

The Water and the Woman
Spilman Memorial Baptist Church, Kinston NC
Dr. H. Powell Dew, Jr.
October 31, 2021

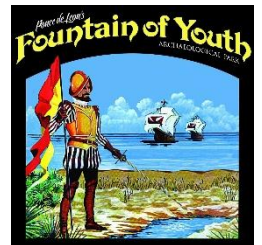
Text: John 4:4-29

Purpose: Jesus met the woman at Jacob's well in Sychar in Samaria. Jesus met her where she was and offered her "Living Water." This same offer of salvation is available to all who ask for it.



A church that loved good fellowship always served coffee after the sermon. One day after church, the pastor asked a young boy if he knew why they served coffee. The boy replied, "I think I know why. It is to get the people wide awake before they drive home."¹ Hopefully you will not need a cup of coffee when you leave here today.

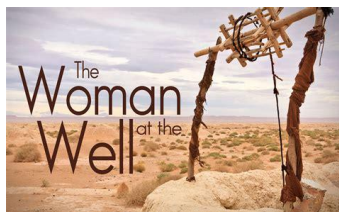
In the early 15th Century, there was a rumor that in some part of the world, there was a special fountain that had water that would cure you of your illness, that if you would just drink from that water fountain, then you would live as a youth once again. On April 2, 1513, according to tradition, there was a fountain discovered by Ponce de Leon, the Spanish Explorer. Today, it is located in St. Augustine Florida. He took possession of the "New World" in the name of the King of Spain. This was one of the many driving forces that brought explorers to the Americas.





Even today, we as Americans pursue a youthful life, youthful appearance and a youthful approach to life. Often, we spend our earnings to capture this illusive thing called youth. The clothing industry with their skimpy clothes, the cosmetic industry with the skin treatments, and even the medical community with plastic surgery and liposuction perpetuate this illusion that there is a fountain of youth out there.

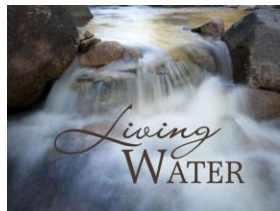
Over the past week as I was preparing for today's sermon, I read the account in John chapter four over and over. The way Jesus talked with this woman was completely different than the way he talked with Nicodemus in chapter three. He was one of the teachers of Israel. One that knew the law, one that knew the scriptures, one that had the position, the power, and the reputation to maintain. This encounter with the woman at the well was different. For you see, Nicodemus went to Jesus under the cover of darkness, but in the encounter with the woman in Samaria, Jesus came to the woman in broad daylight.



The two main features in this encounter are the Living Water and the Woman at the Well. I know Jesus is central in both elements, but let us look for a moment this morning at the **Living Water** and the **Samaritan Woman**.

I. The Living Water

As we back away from the text we want to learn more about this Living Water that Jesus is offering this woman.



What is the nature of this water?
What is the source of this water?
What does this water do for us that drink it?
Is there a condition placed upon anyone that gets this water?
What is the cost of the water?

When we look at the woman at the well, what did Jesus see in her that would cause Him to intentionally go through the village of Samaria to see her? Before we talk about her, let us go back to the water and learn more about this offer Jesus is making to this woman.

What is the nature of this water?



When Jesus talked with this woman from Samaria, He told her, that if she knew who she was talking with, she would ask for this living water. Again, one of the themes we have found in the book of John is that the darkness, or those that do not know God, do not understand the things of God.

Nicodemus did not understand what Jesus was talking about when he said, *"You must be born again."* Nicodemus wanted to know how could he go back into his mother's womb again. This woman, when Jesus offered her the living water said, *"Give me this water so I will not have to come and draw water from here again!"* She wanted some of this water Jesus spoke about. If she had this water that caused her never to thirst again, then she would not need to come and draw water ever again. Give me this water so it will ease my physical life.



But Jesus was not offering this kind of physical water. It is only the living water offered by Jesus that satisfies the soul, that quenches our spiritual hunger, and it causes us to be regenerated. It is a regenerating kind of water, not a refreshing kind of water.

A second question we may ask is
“What is the source of this water?”



Jesus replied, *“If thou would only ask of me, then I would give it to you.”* This water does not come from a special fountain in Florida, but it comes from the source of life, it comes from the Creator of the world, it comes from Jesus Himself. John 17:2 says, *“Unto Him has been ‘given power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life.’”* When you come to Christ, you come to the source that is life itself. It is Living Water. The source of this grace and truth is the gracious heart of the eternal God. John 3:16 reminds us how much God loved the world, that He gave His only Son. It is from the heart of the Father that this living water is given.

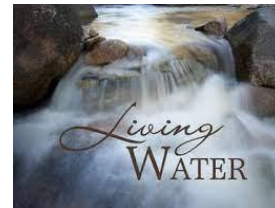
Another question we can ask is,
“What does this water do for us that drink it?”



Verse 14 says, *“Whosoever shall drink of this water that I shall give him, shall never thirst.”* This water is a quenching water. It satisfies a longing in our heart for the things of God. It has been said that mankind has a God shaped void in their spirit. You can try many things to fill that void, relationships, drugs, alcohol, academics, a job, the acquisition of “things,” but none of them will satisfy that

God shaped hole. Only God can fill that emptiness in your heart.

Once we have partaken of God’s offer of forgiveness and accepted Jesus as His Son and our Savior, a strange thing happens. That living water that cleanses us, now becomes a well of water that springs from within us. We become overflowing with the things of God. We now have a source within us that we cannot explain. There is an inner peace, an inner contentment, an inner satisfaction that only comes from abiding in Christ.



Verse 14 describes it this way, *“The water that I shall give him shall become in him a spring of water.”* The idea is that once one drinks of this water and receives this grace and truth from God, there is opened up within that person a fountain of new life and blessedness – it becomes a second source.

Every person that has walked with God knows what I am talking about. Yes, there are times of sorrow, loss and heartache. But somewhere within our spirit there is a source of peace that only God can give. There is a quietness of our soul even in the midst of grief and loss.

When it comes to this water, some may ask, **“Is there a condition placed upon anyone that gets this water?”**

Verse 10 says, *“If thou knew the gift of God, (If you knew this person standing before you, this gift of God, Jesus) thou would ask of Him.”* (You would ask for this living water.)

**JESUS said
ASK and YOU
shall RECEIVE**

The condition for receiving this living water is knowing and asking. If you know to ask, and you ask you will receive. It is not very complicated. Jesus has told this woman at the well, that if you knew who I was, you would ask. After a few more minutes, Jesus reveals who He is to this woman. This is one of the few times Jesus clearly comes out and says, “I am the Messiah you have been waiting for.” He doesn’t play word games with her like he did with Nicodemus. He lays it out plainly.

Today, Jesus is still laying it out plainly for us. He says He is the way, the truth, the life. He is the door. He is the light. He is the living water. He is all that we need to satisfy that empty hole in our spirit. All we have to do is ask for it.

Some may ask, “**What is the cost of the water?**” Our skeptical minds want to know what it will cost me. God has paid the price for your restoration. It cost you nothing. Verse 14 uses that word, “*Whosoever*.” It is available to all! This invitation is to whosoever – that includes you and me! Whosoever is a word of infinite grace from God.



One day a missionary in India spoke near a fountain on the subject, “Jesus, the Water of Life.” A Muslim interrupted, “Your religion is like this little stream of water, but Islam is like a great ocean!”

“Yes,” said the missionary, “but there is this difference: when a man drinks ocean water they will die of thirst. When they drink the water of life which Christ gives, they live forever!” The stream is small, but it can satisfy your

thirst. Jesus came into the world as a little baby that He might show that no one is so little or so insignificant that the great God will not come to dwell within them.²

II. The Samaritan Woman

Let us turn now to this woman in Samaria. In many ways she is just like you and me. We opened this story with Jesus and his disciples going through Samaria from Judea to Galilee. The Jews of that day had three ways they could travel this path. Around on the left, around on the right or right through the middle. Most Jews NEVER went through Samaria. Here Jesus brought a dozen Jewish followers into the heart of the Samaritan community.



It must have been about noon that day and Jesus sent his disciples into town to buy food. Jesus was sitting at the well waiting for her to come. Most women went early in the day to draw the needed water for the day. Maybe she was busy doing other tasks, but most likely she went at noon to avoid all the stares and rude comments made toward her.

She was a woman that, according to the scripture, had been married five times. I am sure other women knew her story and they did not want their husbands to even get near her. She in their opinion, was a flagrant sinner. She was chief among sinners in that area. This encounter with her was not an accident. Jesus knew who He was seeking. In chapter three Jesus talked with a chief official in the temple. Now he is talking with a Samaritan woman that has been married five times who is now living with a man she is not married to. Both extremes in the social spectrum.



After the temple was destroyed the first time, many Israelites were taken into captivity in Babylon. Some of the people were not taken and they remained in the region. Over time, these families' children

intermarried with non-Israelites and they settled in the region known as Samaria. These people were often despised by the Israelites because they were not pure. They were half breeds. That contempt for Samaritans was so deep, that they would walk around the town rather than pollute themselves by walking in that town.

As you can see on this map, Samaria is located between Jerusalem and Galilee. Jesus is talking with a Samaritan woman. Women in that culture were considered as property. They had no rights. They were to be ignored. A husband could divorce a woman for almost any reason.



Do you think that a Jew would even drink from the same vessel as a Samaritan? NO WAY. But Jesus came to her, talked with her, told her who he was, met her where she was.



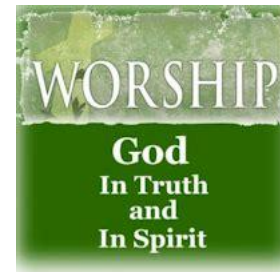
We see here a picture of what the well of Jacob looks like today.

The woman at the well knew something was different about this man. He talked with her. He asked her for a drink of water. Jesus had her attention. To me that shows how great a heart Jesus had for this woman.

She was answering him just as the world answers Jesus. *"You have nothing to draw water from the well with."* But Jesus was talking with her about The Living Water, not physical water. A carnal mind cannot understand the things of God.

She doesn't really believe Jesus when he extends living water to her. She jokingly says, *"Give me this water so I will not have to come here and draw from Jacob's well again."* She could have completely misunderstood and was serious about obtaining this special water and never having to return to the well again.

Jesus cut right to the heart of the issue with this woman. He said to her, *"Woman, go call your husband."* It is then that she hangs her head and says, "I have no husband." Jesus knew her story. Jesus knew her situation. The text doesn't include all the conversation, but Jesus began to reveal to her that He knew her.



Once she realized this could be the Messiah, she began to listen intently. She asked about worship. What is acceptable worship? Here or there. This way or that way? Jesus says, *"Those that worship God, must worship Him in Spirit and in Truth."*

It must have been as if a light bulb came on within this woman. She ran to the village, left her bucket, and brought others to Jesus.

- She came as a weary woman and left renewed and refreshed.
- She came as a hopeless sinner, and left as a forgiven follower.
- She came without salvation, but left with living water.

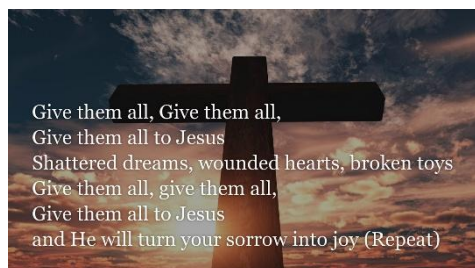
How about you? Where are you in this process called life? Has your life been similar to this woman at Jacob's well in Sychar, in Samaria? Have you been seeking things that do not satisfy you? Why not give them all to Jesus and let him turn your sorrow into joy?

In the 1980's Evie wrote a song entitled, "*Give them All to Jesus.*"³ I still have the album of this song at home. At that time in my life, the words to this song were like water to a thirsty plant. It spoke to me and helped me reorient my life and trust Jesus with every step along the way.

This woman at the well needed to hear the words of life from Jesus. She needed that Living Water. How about you? Do you need this Living Water? He's ready to give if only you receive.

Give Them All to Jesus

Are you tired of chasing pretty rainbows?
Are you tired of spinning round and round?
Wrap up all the shattered dreams of your life
And at the feet of Jesus lay them down.



Chorus

Give them all, give them all, give them all to Jesus,
Shattered dreams, wounded hearts, broken toys.

(Just give them all to Jesus)

Give them all, give them all, give them all to Jesus
And he will turn your sorrow into joy.

(Just give them all to Jesus)

He never said you would only see sunshine
(you'd only see sunshine)

He never said there would be no rain
(He never said there'd be no rain)

He only promised us a heart full of singing
(a heart full of singing)

That's the very thing that once brought pain.
(Just give them all to Jesus)

Chorus

LET US PRAY

Notes:

¹ A Treasury of Bible Illustrations, Number 668, Coffee after the Sermon, page 268.

² A Treasury of Bible Illustrations, "Why did God come into the world like a baby?" Number 111, page 40.

³ <https://youtu.be/DsOnwWsHnIw>