

The Gospel of John

Chapter 4:1-30

January 26, 1997

- **The Gospel of John Outline:**
 - Chapter 1 Our Lord is the Word, the Light and the Life
 - Chapter 2 The Lord of the Wedding Feast; Zeal for the purity of the temple
 - Chapter 3 Spiritual Birth, Belief and Salvation vs. Unbelief and Condemnation
 - Chapter 4 The Ministry in Samaria,
- **Exposition**

John 4:1-30

Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John ²(though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples),³ He left Judea and departed again to Galilee.⁴ But He needed to go through Samaria.⁵ So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.⁶ Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

- The Pharisees were always on the lookout for small factions that would garner followers and threaten their control. They had already dealt with John the Baptist and now when the word that Jesus had amassed a greater following than John reached the Pharisees, our Lord moved on presumably so that He would not have to confront the Pharisees.
- The grammar in verse four, gives the impression that the need to go through Samaria was not that of convenience but compulsion. Therefore, His visit to Samaria is not without significance because of the enmity which had existed between the Jews and the Samaritans.

7 A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink."⁸ For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.⁹ Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

- About two hundred years after the Northern kingdom had been taken captive by Assyrians, the Southern kingdom was taken hostage by Babylon. One tactic of the Assyrians was to deport the Jews and resettle the land with captives from other countries which created Jewish half-breeds. Once the Southern kingdom was restored, the friction developed between the pure Jews of the South and the partial Jews of the North.

10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."¹¹ The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water?"¹² "Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?"

- Our Lord responds by raising the woman's interest level by introducing the living water. This description, which we know to be of Himself, was actually pictured in the rock that gave forth water for the Israelites while they traveled in the desert (1 Cor 10:4).

13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again,¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

- Those who drink from the living water, that is, those who are included in Christ and have been washed and sealed by Him, never have unquenched thirsts. One attribute of those who do drink this water is that they thirst for righteousness and the thirst is fulfilled. God gives us the thirst and fills it with Christ.

15 The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw."¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."¹⁷ The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,'¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly."

- Notice, the woman really doesn't understand what Jesus is saying. She is considering Jesus' words pragmatically; with this new kind of water she wouldn't need to come to the well every day and life would be just that much easier. But this living water quenches the thirst for righteousness as can be seen by our Lord's next comment. His remark was meant to demonstrate that she lacks the real thirst for the water he had to offer. His response is to give law to her so that she might come to know her own sinfulness and thus her need to drink the living water.

19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet."²⁰ "Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship."

- The woman attempts to divert the conversation by recounting a long standing debate between the Jews and Samaritans. The Samaritans claimed they were covenant members through Joseph's two sons Ephraim & Manasseh. The Lord instructed Moses to divide the tribes of Israel into two groups and have each group stand on opposing mountains, Mount Gerizim which later was part of Samaria and Mount Ebal which later was in the Southern kingdom. The blessings were announced on Gerizim and the curses were announced on Ebal. The debate rested on which region was the most blessed sight for worshipping God.

21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father."²² "You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews."²³ "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him."²⁴ "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

- Jesus follows the woman down her theological rabbit trail so that He can instruct her that the true worship of God is not dependent on location. Worship

of God does not become more true with a change of location. Now that our Lord's work of salvation is complete, we are given the Holy Spirit as a seal guaranteeing our inheritance. This means that we are able to worship in Spirit at all times and locations.

- Notice more closely what Christ is really teaching; we are not worshipping more "truly" when we are in one place as opposed to some other place. Certainly, our Sunday mornings, when we are gathered corporately, are included in the worship of God. Unfortunately, this is where too many Christians stop. The specific teaching here of our Lord is that we worship the Father anywhere, anytime. Whether we are working at a job, or ministering to our children or serving our neighbor, we do all things in a worshipful manner. Although our church only meets once a week for a Sunday service, we are worshipping our Father throughout the week in all that we do.
- The truth of the previous point doesn't mean that how we worship corporately is unimportant. We hear frequently people talking about what they like in a Sunday worship service but we hear little instruction on what God has commanded of us in our corporate worship.

25 The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things."²⁶ Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."

- The woman knew enough of her theology to be anticipating the Prophet that Moses said would be sent. This is the first and last time (until his trial) that Jesus applies the title of Messiah to Himself. Although there are those in various heretical religions who will attempt to persuade that Jesus never claimed to be the Messiah, we should have no doubt in our minds that Christ understood clearly who He was and the purpose His ministry.

27 And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?"²⁸ The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men,²⁹ "Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?"³⁰ Then they went out of the city and came to Him. NKJV

- We can see clearly the manifestation of the feud between the Jews and Samaritans in the disciples. However, the woman returns to her city and brings the people out to meet Jesus and as we see later in the chapter, as a result many believe in Christ. After two days Jesus proceeds on His journey to Galilee.