

(John) 05 - the Samaritan Woman

by Alan Redpath

Jesus offers the Samaritan woman a fountain of living water that leads to everlasting life, but she must first confess and forsake her sin.

Duration: 52:14

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 2:23-24, John 3:30, John 4:2, John 4:34-35, John 4:43-54

Topics: "John"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the passage from John chapter 4, where Jesus speaks to his disciples about the harvest. The disciples saw need, but Jesus saw the potential for a harvest. The speaker emphasizes the importance of seeing the opportunities for harvest in our own lives. The sermon also touches on the themes of God's life being revealed to the world and the acknowledgement of that life.

Transcript

Well, you must be saturated with lectures. You agree with that. And I'm sorry to inflict another one on you, but I don't think you'll find this too heavy doing.

First of all, it's from a very familiar passage of scripture, John chapter 4. So familiar, indeed, that I was thinking of saving a few moments' time and not reading it right through, because it takes quite a while. John chapter 4. You're all more or less familiar with this. Anybody not? Well, I'm glad you're on it, brother.

When I was your age, I would know a thing about it. I'll just... I'll tell you what... Oh, no we won't. We'll read alternate verses.

See? I read in the artistry, and then you hear the chaos when you all read in different versions. Right? Ready to go? John chapter 4. Now, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John, he left Judea and departed again to Galilee. So he came to a city of Samaria, called Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

You ever hear anything like that? You're all reading in English, I hope. There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, Give me a drink.

The Samaritan woman said to him, How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria? For Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. The woman said to him, Sir, you have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Jesus said to her, Everyone who drinks of this

water will thirst again.

The woman said to him, Sir, Give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw. The woman answered him, I have no husband. Jesus said to her, You are right in saying, I have no husband.

The woman said to him, Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Jesus said to her, Woman, believe me, the hour is coming, when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

For such the Father seeks to worship Him. The woman said to him, I know that Messiah is coming, He who is called Christ. When He comes, He will show us all things.

Just then His disciples came. They marveled that He was talking with a woman. But none said, What do you wish? Or, Why are you talking with her? Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did.

Can this be the Christ? Meanwhile the disciples besought Him, saying, Rabbi, eat. So the disciples said to one another, Has anyone brought Him food? Do you not say there are yet four months, then comes harvest? I tell you, lift up your eyes and see how the fields are already white for harvest. For here the saying holds true, One sows and another reaps.

Many Samaritans from that city believed in Him, because of the woman's testimony. He told me all that I ever did. And many more believed because of His word.

After the two days He departed to Galilee. So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed Him, having seen all that He had done in Jerusalem at the feast, for they too had gone to the feast. When He heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, He went and begged Him to come down and heal His son, for He was at the point of death.

The officials said to Him, Sir, come down before my child dies. As He was going down, His servants met Him, and told Him that His son was living. The Father knew that was the hour when Jesus had said to Him, Your son will live.

And He believed, Himself believed, and all His household. Right, just a prayer, just a prayer to get on. Thank you God for sending Jesus.

Thank you Jesus that you came. Holy Spirit won't you teach us more about His lovely name. Would you like to sing that together with bowed head and heart before the Lord? Somebody who has the ability to sing on the right note.

Start off. Thank you God for sending Jesus. Thank you Jesus that you came.

Holy Spirit won't you teach me more about His lovely name. Right, have you got your outline there? By the way, do look after this outline with your notes. And I've confirmed that we'll be having a test on John next term, towards the end of the term.

An essay type test. I'm just giving you plenty of notes. Just to the outline, you notice that we're dealing with this section, it's the revelation of God's life to the world, but the life acknowledged.

Chapter 2, 23. Chapter 4, verse 54. And that life is acknowledged in Judea, that's the south, in chapter 2, 23 to chapter 3, 36.

And in Samaria, in the center, chapter 4, 1 to 42. And in Galilee, in the north, chapter 4, verse 43 to 54. I'd like just to add a couple of comments to chapter 3, which I didn't touch on at the end of the chapter.

We finished with the saying there, he must decrease, he must increase, but I must decrease. That's the last statement of John the Baptist. And then these other verses are reflections of John who wrote the gospel.

Sort of reflections. And notice just two things about them. Verse 34.

He whom God has sent utters the words of God, for it is not by measure that he gives the Spirit. Just put down opposite that verse in your notes, would you? The word of God, verse 34, the word of God speaks the words of God. He whom God has sent utters the words of God, and therefore the Holy Spirit is given to him without measure.

It's the word of God who speaks the words of God, to whom the Holy Spirit is given without measure. That was the first thing, just as a note. And the second thing is this.

The Father, this is verse 35, the Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand. The Father who loves the Lord Jesus has given everything into his hand, verse 35. Since God has given all things into the hands of Jesus, Lord, make me content to leave my life thereto.

And just repeat that. Since God has given everything into the hands of the Lord Jesus, make me, Lord, content to leave my life thereto in his hand. And so with those words ends the first year of the ministry of Christ, and following that begins the ministry which is recorded in the other three Gospels, the synoptic Gospels.

Let me just give you that again. With this chapter 1 of John, sorry, chapter 3, ends the first year of Jesus' ministry. And that begins now the ministry recorded, most of it, in the other Gospels.

And here we have, as I said, the life acknowledged in Samaria, and life acknowledged in Galilee. Our Lord appealed to the mind of Nicodemus. He appeals to the conscience of the woman of Samaria, and he goes straight to the heart of this nobleman at the end of the chapter.

He appealed to the mind of Nicodemus. Now he goes for this lady's conscience, and then to the nobleman's heart. You know this story.

I imagine you heard most of you in Sunday school. But let me remind you about it, very briefly. This dissatisfied woman of Samaria who came to draw water from the well.

Verse 7. She wasn't any longer a child, no teenager. She was past her adolescence. She was beyond young womanhood.

The springtime of life was over. In England we would say the autumn had now come. The fall had come.

And she was completely and absolutely disillusioned. That's a long word. D-I-S-I-L-L-U-S-I-O-N-E-D Five men had come into her life.

Verse 18. At one time or another, played with her affection, and then dropped her. And a sixth, even at this time of writing, was doing the same.

She'd lost her character, and she'd lost all confidence in human nature. She couldn't trust anybody anymore. Indeed, she was isolated from everybody.

Because, you see, to see this woman on the streets of any town, she would be looked down at with a sort of self-righteous suspicion. Scorn. Probably a few people sinned like she did.

But maybe a few people had been tempted like she had. Just get that background to the story. And verse 6 and 7. She came to draw water when? At the sixth hour of the day.

That the heat of the midday sun. The only time she could be sure of being alone. Can't you picture her? In that intense heat.

In Israel. Alone. Absolutely empty.

And utterly lonely. Mind you, she was not irreligious. Matter of fact, she believed in the coming of the Messiah.

Verse 25. She said so. And she had a religion which the ancestors of the Jewish people had.

Verse 20. She believed, you see, in Jacob's religion. And in Jacob's God.

She'd got religion, but it had completely failed to satisfy or meet her need. Now that's the woman we're confronted with. Verse 4. Jesus must need go through Samaria.

He had to pass through Samaria. As he traveled from Judea to Galilee. Well, if you look at your map.

Seems the obvious thing to do. The natural thing. Because of the direct route.

But Jesus was a Jew. And the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. If you look at your map again.

And remember, if you have enough knowledge about Nehemiah and Ezra. That at that time the Samaritans had put up a rival temple. The Samaritans had tried to link themselves with the Jews.

But the Jews weren't having any. So the Samaritans built their own temple. On Mount Gerizim.

G.E.R.I.Z. or Z.I.M. G.E.R.I.Z.I.M. They'd built a rival temple. Near Jacob's well. And they set up a religion of a kind.

And they thought, well that's good enough for us. Because of that, the Jew would have no dealings with the Samaritans. You'll find this in fuller detail as you study books like Nehemiah and Ezra.

Any Jew making that journey that Jesus made that day into Galilee would cross the river Jordan go up on the east side through the country of Perea and then come back into Galilee. All because he despised the Samaritans. Now Jesus was a Jew.

But in his heart there was a great concern for this woman who was utterly lonely. Defeated, frustrated and unhappy. So he must needs go through Samaria.

Verse six. He was tired. Weary after his journey.

And he sat down by the well. Presently this woman arrived with her pitcher of water to draw water out of the well. What a picture.

I am tempted to ask myself and maybe ask you I wonder how I'd have made contact with that person. I wonder how I'd have opened up the conversation in sincere effort, you know to win up her Christ. I wonder if I really would have given her a real bang or two.

Said to her, you've no business to be living that sort of life. I wonder how I'd have established contact. How would you have done it? You know how Jesus did it? By asking her a favor.

Verse seven. Give me a drink. And there was a woman who for the first time in her life for years I emphasize that for years was made to realize that she could actually do something to help somebody.

Jesus asked her a favor. For the first time for years she found she could do something to help somebody. And how gladly she responded.

But the Lord had aroused her curiosity and so she said to him, verse nine How is it that you, a Jew should ask drink of me, a woman of Samaria? And the Lord just looked at her and said, verse ten If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, give me a drink you would have asked of him and he would have given you living water. Living water? What's that? What do you mean by that? I've come here with this woman, say every day of my life to satisfy my thirst and I've gone away and come back again and I'm absolutely dissatisfied. Living water? What do you mean? So she asked him, verse eleven Sir, you greater than our father Jacob who gave us this well? Besides, you've got nothing to draw with.

How are you going to get it?

And he just said to her one thing, verse thirteen paraphrasing If you go on drinking of that water which has its source in the earth if you go on drinking from that water you'll go on being thirsty but if you drink of the water that I shall give you you're never thirsty for the water that I will give you will be in you your version may say a well but that's not the word Jesus used it's a fountain springing up into everlasting life She had spoken to him about a well and Jesus said to her if you go on drinking from that well that has its source in the ground you'll go on being thirsty but if you drink of the water I shall give you you'll never thirst again for the water that I shall give you will be in you a fountain a fountain springing up into everlasting life She'd spoken about a well

said to him the well is deep you've got nothing to draw with He spoke to her about a fountain that would leap up in her into everlasting life a genuine test of the reality of Christian living Do I know the difference between a life that's dissatisfied and a life that's frustrated and empty I know it by whether or not I'm going outside myself all the time to try and find satisfaction that's why multitudes of people spend so much on entertainment to find satisfaction because they don't get it go on drawing from wells of all kinds over and over again and only becoming more thirsty but Jesus offers us not a well but a fountain that can spring up in our hearts now that's the secret of life the offer of the Christian faith the offer of a life that's satisfied the longing soul as long as I'm

going outside myself to try and find satisfaction possibly from somebody or some place I'm fighting a losing battle now Jesus is offering a fountain comes into my heart and fills it it's very interesting rather terrifying really that the word translated well in verse 11 is everywhere else in the New Testament translated pit the word is freer in the Bible the pit is a bottomless pit of hell and the fountain is a fountain of life that leads to heaven I've got to be mighty careful to be sure which one I'm drunk from now listen to this conversation a minute verse 15 she said to him sir give me this water that I may not thirst nor come here to draw again and he said something to her that rocked her to the very foundation he said to her verse 16

go call your husband and come here verse 16 I

think I can picture a little of what that would mean to her can you imagine immediately memory would become vivid and she thought back to her wedding day her first wedding day the day when it all started so hopefully only a young girl then unspoiled unstained but into that home I'm picturing in my mind and you can reject it or put in something else that's more apt but I'm thinking that into that home there came a sort of strange dull deadly coldness which became hardness which soon would lead to backbiting hard, unkind words uncharitable thoughts until one day there came a moment when she said I've had enough I can't take anymore and that led to unfaithfulness it's not an old, old story that is it it happens all over the world I was amazed to hear on TV the other night that one in three

marriages in Britain break down in divorce I think it's even a higher rate than that in some countries all over the world, all the time and if people dare look back they can recall their wedding day and can say that kind of thing would never happen to us we were absolutely head over heels in love but that love wasn't cherished Jesus wasn't put at the center and it grew cold stale dull hard, harsh and some people therefore gave up the struggle verse 15 Sir, give me this water that I may not thirst nor come here again to draw go, call your husband and come here why did Jesus say that to her?

I'll tell you why get this down if sin is going to be forgiven it's got to be confessed and forsaken a million times better to face up to it now than a minute too late go, call your husband and come here verse 17 I have love then amazing, amazing she was finding herself listening to the story of her life I have no husband and then she listened to a stranger going over the story of her life the one who who knew her better than she knew herself quite true said Jesus to her you have no husband quite true you've had five and the one with whom you're living now is not your husband quite true there's something very sacred about that conversation something very intimate and you know that sort of thing may not be on your level thank God if it isn't but before Jesus says to any of us come he says go before he says come he says go what about the dishonesty that won you some money pretty fast what about that bit of deceit that lie you told the thing you did that just wasn't straight go the very thing that makes it impossible for us to be right with God and bathe the way to his presence puts his finger on it time and time again and we say no oh yes Jesus I want salvation I want you I want life but when it comes to the equivalent in your life or mine of go call your husband come hit her no Lord and I would say very kindly but I would ask you to put it down if you will never try to hide under a camouflage C A M O U F L A T E means a shield never try to hide under a camouflage or make believe nobody will ever know God's forgiving mercy the cleansing of the blood of Jesus until first sin has been dealt with in his presence in my memory I'll just repeat that nobody will know of God's forgiving mercy until sin has been dealt with and confessed in his presence I think if my memory serves me right this may not mean too much to people who live abroad but you'll catch on F.B.

Meyer one of our great preachers in this country a couple of generations ago I hope you've read all his books they're worth reading he's on a par with A.W. Towson F.B.

Meyer's Bible characters are tremendous and he was speaking one year at the dedication of new buildings in Cliff College in Derbyshire Methodist College and when the ceremony was over it was intended that everybody should have a cup of tea but there wasn't any and there was a panic because they couldn't serve meals no tea news went round the reason was the water supply had been cut off great dismay so they sent for the plumber well he arrived very fast because there were no trade unions in those days and he turned up very quickly and he opened the pipe at the junction and what do you think he found a great big frog great big frog blocking the water that was coming into the pipe once when the pipes had

been laid some years ago that was only a little tadpole tiny little tadpole but now it's

an enormous frog forgive me for being facetious just I'm stressing to put a matter of importance to you I can allow, you can allow tadpoles in our lives that become frogs what's the harm in it anyway everybody else does what's the harm tadpole doesn't matter very much only a little sin only something everybody else does watch it my friend a man speaking to me in confidence a dear man with a broken heart aged about fifty said I learned a sin that wrecked my ministry when I was a child of seven just a tadpole now a frog one day every tadpole becomes a frog and there must come a time when either God be with us in mercy when I confess it and get rid of it or I'll be judged for it will you just put down this sentence and I'll go very slowly promise right I was going to say a man but anybody

anybody can be quite willing to discuss religion but unwilling to be judged by its inner truth in contacts with people remember that quite ready to discuss religion repeating but unwilling to be judged by its inner truth you know what that woman did verse 19 she started an argument started an argument sort of to turn the shaft away and she said that I'm not a Baptist I'm a Christian or something like that argument about religion about denomination about the place of worship and Jesus said to her verse 24 woman the hour has come when they that worship the Father must worship him in spirit and in truth he couldn't have said anything more wonderful God is spirit basically you and I are spirit and spiritually dead because of all the frogs Jesus shed his blood on Calvary and cried I thirst in

order that he might quench the thirst of all the world and he might restore the contact to worship by spirit to spirit can I just repeat that to you God is spirit basically you and I are but dead because of all the frogs Jesus shed his blood on Calvary crying out I thirst in order that he might quench the thirst of a whole world universe if you like so that he might restore the contact that we might worship in spirit and in truth the Bible says he tasted death that's right I thirst therefore I find personally that worship the real thing worship costs me all I've got I was at a very excellent ladies meeting speaking and one lady in that meeting had stood up and given a marvelous testimony and I heard another lady come up to her at the end and say to her I give the world to have what you've

got and the reply that's exactly what it costs me got that I give the world to have what you've got that's exactly what it costs me I have to worship him in spirit and in truth and in verse 28 registered when she got home she left her water pot I wonder why imagine how she'd gone water pot still there perhaps she forgot it maybe she thought it would be a hindrance perhaps she thought Jesus needed it I tell you what she was saying I'll be coming back she left her water pot and she went into the city and said verse 29 come see a man who's told me all things that ever I did maybe she was absolutely filled up with Jesus come see a man who told me all things that ever I did and she arrived back verse 35 on the scene with the whole city coming behind her and saying we believe because of what

you've told us but now we believe because we've seen and heard and we believe that he is the Christ the saviour of the world notice those two steps verse 39 many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony he told me all that I ever did that's step number one step number two when the Samaritans came to him they asked him to stay with them and he stayed there two days and many there more believed because of his word they said to the woman it is no longer because of your word that we believe for we have heard for ourselves and we know that this is indeed the Christ the saviour of the world how amazing just notice this then the disciples in verse 31, 32 talked to him about food verse 34 my food is to do with the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his

work do you not say there are yet four months then comes harvest I tell you lift up your eyes see how the fields are already white for harvest the disciples saw need Jesus saw harvest we can all see need but there's a field waiting for all of us in which we'll see harvest we begin to see harvest and the possibilities of it when like this woman we begin drinking of the water he gives I must leave that second part from verse 46 to 54 to take up with you just briefly next turn all right let's pray Lord we thank you for this very simple and yet lovely story thank you that it hits straight to our hearts thank you that we just can't blindfold you you can't cover cover up you know us and love us completely we want to be right out into the open with you and Lord as we go out and minister in thy

name this weekend we'll be meeting many modern women of Samaria meeting many people who like her but dissatisfied and empty may they see and sense the reality of a living Lord in our hearts on the throne in our lives giving us peace we ask it for your name's sake

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