

# John 3

by Chuck Smith

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*To be born again means to experience a spiritual rebirth, where one's spirit becomes alive and begins to rule within their life, and this is made possible through faith in Jesus Christ.*

**Scripture:** John 3:3-4

**Topics:** "New Birth", "Worship in Spirit and Truth"

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## Description

Chuck Smith delivers a profound message from John chapters 3 and 4, focusing on the necessity of being born again to enter the Kingdom of God, as exemplified in the encounter between Jesus and Nicodemus. He emphasizes that true spiritual rebirth comes not from adherence to the law, but through faith in Jesus Christ, who offers eternal life to all who believe. Smith also highlights the transformative conversation Jesus has with the Samaritan woman at the well, illustrating that God seeks true worshippers who worship in spirit and truth. The sermon underscores the importance of recognizing our spiritual thirst and the need for a relationship with Christ to satisfy it.

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## Transcript

John 3-4

Tape #C2543

By Chuck Smith

Have we got a message for you tonight from the Word of God! John chapter 3 and 4, oh my, how rich! How blessed!

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews (3:1).

We know a few things about him; we know that he must have been very wealthy, for he came with Joseph of Arimathea to embalm the body of Jesus after the crucifixion. And he brought these costly spices, about a hundred pounds, that only a very wealthy person could

afford. A ruler of the Jews means that he was one of the seventy Sanhedrin, and, according to Jesus, he was a teacher of the Jews. He said, "Art thou a teacher of the Jews and knowest not these things?"

Finally, he was a Pharisee. The Pharisees numbered about six thousand men who had dedicated their entire life to keeping the codified law. They recognized that the first five chapters of the Old Testament were God's inspired Word to man. Now, the scribes had sought to interpret those first five books and their codifying of the law, and this was called the Mishna. Now, for instance, the law said, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." But in the Mishna there were twenty-four chapters written to qualify what that meant. Now, God said it very simply, just, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. And in six days you should do your labor, and the seventh day you shall rest and not do any labor on that day." But it took them twenty-four chapters to constitute what it meant and what the limitations and all were, the Mishna.

Now, the Pharisees sought to keep the whole Mishna, the codified law, or the explanations in the writings in the codified law. Now, on top of the Mishna, they then wrote the Talmud, which was a commentary on the Mishna. And so, the things just continued to expand and expand. But the Pharisee was one who sought, and the primary purpose of his life was the keeping of the codified law.

Nicodemus, a Pharisee, a ruler of the Jews:

He came to Jesus at night (3:2),

Now, if anyone had it made by works or by the law, it would have been Nicodemus. If anyone could present their righteous credentials before God, it would be a Pharisee. They spent their entire life endeavoring to keep every aspect of God's holy law. If there were righteousness through the law, then the Pharisees surely would have achieved it. If a man could be righteous before God by his works, then surely the Pharisees would be accounted righteous. If there was anybody who didn't need to be born again, it would have been the Pharisees.

But though he was a Pharisee, a ruler of the Jews, a teacher, he was drawn to Jesus, much like perhaps that rich young ruler who came to Jesus and fell on his knees before Him and

said, "Good Master, what must I do to have eternal life, or to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said, "Keep the commandments." And he said, "Which?" And as Jesus rattled off for him the first six commandments, or the second six actually, he said, "All of these have I kept for my youth, what lack I yet?" There was a realization that just the keeping of the law was not enough. There must be something more. Evidently, Nicodemus had this same awareness: there must be something more! Recognizing in Jesus a special quality, recognizing a special mission.

for he said to Jesus, Rabbi [Master], we know that thou art a teacher who has come from God (3:2):

He recognized, though the other Pharisees did not recognize, he did recognize the divine authority by which Jesus spake. "We know that you are a teacher that has come from God," for no man can do these miracles which you do, except God be with him (3:2).

So, he had made this acknowledgement and had this recognition that was not acknowledged by the other Pharisees. And yet was a tremendous witness and testimony to Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself called His disciples to believe because of the witness of His works. He said, "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me: or else believe Me for the very works' sake" (John 14:11). Again He said, "My works, they do testify of Me" (John 5:36). Nicodemus acknowledged this, "We know that You're a teacher come from God, because no man can do the miracles that You have done unless God was with him."

Now Jesus knew all things and He knew what was in the heart of Nicodemus and He knew foremost in the man's heart was, "How can I enter into this kingdom of God?" And so Jesus came directly to the issue that was upon the heart of Nicodemus, and He said unto him, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God (3:3).

Now Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, said to His disciples, "Except your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:20).

Now, as I said, the Pharisees spent their entire life endeavoring to keep the codified law of God, not just the Ten Commandments, but all of the Mishna, the codified law by which the Ten Commandments were explained and amplified and interpreted. And yet, Jesus said, "Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you're not going to enter the kingdom of heaven." Now He is saying to this Pharisee, the ruler of the Jews, "Unless a man is born again, he cannot enter, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

So Nicodemus said, How can a man be born again when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? And Jesus answered, Verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

For that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of Spirit is spirit (3:4-6).

Now Nicodemus was interested in being born again, but the process, "How can it happen? There's no way that I can return to my mother's womb and be born again." And I do not believe that he was being facetious, I think that he was just really curious as to, "What do you mean, born again?" And then Jesus said, "Unless a man is born of the water and of the Spirit." Now, what does He mean water and Spirit? We know what it is to be born of the Spirit. What is He referring to being born of the water? There are those who declare that He is talking about water baptism.

Unless you have been baptized in water, you're not going to see the kingdom of heaven, and that born of the water refers to water baptism.

I do not believe that Jesus is referring to water baptism here, because I believe that there are people who have gone through the ritual of water baptism who are not going to see the kingdom of heaven. It was only a ritual.

There are those who say the water refers to the Word of God. As Peter in his first epistle, chapter I, verse 23, said that we've been "begotten unto this living hope through the Word of truth." And so, we've been born again through the Word of God. And Jesus said in John 15, "Now

you are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you." And so it is being born of the Word of God.

And, the theological giants have taken their positions and there are those who say water baptism and those who say born through the Word God, and they write their commentaries and their ideas and thoughts and blast each other's ideas.

But, it would seem to me that being born of the water would be a reference to our natural birth, as the fetus is in that water sac being protected, and then there is the water bursting and the child is born. To be born of the water would refer to the natural birth, because in context then, Jesus said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, but that which born of the Spirit is spirit." And so, He's talking about the two births: born of the water, and born of the Spirit.

And that the born of the Spirit is referring to the new birth, the spiritual birth that we have, where born of the water would refer to the fleshly birth.

Now, I don't intend to make any brief for this position. If you want to believe that it refers to water baptism, you're welcome. If you want to believe that it is referring to being born by the Word of God, you're welcome. And if you want to believe it is being born of the flesh, you're welcome. You can take whatever position you want and it's not going to alter your relationship with God one iota. But there are these positions that people take, and sometimes they get very argumentive with them, but I have no argument.

We do know that that which is born of the flesh is flesh. You were born once, naturally, of the flesh. You are not a child of God by natural birth, you are a child of God by the spiritual birth.

Paul the apostle, talking about your life before Christ, said, "And you, hath He made alive, who were once dead in trespasses and sins; who in times past walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, that even now works in the children of disobedience: among whom you all once lived, according to the lust of your mind, and the lust of your flesh; and you were by nature the children of wrath" (Ephesians 2:1-3) Not the children of

God, the children of wrath. It is only by a new birth that I become a child of God.

So that which is born of the flesh is flesh. A person apart from the new birth lives a life that is dominated by his fleshly desires. His body rules over his soul and spirit.

In fact, his spirit is

dead. That's what comes alive when a person is born again, the spiritual birth, that is when my spirit comes alive. Prior to that, I am living in the flesh and after the flesh, and my mind is dominated by the flesh, and thus, I have what the scripture terms the mind of the flesh, which is death. My chief concern is what I'm going to eat, what I'm going to drink, what I'm going to wear. My fleshly needs, my body needs. These are the things that occupy my mind.

But when a person is born of the Spirit, that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Then, the

spirit becomes alive and begins to rule within my life, and now my mind is occupied with the things of the Spirit, with how I might please God, in the worship of God, in the opening up of my life and my heart unto the things of God and of His Spirit, and these are the things that now dominate my mind.

A mind dominated by the Spirit is called the mind of the Spirit, which is life and peace and joy.

So Jesus said,

Don't marvel when I said, you must be born again (3:7).

The word must, again, is one of those words you've got to pay careful attention to, because there, you're coming to the heart of the issue when a person says, "I must." When God said, "You must," it is something you need to pay careful heed to, and He said, "You must be born again." There is no one who will enter the kingdom of heaven who is not born again. He's talking about if you want to come into the kingdom of heaven, you must be born again. You cannot come into the kingdom apart from being born again. God's divine imperative for any man who will come into the kingdom is that spiritual birth, you must be born the second time, born of the Spirit of God.

In the first chapter of the gospel of John we read, "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13).

Born again by the Spirit of God.

Now, the wind bloweth where it listeth, and you hear the sound thereof, but you cannot tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit (3:8).

There is that mysterious working of God's Spirit within our lives and we cannot fully comprehend it or understand it, we just know it. We can see the effects of it. My mother used to ask me when I was a child, "Can you see the wind?" And I said, "Oh, yes, I can see the wind." She said, "No, you can't." "Oh, yes, I can, I can see it out there. Look, it's blowing the dust." She said, "You're seeing the results of the wind. You don't see the wind." I can see the results of the Spirit. I believe it, I know that the Spirit exists. I have never seen Him, but I can feel His effect upon my life, it's very real. I can see His effects in the lives of those around me, it is very obvious. And so are they who are born of the Spirit, there is that mystic work of God's Spirit that I can recognize, I can feel, I can see that work of God's Spirit within me.

Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? (3:9)

Now, he has asked two questions. Number one: "How can a man be born again?" and then, "How can these things be?" Jesus doesn't immediately answer the question, but chides him now.

He said, Are you a teacher of Israel, and don't you know these things?

Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am speaking of those things that I know, and I am testifying of those things that I have seen; and you do not receive my witness. If I have talked to you about earthly things, and you did not believe, how will you believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? (3:10-12)

"If I can't bring to your understanding a faith in these earthly things, how can I ever elevate you to a higher place? You're a teacher, you ought to know these things?" Now He then

turned and answered the question, "How can these things be? How can I be born again?" Having chided him for his not believing, not receiving the witness that Jesus said I know is true.

He then said to him,

For as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up (3:14). Here Jesus is talking about His cross. Notice again the word must. "Even so must the Son of man be lifted up." If there is to be the possibility of redemption, if there is to be an experience of being born again, it can only be by the Son of man being crucified, so must the Son of man be lifted up. He uses a very interesting example out of their history in the Old Testament found in Numbers 21, where the children of Israel, after their failure to enter into the land, and Moses began to take the route around towards Edom up through Moab and Ammon, coming into the land from the east, the people began to murmur and complain against Moses, saying, "Why did you bring us into this wilderness to die, where there is no bread or water, and our souls loathe this manna?

We're sick of it." And the anger of the Lord was kindled against the people of Israel, and God sent these little serpents into the camp, fiery serpents, deadly serpents. They began to bite the people and the people began to die as a result of the bites. And they came to Moses and they said, "We have sinned against you and against the Lord by our murmuring. Pray unto God for us that we might be delivered from this plague of serpents." And Moses prayed unto the Lord and the Lord told him to make a serpent out of brass and to put it on a pole, and to stand it up in the middle of the camp.

And it shall come to pass that whenever a man is bitten by one of these fiery serpents, if he will just look at the pole in the middle of the camp, he will be healed, he will live. And so Moses made a serpent of brass, put it on a pole, set it up in the middle of the camp; and it came to pass that whosoever was bitten by this serpent, when they looked upon that serpent on the pole, they were healed, they did not die. Therein you find the basis for that little symbol that the doctors use, the serpent on the pole, for healing.

But brass in the scripture is always a metal that is symbolic of judgment, and the serpent is always symbolic of sin. So, the brass serpent on the pole was a symbol that God had judged their sins. And by looking at that, they were healed. They did not die. Now, this is an interesting provision that God made, and by what process looking upon the serpent could save a person's life. You know, there's no physical or scientific explanation for this. It was just God's covenant! God's provision.

And He said, "All you have to do is look and you will live." Now, I can imagine that there were some hard heads there in Israel, lying on the ground convulsing as a result of the snakebite, about to die. And their friends say, "Hey, in the middle of the camp Moses set up that pole of the brass serpent. Just look at it and you'll be healed." "Don't tell me that, man, that's ridiculous. I can't make sense out of that. How can looking at that do anything for me? Don't you see, I'm dying, man! I need help!" "Yah, but just

look!" "Ah, come on, how can that help?" And I can see him arguing and dying because he can't understand how looking would help.

People are foolish. Unless they can understand all the processes by which God is working, they won't accept it. I can't explain to you how that believing in Jesus Christ can cleanse

you of your sin and cause you to be born again and become a child of God. All I can tell you is it will. It works. That's what God has ordained. Jesus, hanging on the cross, was bearing the judgment of God for your sins. "All we like sheep have gone astray, we turn, everyone of us, to our own ways. And God has laid on Him the iniquities of us all" (Isaiah 53:6). "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up. " And Jesus, hanging there on the cross, was there taking the judgment of God for sin, dying for our sins, dying in our place. And even as those in the days of Israel looked at the serpent and lived, so we, by looking at the cross in faith and in trusting in Jesus, live. We have eternal life. And so, it was quite an interesting parallel, symbolism that God had established.

How can a man be born again? How can these things be? They are the result of simply believing in Jesus Christ.

That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life (3:15).

God's provisions given to us through faith. Like the wind, you may see the effects, you may see the results and feel the effects; though it's a mystery, you can't tell whence it comes or where it's going, so is that man born of the Spirit. The process is of God's Spirit; we can't fully understand, we just know they exist.

How can a man be born again? How can these things be?

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life (3:16).

Again, the key is believing in Jesus. That's the provision that God has required for those to be born again. You are born again when you, by faith, believe in Jesus Christ, that He bore God's judgment for your sins in His death upon the cross, and you receive Him into your life. You are then born again by the Spirit of God and have become now a new creature in Jesus Christ, a son of God, a child of the King. Believing in Him, that is the key.

Then Jesus went on to declare to Nicodemus,

For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that

the world through him might be saved (3:17).

I do not know why we always seem to picture Christ as condemning us. Well, I guess it's because we're so guilty all the time. But we always are thinking of Him in that posture of condemning. "You," you know, "you're doing it again!" And we're always thinking of Him in that posture of condemning. But Paul the apostle asked the rhetorical question in Romans 8, "Who is he that condemneth?" And then he answers, "Not Jesus! For He died for us; ye, rather is risen again and is even at the right hand of the Father making intercession." God didn't send Him into the world to condemn the world. Jesus hasn't come to condemn you. Jesus has come to save you. "God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." He didn't need to come to condemn, because the world is already condemned.

Now,

He that believeth in him is not condemned (3:18):

Oh, did you hear that? Do you believe that? "He that believeth in Him is not condemned." What a glorious message of God's grace to us tonight! That ought to thrill your soul beyond measure! "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who believe in Jesus Christ" (Romans 8:1). Isn't that what it says? Do you believe it? Why is it that we are always going around condemning ourselves? Why is it that we are always going around feeling so defeated and so discouraged, when there is therefore now no condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus? For he that believeth in Him is not condemned; however, he that believeth not is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God (3:18).

What is His name? Yeshua, the Lord is salvation. Jesus came to save. That's what His name implies. "Thou shalt call His name Yeshua, for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). He didn't come to condemn, He came to save. His name implies His mission. Jesus declared it plainly. He said, "I have come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). Now, "he that believeth not is condemned already because he has not believed in the

name of the only begotten Son of God."

And what is the condemnation?

that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone that doeth evil hates the light, neither comes to the light, lest his deeds should be manifested. But he that doeth the truth comes to the light, that his deeds might be made manifested, that they are wrought in God (3:19-21).

What is the condemnation? That men won't come to the light.

Now, God forbid, but if you will in the future, if you are standing with that throng in Revelation 20 before the great white throne judgment of God, and the books are open, and you are to be judged out of the things written in the books; and when your name is finally called and you have to stand before God naked, open, and God opens the books and the indictment is made against you, there will only be one charge. There's not going to be going down the list of every lie you told or everything you stole or every wrong thought or action or deed you ever had. There's only going to be one indictment: your failure to come to Jesus Christ. He said, "I am the light of the world." Light has come into the world, but men won't come into the light, and that's why they are condemned. "He that believeth not is condemned already." You don't need that Jesus should condemn you, you're already condemned. He didn't come to condemn you. He didn't need to. You already are condemned. But now, the issue is not so much the evil that you have done, but your rejection of the provision, the only provision that God has made whereby men might come to Him. Whereby men might have the forgiveness of their sins. So, there will only be one indictment against man.

Jesus said when the Holy Spirit is come, He's going to reprove the world of sin, of righteousness and judgment. Of sin, because they didn't believe in Me. You see, that's the only sin that's going to damn your soul. Any other thing you may have done is forgiven. Christ died for the sins of the world. God laid upon Him the iniquities of us all. His death satisfied God completely for the sin of all humanity. There's only one charge and indictment that God will make

against a man, his failure to come to the light, his failure to receive God's provision.

Now after these things came Jesus and his disciples to the land of Judea

(3:22);

So, they had come down to the area around Jerusalem.

and he tarried there with his disciples, and baptized (3:22).

So it would seem that the disciples of Jesus were at this time beginning to baptize people.

And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was a lot of water there: and they came, and were baptized. For John was not yet cast into prison. Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying. And they came unto John, and they said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with you beyond Jordan, to whom you bore witness, behold, the same is baptizing, and all men are coming to him (3:23-26).

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So they came to John, and they said, "That one that you bore witness to, you said 'the Lamb of God and all.' He's baptizing now and everyone is going to Him."

And John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it is given to him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Messiah, but that I was sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: and this my joy therefore is fulfilled. For He must increase, and I must decrease (3:27-30).

Beautiful humility of John in taking his rightful place. He said, "You bear witness that I testified of him. Now, look, He's the bridegroom and I'm just the best man. It's the bridegroom that takes the bride. But His best man rejoices when he hears Him. And herein, I rejoice because of the bridegroom's voice, and my joy, therefore, is fulfilled." How? In bringing honor and glory to Jesus. "For He must increase and I must decrease." So say we all!

He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: but he that cometh from heaven is above all. And what he hath seen and heard, that is what he testified; and no man received his testimony (3:31-32).

This is pretty much what Jesus said to Nicodemus. "No man has descended into heaven but he which came down from heaven, even the Son of man which was in heaven. And I've told you earthly things and you believe not. How would you believe if I've told you of heavenly things?" So, he speaks of Jesus coming down from heaven, but no man receiving His testimony. And he that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true (3:33).

When you receive the testimony of Jesus Christ, there is sort of a seal, a stamp in your heart you know that is true. The Spirit of God has born witness to my own heart of the truth of God. There are things I just know are true. You say, "How do you know they are true?" I just know they're true. There is that seal, the Spirit just bears witness to the truth. And you just know it! The oetus, the... just intuitive knowledge.

For he whom God hath sent speaks the words of God: for God did not give to him the Spirit by measure [or just apportioned out] to him (3:34).

But the fullness of the Spirit dwells in Jesus Christ, not just measured out, but that fullness.

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And the Father loves the Son, and has given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son has everlasting life: and he that believes not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abides on him (3:35-36).

So, this is the final witness of John the Baptist concerning Jesus Christ. He that believeth on the Son has everlasting life. But if you believe not, you have not life. You'll not even see life, but conversely, the wrath of God abides upon you.

Chapter 4

Now when the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (though Jesus himself baptized none, but his disciples,) (4:1)

Now this can mean one of two things. Jesus baptized not, but His disciples, or, He only baptized His disciples; or, He didn't baptize at all, it was only His disciples who were baptizing. So, you have a choice. But when Jesus heard that the Pharisees had heard these things, He left Judea (4:2),

The Pharisees had heard now that He was baptizing even more than John, so He left the area of Judea, the area near Jerusalem, where most of the Pharisees hung out. and he departed and went again into the area of Galilee (4:3).

From Judea, on into Galilee.

And he had to go through Samaria (4:4).

For Samaria lies between Judea, Jerusalem and the Galilee. The area of Samaria lies between the two, through the middle part of the country. Now,

He came to a city of Samaria, which was called Sychar [or Shechem], near a parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat on the well: for it was about noon. And there came a woman of Samaria to draw water: and Jesus said unto her, Give me a drink. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Then said the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that you, being a Jew, are asking me for a drink, for I am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that said unto you, Give me a drink; you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water. And the woman said unto him, Sir, you have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: where are you

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going to get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, which gave

us the well, and drank from it himself, and his children, and his cattle? And Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinks of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinks 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. And the woman said unto him, Sir, give me some of this water, so I will never thirst again, and I won't have to come out here and draw water everyday (4:5-15).

Now, up to this point, this woman is being rather saucy with Jesus, sort of pert and cute.

She's not a very upright woman. In fact, she's sort of a low-moral character.

She's probably very

well known in Shechem because of her not-so-illustrious past. She's got a bad reputation. She's probably known as a flirt and available. And probably that kind who is pretty worldly-wise and able to handle men pretty well, and that type which...every man is sort of a challenge. So, when she came to draw water and saw this person sitting there, and He said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" rather than just obliging and giving Him a drink without saying anything, she has to open up the door and ask him, "How come you're asking me for a drink?

You're a Jew and I'm a

Samaritan, and we're not supposed to have dealings with each other." And Jesus said, "If you knew the gift of God and who it was that was asking you for a drink, you would have been asking Him for a drink."

Now, I'm sure that her motives in talking to Jesus at this point are far different from His.

But she continued on in saying, "Why would I ask you for a drink? That well is deep and you don't have anything to draw it with. " She said, "Where are you going to get this living water?

Are

you greater than Jacob who gave us this well?" Jesus said to her, "Whosoever drinks of this water shall thirst again."

When Jesus is talking to this woman about water, about living water, she did not

understand what He was talking about, even, I'm sure, as Nicodemus did not fully understand what Jesus was talking about when He first said, "You've got to be born again." You know, he got this mental picture of his going back into his mother's womb. Jesus was talking again about spiritual things and she was thinking only of material things.

But Jesus said to her, "If you drink of the spiritual water, the living water, you'll never thirst again." "Oh, I'd like some of this water so I don't have to come out here and drink again, so I don't get thirsty any more."

Now, the statement, "He who drinks of this water shall thirst again," there Jesus is referring to that physical water in the well. Carrying it one step further, Jesus, in talking about thirst, spoke not of physical thirst but of spiritual thirst. Man is a threefold being: he is body, mind and spirit. And there are physical thirsts, there are emotional thirsts, and is a spiritual thirst.

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Jesus said to the woman, "If you're going to drink of this water, you're going to thirst again." That can be said of every physical experience that you might possess or seek or find.

There are always those who feel, "If I could just..." and you fill in the blank. "...then I would be happy and satisfied." What's in your blank? "If I just had blank, I would be satisfied and happy!" It seems that man is always setting out a goal or a thing whereby he feels that, "If I could just achieve, if I could just attain, if I could just have, then I would be satisfied. I wouldn't be thirsty any more!" Jesus said, "Not so!

You drink of this water and you will thirst again."

Now, you ought to be able to prove that in your own mind, because surely in times past, you have set those temporary goals that you felt, "If I could just have a new bicycle I wouldn't want anything again as long as I live." I know there was a time when I lusted after a bicycle. And I thought, "If I could just have that bicycle, oh, I would just be so happy. I would never want anything again as long as I lived." And, I got that bicycle.

But it wasn't long before..."If I just had a speedometer on this bicycle, I wouldn't want anything again, you know." And then, "If I just had

a headlight with a generator, oh, I would never want anything again." So, there have been those intermediate goals that I have achieved and attained, but you know what? I thirsted again. They didn't fully satisfy me. As Jesus said, "Drink of this water, you're going to thirst again." And it has been true in my life, as I have achieved those goals, those intermediate goals that I had established, and I thought, "Oh, if I could just have," and I then had, but it didn't satisfy. I thirsted again. But Jesus said, "If you drink of the water that I give, you'll never thirst again.

It'll be like a

well just springing up inside of you." The woman said, "Sir, I'll take some of that water."

And Jesus said, Well, first go call your husband. And she said, I don't have any husband (4:16-17).

I'm available.

And the Jesus said to her, You have well said, I have no husband: for you have had five husbands; and you've finally just moved in with a man without marrying him (4:17-18).

Now, notice the whole switch of her attitude. No longer is she a cute little flirt. Her mask has been ripped off. You know, a lot of people go around wearing masks.

They have a cute,

clever exterior. "I can handle myself, I know how to get around, I don't need any help, I've got it made." But when that mask has been removed, underneath there is a great thirst and a great need, and the thirst and the need that man has is for God, every man, no matter who they are.

You may try to pretend that you don't need God. "That's for weak people! I don't need to commit my life to God, I don't need God, I can handle it, I'm able to make my way in life. The battle is for the strong and I'm strong. I don't need help." And you may put up a very tough, formidable front,

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a mask. But deep down inside every man's heart is crying out for God. No matter what kind of a front you may be putting up. And when Jesus took away her mask, when suddenly she realized she wasn't kidding this fellow, "He's looking right inside of me and He knows what is inside of

me. He knows the truth about me. I'm not fooling Him at all." The mask was gone. Her spirit was open and naked and revealed; and she knew it. And so, suddenly, the whole attitude and tenor changes, and what is her question?

Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and you say, in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship (4:20).

The question was, "Where do I find God? Our fathers said we find God in this mountain, you say we find God in Jerusalem. Where can I find God?" And down deep inside of every man there is that haunting question, "Where can I find God?" Because we all need God, no matter what kind of a front we may be putting up to others. Down deep inside all of us need God, and there is that cry of our hearts, "Where can I find God?" And so her whole attitude changed, "Sir, I perceive you're a prophet."

"Our fathers say we are to worship God in these mountains," that is in Mount Garesam, which is there in Samaria, the mountains upon which the tribes of Israel stood on the top and pronounced God's blessings when they came into the land, opposite to Mount Ebal, where the curses were pronounced.

And so, the Samaritans, those people who inhabited the northern province after the Syrian captivity, those who were not accepted into Judaism when the Jews returned from the Babylonian captivity, because they could not prove the purity of their lineage, who had intermarried with the people brought into the land by the Assyrians, sort of half-breeds, were called Samaritans. And because they were not allowed by the Jews in Jerusalem to help with the temple or to enter into the worship there, they began to establish their own worship center on Mount Garesam, making their own sacrifices there and creating quite a breach between the Jews and the Samaritans, not dealing with each other. And they began to say that it was on Mount Garesam that Abraham had offered Isaac. And they also affirm that on Mount Garesam, Solomon had built the temple, that this is the place to worship God. And they would discourage the Samaritans from going to Jerusalem to worship God. God is found in this mountain, God is worshipped in this mountain.

Now even to the present day, the Samaritans, and, of course, they have dwindled, there are only about twelve hundred Samaritans left in the world. And they are fast passing off the scene, because of the inbreeding, most of them are sort of on the lunatic fringe, because they won't marry outside of that close knit group, and so the intermarriages are too close and there's

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not been the infusion of outside blood, so you've got idiocy going among them now. And they are fast passing away. But to the present day, they still offer a sacrificial lamb on Garesum to the present day. They still affirm, those Samaritans that are left, that Garesum is the place where men find God. But basically her question is, "Where can I find God?" and that's the question that burns in the heart of every man.

Jesus said, Woman, believe me, the hour is coming, when you will neither in this mountain, nor at Jerusalem, worship the Father (4:21).

And then He said something that is very revealing.

You do not know what you worship (4:22):

How true that is of so many people today. They really don't know what they are worshipping. He said,

we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and even now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father is seeking such to worship him. For God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth (4:22-24).

Where's God found? He's found wherever you are. He surrounds us. God is not localized, nor can you localize God. So often in our minds we make that mistake of localizing God. How glorious it is to gather tonight in the presence of God here in the sanctuary. Well, that's true in a sense, but yet, in another sense, God doesn't just dwell here in the sanctuary. God dwells in your car as you're driving to the sanctuary. God dwells in your house as you're yelling at your kids getting ready to go to the sanctuary, because they're not getting dressed fast enough.

We need to become more conscious of the all-prevailing presence of God wherever I am. God is a spirit; I am surrounded by Him. For in Him we live and we move and we have our being. And you cannot localize God...in Garesum, or Jerusalem, or in any other locality. He doesn't dwell there any more than any other place. God dwells in the hearts and in the lives of every child of God, and He surrounds us all. In Him we live, we move, we have our being. God is a spirit, and if you want to worship Him, you've got to worship Him in spirit. That's spiritual worship of God and in truth.

So the woman said unto him, I know that when the Messiah comes, which is called Christ (4:25):

The word Christ is a Greek word. It is the translation into Greek of the Hebrew word Messiah. And so, you have the Greek word Christ, but it is a word that is the translation of the

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word Messiah. So John points that out here. "I know that when the Messiah comes," which in Greek is called Christ, Christos.

when he is come, he will tell us all things. And Jesus said unto her, I who speak unto you am he (4:25-26).

Can you imagine what she must have felt at that moment? "I was flirting with Him?" "I who speak unto you am He."

And upon this the disciples returned, and they marveled that he was talking with the woman: yet none of them said, What are you seeking? or, Why are you talking with her? And the woman then left her waterpot, and went her way unto the city, and said to the men (4:27-28),

The women probably wouldn't talk to her.

Come, and see a man, which told me everything I ever did: is not this the Messiah? And they went out of the city, and come unto him. And in the meantime his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. But he said unto them, I have meat that you don't know about. Therefore said his disciples one to

another, Has someone brought him something to eat? And Jesus said unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work (4:29-34).

And interesting, the phrase "to finish His work." The work of redemption was not yet finished. Later, on the cross Jesus will cry, "It is finished." But God's work of redemption was not yet complete. And so, "I came not to do my own will, I came to do the will of Him who sent Me." Jesus was a man on a mission, sent by the Father to finish the Father's work, the work of redemption of mankind.

And then He said,

Don't say, There are four months, and then the harvest will come?

behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields (4:35);

Now at this point, the men of Shechem were coming out through the fields to the well where Jesus was. And most of them wore these white turbans, and so, as you looked on the fields you saw these white turbans, all of them, descending from the city towards the well. And Jesus said to His disciples, "Don't say four months and the harvest will come. Look unto the fields right now."

behold they are white unto harvest (4:35).

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Hungry souls searching for God. Where can you find God?

He that reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit unto life eternal: and both he that sows and he that reaps may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One sows, another reaps (4:36-37).

Paul said, "One plants, one waters. God gives the increase."

I sent you to reap whereon you bestowed no labor: other men labored, and you are entered into their labors. And many of the Samaritans believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me everything I ever did. So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they begged him that he

would stay with them: and so he remained there for two days. And many more believed because of his own word; then they said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of what you said: for we have heard him ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Messiah, the Savior of the world. Now after two days he departed from there, and went into Galilee. For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet has no honor in his own country. And when he was come into Galilee, the Galileans received him, having seen all of the things which he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast. So, he came again to Cana of Galilee (4:38-46),

Now Cana was a little village there in the valley as you're coming from Nazareth, up over the top of the hill, you drop into this little valley and Cana sits there in the valley, and it's on the road from Nazareth to the Sea of Galilee. So, as He came to Cana, it's probably twenty miles from the Sea of Galilee to Cana. And so, He came unto Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum (4:46).

Now Capernaum was at least twenty miles from Cana.

And when he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea back to Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: because he was at the point of death (4:47).

He's asking Jesus to go from Cana down to Capernaum, twenty miles, to heal his son.

Of course, if you've got a son that's dying and you're the dad, you're going to be desperate.

You're going to do your best if you feel that, "Here's a man that can help my dying son."

And Jesus said unto him, Except you see signs and wonders, you will not believe. And the nobleman said unto him, Sir, come or my child is going to

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die. And Jesus said unto him, Go your way; your son lives. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken to him, and he went his way (4:48-50).

He believed the word so much he didn't even go home. He just believed it. Because, the next day

As he was going down, his servants met him, and said, Your son is alright. And he inquired and he said, At what hour did the change take place?

And they said, At about one o'clock in the afternoon. And he knew that that was exactly the time that Jesus said, Your son lives (4:51-53):

Now you see, if it were one o'clock in the afternoon and he was really concerned for his son, he would have taken off for Capernaum and probably could've made it there by evening on a fast jog. But he wasn't worried any more. He believed the word of Jesus. And so the father knew it was the same hour in which Jesus said unto him, "Your son lives."

and himself believed (4:53),

That moment Jesus said it, and he believed it and it was.

and his whole house believed. This is again the second miracle that Jesus did [that is in Cana], when he was come out of Judea into Galilee (4:53-54).

Now, in chapter 5, we leave Galilee and we go back to Jerusalem and to the pool of Bethesda and the events that were there. And John concentrates the most of his gospel with the ministry of Jesus around Jerusalem. It tells little about the ministry in Galilee, where the other gospels concentrate most on the Galilean ministry. So, John doesn't leave us long in Galilee before we go back to Jerusalem to the feast of the Jews there in Jerusalem. And so, we'll get into that next week, as we continue chapters 5 and 6 next week of the gospel according to John.

May the Lord be with you and bless and keep you in His love, and may your life be enriched daily this week as you study the Word and as you worship God in spirit and in truth. For God is seeking such to worship Him. May your life in Christ grow, be enriched and developed more and more, day-by-day, that you might come to that fullness that God would have you to experience, the fullness of His grace and love towards you through Jesus our Lord. So, may the Lord bless and keep, strengthen and guide, and give you just a totally beautiful week, walking in

the Spirit and the love of Jesus Christ.

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