγώ εἰμι), the one who is speaking to you.²⁴

Samaritans Come to Jesus

27 Just then his disciples came back. They marvelled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, What do you seek? or, Why are you talking with her? 28 So the woman left her water jar (ὕδρια) and went away into town and said to the people,

29 Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Messiah (ὁ Χριστός)?

¹⁶ See *Jesus as Prophet*.

¹⁷ Abram (Ge 12:7) and Jacob (Ge 33:20) worshipped Yahweh nearby, and from here were pronounced the blessing and the curse on Israel (Dt 11:29; 27:12; Jos 8:33).

¹⁸ The woman throws out a religious red herring. See *Jerusalem*.

¹⁹ **Zep 2:11** 11 ...To [Yahweh] shall bow down, each in its place, all the lands of the nations. **Mal 1:11** 11 ... From the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering.

²⁰ Humans are worshippers. We can't help but worship. **Ac 17:23** 23 ...As I [Paul] passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: To the unknown god. What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.

²¹ See *Israel*.

²² You would expect a Samaritan woman to say "Moses," not "Messiah."

²³ **Dt 18:18** 18 I [Yahweh] will raise up for them a prophet like you [Moses] from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.

²⁴ **Jn 9:37** 37 Jesus said to [the formerly blind man], You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you.

30 They went out of the town and were coming to him.

Fields White for Harvest

31 Meanwhile the disciples were urging him saying, Rabbi, eat. 32 But he said to them, I have food to eat that you do not know about. 33 So the disciples said to one another, Has anyone brought him something to eat? 34 Jesus said to them,

My food²⁵ is to do the desire of him who sent me and to complete (τελειόω, aor.) his work.²⁶ 35 Do you not say, There are yet four months, then comes the harvest? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest (θερισμός).²⁷ 36 Already the one who harvests (θερίζω) is receiving wages (μισθός) and gathering fruit (καρπός)²⁸ for eternal life, so that sower²⁹ and harvester may rejoice together.³⁰ 37 For here the saying holds true, One sows and another harvests. 38 I sent you (pl.) to harvest that for which you have not worked hard. Others have worked hard, and you have entered into their labour.

Many Samaritans Believe

39 Many Samaritans from that town believed (aor.) into (εἰς) him because of the woman's testimony, He told me all that I ever did. 40 So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay (μένω) with them, and he stayed (μένω) there two days. 41 And many more believed because of his word (λόγος). 42 They said to the woman,

²⁵ Jesus loves to elevate discussions to a spiritual level: spiritual birth (Jn 3:3), spiritual drinking (Jn 4:10), and spiritual eating (Jn 4:34). **Job 23:12** 12 I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my portion of food.

²⁶ Jesus' priority is spiritual, not material (Blum, *BKC*, 2:287). **Jn 5:30** 30 ...I seek not my own desire but the desire of him who sent me. **Jn 5:36** 36 ...The works that the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing, testify about me that the Father has sent me. **Jn 6:38** 38 ...I have come down from heaven, not to do my own desire but the desire of him who sent me. **Jn 14:31** 31 ...I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. **Jn 17:4** 4 I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.

²⁷ **Mt 9:37-38** 37 ...The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few. 38 Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.

²⁸ See *Rewards*.

²⁹ **Mt 13:37** 37 ...The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. **Mk 4:14** 14 The sower sows the word.

³⁰ **Is 9:3** 3 You have multiplied the nation. You have increased its joy. They rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil.

It is no longer because of what you said that we believe (pres.), for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world (ὁ σωτὴρ τοῦ κόσμου).³¹

Jesus Returns to Galilee

43 After the two days he departed for Galilee. 44 (For Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honour in his own hometown.)³² 45 So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast.³³ For they too had gone to the feast.

Second Sign: Jesus Heals the Official's Son

46 So he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. And at Capernaum there was an official (βασιλικός)³⁴ whose son was ill. 47 When this man heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to him³⁵ and asked him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. 48 So Jesus said to him, Unless you (pl.) see signs and wonders you (pl.) will not believe (πιστεύω, aor. act.).³⁶ 49 The official said to him, Sir, come down before my child dies. 50 Jesus said to him, Go. Your son will live. The man believed (πιστεύω, aor.) the word (λόγος) that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way. 51 As he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was recovering. 52 So he asked them the hour when he began to get better, and they said to him, Yesterday at the seventh hour³⁷ the fever left him. 53 The father knew that was the hour when Jesus had said to him, Your son will live. And he himself believed (aor.), and all his household.³⁸ 54 This was now the second sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea to Galilee.³⁹

³¹ See *God as Saviour*. **1 Jn 4:14** 14 ... We have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world. **1 Jn 5:20** 20 ... We know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Messiah. He is the true God and eternal life. **1 Ti 4:10** 10 ... We have our hope set on the living God, who is the Saviour of all people, especially of those who believe.

³² **Mt 13:57** 57 ... [The residents of Nazareth] took offense at [Jesus]. But Jesus said to them, A prophet is not without honour except in his hometown and in his own household.

³³ **Jn 2:23** 23 ... When [Jesus] was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing.

³⁴ “The β. **J 4:46, 49** could be a relative of the royal (Herodian) family..., but more prob. the ref. is to a royal official (not necessarily a Jew...)” (*BDAG*, 170). The official could have been a Gentile or a Jew, a centurion, or a minor official in Herod’s court. Possibly he was a Jew because Jesus included him among the people who desire signs and wonders (Blum, *BKC*, 2:288).

³⁵ The ruler’s travelling from Capernaum to Cana (20-25 miles) was an act of faith in Jesus.

³⁶ **Jn 2:18** 18 So the Jews said to [Jesus], What sign do you show us for doing these things? **Jn 6:30** 30 So they said to [Jesus], Then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe you? What work do you perform?

³⁷ 1 pm.

³⁸ This is an example of οἶκος evangelism (Ac 11:14; 16:34; 18:8).

³⁹ Two of the eight signs in *John* were done in Galilee.

Biblical Worldview

- 1. Jesus Passes through Samaria (Jn 4:1-6).**
- 2. Living Water (Jn 4:7-15).**
 - a. Here Jesus shows us how to be ambassador to those of other cultures religions.
- 3. True Worship (Jn 4:16-26).**
 - a. About worship we learn:
 - (1) Samaritans worship on Mount Gerizim (v. 20).
 - (2) Jews say Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship (v. 20).
 - (3) The hour is coming when people won't worship the Father on Mount Gerizim or in Jerusalem (v. 21).
 - (4) The Samaritans worship what they do not know (v. 22).
 - (5) The Jews worship what they know (v. 22).
 - (6) The hour is here when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth (v. 23).
 - (7) The Father seeks true worshippers who will worship him in spirit and truth (v. 23).
 - (8) Those who worship the Father must worship in spirit and truth (v. 24).
 - b. Jesus was ambassadorial but not politically correct. Jesus corrected the woman's faulty ideas.
- 4. The Woman Tells the Town (Jn 4:27-30).**
- 5. Fields White for Harvest (Jn 4:31-38).**
- 6. Many Samaritans Believe (Jn 4:39-42).**
- 7. Jesus Comes to Galilee (Jn 4:43-45).**
- 8. Second Sign: Official's Son Healed (Jn 4:46-54).**
- 9. Principles of Evangelism.**
 - a. We venture into difficult areas, cross ethnic boundaries, and break cultural norms (vv. 4, 9, 27).
 - (1) What cultural norms do we need to break to fulfil the Great Commission?
 - b. We should look for "people of peace" with influence (vv. 39, 42, 53).
 - (1) This woman is likely not a prostitute but an attractive, influential, but very unfortunate woman (vv. 18, 28-30, 39, 42).
 - (2) **Mt 10:11-15** 11 ... Whatever town or village you enter, find out who is worthy in it and stay there until you depart. 12 As you enter the house, greet it. 13 And if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it, but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. 14 And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town.
 - c. Usually, we must be the ones to speak first (v. 7) and also to turn a conversation to spiritual matters (vv. 10, 13-14).

- (1) Remember FORM: Family, Occupation, Religious background, Message.
- (2) If nothing else, smile and say, “How are you?”
- d. We must not allow political or religious “red herrings” to derail us (vv. 11-12, 20).
 - (1) Illustration: Russians used “red herrings” to train their dogs not to lose the scent.
 - (2) Illustration: People often bring up Trump when I’m sharing the gospel in Dunedin.
 - (3) Tip. Finish your presentation of the gospel. Then come back to the issue the person has raised.
- e. We must talk about the bad news (vv. 17-18).
 - (1) **Jn 16:8** 8 ... When [the Spirit] comes, he will convict the world concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment.
 - (2) See *Gospel Diagram*.
- f. We must also talk about the good news (v. 14).
 - (1) “There’s a God-shaped hole in every human heart that only God can fill.”
- g. We must be able to correct theological misconceptions (vv. 21-24).
 - (1) **1 Ti 3:15** 15 if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.
 - (2) This is where theology, preaching, teaching, and Bible study come in.
- h. We must point point people ultimately to Jesus himself, the Messiah (v. 26).
 - (1) See *Gospel Diagram*.
- i. Evangelism must become much more important to us than it currently is (v. 34).
 - (1) Church leaders must keep evangelism on the front burner and be models of evangelism.
 - (2) When it comes to evangelism, every believer must play, pay, or pray.
 - (3) I’d like to see our CCCNZ churches fund a full-time evangelist in our area.
- j. If we lift up our eyes, we will see the fields are white for harvest (v. 35).
 - (1) Who are we failing to see? Let’s ask the Lord about it.
 - (2) **Mt 9:36-38** 36 When [Jesus] saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. 37 Then he said to his disciples, The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few. 38 Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.
- k. Evangelism results in fruit, rewards, and joy (v. 36).
- l. Some are sowers, and others are harvests (v. 37).
 - (1) Are you more of a sower or a harvester?
 - (2) Task oriented people are more likely to be sowers. People oriented people are more likely to be harvesters.
- m. Evangelism is hard work (vv. 34, 38).
- n. We have to allow evangelism to interrupt (not derail) our plans (v. 40).
 - (1) If the Spirit prompts us, we need to obey him, even if our plans are momentarily interrupted.
- o. Signs are not necessary for one to trust in Christ (vv. 41-42, 48).