

## Introduction

In 1992 I published two evangelistic golf booklets, *Good News For Golfers* and *Good News About Fundamentals*. The Lord had given me an idea of how to reach golfers with the gospel message. Nearly everyone that I met at that time was a golf enthusiast, and wanted to read anything they could about golf. I had the opportunity this week to hand out *Good News About Fundamentals* and a personal testimony tract, so it is still a good resource to use. In these two evangelistic booklets, I came up with various golf tips, and with each golf lesson there was a corresponding part of the gospel message. I had the booklets professionally illustrated and they were a big success. For example, one golf tip was to know your yardage. Professional golfers have yardage books that have measurements from sprinklers to the front of the green, and many other yardages. They also contain notes that they have made about the course and the greens. Professionals will not hit a shot until they have checked their distance and notes using the yardage book. In our spiritual lives, God has given us a book to help us get our yardages in life and to make wise decisions, and it is called the Bible. The Bible is 100% truth, and you will never mis-club a shot in life when you rely upon God's word.

In our text today, Jesus has an encounter with a Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. He asked her for a drink of water, and then turns the conversation from physical water to spiritual water, telling 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." He used water as a springboard to talk about the gospel message. When the Lord gave me the ideas for the two evangelistic golf booklets, He was telling me to do the same thing that He did in His ministry. He taught all kinds of spiritual lessons with farming, fishing, and other illustrations.

In our passage today, we will look at the setting of the story. Second, we will look at Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman. Third, we will look at the testimony of the woman in the city. Fourth, we will look at Jesus' conversation with His disciples. In Part 2, we will look at the impact that this conversation had on the entire city and Jesus' discussion with His disciples.

## Jesus' Encounter with the Samaritan Woman – Part 1 (John 4:1-42)

1. Setting
2. Jesus' Conversation with the Samaritan Woman
3. Woman's Testimony

### 1. Setting (Jn 4:1-6)

Our text begins with Jesus in Judea, where his disciples were baptizing people. John tells us that they were baptizing more disciples than John the Baptist, who had moved his ministry north to Aenon. When Jesus knew that the Pharisees had heard that he was making more disciples than John, He left Judea to go back again to Galilee.

(Jn 4:1–3) "Therefore when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John {2} (although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were), {3} He left Judea and went away again into Galilee."

John the Baptist had confronted the Pharisees and religious leaders, calling them a brood of vipers. He admonished and exhorted them to repent and bring forth the fruit of repentance. The Pharisees did not receive His ministry and were not baptized by Him. They were against John, but they felt their hands were tied because the people regarded him as a prophet.

(Mt 3:7–8) “But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? {8} “Therefore bear fruit in keeping with repentance;”

(Lk 7:30) “But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected God’s purpose for themselves, not having been baptized by John.”

As much as the Pharisees disliked John, they disliked Jesus even more. He had come into town and disrupted things in the temple, overturning tables and driving out the animals and vendors. He told them to stop making His Father’s house a place of business. Now that Jesus’ ministry was growing larger than John, He was their biggest threat. Jesus had a divine sense of timing, and His hour had not come. He had lots of other ministry to do throughout Israel, and so He left for Galilee.

There were three routes to take to go from Judea to Galilee. You could go via the highway by the Mediterranean Sea, which would almost double the distance. Alternatively, you could go to the Jordan River and follow it north to Galilee. This would add an additional day or two to the route. The third route was the most direct route, which was to go due north and pass through Samaria. Many of the Jews would not take this route, because they tried to avoid being around the Samaritans. John recorded that Jesus had to pass through Samaria. There were two other routes that He could have taken. The reason that Jesus had to pass through Samaria was there was a divine appointment waiting for Him. Jesus did what the Father told Him, and He had to pass through Samaria to preach the gospel to this Samaritan woman, and to the city of Sychar.

(Jn 4:4) “And He had to pass through Samaria.”

Who were the Samaritans and why were they so disliked by the Jews? The Samaritans had Jewish roots, but in BC 722, when the Assyrians conquered Israel and led most of the Jews away as captives, they left some of the poorest people there. They repopulated the region with Assyrians. The Jews that remained had mingled and intermarried with the Assyrians, and had corrupted their Jewish lineage. This was a detestable sin, and they were now considered to be worse than the Gentiles. Though the Samaritans claimed Abraham as their father, they also served the pagan gods of the Assyrians. Therefore, the Jews considered the Samaritans as unclean, and outcasts. They would not have anything to do with Samaritans.

Jesus did not live by cultural prejudices. God desires all men to be saved, and for none to perish. Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost, and the Samaritans were just as lost as the Jews.

(1 Ti 2:3–4) “This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, {4} who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

(2 Pe 3:9) “The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.”

(Lk 19:10) “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

The gospel message was not just for the Jews, it was also for the nations. When Jesus gave the Great Commission, He commanded us to take the gospel to all the nations.

(Mt 28:19–20) “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, {20} teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

In Acts 1:8, the Lord gave some final instructions just before He ascended, saying, “but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.” He did not just say Jerusalem and Judea, but also Samaria, where Jesus is sharing the gospel with this Samaritan woman.

(Ac 1:8) “but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”

In Acts 10, after God led Peter to preach to Cornelius, and the Holy Spirit was given to them, he declared, “I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him.” Jesus did not have any partiality, and He took the direct route through Samaria.

(Ac 10:34–35) “Opening his mouth, Peter said: “I most certainly understand *now* that God is not one to show partiality, {35} but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him.”

Jesus also did what the Father told Him to do. I believe that He knew what was about to take place in Samaria with the woman at the well. Therefore, He was making disciples on His way. We do not know exactly where Jesus was in Judea before leaving for Galilee, so any distances that we give are general speculations. If Jesus were in Jerusalem or Bethany, it would have been thirty-five miles. People traveling by foot generally traveled fifteen to twenty miles a day, so Jesus has probably been walking for two days.

The town of Sychar lies in a valley between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. The city of Sychar is not in existence, and some scholars say that it was another name for the city of Shechem. Jacob's well is still there, and it is a tourist attraction, and it is located just outside of Shechem. There was a church father and apologist named Justin Martin, who lived from AD 100 to AD 165. He was from Shechem, and in his writings he identified Jacob's well. Since he was from Shechem, and a trustworthy apologist, his testimony is very reliable.

While not much is known about Sychar, the town of Shechem is mentioned sixty-six times in the Bible. When God spoke to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-7, promising him that he would inherit this land, it was at Shechem. In Genesis 33:18, Jacob bought land and built an altar called El-Elohe-Israel, and worshiped the Lord; and this was in Shechem. Shechem was the name of the son of Hamor, who violated Dinah in Genesis 34. Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, killed every male in Shechem. We find in Joshua 24:32 that Joseph's bones were buried in Shechem. In Deuteronomy 27, when God gave Moses the Law, he had Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph and Benjamin stand on Mount Gerizim and bless the people. He had Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali stand on Mount Ebal and pronounce curses for disobedience. There were a lot of significant things that happened in Shechem.

(Dt 27:11–13) “Moses also charged the people on that day, saying, {12} “When you cross the Jordan, these shall stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people: Simeon, Levi, Judah,

Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin. {13} “For the curse, these shall stand on Mount Ebal: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.”

Between these two mountains, where God gave Moses the Law, there was this city named Sychar. Our text says that it was near a parcel of ground that Jacob had given to his son, Joseph. The name, Sychar (Strong's G4965) comes from a Hebrew word, shekar (Strong's H7941), which means a strong drink, an alcoholic drink, or in one verse, a drunkard. It is very likely that this little town was known for making this strong alcoholic drink.

(Jn 4:5) “So He came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph;”

Jacob had dug a well in this valley, and it was located there. Geologists say that there is a layer of impermeable basalt below the ground, and there is a water table above this layer of basalt. The well that was dug is about one hundred and twenty feet deep. The well is still in existence today, and there is an Eastern Orthodox church, named the Church of Jacob's Well, on top of the well. You can go to the lower level and see the well. The surface opening was dug through a rock, so it took a little work for Jacob to dig this well. In dry years the well is dry, but in most years there is water in the well, and it is a much better quality than the hard water in some of the other wells.

(Jn 4:6) “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.”

Jesus and His disciples arrived at the well about the sixth hour. Though the text does not say that this was their second day of walking fifteen to twenty miles. The Jewish day begins at six a.m., so this is about 12:00 noon when this account happens, and Jesus was wearied from the journey. Recently, I walked thirteen and a half miles, and it took me three hours and thirty-nine minutes. I walked at a fairly fast pace, doing 16:14 minutes per mile. I would think that Jesus and the disciples could easily have walked at an eighteen-minute pace, which means that it would have taken them six hours to walk twenty miles. If they started at six in the morning, they would arrive at the well around noon. Walking twenty miles would tire out most people, much less, walking thirty-five miles in two days. The fact that Jesus was wearied from His journey was normal, and shows His humanity.

## **2. Jesus' Conversation with the Samaritan Woman (Jn 4:7-26)**

Jesus was not just weary, He was thirsty, and He had sat down by the well, waiting for someone to come along and offer Him a drink. Along came a woman of Samaria to draw water, and Jesus said to her, “Give Me a drink.” Jesus is alone with the woman, for His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. There are several things that are worth noting. First, most women did not go at noon to draw water; they went in the morning. Second, the women went in groups. It was the women's responsibility to go get water, and typically they would fill a water pot and carry it on their head and walk back to the city. This woman was an outcast. She did not go with the other women, or at the same time as the other women. She was also an immoral woman. She had had five husbands, and the man she was living with now was not her husband.

(Jn 4:7–8) “There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give Me a drink.” {8} For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.”

(Jn 4:17–18) “The woman answered and said, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You have correctly said, ‘I have no husband’; {18} for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly.”

For Jesus, there are several things to be noted. At that time, rabbis were not allowed to talk to women in public, even their own wives. Second, Jewish people were not to talk to Samaritans. Jesus has disregarded the prejudice against women, and the prejudice against the Samaritans. Jesus ate with tax collectors and sinners; He did not discriminate or show partiality to anyone. The Samaritan woman said to Jesus, “How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?” She knew the prejudice that the Jews had towards the Gentiles. She also knew that the Jews would not drink or eat out of any vessel or utensil that had been touched by a Samaritan. In John’s note, “For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans,” the literal translation is that Jews do not use jointly or share utensils with Samaritans. By asking for a drink, Jesus has also rejected this prejudiced practice. Jesus’ willingness to cross cultural and prejudicial barriers has immediately grabbed her attention.

(Jn 4:9) “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.)

Jesus does not respond to her question about why He is asking a Samaritan woman for a drink. Instead, he springboards off of the idea of asking for a drink, and said, “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.”

(Jn 4:10) “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.”

There are differences of opinion about what the living water is. Many scholars believe it is referring to eternal life, our salvation, while others maintain that Jesus was referring to the Holy Spirit. In John 7, Jesus said that “he who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’ But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”

(Jn 7:37–39) “Now on the last day, the great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. {38} “He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’ ” {39} But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet *given*, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”

When a person receives Christ, they are given the gift of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 2, people asked how they could be saved, and Peter said, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” In Acts 10, Peter said that “the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.” In both cases, the gift of the Holy Spirit was given to those who believe.

(Ac 2:38) “Peter *said* to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

(Ac 10:45) “All the circumcised believers who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.”

While the living water probably refers to the Holy Spirit, our salvation and the Holy Spirit are tied together. When we receive Christ, we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and the gift of salvation. Both are gifts.

We do not earn our salvation as a result of works; it is a gift of God. Paul wrote in Romans 6:23 that the wages of sin is death. Wages are what we earn, while a gift is something given to us that we do not earn or work for. The free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus. In Ephesians 2:8-9, Paul wrote that “by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.” Our salvation is a gift.

(Ro 6:23) “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

(Eph 2:8–9) “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; {9} not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

In verse fourteen, Jesus said, “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.”

(Jn 4:14) “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.”

In Ephesians 1:13-14, Paul wrote that “after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance.” That pledge, that river of living water, will spring up to eternal life. When a person believes the gospel, and receives Christ, they have eternal life, and they are sealed with the Holy Spirit. Both things happen when a person believes and receives Christ into their life.

(Eph 1:13–14) “In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, {14} who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of *God's* own possession, to the praise of His glory.”

The Samaritan woman was still thinking on the earthly level, not the spiritual level, which Jesus was referring to. She responded, “Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water? 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?” She was correct about the well being deep, as I mentioned earlier that it is about 120 feet deep. Jacob had this well dug out, and he, his family, and his livestock all drank from that well. There are guided tourist trips to Jacob's Well, and the tour guides normally offer a cup of water from the well to the tourists.

(Jn 4:11-12) “She said to Him, “Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water? {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?”

However, Jesus was not referring to the water from the well, but the living water that He would give. To make it clear, Jesus said that those who drink of this water (from the well) will thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that He would give would never thirst again. That living water would become a well of water springing up to eternal life.

(Jn 4:13-14) “Jesus answered and said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; {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.”

The Samaritan woman still does not fully grasp what Jesus is saying. She is intrigued and very interested, but still does not know that He was not talking about physical water, so she responded, “Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw.”

(Jn 4:15) “The woman said to Him, “Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw.”

Earlier Jesus had 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.” So far He has focused water. He went from physical water to living water. Now Jesus switches gear to show her who the one asking her for water is.

(Jn 4:10) “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.”

Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband and come here.” Jesus has a word of knowledge about this woman and her life. She responded, saying, “I have no husband.” Jesus then said to her, “You have correctly said, ‘I have no husband’; for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you know have is not your husband; this you have said truly.” Jesus did not judge the woman, even though she was an immoral woman. He did not talk to her in a condescending manner. He conversed with her in a respectful way. He just told her something that only a local person, or God would know. By bringing up her immoral life, she knew that she needed to be cleansed of her sins; she needed the Christ to come and forgive her of her sins. Since Jesus was not from Sychar, he had no way of knowing this woman, or her past. Therefore, she said to Him, “Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.”

(Jn 4:16-18) “He 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 correctly said, ‘I have no husband’; {18} for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly. {19} The woman said to Him, ‘Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.’”

Prophecy has an impact on unbelievers. In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul wrote that “if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an ungifted man enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all; the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so he will fall on his face and worship God, declaring that God is certainly among you.” This is exactly what happened with the woman at the well. She said that Jesus must be a prophet from God in order to know the secrets of her life.

(1 Co 14:24–25) “But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an ungifted man enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all; {25} the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so he will fall on his face and worship God, declaring that God is certainly among you.”

The Samaritan woman continued, saying, “Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.” The Samaritans had Jewish roots, and they accepted the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament. Even though they had intermarried with the Assyrians and adopted some of their gods, they still worshiped at Mt. Gerizim. Since the Patriarchs had worshiped God at Shechem, they felt that any temple erected to worship God should be there at Mt. Gerizim. So they built a place of worship on Mt. Gerizim. Her comment has shifted from water to worship, and where people were supposed to worship God.

(Jn 4:20) “Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you *people* say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.”

One of the main contentions with the Jews was the place of worship. Jesus is a Jew, and He is talking about spiritual things with this Samaritan woman, and she brings up this point of contention. Many times, when you are sharing with someone, they will bring up something that is not totally relevant. I have often heard people bring up the example of whether the pygmies who have not heard the gospel will be saved, although no one has ever brought that up with me. People will bring up objections and we need to be able to respond appropriately.

Notice how Jesus handles this objection. He said to her, “Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 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. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

(Jn 4:21-24) “Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. {22} “You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. {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. {24} “God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

Jesus handled the objection by saying that neither one was correct. People were not going to worship in Sychar or in Jerusalem. And Jesus explained why, that God is spirit and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth. The hour that was coming was Jesus' death on the cross and the New Covenant. God was going to pour out His Spirit on believers, and they were going to worship in spirit and truth. The veil of the temple was going to be ripped from top to bottom, and the Old Covenant worship at the temple was going to end. The Father was seeking people who will worship Him in spirit and truth to be His worshipers. Jesus answered the objection with truth. We must be able to respond to objections appropriately. If we don't know the answer or how to answer their objection, there is nothing wrong with saying that you don't know the answer, but you will get back to them with an answer.

After hearing Jesus' response, the woman said, “I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us.” The Pentateuch included



references to the Messiah. In Genesis 49:10, Moses wrote that “the scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes, and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples. Shiloh is an epithet or characteristic representing the Messiah. Like the Jews, the Samaritans believed that the Messiah would come from the lineage of Judah.

(Jn 4:25-26) “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.”

(Ge 49:10) “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes, and to him *shall be* the obedience of the peoples.

Another place that the Jews and Samaritans based their belief that the Messiah would come is in Deuteronomy 18:15-18, which says that “the Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him...I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.” By the woman’s comment, it appears that she was referring to this reference in Deuteronomy 18. “He will declare all things to us.”

(Dt 18:15–18) “The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him.... {18} ‘I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.”

Jesus responded by declaring to her, “I who speak to you am He.” Jesus declared that He was the Messiah. In the Old Testament, the word, LORD, is usually capitalized, and it is the Hebrew word, Jehovah. The Jews would not put vowels in it so it was YHVH, and it literally means I Am. This word is used 6,519 times, and always refers to the self-existent God, known as the “I Am.” The Gospel of John is written in Greek, not Hebrew, so YHVH is not used. However,

Jesus tells her, “I who speak to you am He. He is telling her that He is the I Am. In the Gospel of John, the phrase, “I Am” is used over twenty times. Seven times it refers to specific things. Jesus said, I Am the bread of Life; I Am the light of the world; I Am the gate; I am the good shepherd; I Am the resurrection and the life; I Am the way, the truth, and the life; and I Am the vine.

Seven “I Am” Statements in Gospel of John	
“I Am the bread of Life”	John 6:35
“I Am the light of the world”	John 8:12
“I Am the gate”	John 10:9
“I Am the good shepherd”	John 10:11
“I Am the resurrection and the life”	John 11:25
“I Am the way, the truth, and the life”	John 14:6
“I Am the vine”	John 15:1

(Jn 4:26) “Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am *He*.”

This was not the only time that He declared Himself to be the Messiah. When He was brought before the Sanhedrin Council, Caiaphas, the high priest said to Jesus, “I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God.” Jesus said to him, “You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.” Upon hearing Jesus affirm that He was the Messiah, Caiaphas tore his robes and said, “He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses.”

(Mt 26:63–65) “But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, “I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God.” {64} Jesus said to him, “You have said it *yourself*; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven. {65} Then the high priest tore his robes and said, “He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? Behold, you have now heard the blasphemy;”

### 3. Woman's Testimony in the City (Jn 4:27-30)

At this point in their conversation Jesus' disciples came, and they were amazed that He had been speaking with a woman. This was culturally taboo and not something a rabbi would do. Jesus has crossed the wall of prejudice against the Samaritans, and the cultural wall of speaking with a woman. John records that no one asked Jesus what He wanted or why He was speaking to her. Since John included this detailed conversation, and he was not present to hear it, it is apparent that Jesus told His disciples everything about His conversation with the woman.

(Jn 4:27) “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?”

In Matthew 4:19, Jesus told Peter that He would make him a fisher of men. Jesus used this opportunity to teach His disciples about one-on-one evangelism. In John 3, He had a one-on-one conversation with Nicodemus, and this was the second of many that He would have in His ministry. The Billy Graham Center (2016) reported that only 1% of people become Christians through a crusade. Larry Tomczak said that 80-90% of people come to Christ through relational evangelism. Statistically, people do not get saved at church by a pastor, or at a crusade, or other church events; they are brought to Christ by a friend or relative. Jesus taught this passage to the disciples, and now we have the same teaching to learn from. I believe they were given an opportunity to talk about their questions in their private debrief and training afterwards.

(Mt 4:19) “And He said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”

What was the result of the conversation with the woman? The woman left her waterpot and went into the city. The reason that she had gone to the well was to draw water, and she left her waterpot there. She had more urgent business to do than take water back to town. She could not go quickly to town carrying her heavy waterpot. Water pots for purification were typically 20-30 gallons, but these were not carried around. The water pots that women carried were anywhere from 3-5 gallons, and they usually carried them on their head. If the Samaritan woman put a 40-to-45-pound pot on her head, she would have to walk slowly and carefully so that it would not fall off of her head. She was obviously in a hurry to tell the towns people that she had found the Messiah, so she left her waterpot at the well and went into the city.

(Jn 4:28-30) “So the woman left her waterpot, and went into the city and said to the men, {29} “Come, see a man who told me all the things that I *have* done; this is not the Christ, is it?” {30} They went out of the city, and were coming to Him.”

She said to the men in the city, “Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is it?” She was an outcast to the women, but she knew the men of the city, and she went to them. Because of her testimony, “The men went out of the city, and were coming to Him.”

We gather from this account several things. First, the woman believed Jesus when He told her that He was the Messiah. Second, her priorities were changed. Instead of carrying water back to town, she was taking living water back to town. She was now a believer. Third, she boldly testified to those around her that Jesus had prophesied to her all the things that she had done, and that He was the Messiah. Fourth, the men of the city went out of the city and came to Jesus. They believed her testimony and came to Jesus.

## **Conclusion and Applications**

The first application from our message today is that Jesus came to save that which was lost. He did not come just for the Jews, but He also came to the Gentiles. In God's promise to Abraham, he would be a blessing to all nations. It was never just about the Jews. God is not a respecter of persons and does not show partiality. Jesus reached out to the Samaritans, where were not liked by the Jews, and were avoided at all costs. We should reach out to people of all colors, nationality, social status, economic status, age, and sex.

Our second application is that we need to show respect all peoples. Jesus showed respect to the Samaritan woman, and did not talk down to her. He knew that she was an adulteress and an outcast, but He did not treat her that way. He did not come to judge, but to save, and that should be our attitude when we speak with people. In my jail ministry, I often heard the inmates say that they appreciated me because I treated them with respect, something that they did not get much of while in prison.

Our third application is that as we go, we are to share the gospel and make disciples. Jesus was on His way to Galilee, and on His way, He had this encounter with the Samaritan woman. As we go through life, going to work, the gym, the grocery store, or walking in the neighborhood, all of these encounters with people represent a potential Samaritan woman conversation. We need to be focused on reaching people with the gospel. We need to be praying and looking for divine appointments and opportunities. We need to look for ways to initiate conversation and for springboards. Jesus used the springboard of asking for a drink to get the conversation started.

Larry Tomczak, an evangelist and apostle, gave a list of ten ways to initiate and establish relationships with people.

1. Pray
2. Greet people (be friendly)
3. Take initiative to establish conversation
4. Learn people's names
5. Take a genuine interest in others
6. Bless people with tangible expressions of God's love
7. Serve people
8. Invite people to your home
9. Allow people to assist you
10. Get reconciled of any offenses with people

Our fourth application is that we need to shod our feet with the preparation of the gospel. We need to know about evangelism, and the gospel message so that we can share it with people. We need to know how to handle objections. We need to know how to use springboards. We need to know how to lead a person to Christ. This means that many people need training in evangelism. This training is not just for evangelists; all of us are called to be God's witnesses and to share the

gospel. Jesus used this encounter to train His disciples in one-on-one evangelism, which is how John knew all the details of this account. He was training His disciples to be fishers of men.

Our fifth application is that we need to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit may give us a word of knowledge, or a prophetic word, and we need to be in tune to the Spirit. Sometimes a prophetic word will be what the Lord uses to bring someone to the Lord.

### **Closing Prayer**

Father God, thank You for this passage in John 4 about the Samaritan woman. It is obvious that You welcome all people and You reach out to the outcasts and to everyone. You do not want any to perish, but for all to have eternal life. Help us to love all people. Help us to have Your perspective. Help us to reach out to all men. Give us encounters like this and open doors to share the gospel with those that we meet. Help us to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Help us to walk in the Spirit, and in the power of Your Spirit. We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

### **Discussion Questions**

- Why do you think Jesus did not go into town with His disciples?
- How did Jesus show respect to the woman?
- Jesus used the springboard of water and eternal water? What is a springboard that you have used in the past to initiate a conversation? (I often use a person's name as a springboard.)
- Why do you think that Jesus asked her to bring her husband there?
- What are some of the cultural barriers that we have today?
- How can we cross those cultural barriers to share the gospel?
- How did Jesus handle the objection that the woman gave about the place to worship God?

## **Jesus' Encounter with the Samaritan Woman – Part 1 (Jn 4:1-30)**

### **Introduction**

1. **Setting** (Jn 4:1-6, Mt 3:7-8, Lk 7:30, 1 Ti 2:3-4, 2 Pe 3:9, Lk 19:10, Mt 28:19-20, Ac 1:8, Ac 10:34-35, Ge 12:1-7, 33:18, 34, Josh 24:32, Dt 27:11-13)
  
2. **Jesus' Conversation with the Samaritan Woman** (Jn 4:7-26, Jn 7:37-39, Ac 2:38, 10:45, Ro 6:23, Eph 2:8-9, 1:13-14, 1 Co 14:24-25, Ge 49:10, Dt 18:15-18, Mt 26:63-65)
  
3. **Woman's Testimony in the City** (Jn 4:27-30, Mt 4:19)

### **Conclusion and Applications**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.