

**Jesus Compassion for One
John 4**

Big Idea – To be like Jesus I need to follow His examples in the Bible.

John 4:1-4 The Pharisees heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more followers than John,

2 although Jesus himself did not baptize people, but his followers did.

3 Jesus knew that the Pharisees had heard about him, so he left Judea and went back to Galilee.

How did Jesus know? He knew everything because He was God!

The Pharisees were trying to incite competition between Jesus and John the Baptist (John 3:25-30), Jesus left Judea and started north for Galilee. He could have taken one of three possible routes: along the coast, across the Jordan and up through Perea, or straight through Samaria. Orthodox Jews avoided Samaria because there was a longstanding, deep-seated hatred between them and the Samaritans.

1. He went out of His way to meet the woman at the well in Samaria

John 4: 4 “But on the way he had to go through the country of Samaria.”

5 Eventually he came to the Samaritan village of Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

6 Jacob’s well was there; and Jesus, tired from the long walk, sat wearily beside the well about noontime.

Because He was on a divinely appointed schedule, it was necessary that Jesus go through Samaria. Why? Because He would meet a woman there and lead her into saving faith, a true faith that would affect an entire village. Our Lord was no respecter of persons. Earlier, He made time for a moral Jewish man named Nicodemus (John 3), and now He will witness to a Samaritan woman!

Why did Jesus get tired? Because He was human!

2. Jesus started a conversation about water

John 4:7 Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Please give me a drink."

8 He was alone at the time because his disciples had gone into the village to buy some food.

Jesus' request was simply a way to open the conversation and share with her the truth about "living water." Whenever He witnessed to people, Jesus did not use a "sales talk" that He adapted to meet every situation. To Nicodemus, He spoke about new birth; but to this woman, He spoke about living water.

3. The woman raised the race question

John 4:9 The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans. She said to Jesus, "You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?"

The Samaritans were a mixed race, part Jew and part Gentile, that grew out of the Assyrian captivity of the ten northern tribes in 727 b.c. So intense was their dislike of the Samaritans that some of the Pharisees prayed that no Samaritan would be raised in the resurrection! When His enemies wanted to call Jesus an insulting name, they called Him a Samaritan (John 8:48).

In that day, it was not considered proper for any man, especially a rabbi, to speak in public to a strange woman (John 4:27). However, Jesus set social customs aside because a soul's eternal salvation was at stake. It certainly surprised her when He asked for a drink of water.

The information in John's parenthesis at the end of John 4:9 was for the benefit of his Gentile readers. Since the disciples had gone into the city to purchase food, it is obvious that the Jews did have some "dealings" with the Samaritans; so John was not trying to exaggerate. The phrase can be translated "ask no favors from the Samaritans" or "use no vessels in common with the Samaritans." Why would Jesus, a Jew, want to use her "polluted" vessel to get a drink of water?

THERE ARE NO SUPERIOR RACES!!!

Acts 17:26 And He has made from one blood all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand when they should rise and fall, and he determined their boundaries.

4. Jesus turned the conversation to spiritual things

John 4:10 Jesus replied, "If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water."

Jesus pointed out that she was ignorant of three important facts: Who He was, what He had to offer, and how she could receive it. Here was the eternal God speaking to her, offering her eternal life! Jesus' words had aroused her interest, so she pursued the conversation.

11 "But sir, you don't have a rope or a bucket," she said, "and this well is very deep. Where would you get this living water?"

12 And besides, do you think you're greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us this well? How can you offer better water than he and his sons and his animals enjoyed?"

13 Jesus replied, "Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again.

14 But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life."

15 "Please, sir," the woman said, "give me this water! Then I'll never be thirsty again, and I won't have to come here to get water."

Jesus was talking about spiritual water, but she interpreted His words to mean literal water. Again, we see how easily people confuse the material and the spiritual.

Also, she worried about how He would get this water, instead of asking Him to give her a drink of it.

Certainly, Jesus is greater than Jacob—and greater than the well itself!

To paraphrase His reply: "Whosoever continues to drink of this material water (or anything the world has to offer) will thirst again. But whosoever takes one drink of the water I give will never thirst again!" (John 4:13-14)

How true it is that the things of this world never completely satisfy. In hell today, people are crying, "I thirst!"

"Life" is one of John's key concepts. He uses the word at least thirty-six times. Campbell Morgan has pointed out that humans need air, water, and food in order to have life. (We might also add that he needs light.)

All 4 are provided in Jesus Christ:

He provides the "breath" (Spirit) of God (John 3:8; 20:22).

He is the Bread of Life (John 6:48)

the Light of Life (John 1:4-5), and

He gives us the water of life.

The woman's immediate response was to ask for this gift, but she did not know what she was saying. The seed of the Word fell on shallow soil, and the shoots that sprang up had no root (Matt. 13:20-21). She had made progress, but she still had a long way to go; so Jesus patiently dealt with her.

5. Jesus drew attention to her sin problem

John 4:16 Jesus told her, "Go get your husband and come back here."

17 The woman answered, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right to say you have no husband.

18 Really you have had five husbands, and the man you live with now is not your husband. You told the truth."

19 The woman said, "Sir, I can see that you are a prophet.

6. She raised the religion question

John 4:20 So tell me, why is it that you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place of worship, while we Samaritans claim it is here at Mount Gerizim, where our ancestors worshiped?"

Since they were rejected by the Jews because they could not prove their genealogy, the Samaritans established their own temple and religious services on Mt. Gerizim. This only fanned the fires of prejudice and animosity.

Never argue with someone about religion, who's right and who's wrong!

I like to say "It doesn't matter what your label is – the labels are going to drop off on the way up or burn off on the way down! You need to know Jesus!"

21 Jesus replied, "Believe me, dear woman, the time is coming when it will no longer matter whether you worship the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem.

22 You Samaritans know very little about the one you worship, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes through the Jews.

23 But the time is coming—indeed it's here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way.

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

25 The woman said, "I know the Messiah is coming—the one who is called Christ. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

In spite of her ignorance, there was one truth this woman did know: the Messiah was coming and would reveal the secrets of hearts. Where did she learn this truth? We do not know, but that seed had lain buried in her heart until that very hour, and now it was going to bear fruit.

7. Jesus revealed Himself to her as God

John 4: 26 Then Jesus told her, "I AM the Messiah!"

This is not the only time that Jesus made this claim.

John 5:17 But Jesus said to them, "My Father never stops working, and so I keep working, too."

18 So the Jewish leaders tried all the harder to find a way to kill him. For he not only broke the Sabbath, but he also called God his Father, thereby making himself equal with God.

19 So Jesus explained, "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself. He does only what he sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son also does.

20 For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything he is doing. In fact, the Father will show him how to do even greater works than healing this man. Then you will truly be astonished.

21 For just as the Father gives life to those he raises from the dead, so the Son gives life to anyone he wants.

22 In addition, the Father judges no one. Instead, he has given the Son absolute authority to judge,

23 so that everyone will honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Anyone who does not honor the Son is certainly not honoring the Father who sent him.

When Jesus said "My Father" instead of the usual "our Father," used by the Jews, He claimed to be equal with God.

The Jewish leaders instantly understood His claim, and they changed their accusation from that of Sabbath-breaking to blasphemy, because Jesus claimed to be God. Liberal theologians who say that Jesus never claimed to be God have a difficult time with this passage.

8. She put her trust in Him as the Messiah

John 4:27 Just then his disciples came back. They were shocked to find him talking to a woman, but none of them had the nerve to ask, "What do you want with her?" or "Why are you talking to her?"

28 The woman left her water jar beside the well and ran back to the village, telling everyone,

29 "Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah?"

30 So the people came streaming from the village to see him.

9. She immediately told others the good news about Jesus

John 4:31 Meanwhile, his followers were begging him, "Teacher, eat something."

32 But Jesus answered, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about."

33 So the followers asked themselves, "Did somebody already bring him food?"

34 Jesus said, "My food is to do what the One who sent me wants me to do and to finish his work.

In John 17:4 Jesus said, I have glorified you on the earth, I have finished the work you gave me to do!

35 You have a saying, 'Four more months till harvest.' But I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields ready for harvest now.

36 Already, the one who harvests is being paid and is gathering crops for eternal life.

So the one who plants and the one who harvests celebrate at the same time.

37 Here the saying is true, 'One person plants, and another harvests.'

38 I sent you to harvest a crop that you did not work on. Others did the work, and you get to finish up their work."

39 Many of the Samaritans in that town believed in Jesus because of what the woman said: "He told me everything I ever did."

40 When the Samaritans came to Jesus, they begged him to stay with them, so he stayed there two more days.

41 And many more believed because of the things he said.

42 They said to the woman, "First we believed in Jesus because of your speech, but now we believe because we heard him ourselves. We know that this man really is the Savior of the world."

Personal evangelism is one beggar telling another beggar where he got bread.