

# John 04 - Woman at the Well; Healing the Nobleman's Son; Galilean Ministry

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## John 4

- (6) The Woman at the Well (4:1-42)
  - (A) The Savior sojourns to Sychar (4:1-6)
    - (a) The Savior leaves Judea (4:1-3)

1 So then, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that He was making and **baptizing more disciples** than John

1 Therefore when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John

1 Now when Jesus realized that the Pharisees had heard he was making and baptizing more disciples than John—

1 When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,  
 - "...baptizing more disciples" - Jesus' extreme popularity (Matt 3:5; Mark 1:5)  
 - This passage hints that the confusion about Jesus that began to trouble John the Baptist followers (John 3:25-26) may have played a part in the Pharisees' resentment of Jesus  
 — By comparing John's Gospel with the other gospels, it seems that at this time King Herod may have imprisoned John the Baptist (Matt 4:12; Mark 1:14)  
 — To avoid premature conflicts, Jesus took His disciples to Galilee, out of the limelight of Judea

2 (although Jesus Himself was not baptizing; rather, His disciples were),  
 2 (although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were),  
 2 although it was not Jesus who did the baptizing but his disciples—  
 2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)  
 - An informative parenthetical statement...it shows that Jesus is allowing His disciples to play a greater and greater role in His ministry, giving them ministry experience within His direct oversight  
 — One of the reasons it was not yet time for Jesus to confront the Pharisees was to allow the disciples to grow and mature in their faith, to prepare them for what was to come,

because these same disciples would become the foundation for the church (Eph 2:20).

— In addition, most if not all of them would die horrific deaths because of their commitment to the Lord. They were nowhere near ready for that yet.

3 He left **Judea** and went away again to Galilee.

3 He left Judea and went away again into Galilee.

3 he left Judea and went back to Galilee.

3 He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee.

- "...Judea" - the area where Jesus was and where His disciples were baptizing (3:22)

- Jesus lived His entire life on a divine time schedule...over and over Jesus says "My time has not yet come" (2:4; 7:6,8,30)

— At this point, Jesus didn't want the Pharisees and religious leaders to become aware of His ministry. If He would've stayed in Judea, His popularity would've continued to grow and His unavoidable confrontation with the Pharisees would not have been on the divine timetable.

— In the chronology of God, it was not yet time for the Jesus-Pharisee confrontation

- Many Christians struggle with God's timetable...it's rarely faster than we want it to be, and almost always slower than what we want. If God has put some sort of desire in our heart, we want it to materialize immediately, and if it doesn't we tend to think (incorrectly) that we are outside of God's will.

— The longer you are a Christian and walking with the Lord, the more you see that timing is critical. God is not running your life on *your* timetable, He's running it on *His* schedule.

— There are a number of things in my life that I wanted much earlier than I received them...but if they would've happened sooner, they would not have had the affect that God wanted them to have. Often, God is waiting for us to grow into a more advanced state of maturity before He gives us these greater things. God is busy in our lives even when we don't think He is and we think He's forgotten us.

(b) The Savior arrives at Samaria (4:4-6)

4 And He **had** to pass through **Samaria**.

4 And He had to pass through Samaria.

4 Now it was necessary for him to go through Samaria.

4 And he must needs go through Samaria.

- "...had" - *dei*, refers to a divine requirement

— Typically, Jews would cross to the east of the Jordan River in Judea, head north, then cross back over the river once they reached Galilee, in order to completely avoid Samaria

— But Jesus rebelled against cultural norms of the time and traveled directly through the heart of Samaria

- He had alternate routes available, but His need arose out of His mercy for the Samaritans and His divine appointment with a certain woman
- His route was deliberate; He wasn't in a hurry. The trip took two days (v40).
- "...Samaria" - the area between Judea and Galilee

For background on why the Jews hated the Samaritans, and vice-versa, see [Samaritans](#).

5 So He \*came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near **the parcel of land that Jacob gave to his son Joseph;**

5 So He \*came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph;

5 So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the piece of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.

5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

- "...parcel of land that Jacob gave to his son Joseph" - Jacob received that parcel of land in Gen 33:12 and he gave it to Joseph in Gen 48:22

6 and **Jacob's well** was there. So Jesus, **tired from His journey**, was just sitting by the well. It was about the **sixthhour**.

6 and Jacob's well was there. So Jesus, being wearied from His journey, was sitting thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

6 Jacob's Well was also there, and Jesus, tired out by the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.

- "...Jacob's well" - not mentioned anywhere in the OT
- "...tired from His journey" - how could God be tired? Because Jesus, while being God, was also fully Man. He added humanity to His deity, combined into one human being
- As a human being, He suffered many of the limitations that we suffer: tiredness (4:6); hunger (Matt 4:2); thirst (19:28); troubled (13:21); He wept (11:35; Luke 19:41). Thus, He is qualified to be our sympathetic and merciful High Priest (Heb 4:15).
- Despite His physical weariness, Jesus' heart and mind were free of self-interest and desire for His own comfort
- "...sixth hour" - noon

(B) The Savior speaks to a sinner at Sychar (4:7-27)

(a) The contact (4:7-9)

(i) The request (4:7-8)

7 A woman of Samaria \*came to draw water. Jesus \*said to her, "Give Me a drink."  
7 There \*came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus \*said to her, "Give Me a drink."  
7 A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus told her, "Please give me a drink,"  
7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.  
- Jesus is already divinely positioned to meet and talk to this woman before she arrives  
— When the woman arrives, Jesus initiates the conversation. God is always the initiator with man (Luke 19:10).  
- Although He was physically thirsty and needed a drink, no Jewish rabbi would ask even the most respectable, moral woman for a drink, no matter how thirsty they were  
— The strictest rabbinical laws forbade a rabbi ever to greet a woman in public, not even his daughter, sister or wife, let alone a morally corrupt Samaritan woman  
— The only reasonable conclusion is that Jesus' thoughts were on the woman's wounded heart and spiritual need, not on His own physical need

8 For His disciples had gone away to the city to buy food.  
8 For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.  
8 since his disciples had gone off into town to buy food.  
8 (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)  
- The scene was set...the disciples were gone and Jesus was alone  
— If the disciples were present, they likely would've pushed this woman away due to their hatred of the Samaritans and the unlikeliness of a Jewish male speaking with a female, let alone a Samaritan female (wrong race, wrong religion, wrong gender, Cf. v27)

(ii) The response (4:9)

9 So the Samaritan woman \*said to Him, "How is it that You, though You are a Jew, are asking me for a drink, though I am a **Samaritanwoman?**" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)  
9 Therefore the Samaritan woman \*said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)  
9 The Samaritan woman asked him, "How can you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" Because Jews do not have anything to do with Samaritans.  
9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.  
- This woman is astonished that a Jewish male is speaking with her  
- "...Samaritan woman" - the woman is aware of the awkwardness of this conversation, and is amazed that Jesus is addressing her. She has two strikes against her...she's a Samaritan and also a woman.

- "...(For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)" - a parenthetical comment by John, which demonstrates that he is writing to unsaved Gentiles in Asia Minor, not to Jews, because Jews would already know the enmity between Jews and Samaritans (Cf. 5:2; 19:31)

- This conversation reveals that the gospel is for everyone, the entire human race, including the social outcasts, the gospel is for those whom the Christian church today doesn't even bother with anymore (Democrats)

(b) The contrasts (4:10-27)

(i) Liquid vs living water (4:10-19)

(a) Revelation #1: Living water (4:10)

10 Jesus replied to her, **"If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who is saying to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."**

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."**

10 Jesus answered her, **"If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who is saying to you, 'Please give me a drink,' you would have been the one to ask him, and he would have given you living water."**

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, **If thou knewst the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.**

- Jesus tells the woman that He wished she understood three things:

1. The gift of God
2. Who it is who is speaking with you
3. What I am capable of giving to you

- If you knew who I was and you knew what I had, you would have asked Me for it and I would have given it to you. The woman saw Jesus as an ordinary man. She needed to recognize His identity as the Son of God.

— Jesus alone has the power to give God's gift of "living water" to the person who asks

— In the OT, God spoke of Himself as the spring of living water (Jer 2:13; Ezek 47:9; Zech 14:8)

— When Jesus promised to give the living water to those who asked, above all He promised the Holy Spirit (Cf. 6:63; 7:37-39)

- "...asked" - salvation is available for the asking; there is no other requirement to obtain salvation other than to simply believe (confirmed 99x in John's Gospel)

- "...living water" - a wonderful description of a believer's relationship to the Holy Spirit (7:37-39; Cf. Ezek 36:25-27)

(b) Objection #1: Drawing water without a rope or bucket (4:11)

11 She \*said to Him, "Sir, You have no bucket and the well is **deep**; where then do You get *this* living water?"

11 She \*said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water?"

11 The woman told him, "Sir, you don't have a bucket, and the well is deep. Where are you going to get this living water?"

11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

- "...Sir" - shows the process by which this woman slowly understands who Jesus is

— In v9, He was a Jew; in v11,15,19 she addressed Him as "Sir"; in v19 she understands that He is a "prophet"; in v26-27, she recognizes Him as the Messiah

— John demonstrates this because this is the process that unbelievers need to go through in understanding who Jesus is, as He is progressively revealed to them

— At the end of this Gospel, there should be no doubt in anyone's mind about who Jesus is, and we are now simply to respond by way of faith

- Notice the patience Jesus has with her...He doesn't expect her to understand everything right away, He understands that it's a process. People who have been Christians for some time often become impatient, short, irritable with unbelievers if they don't understand what we understand right away. We even think sometimes that there's no hope for them and they'll never come to Christ.

— We forget how patient God is with us when we came to faith, and we sometimes don't recognize that and transfer that patience in our dealings with others

- "...deep" - based on archaeological evidence of similar wells in the area, it was likely about 100ft deep

- This is another example of Jesus and those He is addressing being on different planes (Cf. 2:19-21; 3:4)...Jesus is speaking on a spiritual plane, referencing "living water" and the woman is speaking on a physical plane, thinking you can't get water from the well without a rope and a bucket (1 Cor 2:14).

— We need the Holy Spirit to understand Scripture, to understand that spiritual plane that Jesus is speaking on. Without the Holy Spirit, we cannot understand the things of God, and the woman here is a good example of that.

(c) Objection #2: Are you greater than Jacob? (4:12)

12 You are not greater than our father Jacob, are You, who gave us the well and drank of it himself, and his sons and his cattle?"

12 You are not greater than our father Jacob, are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself and his sons and his cattle?"

12 You're not greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it, along with his sons and his flocks, are you?"

12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

- Even though she is a Samaritan, she had respect for the patriarchs of Israel

— Jacob acquired this well in Gen 33:12 and gave it to his son Joseph in Gen 48:22

— The woman reasoned that Jacob owned this well, he drank from it, his sons drank from it, his animals drank from it, and now you're talking about living water...are you greater than Jacob?

(d) Revelation #2: Living water satisfies (4:13-14)

13 Jesus answered and said to her, "**Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again;**

13 Jesus answered and said to her, "**Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again;**

13 Jesus answered her, "**Everyone who drinks this water will become thirsty again.**

**13** Jesus answered and said unto her, **Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:**

- Jesus now contrasts the physical water in the well with the living water that He wants to provide to this woman

— The physical water in the well will only satisfy (quench) your thirst temporarily, but the living water He will provide will satisfy your spiritual thirst forever (v14)

- Jesus explains that He was not referring to the water from the well, which although it is drank continually, never satisfies. This described the woman's unhappy experience in her emotionally thirsty, yet unhappy life.

— All of God's good, earthly gifts are ultimately empty without Him (Eccl 1:1-11).

— The more people depend on external objects for conscious happiness, the more quickly your thirst returns, with increasing intensity. This relentless thirst grips countless people today.

**14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never be thirsty; but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up to eternal life."**

**14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."**

**14 But whoever drinks the water that I will give him will never become thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become a well of water for him, springing up to eternal life."**

**14 But whosoever drinketh 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.**

- Physical water satisfies a temporary physical need; living water satisfies a permanent spiritual need, that we don't always feel is a need, but in reality it's the greatest need a human being has
  - That is what Jesus is all about...He's interested in satisfying our spiritual needs, that many times we don't even realize are a need
  - What is our spiritual need? According to Scripture, mankind's greatest need is that we are dead (separated from God) in our trespasses and sins, and we need a way out of that spiritual predicament. We are dead and doomed without Christ, and do not have within us the life of God (Eph 2:1). And if that weren't bad enough, I'm on a collision course with the judgment of God.
  - This is the problem with the social gospel: it started out well-intentioned, to feed the hungry, give blankets to those who were cold, to generally meet the temporal needs of those less fortunate.
  - There is plenty of scriptural support for doing this work; Jesus Himself modeled this in His life. But the problem with the social gospel is that's where it stopped...it stopped at attempting to meet the short-term temporal needs of people, and made no effort to meet the biggest need people have, which is spiritual.
  - Jesus never *just* met the temporal/social needs of people He encountered...that was only the first step. He then proceeded to meet their biggest need, which is to give them the gospel.
  - "...whoever" - this living water is available for the entire world, every single person ever conceived is savable because Jesus died for the entire world
  - This includes this woman, who was the "wrong race," the "wrong gender," and the "wrong religion"
  - "...drinks of the water" - Jesus uses the analogy of drinking physical water to picture believing in Him for eternal life (Cf. 3:14-15, where Jesus used the analogy of "looking" at a snake). In 6:35, Jesus uses "drinking" as a metaphor for appropriating eternal life by faith.
  - Jesus point here is that people had to keep drinking from the well of Sychar to satisfy their physical thirst, but Jesus offered to quench her spiritual thirst forever if she drank just one time from the water that He provides.
  - A person only needs to have one spiritual drink of Christ and they will have spiritual life. There is a contrast in thirsts. Mankind is always thirsty for natural water, but Jesus said that one spiritual drink will forever quench man's spiritual thirst.
  - Jesus Christ is not teaching here that we must keep on drinking, and drinking, and drinking, in order to either maintain the gift of eternal life (Arminianism) or to prove that we possess it (Calvinism).
  - Jesus nowhere in this story requires the woman at the well to make some sort of costly commitment to serve Christ before He would grant her eternal life, as Lordship Salvation

teaches.

- To the simplicity of salvation that Jesus consistently preaches in John's gospel, a Calvinist might say that "drinking" conveys the idea of appropriation that involves on-going commitment. They will point to Matt 20:22 ("Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?") and John 18:11 ("the cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?"), which both use *drink* in a way that clearly implies full compliance and surrender.
- However, it is completely unwarranted to use Christ's own drink from the cup of God's wrath as a comparison with freely drinking the water of eternal life.
- In Christ's case, the cup He drank amounted to His unique, once-for-all, sacrificial, substitutionary death in the place of sinners. In the case of the woman at the well of Sychar, the cup Jesus was offering her to drink was not the cup of God's wrath that required her own work of dying to pay for sin but was in fact the water of life that was without cost to her because it would be purchased in full by the Offeror Himself (John 19:30).
- To equate drinking the water of life that Jesus offers sinners to Christ's drinking the cup of wrath merely proves that perseverance advocates are adding the believer's works to Christ's work as a condition for salvation.
- "...give" [2x] - *didōmi*, it's clear that this living water is a free gift from God, and no amount of trying to do better or trying to do good things can gain a person this living water (Is 64:6)
- "...shall never be thirsty" - the greatest need a person has will be quenched/fulfilled once and for all once they receive this living water
- That need, that we're often not even aware of, will be permanently resolved, fixed, repaired, satisfied, and will no longer be a need
- To drink the water Jesus promises to give is to have your innermost needs completely and permanently met. This water promises a meaning/purpose to our existence.
- Trials come to every human being, but believers find that God's gift of living water produces a profound contentment in Him. He teaches us to find deep satisfaction in His ways of treating us. As we trust Him, we gain immovable confidence in His wise and loving purposes (Phil 4:11; Heb 13:5).
- "...become in him" - this living water will bring about a transformation in a person from the inside out
- The living water doesn't cause a person to try harder, to work harder to be a better person...it is something that is greater than yourself that enters you and transform you from the inside
- Physical water is temporary and comes from the outside and goes in to someone; living water flows from the inside out

- "...eternal life" - the deadness (separation) you once had, the incapacity to understand spiritual things, and your scheduled day of judgment that is hanging over your head will all be gone once you taste this living water

(e) Response: Give me this water (4:15)

**15** The woman \*said to Him, "Sir, give me this water so that I will not be thirsty, nor come *all the way* here to draw water."

**15** The woman \*said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw."

**15** The woman told him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I won't get thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

**15** The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

- The woman is still thinking and reasoning on the physical level, while Jesus is speaking on a spiritual level

— The woman requests this living water without understanding the spiritual implications of receiving it. She is thinking that if this physical water from Jesus is so good, maybe she doesn't ever have to come back to this well again.

Now Jesus begins to unpack a second lesson for this woman. This is a lesson that is so significant that it's unfortunate that people spend their entire lives not grasping it. If you don't grasp the next phase of Jesus' teaching (v16-19), you will spend the rest of your life in futility. The gist of the lesson Jesus will unpack here is that in every human soul, there is a God-shaped hole, a basic emptiness, that needs and desires to be filled with a relationship with our Creator. If that emptiness inside of them is not filled with a relationship with God, they will spend their entire life in emptiness and futility.

*There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of every man, which cannot be filled by any created thing, but only by God the Creator, made known through Jesus Christ.*

[Pasquale]

What lesson does this Samaritan woman need to learn? She needs to learn that if this void is not filled by God, the best she can fill it with is a second-rate substitute. And if a person does not have a relationship with God, they will spend their years on the earth trying to fill that void with something else, an artificial substitute (power, prosperity, pleasure). If the void will not be filled with the living water, they take the next best substitute that is available.

If people are not aware that the living water is available, they recognize their emptiness, so they spend their life trying to fill this void, which only God can fill, with power, pleasure and the pursuit of prosperity. And just like the physical water from the well, it never delivers a

permanent solution and doesn't permanent satisfy. For example, you're working outside on a hot summer day and your body is thirsty. You grab a cold soda and drink it, and for a short time (maybe 10 minutes), your thirst is quenched. But 10 minutes later, you're thirsty again, because you drank the wrong substance (junk food instead of water).

This is what people do in their lives...they recognize the emptiness inside of them, but instead of filling that need with living water, they instead consume junk food in the form of power, prosperity, or pleasure, and while it satisfies for a short time, they are left thirsty and the void is still there. So they try a different junk food (drugs, alcohol, popularity/fame, materialism), but yet all of them leave them thirsty because you are living outside of your design. We were designed and created to have an intimate relationship with God, but as long as we don't have that, we can never be fully content.

*God made man for Himself, and our souls are restless until we find rest in Him.*

[Augustine]

*I can't get no satisfaction, and I try and I try and I try and I try, I can't get no satisfaction.* [Mick Jaggar]

Solomon was the best biblical example of this (Eccl 2:1-11)...anything that he saw that he wanted, he received. He wanted sex, so he obtained 700 wives and 300 concubines, but they didn't satisfy him. He decided to indulge in wine (mind altering substances), but it didn't satisfy him. He decided to pursue materialism so he took on multiple building projects, building multiple homes for himself and planting vineyards, gardens, parks with all kinds of fruit trees, and he built lakes to irrigate the trees. He had male and female slaves, material goods beyond anyone who had ever lived, silver and gold in abundance, male and female singers. And everything he had increased in abundance more than all who preceded him, everything he wanted he received, and he did not restrain himself from any indulgence. But when he considered everything he had and everything he had done, it was all futility, with no earthly benefit.

Solomon, just like the Samaritan woman, had this God-shaped vacuum inside but he didn't know the right thing to fill it with, so he attempted to fill it with substitutes.

(f) Command (4:16)

16 He \*said to her, "**Go, call your husband and come here.**"

16 He \*said to her, "**Go, call your husband and come here.**"

16 He told her, "**Go and call your husband, and come back here.**"

**16** Jesus saith unto her, **Go, call thy husband, and come hither.**

- When the woman responded to Jesus' offer with true desire, He began to reveal her deepest need

— Like a great Physician, Jesus opened the wound at the place where His cure was to begin. Conviction of sin was the first step in granting her the living water.

- "...Go" - *hupage*, present active imperative. She needed to confront her own sin. For the first time, the woman began to discuss spiritual issues.

— Jesus gives her this statement in order to begin teaching her a lesson that many people go their whole lives being completely unaware of

(g) Concealment (4:17a)

(h) Correction (4:17b-18)

17 The woman answered and said to Him, "I have no husband." Jesus \*said to her, "You have correctly said, 'I have no husband';

17 The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus \*said to her, "You have correctly said, 'I have no husband';

17 The woman answered him, "I don't have a husband." Jesus told her, "You are quite right in saying, 'I don't have a husband,'

17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, **Thou hast well said, I have no husband:**

- Her answer was honest, as far as it went; but it didn't go far enough. There was still a partial cover-up...

18 for you have had **five husbands**, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this *which* you have said *is* true."

18 for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly."

18 because you have had five husbands, and the man you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true."

18 For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.

- The omniscience of Christ on display (Cf. 1:47-48), once again showing that He is the God-Man

- "...five husbands" - the rabbis would permit two, maybe three divorces at most. This woman was divorced five times, and now she was with her sixth man, who was not her husband

— She had a God-shaped vacuum in her life that she recognized, she just knew nothing about the living water, and she was on a quest that people are on their whole lives to fill it with something...power, pleasure or prosperity, and she chose pleasure.

— Yet it was an empty experience, like water out of a well that temporarily quenches your thirst, but after time, leaves you thirsty again

- He uses strong words, not to condemn her, but to cause her to see her sin and her true state from God's perspective

— She assumed that being a stranger, Jesus didn't know her. His words proved He knew the worst about her.

— Although the secrets of her heart were open to Him, He did not despise her. In fact, He loved her deeply.

Evangelism Tip (and theological truth to be understood): You cannot get a more morally messed up person than the woman at the well, but notice that Christ asked the woman to receive Him and His gift without any prerequisite change in her life. Jesus did not say one word about her leaving her current life of sin. He never told her to stop being sexually immoral, stop sleeping around, leave your current boyfriend, and receive the Holy Spirit. After, and because, of her belief and acceptance of the living water, her life would change. What Jesus told her was that she needed water to come into her that will quench this desire you have for meaning that is being misdirected into all of these promiscuous experiences. Once something greater than you is inside of you, now you have the divine resources that give you the ability to leave behind your promiscuity, drugs, alcohol, materialism, or whatever other temporary fixes you are using to fill that God-shaped void in your life.

What happens when the resources of God come into people? They begin to change. Some more quickly than others. But this woman changed quickly and began to be a tremendous evangelist for Christ, because something greater than herself entered her.

If the Gospel was "clean yourself up and come to Jesus," this would've been the perfect time for Jesus to mention it. But Jesus gives this immoral woman no prerequisite conditions, no altering of behavior. What He told her was that she needed to receive Him and His resources by faith. The change in behavior comes on the other side of receiving the Gospel by faith.

Any gospel presentation that says that to come to Christ you have to first set aside sins A, B and C is a false gospel. It is anathema to God to tell this to an unbeliever because you're telling an unsaved person to do something, to change something, that they do not have the power to change. In addition, if they have to stop committing sins A, B, and C before coming to Christ, you're teaching a gospel by works. We can take a number of lessons on evangelism from how our Lord evangelized this Samaritan woman.

If there was ever an opportunity for Jesus to insert the word "repent" into a conversation, this was it. Yet not here, nor anywhere else in John's Gospel, is the word "repent" used. If Jesus would've used the word "repent" with this woman, defining it incorrectly the way most of Christendom defines it today (change of behavior), He would have left this woman in bondage.

(i) Conclusion (4:19)

19 The woman \*said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a **prophet**.  
19 The woman \*said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.  
19 The woman told him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet!  
**19** The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.  
- "...prophet" - the woman now moves forward in how she's viewing Christ, from Sir (v11,15); now she recognizes Him as a "prophet"

(ii) Ritual vs real worship (4:20-27)

(a) Confusion (4:20)

20 Our fathers worshiped on **this mountain**, and yet you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one must worship."

20 Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you *people* say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."

20 Our ancestors worshipped on this mountain. But you Jews say that the place where people should worship is in Jerusalem."

20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

- As soon as she realizes His "inside" information, she jumps right into the current doctrinal issue. It also may be true that after recognizing Jesus as God's Prophet, for the first time she may have wondered how she should live and how she should, as a sinful woman, worship God.

- Jesus understood her spiritual poverty and ignorance of God's Word, and He saw how seriously she desired truth

- "...this mountain" - Mount Gerazim was the Samaritans location of worship, not the temple in Jerusalem

— No wonder she was confused...the only religion she had known mixed false religions with a twisted and drastically shortened version of the OT. Samaritans had adjusted history and truth to elevate themselves over the hated Jews. According to Samaritans, Mount Gerazim, not Mount Zion, was where Abraham met Melchizedek (Gen 14:17-24), and planned to sacrifice Isaac (Gen 22). In their Scriptures, Mount Gerazim was the most sacred spot on earth.

— The Samaritans also re-wrote Deuteronomy to locate the first altar the Israelites erected on Mount Gerazim, not Mount Ebal, as the Bible states (Deut 27:4-7; Joshua 8:30-35).

These twin mountains were where the Israelites renewed God's covenant when they entered the Promised Land. Blessings for obedience were pronounced on Mount Gerazim and curses for disobedience, on Mount Ebal (Deut 11:29; 27:9-28:68). God commanded the altar to be built where curses were poured out on disobedience.

(b) Clarification (4:21-24)

21 Jesus \*said to her, "Believe Me, woman, that **a time is coming** when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.

21 Jesus \*said to her, "Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.

21 Jesus told her, "Believe me, dear lady, the hour is coming when you Samaritans will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.

**21** Jesus saith unto her, *Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.*

- "...a time is coming" - a dispensational change (Cf. v23)

— Jesus is telling this woman that there is about to be a huge change in how people worship, which isn't based any longer on geography (*where* we worship God), but rather on *how* we worship God

22 You *Samaritans* worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, because salvation is from the Jews.

22 You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.

22 You don't know what you're worshiping. We Jews know what we're worshiping, because salvation comes from the Jews.

22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.

- As Jesus begins to describe this dispensational change and how it will affect worship, He articulates what true worship really is

— Jesus here goes fully politically incorrect, telling this woman that the Samaritans have worship all wrong. He never shied away from difficult or touchy political or religious issues. He told the truth in love.

— Jesus told the woman that the Jews were doing worship right because they followed the revealed plan of God for worship. The Samaritans were doing it wrong because they didn't know what they were doing ("You worship what you do not know").

23 But **a time is coming**, and **even now has arrived**, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.

23 But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.

23 Yet the time is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. Indeed, the Father is looking for people like that to worship him.

23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

- "...a time is coming" - see note on v21
- But, Jesus tells her, even though you Samaritans have worship all wrong, shortly it's not going to matter because a new dispensation is coming, and even now has arrived, when worship will be in spirit and truth rather than in Jerusalem or Mount Gerazim
- The issue at that time will not be *where* worship takes place, but *how* worship takes place
- "...even now has arrived" - God has always wanted worshippers to worship Him in spirit and truth. This isn't just a Church Age "rule"; this is how God has always wanted to be worshipped.

24 God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and **truth.**"

24 God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

- The biggest problem mankind has is that we are born without the Spirit of God inside of us. The Holy Spirit does not enter us until we are born again. We are born spiritually dead.
- The Spirit of God has to enter a dead person before we can have any knowledge or understanding of God, or communicate with God (1 Cor 2:11)
- Thus, we cannot worship God without the Spirit of God inside of us. An unbeliever has no desire or capacity to worship God.
- "...truth" - *alētheia*, God wants us to worship Him as He is, not as we want Him to be (Cf. 2 Tim 4:3-4)
- We need to focus and worship God for all of His attributes, not just the "good" ones (grace, mercy, love). We need to worship Him for His holiness (probably His dominant attribute), His justice, and His judgment.
- The great sin of Aaron in the OT was that he wasn't satisfied with God had revealed Himself through the Law, and instead wanting a God that he could concoct, that he would be satisfied with.
- If you don't mention sin, don't mention judgment, don't mention God's holiness, don't mention hell, don't mention the Second Coming...you don't have God, you have a golden calf, a manufactured god who bears no resemblance to the Almighty.

(c) Conversion (4:25-26)

25 The woman \*said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us."

25 The woman \*said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us."

25 The woman told him, "I know that the Anointed One is coming, who is being called 'the Messiah'. When that person comes, he will explain everything."

**25** The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.

- This woman knew that the Messiah was coming; she knew about the OT predictions of the Messiah and His deeds (Cf. 5:46; Luke 24:44)

26 Jesus \*said to her, "**I am He, the One speaking to you.**"

26 Jesus \*said to her, "**I who speak to you am He.**"

26 "**I am he,**" Jesus replied, "**the one who is speaking to you.**"

**26** Jesus saith unto her, **I that speak unto thee am he.**

- Jesus reveals Himself to her...

- "...I am" - *ego eimi*, Jesus uses the name "I AM" from Ex 3:14, a name claimed only by God

- This Samaritan woman is now in faith and is prepared to worship the Lord in spirit and truth

(d) Concern (4:27)

**27** And at this point His disciples came, and they were amazed that He had been speaking with a woman, yet no one said, "What are You seeking?" or, "Why are You speaking with her?"

**27** At this point His disciples came, and they were amazed that He had been speaking with a woman, yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why do You speak with her?"

**27** At this point his disciples arrived, and they were astonished that he was talking to a woman. Yet no one said, "What do you want from her?" or, "Why are you talking to her?"

**27** And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?

- The disciples had been away buying food (v8), but now they return and are astonished that Jesus had been speaking with this woman

— Jesus divinely orchestrated this entire conversation with the disciples away purchasing food because if they were there, they would've interrupted the entire thing

(C) The sinner at Sychar becomes a soul-winner (4:28-42)

(a) Her faithful evangelism (4:28-30)

**28** So the woman left her waterpot and went into **thecity**, and \*said to the **people**,

**28** So the woman left her waterpot, and went into the city and \*said to the men,

28 Then the woman left her water jar and went back to town. She told people,

**28** The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, - Her original purpose for going to the well was to retrieve water, yet now after her encounter with Christ, she left her waterpot and began to evangelize (bring people to Christ)

— Once we're in Christ, many of the things we once viewed as priorities drift off into irrelevance. God reshapes our priorities to begin to match His priorities.

- "...the city" - Sychar (v5)

— This woman was confronted with the grace of God and immediately dropped everything and went into the city to spread the word

— Sometimes the best evangelists are new believers. Unfortunately, as believers grow and mature in Christ, we tend to lose our connections with unbelievers, we tend to meet people and make friends inside the church, and for the most part lose close personal contact with unbelievers.

— Not so for unbelievers, like this Samaritan woman. She had a bunch of unbelieving contacts and immediately went out to evangelize them and tell them who she had met and what He said.

- "...people" - men; it was with men that she had fallen into sexual sin. But now it is the men who she goes to to evangelize.

— This is how God works...He'll take your greatest area of weakness, and if you give it to Him, He'll make it your greatest strength

— Notice that this woman didn't feel she needed to be a Christian for a long time, go to seminary, etc. in order to begin to service the Lord

29 "Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; **this is not the Christ, is He?"**

29 "Come, see a man who told me all the things that I *have* done; this is not the Christ, is it?"

29 "Come, see a man who told me everything I've ever done! Could he possibly be the Messiah?"

29 Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

- The woman appeals to the unsaved based on the signs of Jesus

— Jesus looked into her heart and revealed her motives to her. He understood what was happening in her personal life, and this was used as a sign by the Holy Spirit to convince her that Jesus Christ was the Son of God.

— Then as she goes out to evangelize people, she appeals to people based on Christ's ability to produce signs. John includes this because it is the purpose of his Gospel (20:30-31).

- "...this is not the Christ, is He?" - she uses a question to incite interest in who Jesus was instead of using dogmatic assertions or hitting them over the head with a theological 2x4
- Sometimes questions can be used much more tactfully than statements of fact

30 They left the city and were coming to Him.  
30 They went out of the city, and were coming to Him.  
30 The people left the town and started on their way to him.  
30 Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.

- (b) Her spiritual example (4:31-38)
  - (i) Real food (4:31-34)

31 Meanwhile the disciples were urging Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat *something*."

31 Meanwhile the disciples were urging Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat."

31 Meanwhile, the disciples were urging him, "Rabbi, have something to eat."

**31** In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.

- Jesus now uses this event to teach two spiritual lessons to His disciples...

— The first lesson is about real (spiritual) food

— The disciples were thinking like a natural man, but Jesus is always focused on the spiritual. Jesus is always seeking to convert inquiries about the physical world into a launching pad to teach a spiritual reality.

32 But He said to them, "**I have food to eat that you do not know about.**"

32 But He said to them, "**I have food to eat that you do not know about.**"

32 But he told them, "**I have food to eat that you know nothing about.**"

**32** But he said unto them, **I have meat to eat that ye know not of.**

- Jesus is not focused on and doesn't want to discuss physical food...He wants to discuss spiritual food

— The same thing happened when Jesus initiated the conversation with the Samaritan woman...she was asking about physical water, but Jesus was only interested in talking about living water.

33 So the disciples were saying to one another, "No one brought Him *anything* to eat, did he?"

33 So the disciples were saying to one another, "No one brought Him *anything* to eat, did he?"

33 So the disciples began to say to one another, "No one has brought him anything to eat, have they?"

**33** Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat?

- A spiritual lesson is coming, but the disciples at this point do not have ears to hear it
- This is a common problem in John's Gospel (Cf. 2:19-21; 3:3-4; 4:14-15)
- The reason why human beings have such a difficult time understanding the spiritual things that Jesus is talking about is because the Holy Spirit had not yet been poured out (7:39)
- Throughout His ministry, many of the truths that Jesus tried to teach His disciples were not understood until later, once the Holy Spirit had been given to the Church (Acts 2)
- The disciples are desperate at this point for the illumination ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Bible and spiritual things cannot be understood outside of the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

**34** Jesus \*said to them, **"My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work.**

**34** Jesus \*said to them, **"My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.**

**34** Jesus told them, **"My food is doing the will of the one who sent me and completing his work.**

**34** Jesus saith unto them, **My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.**

— "...My food" - a deep and abiding sense of satisfaction, joy and contentment that comes from doing God's will. Waking up every morning and going to bed every night knowing that your life matters, that it counts for something.

— Every day knowing that if you were to die today, you'll spend eternity in His presence. Having a relationship with the God who made you...this is the "food" that Jesus is talking about, and any discussion of physical food pales by way of comparison.

— How do you get this food? The world system will tell you that to get it, go out and live for yourself. This is the same lie that the serpent told Eve in Eden. We call this doctrine Humanism, because it places man at the center of all things.

— Humanism is the religion taught in our public schools today...our schools today are as religious as they've ever been, they are just teaching the wrong "religion." Humanism is constantly screaming at us through entertainment, higher education, media and corporations that if you want to be happy, you have to do things your own way.

— Jesus, however, is speaking here about how to experience true satisfaction through spiritual food. This satisfaction cannot be found in Humanism.

— "...the will of Him" - we are designed by God to live in submission to Him; this is our purpose. If I'm not living in submission to God, I'm living outside of the purpose for which I was created. I'm living outside of my design, consequently I cannot have the meaningful life that God has for me.

- The abundant life can only be a reality when we live within our purpose and design, which is not *my will be done* but *Thy will be done*
- The coming Antichrist will be just the opposite of Christ (Dan 11:36)
- "...accomplish His work" - God has called us not only to do His will, but also to accomplish His work
- God has called every believer to do different things...my calling is different from your calling. We all have a general calling in regards to living the Christian life, but beyond that God has called each of us to perform different tasks.
- Until we find out what that task is and press ourselves into the mold of it, we will never eat of this "real food" that Jesus describes here
- Ps 37:4 says, Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.
- God is so good that this task that He has given us, He has also placed into our heart as a desire, so that it wouldn't be something that we loathe to do, but something that we delight to do.
- As we call out to God to fulfill these desires in our heart, God does something sneaky to us as He is moving us into His will, which is where we discover this real and lasting food

(ii) Ripe fields (4:35-38)

35 Do you not say, 'There are still four months, and *then* comes the harvest'? Behold, I tell you, raise your eyes and observe the fields, that they are white for harvest.

35 Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, and *then* comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest.

35 You say, don't you, 'In four more months the harvest will begin?' Look, I tell you, open your eyes and observe that the fields are ready for harvesting now!

35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

- In His second lesson for the disciples, Jesus uses a agrarian analogy
- Jesus is saying that there is a period of time between planting a seed in the ground and reaping a harvest (here, four months)
- Jesus is saying that this may be true in the physical world, in the farming world, but it is not true in the spiritual world. Jesus tells His disciples that as He was preparing them for ministry, this delay between sowing and reaping is not applicable in the spiritual world because the harvest is ready right now.
- Jesus is trying to get His disciples to understand an immediate spiritual truth that was about to happen right then and there...there was to be no waiting, the seed was in the ground and the harvest was ripe right then and there

36 Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that the one who sows and the one who reaps may rejoice together.

36 Already he who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering fruit for life eternal; so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.

36 The one who harvests is already receiving his wages and gathering a crop for eternal life, so that the one who sows and the one who harvests may rejoice together.

36 And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

37 For in this case the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.'

37 For in this case the saying is true, 'One sows and another reaps.'

37 In this respect the saying is true: 'One person sows, and another person harvests.'

37 And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.

38 I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have come into their labor."

38 I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored and you have entered into their labor."

38 I have sent you to harvest what you have not worked for. Others have worked, and you have adopted their work as your own."

38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

- Jesus now begins to talk about the process of evangelism by using an agrarian principle...there is a sower and a reaper: the sower sows the seed into the ground and the reaper who later harvests the crop

— In the same way, Jesus is teaching that in the spiritual world, there is a sower and also a reaper (1 Cor 3:6). Both work for God fulfilling different functions, for different purposes, so that the harvest may come in.

— Even though they are different people with different purposes, both can rejoice when the harvest comes in

— One of the biggest mistakes we make in evangelism today is that we think if when we share the gospel and someone doesn't believe and accept Christ, we've failed. In fact, what has happened is that God has used your faithful word to plant a seed into the ground, or to water a seed that was placed in the ground by someone else.

(c) Her fruitful evangelism (4:39-42)

39 Now from that city **many** of the Samaritans **believed** in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all the things that I have done."

39 From that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all the things that I *have* done."

39 Now many of the Samaritans of that town believed in Jesus because the woman had testified, "He told me everything I've ever done."

39 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.

- "...many" - the harvest starts to come in, fulfilling Jesus' words in v35

— These came because the woman simply appealed to people about Jesus had done (His signs)

- "...believed" - *pisteuō*, the sole condition that one must satisfy to enter into a relationship with the God who created them

40 So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days.

40 So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days.

40 So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there for two days.

40 So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days.

- The other Samaritans were not content to only hear of Jesus through the woman; they took time to be with Him themselves

41 Many more believed because of **Hisword**;

41 Many more believed because of His word;

41 And many more believed because of what he said.

41 And many more believed because of his own word;

- "...His word" - faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God (Rom 10:17)

— If the Word of God is not taught, you will not have any converts because the Word of God is the instrument that the Holy Spirit uses to make a lost sinner aware of their need for Jesus Christ

— If someone hears a sociological message, or a pastor takes a managerial approach to preaching, you will not see anyone come to Christ because the Spirit of God has opted to work through the Word of God to bring the unsaved to Christ.

42 and they were saying to the woman, "*It is* no longer because of what you said *that* we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One truly is the Savior of the world."

42 and they were saying to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world."

42 They kept telling the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, because now we have heard him ourselves, and we know that he really is the Savior of the world."

**42** And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

- The people responding to the woman here are saying...we initially believed on the Son of God when you talked to us, and now we've believed again once we heard Him for ourselves  
— After we believe initially, we receive forgiveness for our sins and are brought into a relationship with the Lord. Then God takes the faith that already exists within us and adds to it greater certainty, greater confirmation.

— Our faith is strengthened. God does not leave us how we are after we come to Christ, He takes our faith that we exercised for initial salvation and He works it out and strengthens it, giving us greater faith and assurance. As we endure the trials and tribulations of life, and see how God bails us out of them time and time again, our faith grows stronger and stronger.

The first large group of people to receive salvation and openly confess Jesus as Savior were these non-Jews. Salvation came first to the Jews, but God sent His Son into the world to save the world. The Samaritans possessed only a small portion of God's Word. Their worship was mixed with the worship of false gods (2 Kings 17:33). They had no true temple, no covenant promises, no access to God. They lacked all these advantages of the Jews (Rom 3:2; 9:4), yet they now boldly confessed Christ. In the early days of the Church, many Samaritans turned to Christ (Acts 8:5-25).

### **Increments of Belief**

The gradual change in attitude:

...a Jew (John 4:9)

...greater than Jacob? (John 4:12)

...a prophet (John 4:19)

...the Christ Himself! (John 4:25,29)

### **A Comparison**

#### **Nicodemus**

A man with a name

Good Reputation

#### **Samaritan Woman**

Unnamed Woman

Bad reputation

Wealthy man	Poor woman
Initiated conversation with Jesus	Jesus initiated conversation with her
He came to Jesus	Jesus came to her
Came at night	Conversation at midday
Outstanding Socially	Social outcast
A Jew	A Samaritan
Religious (upright)	Worldly (immoral)
No immediate response	Immediately told city
Jesus was blunt	Jesus was tactful
Began talking of spiritual things	Began talking of physical things
Thorough knowledge of Scripture	Biblically illiterate
Slow to believe and receive	Quick to believe and receive

(7) Healing the Nobleman's Son (4:43-54)

(A) The places (4:43-46)

**43** And after the two days, He departed from there for Galilee.

**43** After the two days He went forth from there into Galilee.

**43** Two days later, Jesus left for Galilee from there,

**43** Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee.

- "...two days" - the same two days described in v40

— After spending two days in Samaria with those who had believed in His name (v40-42), Jesus got back on the road to His original destination, Galilee (v3)

**44** For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country.

**44** For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country.

**44** since Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country.

**44** For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country.

- Jesus is heading for Nazareth, His hometown

— We will learn that the Jews were not as receptive to believing that Jesus was the Messiah as were the non-Jews (Samaritans, etc.)

— In Samaria, many people came to Christ with no evidence of a sign (v39,41), but the Jews demand a miracle or sign in order to believe (Cf. v48)

— John continues to document the two parallel lines of belief and unbelief, with the non-Jews being the primary ones who believe, and the Jews being the primary party of unbelief

— John is so clear about these two parallel lines because his aim is to get his readers to make a decision about which side of the ledger they are on; there is no neutrality

45 So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, *only because* they had seen all the things that He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they themselves also went to the feast.

45 So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things that He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they themselves also went to the feast.

45 When he arrived in Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him because they had seen everything that he had done in Jerusalem during the festival and because they, too, had gone to the festival.

45 Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galileans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.

- Back in 2:12-25, Jesus was in Jerusalem for Passover; 2:23 says that many at that time believed in His name because they saw the signs that He did

— It is only due to these signs that they were receptive to Him. Those in Samaria were different...they believed on the testimony of the woman, not necessarily needing a sign in order to believe.

— Is it wrong to believe in Christ based solely on signs? No, in fact that's the purpose of John's Gospel (20:30-31), but it's not the most noble form of faith. In 20:29, Jesus tells Thomas, Because you have seen Me, have you *now* believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed.

— What saves us is a hearing of the Word of God (Rom 10:17); we hear the Word of God, then we believe it, sign or no sign. This is what the Samaritans did. In contrast, the Jews did not believe unless they saw a sign (an immediate authentication) of who Christ was.

**46** Therefore He came again to Cana of Galilee, where He had made the water *into* wine. And there was a **royalofficial** whose son was sick at Capernaum.

**46** Therefore He came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a royal official whose son was sick at Capernaum.

**46** So Jesus returned to Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. Meanwhile, in Capernaum there was a government official whose son was ill.

**46** So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.

- "...royal official" - most commentators agree that he was a servant of the king in either military or civil capacity

— The king at that time was Herod Antipas, who this royal official was likely serving  
- Jesus was in Cana, while the sick boy was in Capernaum (about 13 miles away)

<u>Miracle</u>	<u>Water to Wine</u>	<u>Healing</u>
<b>Scripture</b>	John 2:1-11	John 4:43-54
<b>Order</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> (John 2:11)	2 <sup>nd</sup> (John 4:54)
<b>Place</b>	Cana of Galilee	Cana of Galilee
<b>Crisis</b>	Public embarrassment	Disease unto death
<b>Faith</b>	Mary	Nobleman
<b>Power over:</b>	Time	Space
<b>Impact on:</b>	Disciples	Nobleman's family
<b>Spoken word</b>	John 2:7-8	John 4:50,53
<b>Capernaum</b>	John 2:12	John 4:46

(B) The plea (4:47)

47 When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and began asking *Him* to come down and heal his son; for he was at the point of death.

47 When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and was imploring *Him* to come down and heal his son; for he was at the point of death.

47 When this man heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to him and asked him repeatedly to come down and heal his son, because he was about to die.

47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.

- You can understand the urgency and perspective of this father, in desperation for his sick son who is about to die

— Many times in our lives we suffer things unnecessarily because we fail to seek the Source who can help us (James 4:2)

— Had this man not sought out Jesus and implored Him to heal his son, this healing would've never taken place and his son would've died

- Are you going to the Lord for help in the midst of your crisis or difficulty? You may be surprised on how fast God answers.
- The nobleman made two false assumptions about Jesus:
  1. He assumed that unless Jesus made the 13 mile trip, his son couldn't be healed (v47)
  2. He assumed that if Jesus didn't arrive before His son died, it would be too late (v49)
- We often get ourselves in some sort of bind, and we rightly and appropriately cry out to God for help, but then we limit God about how He is going to answer our prayer. Experience shows that when we cry out to God and He is gracious to answer, the help always comes in an unexpected way.
- Then the next time we cry out for help, we expect Him to come through in the same way He did before. Many times the next time He resolves the problem, it's through a completely different channel.

#### (C) The problem (4:48)

48 Then Jesus said to him, "**Unless you people see signs and wonders, you simply will not believe.**"

48 So Jesus said to him, "**Unless you people see signs and wonders, you simply will not believe.**"

48 Jesus told him, "**Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will never believe.**"

48 Then said Jesus unto him, **Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.**

- "...you people" - "people" was added by the translators because the second person pronoun "you" is in the plural

— Jesus is describing a problem not just among the nobleman and his family, but amongst the nation of Israel as a whole

— He's referring to the Jewish mentality that demanded a sign from Jesus Christ before they would believe (Cf. Matt 12:39; 1 Cor 1:22-23)

- "...signs and wonders" - they wanted a sign (miracle) then they wanted the wonder (awe) that accompanied the sign

— These are what the Jews needed in order to believe, contrary to the Samaritans

— Jesus here is not attacking signs and wonders, or even the belief that comes from seeing signs and wonders. He's attacking a mindset that says we want God on our own terms. Unless God accommodates me now with a sign or wonder, I will not believe in Him.

— That mindset expresses dissatisfaction of the signs and wonders that God has already performed, and wanting God to do it again to meet a "bar" that man has set in order to believe

- "...you simply will not" - the Bible consistently puts the responsibility to believe on man, not on God (Cf. 1:12-13; 3:16,36; 5:24; 6:47; Acts 16:31; Rom 3:21-22,25-26; 4:3-6; Eph

2:8. The Bible also consistently puts the responsibility for not believing on man (Cf. 3:18; 4:48; 5:40; Matt 23:37).

- "...believe" - *pisteuō*, the sole condition a lost sinner must fulfill to be saved  
(D) The persistence (4:49)

49 The royal official \*said to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies."

49 The royal official \*said to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies."

49 The official told him, "Sir, please come down before my little boy dies."

**49** The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.

- The man is preoccupied with the impending death of his son; he's not interested in the theology lesson that Jesus is giving him

- "...Sir" - a title of respect, but the man obviously has not yet recognized that Jesus is the Son of God

— At this point the man understands Jesus only to be a worker of miracles who may be able to help him in his time of desperate need

(E) The promise (4:50)

50 Jesus \*said to him, "**Go; your son is alive.**" The man **believed** the word that Jesus spoke to him and went *home*.

50 Jesus \*said to him, "**Go; your son lives.**" The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started off.

50 Jesus told him, "**Go home. Your son will live.**" The man believed what Jesus told him and started back home.

**50** Jesus saith unto him, **Go thy way; thy son liveth.** And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.

- "...Go; your son is alive" - Jesus offers this man a promise, that his son will live

— The man would have to believe this promise by faith, because he was 13 miles away from his son and could not immediately confirm whether he was dead or alive

— Jesus simply spoke something (healing of his son) into existence, and this man was called to trust in what He said

— This is how God works with all of us...without faith, it is impossible to please Him (Heb 11:6). Many times God calls us to trust things or believe things simply on the fact that He said they were true.

— So Jesus answered one request of the man (healing his son), but He did not answer the other request (travel 13 miles to visit his son). In other words, Jesus answered the prayer request on His terms, the the nobleman's terms (1 John 5:14).

— God is not obligated to answer prayers that are outside of His will. This is one of the problems with the Prosperity Gospel taught today on so-called Christian TV. It's this idea that we can speak and that God is some sort of "cosmic bellhop" who leaps into action to

fulfill our desires, mainly material prosperity or immediate healing. Yet 1 John 5:14 makes it clear that this is not how it works.

- "...believed" - *pisteuō*, what Jesus did here was bring this man's faith to another level, from a crisis faith (coming to Jesus to hopefully heal his son) to a confident faith, simply trusting in the promise of God
- He came to Jesus in a crisis, now he is resting on a promise

### **Seven Signs in John's Gospel**

1. Changing water to wine (2:11)
2. **Healing official's son (4:46-54)**
3. Healing an invalid at the Pool of Bethesda (5:1-18)
4. Feeding the 5000 (6:5-14)
5. Walking on water (6:16-21)
6. Healing a blind man (9:1-7)
7. Raising of Lazarus (11:1-45)

#### (F) The payoff (4:51-54)

##### (a) Physical restoration of the boy (4:51-53a)

51 And as he was now going down, his slaves met him, saying that his son was alive.

51 As he was now going down, *his* slaves met him, saying that his son was living.

51 While he was on his way, his servants met him and told him that his child was alive.

51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth.

- As the nobleman was returning to his home in Capernaum, his slaves met him on the road to tell him that his son was alive; his health condition had improved significantly

52 So he inquired of them the hour when he began to get better. Then they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him."

52 So he inquired of them the hour when he began to get better. Then they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him."

52 So he asked them at what hour he had begun to recover, and they told him, "The fever left him yesterday at one o'clock in the afternoon."

**52** Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.

- The nobleman inquired about the timing of the son's healing, in order to tie it to Jesus' words...

— The slaves told him that it was at the seventh hour (1pm), which corresponded to the same time that Jesus told the nobleman that his son was alive (v50)

(b) Spiritual restoration of the household (4:53b-54)

53 So the father knew that *it was* at that hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son is alive"; and **he himself believed**, and **his entire household**.

53 So the father knew that *it was* at that hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives"; and he himself believed and his whole household.

53 Then the father realized that this was the very hour when Jesus had told him, "Your son will live." So he himself believed, along with his whole family.

53 So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, **Thy son liveth**: and himself believed, and his whole house.

- When God works in our lives, He typically asks us to step out and trust Him with something. As we do that, as we begin to walk by faith, we begin to see God move in our lives as He validates over and over again His presence in our lives.

- Name even one biblical character in all of Scripture with whom God did not work in this way.

- One example is Abraham: when God called Abraham and gave him promises, God didn't lay out His entire plan to Abraham in advance. He asked Abraham to step out in faith and begin to obey. As Abraham did this, God blessed him and began to disclose additional revelation to him.

- Many times we want to see God work in our lives, but we are afraid to walk by faith that we never step out and trust Him. When we don't, we deprive ourselves of many blessings that God wants to do for us.

- "...he himself believed" - didn't the man already believe in v50? Why does it say he believed twice? (Cf. 2:12)

- In v50 the man was saved by his faith; in v53 the man's faith that he already had in Christ was strengthened and brought to a deeper more personal level

- Faith alone saves, but that faith is like a muscle, it needs to be developed in order to get stronger. If that muscle isn't developed, it begins to grow weak and atrophy. To develop our faith muscle, after we become a Christian, God puts us through crises and adverse circumstances in order to force us to become more and more dependent upon Him. We should not resist these crises as we know that it's from the hand of God (James 1:2-4).

- Consequently as our faith is exercised, it is strengthened and it begins to grow to a place of maturity. God puts us into situations that are beyond our ability to figure out or control so that our faith muscle will grow stronger.

- "...his entire household" - one of the amazing things about coming to Christ in faith is the impact it can have on your entire family

- Household faith is an important topic in the NT (Acts 16:33; 18:8). Just because one person in the household is saved doesn't mean everyone else is saved also (God doesn't

have any grandchildren, only children), but it's the impact that one person coming to Christ in faith can have, which often spreads to other close relatives.

Wiersbe describes four phases of the Nobleman's faith:

1. Crisis faith (v47) - an emergency, the nobleman's son was dying
2. Confident faith (v50) - Jesus didn't answer his request in the way he wanted, but he believed in Jesus' promise anyway
3. Confirmed faith (v50) - he stepped out in faith and did what the Lord asked him to do ("Go")
4. Contagious faith (v53) - once the slaves confirmed the timing of his son's healing corresponded to Jesus' promise, his faith was strengthened and he began to tell others about Jesus

54 This is again a second sign that Jesus performed when He had come from Judea into Galilee.

54 This is again a second sign that Jesus performed when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.

54 Now this was the second sign that Jesus did after coming from Judea to Galilee.

**54** This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee.

- Sign 1 was Jesus turning water to wine in Cana (2:1-11)
- Sign 2 was Jesus healing the nobleman's son (4:43-54)