

**THE WOMAN AT THE WELL PART IV**  
(John 4:27-42)

Jesus came to Samaria and had a conversation with a sinful woman of Samaria. This was not just a casual, meaningless conversation, but it was a saving conversation. And as we are going to see tonight, the saving effects of this conversation extended beyond this one woman into the city of Samaria. Because you see at the end of the chapter it says,

*And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified.*

John 4:39

And,

*And many more believed because of his own word.*

John 4:41

And this conversation was recorded by John the Apostle by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Even though John was apparently in the city buying food at the time, either Jesus told him about the conversation or the Holy Spirit revealed it to him later. And it has become a part of the Holy Scriptures. This makes it a most important conversation indeed. Who knows how many thousands or millions have found eternal life through the reading and preaching of this story about the conversion of this woman and many of her fellow Samaritans.

I want to summarize this passage of Scripture tonight and to put it all together and to hit on the main points of instruction that we find here.

This discourse is intimate and personal.

Obviously, there is much to learn in this discourse. But we must first recognize that above all else it is Jesus speaking to a sinner about salvation. It is a very personal discourse. It was behind closed doors, so to speak. It is a very private discourse and Jesus confronted her with very personal matters. It is a dialog between the Savior of the world and a lost sinner.

In another time and place it could very well have been a conversation between the Savior and you or me. If he had chosen to come to this world in our time, He could have met some of you women in the fruit section of Kroger or he could have found me on the eighteenth tee at the golf course. And he might have had a similar conversation with you or me. And what sins would he have known about each of us? He would have known all of them and he may have gently pointed them out to us!

As we study this passage, let's not forget that Jesus met with one woman about her spiritual condition. And he brought her into the kingdom of God. Jesus is about the business of finding his sheep, wherever they may be. And he is tenderly calling them home. This discourse is first and foremost about the salvation of a soul. It is the Savior, saving a sinner. And salvation is always a very personal and singular meeting between Jesus and a sinner somewhere.

This discourse is providentially linked to the discourse with Nicodemus

It is no accident that the discourse with this woman follows immediately after the discourse with Nicodemus and the two discourses should be considered in conjunction with one another to give us a fuller appreciation of this work of God called salvation.

In the discourse with Nicodemus we find the starting point of salvation. We find there the initial work of the Holy Spirit. It is called the new birth. It is regeneration. And Jesus told Nicodemus,

*Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*  
John 3:3

In the discourse with the woman, we find not so much the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit but the ongoing, sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit which is in us. Jesus told her,

*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.*  
John 4:14

You will notice that with both Nicodemus and with the woman, Jesus used the figure of water to teach about the work of the Holy Spirit. And so, the two discourses are woven together in a most interesting way to teach believers in all generations about the source and the cause of our salvation. And the source and the cause of our salvation is the work of the Holy Spirit. The core of the instruction in these two discourses is that it is the Holy Spirit that applies redemption to our souls. We don't climb to heaven to find salvation, but heaven comes down and finds us in our helpless condition. Christ did the suffering part of the work of redemption and it is the Holy Spirit that applies the work of Christ to our hearts. And this is the central doctrine of the two discourses.

There is another reason to consider the two discourses together. The two discourses demonstrate that Jesus is not merely the Savior of the Jews but he is the Savior of the world. With Nicodemus we see that Jesus is the Savior of the Jews. Though the Jews deserved to be utterly forsaken in their ignorance and unbelief, Jesus has not forsaken them. And Jesus demonstrated that he will yet save Jews. Look at what Paul said about this issue.

*Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew.*  
Romans 10:1, 2

*Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*  
Romans 10:5

And so, Jesus went to Jerusalem and saved Nicodemus. Then he left Jerusalem and went out into the land of Judea where he baptized. (John 3:22) Then, He went into Samaria to save a woman there. And this is to show that salvation is not for the Jews only but also for half-breeds and no breeds at all.

You might remember that Jesus told the disciples after his resurrection,

*But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*  
Acts 1:8

And we have an example of this in our present context. He saved Nicodemus in Jerusalem. Then he went into Judea and baptized. Then he went into Samaria and saved the woman and others. Then, we are going to see that he went on into Galilee. And by so doing, Jesus began to demonstrate that salvation is for his sheep wherever they may be in the world.

### Jesus is no respecter of persons

I think we also should see in the two discourses that Jesus is the Savior for all kinds of sinners. He will save high sinners and low sinners. He will save high society and low society. He will save men and women. He will save Jews and Samaritans.

I find it interesting in the two discourses that in one we have a high Jewish officer boldly coming and knocking on Jesus' door. And in the other, we have a woman who marveled that Jesus would even

speak to her. One man deemed himself worthy of honor and the woman deemed herself worthy of nothing. And yet to Jesus they were the same.

Jesus does not care whether you are Donald Trump or Donald Tramp. They are all the same to him. Jesus will save the have and the have not and it has nothing to do with anything in the sinner because Jesus is not a respecter of persons. He doesn't save a sinner because the sinner is a nice fellow. He doesn't save a sinner because he occupies a high office. He doesn't save one sinner because he is better than another sinner. All you can say is that everyone he ever saved was a wretched sinner.

*For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.*  
Romans 3:23

Now with respect to Nicodemus, Jesus instructed him in the initial work of the Holy Spirit. And Jesus talked to him about that instantaneous work of regeneration. This is the work of the Holy Spirit that makes the sinner alive. It is a glorious work. It is a work on par with resurrecting a dead body. Just as Jesus once raised Lazarus from the dead physically, the Holy Spirit raises dead sinners to life spiritually. And Jesus told Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

But the work of the Holy Spirit in salvation continues beyond the great work of regeneration. Once the believer is made alive by regeneration, the Holy Spirit then continues to work inside the believer. And this seems to be the focus of the instruction to this woman.

The central truth regarding the Holy Spirit in the Samaritan discourse is that the Holy Spirit will be an ever present saving, spiritual resource in the believer.

*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.*  
John 4:14

Why is it that the believer will never thirst? It is because the Holy Spirit will be a well of water in him springing up into everlasting life. Now Jesus didn't elaborate to this woman as to the various ongoing works of the Holy Spirit inside the believer. But he certainly let her know that the Holy Spirit would be a perpetual, working force in her.

We know from the Scriptures that the Holy Spirit in us does several things. He teaches and enlightens us. He produces fruit in us. He gives us ministerial gifts. He produces godliness in us. He assists us in our prayers and when we lift up feeble prayers he converts them into powerful prayers consistent with our true needs and the will of God. All of this Jesus intended when he told her there would be a well of water in her springing up.

The two discourses give us lessons in evangelism.

We see first that Jesus was willing to engage others in conversations about eternal things. Sometimes you and I are negligent about talking to others about these things, but this was the everyday business of Jesus. And it is impossible to evangelize without engaging others in conversation about the state of their souls. And Jesus engaged them.

We also see that Jesus spoke to others on their own level. With Nicodemus, Jesus engaged in rather deep theological conversation with Old Testament scriptural references. But with the woman, he simply asked for a drink of water and spoke to her on a simple level that she could understand.

It seems that the evangelistic approach of Jesus included bringing the sinner face to face with his sin. In an indirect way he confronted Nicodemus with his sin. He basically told Nicodemus that he was not qualified to enter into the kingdom. And he scolded Nicodemus for his ignorance of Old Testament things which he should have known. With the woman he was more direct. He told her to go bring her husband. And this forced the woman to confront her sins. It seems to me that sinners will never drink spiritual water

unless they become aware of their thirst. And Jesus made both Nicodemus and the woman very aware of their thirsty condition.

In both discourses, Jesus came back to the central question and that is, "What think ye of Christ." With Nicodemus Jesus said,

*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."*

John 3:14, 15

With the woman Jesus was more direct.

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

John 4:25, 26

Jesus taught the woman about the new age. (John 4:20-24)

The woman asked Jesus a religious question. She asked him where was the proper place of worship. The Jews worshipped at Jerusalem and the Samaritans worshipped at Mt. Gerasem. And Jesus took the opportunity to teach this woman that a new age was dawning on the earth. Now he frankly told her that the Jews were right. Proper worship was at Jerusalem. This was the place authorized by God where sacrifices should be made and where all the religious services should be done. He told her salvation is of the Jews. That is, salvation is channeled through the Jews. Knowledge of God came through the Jews and the Jewish Scriptures. The Savior of the world came through the Jewish nation.

But his principle instruction to her was that there is a new day dawning. And that old religion is about to blossom into maturity. That old Jewish religion can be characterized by two terms. It was carnal and it was typical. It was carnal in the sense that the religious services were earthly. They had earthly priests and earthly sacrifices and earthly tabernacles. And it was typical in the sense that all of these religious services were not the real and final services. The animal sacrifices were merely types. The tabernacle was merely a type of the true tabernacle. The altar was a type. The High Priest was a type of our great High Priest. And so, Jesus taught this woman that,

Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. 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.

Now Jesus says that in this new age people will worship in spirit and in truth. This is in contrast to that old Jewish form of worship in which people worshipped carnally and in types.

Now Jesus openly told the woman that he was the Christ. (John 4:26) And just as Jesus told her that he was the Messiah, the disciples came back from the city with food. I want you to notice first the astonishment of the disciples.

*They marveled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What sleekest thou? Or, Why talkest thou with her?*

It was not kosher for Jesus to be speaking to this woman. So, they marveled. They were astonished. To use a phrase that we might be familiar with, they were grossed out. This was offensive to their sensibilities. But notice, they kept their mouths shut. They didn't chide the woman by saying, "What do you want?" And they didn't chide Christ by asking, "Why talkest thou with her?" I think at this point the disciples are deferring to Jesus. They certainly recognize that he is special and though they are astonished they are willing to be taught in the matter.

But there is someone else who is astonished here and it is the woman. Jesus has just told her that he is the Messiah. And I want you to notice what she did.

*The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come and see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.*

John 4:28

She forgot all about her physical thirst and she went back to the city and told others to come and see. And she was quite astonished. She was astonished that Jesus knew everything about her. And she was astonished that Jesus was interested in her. And so should every sinner be astonished that Jesus has an interest in him. This was just a poor Samaritan woman. She was an outcast and a hopeless sinner. And Jesus spoke to her and her alone. And he knew everything about her!

And can it be that I should gain an interest in the Savior's blood.

Jesus taught the disciples about the harvest of the new age. (John 4:31-42)

The disciples came back and they encouraged Jesus to eat. I am sure that they were all hungry. It was noontime and they had undoubtedly been travelling all day. The disciples may have already eaten. But they now brought food to Jesus. And Jesus took this opportunity to teach them about the looming harvest of this new age.

*But Jesus said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat? Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.*

John 4:32-34

Now of course, Jesus is using a physical reality to teach a spiritual truth. The disciples all understood what it meant to be hungry physically. And Jesus was teaching them that he had a spiritual hunger and that it was necessary for him to eat spiritual meat. Now when Jesus was hungry physically, it was necessary for him to do something. He had to go catch a fish or go into the city to buy sandwiches. But in the spiritual realm, Jesus also had a hunger. In fact he had a ravishing spiritual hunger. And his spiritual hunger was only satisfied by doing something.

*My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.*

Hunger is a compelling force, isn't it? When we are truly hungry, we must eat. And Jesus had a compelling spiritual need and he must satisfy that need. And so, Jesus told them he had meat to eat that they did not know about.

Oh, poor disciples. They whispered to each other. What is he talking about? Has someone brought him food that we don't know about? But Jesus was talking about his spiritual hunger to do the will of the Father. And the only way to satisfy this hunger was to do the Father's will.

*For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

John 6:38-40

So, Jesus says, my food is to do the will of my Father. That is the only thing that will satisfy my hunger – to do his will. And his will is for me to save all those whom he has given me. This was the mission and this was his hunger. It was to find and save all of those whom the Father has given him. We call those people the elect, the called, the sheep. And Jesus was starving with hunger to round them all up and save them. And he said, My meat is to do the will of the Father.”

Now this is the principle work of Christ during this age. He is harvesting. He is going from door to door, from town to town, from country to country and he is reaping a harvest of souls. And he is satisfying his ravenous hunger. He is hungry to gather in all the elect – all those whom the Father has given him. And it is a great harvest indeed.

The first lesson we learn here is that,

1. The new age is harvest time.

Jesus told his disciples,

*Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.*

John 4:35

This is the unique characteristic of this new age, this age of grace. It is harvest time! And how we should be about this business. Compared to the old days, these days are rich with opportunity. God is calling out his elect. The seed of the gospel was sown in olden times, but now it is time to reap. So, lift up your eyes ye churches, lift up your eyes pastors, lift up eyes Christians and see the fields white unto harvest.

You will notice that there is no more waiting. The fields are white already. Noah did not find much success. Elijah wanted to die for lack of support. Jeremiah was the weeping prophet. Isaiah was sawn asunder. But look now. The fields are white unto harvest.

2. Reaping the harvest brings great joy.

The Old Testament prophets wept with sorrow when they spoke the Word of God with poor reception. But they shall rejoice with the reaper in due time.

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

John 4:36

3. Reaping souls is far superior to reaping wheat.

He that reaps a spiritual harvest reaps unto eternal life. There are eternal dividends to a spiritual harvest. And joy also shall spring eternal.

May the Lord give us the joy of harvest as we reap where others have sown.