

Stage III. The Early Judean Ministry

E. Jesus Makes Disciples in Samaria

2. Jesus Offers the Gift of “Living Water” to a Samaritan Woman

The DAILY JESUS NEWS #044

JN 4.7-14

7 Look at this! A Samaritan woman came to draw water. Jesus took the initiative to speak to her, *"Will you give me a drink?"* 8 (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is that you, being a Jew, are asking for a drink from me, a Samaritan woman? (For Jews have nothing to do with Samaritans.)

10 Jesus answered her, *"If you knew the gift of God (but you don't), and who it is that is asking you for a drink, you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."*

11 "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where are you going to get this living water? 12 I don't think you are greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock, but are you?"

13 Jesus answered, *"Everyone who drinks this water is going to be thirsty again, (14) but whoever drinks the water that I will give them will never, ever be thirsty again. Indeed, the water I give them will become a spring of water inside them, that keeps on gushing up with eternal life."*

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = ^{MT}, Mark = ^M, Luke = ^L, John = ^J, Acts = ^A. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *the words of Jesus are italicized in red*. Old Testament quotations are CAPITALIZED.

	CONTEXT DIGEST
Location	Sychar in Samaria
Timeline	August 30 AD (Month seven)
Jesus' Life Context	Stage III: The Early Judean Ministry
	E. Jesus Makes Disciples in Samaria
Title	2. Jesus Offers the Gift of “Living Water” to a Samaritan Woman

COMMENT:

We have seen that Jesus' journey through Samaria was *“necessary”* for Him. He arrived at Jacob's well around noon (“the sixth hour” 4.6). After sending his disciples into the village to buy some food, Jesus sat down on the lip of the well to rest. The Greek shows that Jesus had entered into a state of deep fatigue. He was wiped out. This makes what follows that much more remarkable.

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A Samaritan woman came to the well to draw some water. The fact that she came in the full heat of the noonday sun shows us she was an “outcast,” for she came alone. The women of the city normally came in the cool of the early morning to draw their water, so the well became a place of conversation and fellowship for them. This woman was not welcome in their company.

The reason for the woman’s exclusion emerges later in the conversation. She had been married and divorced five times, and was now shacking up with her unmarried partner. And, if her fellow women shunned her, how much more would a respectable man do so? Men never addressed women in public in that society, much less would a Jew address an obviously loose and immoral woman. Little did she know that she had a Divine Appointment to meet the Savior and Lord of the whole world when she headed for that well in the full light of day. She was about to meet the Light of the Word!

Jesus saw her coming and realized that she was the reason His Father had led him to that very place and time. His state of exhaustion did not deter Him in the least from revealing Himself to this hurting woman in need of His grace. Jesus reached across all the religious, racial, gender, class, economic, traditional, and cultural barriers that separated Him from this woman in one brilliant moment by making a simple request: **“Give Me a drink.”**

When Jesus spoke to an immoral woman like this, He made a radical, bold, counter-cultural move that took Him completely outside the predictable box of normal behavior. He demonstrated the impartiality of God’s love.

This was the one perfect thing Jesus could say in order to engage this woman in conversation. Here are some of the results of taking this approach:

- (1) Making a request required a response. She could not ignore a stranger’s request for life-giving water.
- (2) It opened up the door to using the well and water as object lessons in revealing Himself to her.
- (3) It established a bond with her on the lowest common denominator of human need: they were both people who needed water to drink.
- (4) This request could be made without suggesting anything untoward in His relationship with a woman.
- (5) But there is one more shocking dimension to this request: Jesus was offering to drink from the same container from which she drank! This was the ultimate expression of his compassion and sincerity in opening up this conversation, and it instantly registered with her.

We have examined the contrast between Nicodemus and the Samaritan women in previous readings. We need to think a little bit more about this now. In Jesus’ day Nicodemus was the epitome of the man that is pleasing to God. He was male, educated, a Bible scholar and Teacher, rich, a member of the ruling ultra-elite, and a Pharisee. Yet Nicodemus totally misunderstood what Jesus was saying to Him and ended His conversation with Jesus without believing in Him. The “likeliest” candidate for salvation-from a human point of view--completely bombed out.

The Samaritan woman, on the other hand, is the most unlikely candidate--from a human point of view-- for knowing Jesus in the entire gospel of John. This woman was immoral, shunned, living in sin, and hardened in all these areas to boot. She was not a seeker, who came to Jesus with a repentant heart like the woman caught in adultery in JN 8, or Mary Magdalene. Jesus took the initiative and sought HER out.

Yet SHE believed in Jesus on the spot, and became the greatest evangelist in the entire gospel of John after Jesus Himself, and John the Immerser. What an example of what Jesus’ boundless grace can accomplish!

Jesus came to call the unlikeliest people into an eternal relationship with Himself, and then use them to extend that same grace to others. This woman is a glorious example of what the grace of Jesus can accomplish in anybody who believes into Him. That is why John included this encounter in his Gospel. This is also why I have again prepared extensive notes of this passage, focusing on every word Jesus spoke. ([Access it here.](#)) For example, today’s reading

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includes the most prolific, expansive promise of Jesus' ministry in verse 14. You *need* to understand and experience what Jesus communicated in this conversation.

Please download the pdf I have included with every reading in JN Chapter Four, and allow the same grace that Jesus extended to this woman have its full impact in and through you, as you steep yourself in her story.

APPLICATION. Three stellar principles of evangelism according to Jesus need to be applied from this text.

First, ignore the many artificial barriers, and entrenched forms of prejudice that surround us. Let God's love set you free from the shallowness of only reaching out to other people who are like you, with whom you feel most comfortable. Evangelism "according to Jesus" requires a commitment to boldly share the good news with even the most unlikely of sinners. Go and do likewise.

Second, use the power of asking a question or making a request. Probing questions and unexpected requests allow us understand the mind and heart of those we witness to, and draw them out into a witnessing conversation in a non-threatening way. Use pertinent questions to initiate conversations and develop relationships.

Third, effective witnessing uses objects and experiences from the life-experience of those we are talking to. Jesus capitalized on the water and well that He shared in common with the woman in order to witness to her. Use what is at hand to illustrate who Jesus is, and what He has accomplished.

Now...go and do likewise!

How will you implement these principles?