

# John 4 Commentary

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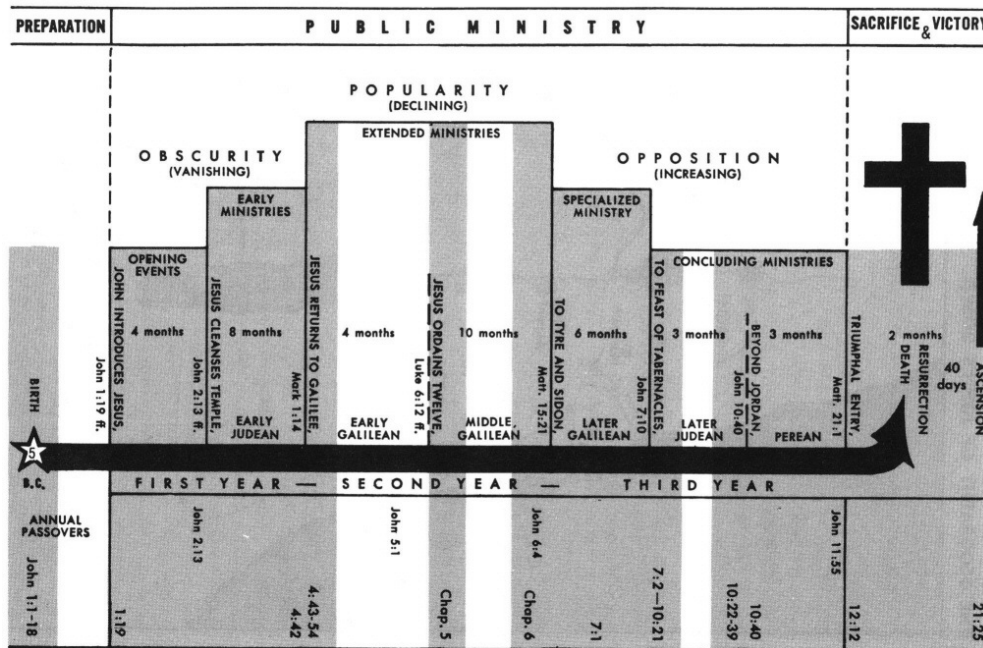
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Click chart to enlarge  
 Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission  
[Another Chart](#) from Charles Swindoll

Click to enlarge

THE LIFE OF JESUS AS COVERED  
 BY GOSPEL OF JOHN (shaded area)



Click chart to enlarge

**John 4:1 Therefore when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John**

NET John 4:1 Now when Jesus knew that the Pharisees had heard that he was winning and baptizing more disciples than John

GNT John 4:1 ς ο ν γνω ησο ς τι κουσαν ο Φαρισα οι τι ησο ς πλε ονας μαθητ ς ποιε κα βαπτ ζει ω ννης

NLT John 4:1 Jesus knew the Pharisees had heard that he was baptizing and making more disciples than John

KJV John 4:1 When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,

ESV John 4:1 Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John

NIV John 4:1 The Pharisees heard that Jesus was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John, 3 When the Lord learned of this, he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.

ASV John 4:1 When therefore the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John

CSB John 4:1 When Jesus knew that the Pharisees heard He was making and baptizing more disciples than John

NKJ John 4:1 Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John

NRS John 4:1 Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard, "Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John"

YLT John 4:1 When therefore the Lord knew that the Pharisees heard that Jesus more disciples doth make and baptize than John,

NAB John 4:1 Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John

NJB John 4:1 When Jesus heard that the Pharisees had found out that he was making and baptizing more disciples than John-

GWN John 4:1 Jesus knew that the Pharisees had heard that he was making and baptizing more disciples than John.

BBE John 4:1 Now when it was clear to the Lord that word had come to the ears of the Pharisees that Jesus was making more disciples than John and was giving them baptism

- **the Lord:** Lu 1:76 2:11 19:31,34 Ac 10:36 1Co 2:8 15:47 2Co 4:5 Jas 2:1 Rev 19:16
- **that Jesus:** Joh 3:22,26
- [John 4 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE LORD HEARS ABOUT PHARISEE'S CONCERN

**D L Moody** - Woman—Well—Worship—Witness—White fields.

**Bob Utley** comments -There is a purposeful structure in chapters 3 and 4 - (1) mister religious (Nicodemus) vs. miss outcast (woman at the well) and (2) Jerusalem-based Judaism (Orthodox) vs. Samaritan Judaism (heretical) ([John 4 Commentary](#))

**McGarvey** notes that this text breaks down three formidable walls: (1) racial prejudice; (2) gender — Jesus endorses this woman's fitness to receive spiritual instruction and even her suitability to announce his presence and position; (3) moral rectitude. Jesus has indeed come to save the least and the lost.

**D A Carson** has an interesting observation in comparison of the present chapter with the previous chapters - The connections between this account and the preceding chapters occur at several levels. Water symbolism continues (cf. Jn 2:6; Jn 3:5; Jn 4:10ff.). Jesus continues a series of dialogues, in each of which he discloses himself as the fulfillment of Old Testament promises and institutions, as understood by highly orthodox Judaism (represented by Nicodemus, Jn 3:1ff.) or by circles widely viewed as flawed and even heterodox (represented by the Samaritans, Jn 4:1ff.). (BORROW [The Gospel according to John](#))

**Therefore when** - **Vincent** says the **therefore when** points "back to Jn 3:22+, and the controversy which arose about the two baptisms." ([John 4 Commentary](#)) **Robertson** adds "Reference to Jn 3:22f. the work of the Baptist and the jealousy of his disciples." Others say the **therefore when** has a transitional function or simply "loosely connects the narrative with the preceding." (An Exegetical Summary of John 1-9) and does not have the usual [inferential](#) meaning (i.e., proceeding from general premisses to a necessary and specific conclusion).

**Carson** says **therefore** here is "a loose 'so' or 'therefore', in this instance connecting the fact of Jesus' rising influence with his discovery that the Pharisees had heard of it." ([John 4 Commentary](#))

**The Lord** ([kurios](#)) - Notice that several versions (NET, NLT, ESV) have "**Jesus**" and not "**Lord**." Several early and important manuscripts, along with the majority of later manuscripts have kurios, "**Lord**" here instead of Iesous, "Jesus".

**Knew** ([ginosko](#)) **that the Pharisees** ([pharisaios](#)) **had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing** ([baptizo](#)) **more disciples** ([mathetes](#)) **than John** - Jn 4:1-3 is one sentence in Greek. John had clearly "passed the torch" so Jesus was increasing and he was decreasing (Jn 3:30+). The **Pharisees** kept a close eye on Jesus (see Jn 1:19, 24+) and John the Baptist because of their distinctive message regarding repentance and the kingdom (John = Mt 3:2+, Jesus = Mt 4:17+). The fact that Jesus was making and baptizing disciples would suggest that there was a response to His message (but compare Jn 1:11-13+). Here the writer states that the religious leaders learned that Jesus' following was growing faster than that of John the Baptist. How did Jesus know ([ginosko](#))? John does not tell us how He **knew** but it would be one of these three considerations - (1) exercising His omniscience (which He did

occasionally), (2) revealed to Him by the Father and/or the Spirit or (3) in the simple giving of information from another person familiar with the details.

**Blum** - Since Jesus was working on God's schedule (cf Jn 4:34), He knew how His ministry would end. Until that appointed time, He must live carefully, so He withdrew from the conflict until His "**hour**" (John 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20; cf. 12:23; 13:1; 17:1)...This second interview is another illustration of the fact that "He knew what was in a man" (Jn 2:25). The Samaritan woman contrasts sharply with Nicodemus. He was seeking; she was indifferent. He was a respected ruler; she was an outcast. He was serious; she was flippant. He was a Jew; she was a despised Samaritan. He was (presumably) moral; she was immoral. He was orthodox; she was heterodox. He was learned in religious matters; she was ignorant. Yet in spite of all the differences between this "churchman" and this woman of the world, they both needed to be born again. Both had needs only Christ could meet. (See [Bible Knowledge Commentary](#) - scroll up and down to show more pages)

As **William MacDonald** says "The Lord Jesus realized that the Jewish leaders were already rejecting Him and His testimony, and so here He turns to the Gentile people with the message of salvation." (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**Harris** - The reason given for Jesus' departure from Judea at this particular time is not at all clear—did he fear persecution? (ED: OF COURSE HAD NO FEAR PER SE LIKE WE DO, FOR HE KNEW HIS MISSION WAS TO DIE FOR THE SINS OF THE WORLD.) Certainly he had openly opposed the Jewish leaders before in the Temple. John really doesn't tell us why Jesus chose this time to return to Galilee. Some have suggested that the Pharisees turned their attention to Jesus because John the Baptist had now been thrown into prison. But the text gives no hint of this. In any case, perhaps Jesus simply did not want to provoke a confrontation at this time (knowing that his "hour" had not yet come). ([Exegetical Commentary](#))

**John** had just recorded Jesus' rising popularity

"And they (John's disciples - Jn 3:25) came to John and said to him, **Rabbi**, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to Whom you have testified, **behold**, He is baptizing and all are coming to Him." (Jn 3:26+)

**Matthew** helps us understand what else Jesus **knew** recording...

Now when Jesus heard that John had been taken into custody, He withdrew ([anachoreo](#)) into Galilee (Mt 4:12+)

Why had John the Baptist been imprisoned? He was incarcerated for boldly rebuking **Herod the tetrarch** (aka, Herod Antipas, also called "King Herod") for his incestuous marriage to his niece, **Herodias**, his brother Philip's wife (Mk 6:17+)...

But **Herod the tetrarch**, being rebuked by [John] concerning **Herodias**, his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, also added this, above all, that he shut John up in prison. (Lk 3:19-20+, cf Mk 6:17-20+).

**Westcott** comments, "It is worthy of notice that St. John never notices (by name) the Sadducees or the Herodians. The **Pharisees** were the true representatives of the unbelieving nation."

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**Lord** (master, owner) ([2962](#)) (**kurios** from **kuros** = might or power, related to **kuroo** = to give authority) primarily means the possessor, owner, master, the supreme one, one who is sovereign and possesses absolute authority, absolute ownership and uncontested power. "The primary meaning relates to possession of power or authority." (BDAG) **Kurios** is used supremely of Christ the Lord, the sovereign over all creation who is the Creator (cf. Jn 1:3; Col 1:16,17). **Kurios** in the NT is also applied to the triune God (Yahweh). **BAGD** lists numerous places where "**Lord**" could refer to either God the Father, or God the Son (Acts 9:31; 1 Cor 4:19; 7:17; 2 Cor 8:21; Col 3:22b; 1 Th 4:6; 2 Th 3:16).

**Kurios in John** - Jn. 1:23; Jn. 4:1; Jn. 4:11; Jn. 4:15; Jn. 4:19; Jn. 4:49; Jn. 5:4; Jn. 5:7; Jn. 6:23; Jn. 6:34; Jn. 6:68; Jn. 8:11; Jn. 9:36; Jn. 9:38; Jn. 11:2; Jn. 11:3; Jn. 11:12; Jn. 11:21; Jn. 11:27; Jn. 11:32; Jn. 11:34; Jn. 11:39; Jn. 12:13; Jn. 12:21; Jn. 12:38; Jn. 13:6; Jn. 13:9; Jn. 13:13; Jn. 13:14; Jn. 13:16; Jn. 13:25; Jn. 13:36; Jn. 13:37; Jn. 14:5; Jn. 14:8; Jn. 14:22; Jn. 15:15; Jn. 15:20; Jn. 20:2; Jn. 20:13; Jn. 20:15; Jn. 20:18; Jn. 20:20; Jn. 20:25; Jn. 20:28; Jn. 21:7; Jn. 21:12; Jn. 21:15; Jn. 21:16; Jn. 21:17; Jn. 21:20; Jn. 21:21

**Pharisees** ([5330](#)) (**pharisaioi**) is transliterated from the Hebrew **parash** ([06567](#) - to separate) from Aramaic word **peras** ([06537](#)) ("Peres" in Da 5:28+), signifying to separate, owing to a different manner of life from that of the general public. After the resettling of the Jewish people in Judea on their return from the Babylonian captivity, there were two religious groups among them. One party contented themselves with following only what was written in the Law of Moses. These were called **Zadikim**, the righteous. The other group added the constitutions and traditions of the elders, as well as other rigorous observances, to the Law and voluntarily complied with them. They were called **Chasidim** or the pious. From the Zadikim the sects of the Sadducees and Karaites were derived. From the Chasidim were derived the Pharisees and the Essenes. Ironically, it was

the zeal of the Pharisees for the law that caused the Pharisees to become focused on rituals and externally keeping the law. They abandoned true religion of the heart for mere outward behavior modification and ritual (cf. Mt. 15:3–6), leading Jesus to scathingly denounce their pseudospirituality (Mt. 23:23; cf. 6:1–5; 9:14; 12:2; Luke 11:38–39). According to [Josephus, Ant. 17.2.4](#) there were more than 6,000 Pharisees in Jesus' day (more Pharisees than Sadducees). See also [Who were the Pharisees?](#)

**Pharisaioi - 99x in 94v** - Matt. 3:7; Matt. 5:20; Matt. 9:11; Matt. 9:14; Matt. 9:34; Matt. 12:2; Matt. 12:14; Matt. 12:24; Matt. 12:38; Matt. 15:1; Matt. 15:12; Matt. 16:1; Matt. 16:6; Matt. 16:11; Matt. 16:12; Matt. 19:3; Matt. 21:45; Matt. 22:15; Matt. 22:34; Matt. 22:41; Matt. 23:2; Matt. 23:13; Matt. 23:14; Matt. 23:15; Matt. 23:23; Matt. 23:25; Matt. 23:26; Matt. 23:27; Matt. 23:29; Matt. 27:62; Mk. 2:16; Mk. 2:18; Mk. 2:24; Mk. 3:6; Mk. 7:1; Mk. 7:3; Mk. 7:5; Mk. 8:11; Mk. 8:15; Mk. 10:2; Mk. 12:13; Lk. 5:17; Lk. 5:21; Lk. 5:30; Lk. 5:33; Lk. 6:2; Lk. 6:7; Lk. 7:30; Lk. 7:36; Lk. 7:37; Lk. 7:39; Lk. 11:37; Lk. 11:38; Lk. 11:39; Lk. 11:42; Lk. 11:43; Lk. 11:53; Lk. 12:1; Lk. 13:31; Lk. 14:1; Lk. 14:3; Lk. 15:2; Lk. 16:14; Lk. 17:20; Lk. 18:10; Lk. 18:11; Lk. 19:39; Jn. 1:24; Jn. 3:1; Jn. 4:1; Jn. 7:32; Jn. 7:45; Jn. 7:47; Jn. 7:48; Jn. 8:3; Jn. 8:13; Jn. 9:13; Jn. 9:15; Jn. 9:16; Jn. 9:40; Jn. 11:46; Jn. 11:47; Jn. 11:57; Jn. 12:19; Jn. 12:42; Jn. 18:3; Acts 5:34; Acts 15:5; Acts 23:6; Acts 23:7; Acts 23:8; Acts 23:9; Acts 26:5; Phil. 3:5

### John 4:2 (although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were),

NET John 4:2 (although Jesus himself was not baptizing, but his disciples were),  
GNT John 4:2 -κα τοιγε ησο ς α τ ς ο κ β ππιζεν λλ ο μαθητα α το -  
NLT John 4:2 (though Jesus himself didn't baptize them-- his disciples did).  
KJV John 4:2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)  
ESV John 4:2 (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples),  
NIV John 4:2 although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples.  
ASV John 4:2 (although Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples),  
CSB John 4:2 (though Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were),  
NKJ John 4:2 (though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples),  
NRS John 4:2 -- although it was not Jesus himself but his disciples who baptized--  
YLT John 4:2 (though indeed Jesus himself was not baptizing, but his disciples,)  
NAB John 4:2 (although Jesus himself was not baptizing, just his disciples),  
NJB John 4:2 though in fact it was his disciples who baptised, not Jesus himself-  
GWN John 4:2 (Actually, Jesus was not baptizing people. His disciples were.)  
BBE John 4:2 (Though, in fact, it was his disciples who gave baptism, not Jesus himself),

- Acts 10:48 1Co 1:13-17
- [John 4 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### PARENTHETICAL NOTE DISCIPLES BAPTIZING

**Although Jesus Himself was not baptizing ([baptizo](#)), but His disciples were** - John is speaking of course of literal baptism in water (he does not specify how much water), but clearly baptism was not being performed as an empty ritual. Those who heeded the call to repent (Jesus cried "Repent and believe in the Gospel" - Mark 1:15+) were baptized as in the [baptism of John](#) and foreshadowed Christian baptism which was not instituted until after Jesus' death and resurrection (see Ro 6:3-4).

**NOTE:** The fact that Jesus Himself did not baptize is an argument against the false teaching of [baptismal regeneration](#). How could the Savior of the world not baptize individual and yet still save them? For example in Luke 7:48-50 said "said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace." Notice what He did NOT say - "Go and be baptized so you can be saved!" Similarly in Mark 2:5 "Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Again He makes no mention of baptism but clearly declares the forgiveness of

sins! Clearly water baptism was not necessary for salvation. Do not let any church teach you it is absolutely necessary for salvation. The only thing that is necessary for salvation is to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved! (cf Acts 16:31+). Notice that the Philippian jailer was first SAVED and then he was BAPTIZED (Acts 16:33+). The baptism did not save him but was demonstration that he had been saved! As **MacArthur** says "Surely the Lord Jesus Christ, who came to "seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10+), would Himself have done whatever was necessary to bring sinners to salvation." See [What is baptismal regeneration?](#)

**W A Criswell** comments on **was not baptizing** - Although Jesus honored baptism by continuing the practice, commanding it for all of His disciples and (though for a different reason) being baptized Himself, the Lord baptized no one. Since the Savior baptized no one, yet honored the practice in so many ways, three conclusions are inevitable: (1) baptism must be of great importance; (2) that importance is found in terms of the Christian's obedience to the lordship of Jesus Christ (cf. Mt 28:18-20+); and (3) the emphasis of the act is on the witness of baptism, since baptism can never save. Christian baptism is founded on the believer's willingness to live in union with a crucified and living Savior (cf. Ro 6:3-5+). ([Believer's Study Bible](#))

**John Calvin** comments on the significance of baptism "He calls Christ's Baptism that which He administered by the hands of others, to teach us that Baptism is not to be valued from the person of the minister, but that its whole force depends on its author, in whose name and by whose command it is administered ... our Baptism has no less efficacy to cleanse and renew us than if it had been given directly by the Son of God." ([John 4 Commentary](#))

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**Baptizing** (907)(**baptizo** from **bapto** = cover wholly with a fluid; stain or dip as with dye; used of the smith tempering the red-hot steel, used of dyeing the hair; of a ship that "dipped" = sank) has a literal and a figurative meaning in the NT. The literal meaning is to submerge, to dip or immerse as in water. A study of the 77 NT uses (See below) reveals that most of the uses of **baptizo** in the Gospels and Acts are associated with literal water baptism. The Greeks used **baptizo** to describe the dyeing of a garment, in which the whole material was plunged in and taken out from the element used. **Baptizo** was used of the act of sinking ships. **Baptizo** also meant to bathe of a boat which had been wrecked by being submerged and then stranded on the shore. Figuratively, **baptizo** pictures the introduction or placing of a person or thing into a new environment or into union with something else so as to alter its condition or its relationship to its previous environment or condition. In this sense **baptizo** means to be identified with.

The [baptism of John the Baptist](#) was for repentance and was associated with a genuine belief in Jesus (Acts 19:4+) and thus these Jews who were being baptized by John (eg, Mt 3:6+, Mk 1:4, 5+, Contrast Lk 7:29+ = saved with Lk 7:30+ = unsaved) were genuinely "saved". Note that it was not the fact that John baptized them in water that they were saved but their salvation was based on repentance and belief in Jesus. See [What was the meaning and importance of the baptism of John the Baptist?](#)

**James Montgomery Boice** helps understand this figurative meaning of **baptizo** writing that "The clearest example that shows the meaning of **baptizo** is a text from the Greek poet and physician Nicander, who lived about 200 B.C. It is a recipe for making pickles and is helpful because it uses both words. Nicander says that in order to make a pickle, the vegetable should first be '**dipped**' (**bapto**) into boiling water and then '**baptised**' (**baptizo**) in the vinegar solution. Both verbs concern the immersing of vegetables in a solution. But the first is temporary. The second, the act of **baptizing** the vegetable, produces a permanent change. When used in the New Testament, this word more often refers to **our union** and **identification** with Christ than to our water baptism... mere intellectual assent is not enough. **There must be a union with Him, a real change, like the vegetable to the pickle!**" (Bolding added)

**Baptizo - 77x in 63v** - Matt. 3:6; Matt. 3:11; Matt. 3:13; Matt. 3:14; Matt. 3:16; Matt. 28:19; Mk. 1:4; Mk. 1:5; Mk. 1:8; Mk. 1:9; Mk. 6:14; Mk. 6:24; Mk. 10:38; Mk. 10:39; Mk. 16:16; Lk. 3:7; Lk. 3:12; Lk. 3:16; Lk. 3:21; Lk. 7:29; Lk. 7:30; Lk. 11:38; Lk. 12:50; Jn. 1:25; Jn. 1:26; Jn. 1:28; Jn. 1:31; Jn. 1:33; Jn. 3:22; Jn. 3:23; Jn. 3:26; Jn. 4:1; Jn. 4:2; Jn. 10:40; Acts 1:5; Acts 2:38; Acts 2:41; Acts 8:12; Acts 8:13; Acts 8:16; Acts 8:36; Acts 8:38; Acts 9:18; Acts 10:47; Acts 10:48; Acts 11:16; Acts 16:15; Acts 16:33; Acts 18:8; Acts 19:3; Acts 19:4; Acts 19:5; Acts 22:16; Rom. 6:3; 1 Co. 1:13; 1 Co. 1:14; 1 Co. 1:15; 1 Co. 1:16; 1 Co. 1:17; 1 Co. 10:2; 1 Co. 12:13; 1 Co. 15:29; Gal. 3:27

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**QUESTION** - [What is baptismal regeneration? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**ANSWER** - Baptismal regeneration is the belief that [baptism is necessary for salvation](#), or, more precisely, that regeneration does not occur until a person is [water baptized](#). Baptismal regeneration is a tenet of numerous Christian denominations, but is most strenuously promoted by churches in the [Restoration Movement](#), specifically the [Church of Christ](#) and the [International Church of](#)

## [Christ.](#)

Advocates of baptismal regeneration point to Scripture verses such as Mark 16:16, John 3:5, Acts 2:38, Acts 22:16, Galatians 3:27, and 1 Peter 3:21 for biblical support. And, granted, those verses *seem* to indicate that baptism is necessary for salvation. However, there are biblically and contextually sound interpretations of those verses that do not support baptismal regeneration. Please see the following articles:

- [Does Mark 16:16 teach that baptism is necessary for salvation?](#)
- [Does John 3:5 teach that baptism is necessary for salvation?](#)
- [Does Acts 2:38 teach that baptism is necessary for salvation?](#)
- [Does Acts 22:16 teach that baptism is necessary for salvation?](#)
- [Does Galatians 3:27 teach that baptism is necessary for salvation?](#)
- [Does 1 Peter 3:21 teach that baptism is necessary for salvation?](#)

Advocates of baptismal regeneration typically have a four-part formula for how salvation is received. They believe that a person must believe, repent, confess, and be baptized in order to be saved. They believe this way because there are biblical passages that *seem* to indicate that each of these actions is necessary for salvation. For example, Romans 10:9–10 links salvation with confession. Acts 2:38 links salvation with repentance and baptism.

[Repentance](#), understood biblically, is required for salvation. Repentance is a change of mind. Repentance, in relation to salvation, is changing your mind from rejection of Christ to acceptance of Christ. It is not a separate step from saving faith. Rather, it is an essential aspect of saving faith. One cannot receive Jesus Christ as Savior, by grace through faith, without a change of mind about who He is and what He did.

[Confession](#), understood biblically, is a demonstration of faith. If a person has truly received Jesus Christ as Savior, proclaiming that faith to others will be a result. If a person is ashamed of Christ and/or ashamed of the message of the gospel, it is highly unlikely that the person has understood the gospel or experienced the salvation that Christ provides.

[Baptism](#), understood biblically, is an identification with Christ. Christian baptism illustrates a believer's identification with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6:3–4). As with confession, if a person is unwilling to be baptized—unwilling to identify his/her life as being redeemed by Jesus Christ—that person has very likely not been made a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17) through faith in Jesus Christ.

Those who contend for baptismal regeneration and/or this four-part formula for receiving salvation do not view these actions as meritorious works that earn salvation. Repenting, confessing, etc., do not make a person worthy of salvation. Rather, the official view is that faith, repentance, confession, and baptism are “works of obedience,” things a person must do before God grants salvation. While the standard Protestant understanding is that faith is the one thing God requires before salvation is granted, those of the baptismal regeneration persuasion believe that baptism—and, for some, repentance and confession—are additional things God requires before He grants salvation.

The problem with this viewpoint is that there are biblical passages that clearly and explicitly declare faith to be the only requirement for salvation. [John 3:16](#), one of the most well-known verses in the Bible, states, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” In Acts 16:30, the Philippian jailer asks the apostle Paul, “What must I do to be saved?” If there was ever an opportunity for Paul to present a four-part formula, this was it. Paul's response was simple: “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved” (Acts 16:31). No baptism, no confession, just faith.

There are literally dozens of verses in the New Testament that attribute salvation to faith/belief with no other requirement mentioned in the context. If baptism, or anything else, is necessary for salvation, all of these verses are wrong, and the Bible contains errors and is therefore no longer worthy of our trust.

An exhaustive study of the New Testament on various requirements for salvation is not necessary. Receiving salvation is not a process or a multi-step formula. Salvation is a finished product, not a recipe. What must we do to be saved? Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and we will be saved.

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### Related Resources:

- C H Spurgeon - [Baptismal Regeneration](#)

**John 4:3 He left Judea and went away again into Galilee.**

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NET John 4:3 he left Judea and set out once more for Galilee.

GNT John 4:3 φ κεν τ ν ουδα αν κα π λθεν π λιν ε ρ τ ν Γαλιλα αν.

NLT John 4:3 So he left Judea and returned to Galilee.

KJV John 4:3 He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee.

ESV John 4:3 he left Judea and departed again for Galilee.

NIV John 4:3 When the Lord learned of this, he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.

ASV John 4:3 he left Judea, and departed again into Galilee.

CSB John 4:3 He left Judea and went again to Galilee.

NKJ John 4:3 He left Judea and departed again to Galilee.

NRS John 4:3 he left Judea and started back to Galilee.

YLT John 4:3 he left Judea and went away again to Galilee,

NAB John 4:3 he left Judea and returned to Galilee.

NJB John 4:3 he left Judaea and went back to Galilee.

GWN John 4:3 So he left the Judean countryside and went back to Galilee.

BBE John 4:3 He went out of Judaea into Galilee again.

- **left:** Joh 3:32 10:40 11:54 Mt 10:23 Mk 3:7
- **again:** Joh 1:43
- [John 4 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**He left** ([aphiemi](#)) **Judea** and went away again into **Galilee** - **Judea** was the site of Jerusalem and thus was the religious center of Israel. It was like a "powder keg," so Jesus did not want opposition by the religious leader to escalate too quickly. "He would not precipitate a clash until the right time." (Leon Morris BORROW [The Gospel according to John : NICNT](#)) Notice the phrase **again into Galilee** for He had been there previously (of course He was raised in Galilee, in the town of Nazareth).

**D A Carson** suggests another possible reason why Jesus left Judea -- "Fearful that there might be an attempt to polarize the two ministries, Jesus determines to minimize the potential damage by departing for Galilee." (BORROW [The Gospel according to John](#))

The verb **left** ([aphiemi](#)) can also convey the sense of "abandon" and while the literal meaning (go out of, depart) is certainly the most preferred, **Morgan** ([The Gospel according to John -John 4:1-42 Samaria](#)) makes an interesting comment that "We should not misinterpret the thought if we said He **abandoned** Judaea. He did go back, but very seldom. He had been to Judaea. He had gone to the Temple. He had exercised His ministry in the surrounding country with marvellous success; but hostility was stirring there, and He **left** Judaea; He broke with it." John uses [aphiemi](#) with the sense of **abandon** later in this same chapter when "the woman left (abandoned) her waterpot." (Jn 4:28, cf third use Jn 4:52).

**Plummer** ([John 4 Commentary](#)) adds "First the Temple, then Jerusalem, and now Judaea has to be abandoned, because He can win no welcome."

**Gotquestions** - Ancient Israel was divided into three main regions (see map below):**Galilee** to the north, **Samaria** in the center, and Judah, later called **Judea**, to the south. The province of Judea, as distinguished from Galilee and Samaria, included the territories of the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, Dan, Simeon, and part of Ephraim. This area, known as the upper hill country, extended from Bethel in the north to Beth Zur in the south, and from Emmaus in the west to the Jordan River in the east. ([What is the significance of Judea in the Bible?](#))

**NET Note** - The author doesn't tell why Jesus chose to set out once more for Galilee. Some have suggested that the Pharisees turned their attention to Jesus because John the Baptist had now been thrown into prison. But the text gives no hint of this. In any case, perhaps Jesus simply did not want to provoke a confrontation at this time (knowing that his "hour" had not yet come).

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**Left** (863)(**aphiemi** from **apo** = prefix speaks of separation, putting some distance between + **hiemi** = put in motion, send) conveys the basic idea of an action which causes separation. It is notable that although the common meaning of forgive (some 47/133 NT uses) is used by John only once in John 20:23 (Twice - "If you **forgive** the sins of any, their sins have been **forgiven** them")

All uses of aphiemi in John's Gospel - Jn. 4:3; Jn. 4:28; Jn. 4:52; Jn. 8:29; Jn. 10:12; Jn. 11:44; Jn. 11:48; Jn. 12:7; Jn. 14:18; Jn. 14:27; Jn. 16:28; Jn. 16:32; Jn. 18:8; Jn. 20:23.

### John 4:4 And He had to pass through Samaria.

NET John 4:4 But he had to pass through Samaria.

GNT John 4:4 δεῖ δὲ αὐτὸν διελθεῖν διὰ τῆς Σαμαρείας.

NLT John 4:4 He had to go through Samaria on the way.

KJV John 4:4 And he must needs go through Samaria.

ESV John 4:4 And he had to pass through Samaria.

NIV John 4:4 Now he had to go through Samaria.

ASV John 4:4 And he must needs pass through Samaria.

CSB John 4:4 He had to travel through Samaria,

NKJ John 4:4 But He needed to go through Samaria.

NRS John 4:4 But he had to go through Samaria.

YLT John 4:4 and it was behoving him to go through Samaria.

NAB John 4:4 He had to pass through Samaria.

NJB John 4:4 He had to pass through Samaria.

GWN John 4:4 Jesus had to go through Samaria.

BBE John 4:4 And it was necessary for him to go through Samaria.

- Matthew 10:5,6; Luke 2:49; 9:51,52; 17:11
- [John 4 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Enlarge to see Sychar in Samaria  
Map courtesy of Holman Bible Atlas ([digital book](#); [hardcover](#))  
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### A DIVINE NECESSITY!

**Harris** - The reason given for Jesus' departure from Judea at this particular time is not at all clear—did he fear persecution? (ED: OF COURSE HAD NO FEAR PER SE LIKE WE DO, FOR HE KNEW HIS MISSION WAS TO DIE FOR THE SINS OF THE WORLD.) Certainly he had openly opposed the Jewish leaders before in the Temple. John really doesn't tell us why Jesus chose this time to return to Galilee. Some have suggested that the Pharisees turned their attention to Jesus because John the Baptist had now been thrown into prison. But the text gives no hint of this. In any case, perhaps Jesus simply did not want to provoke a confrontation at this time (knowing that his "hour" had not yet come). ([Exegetical Commentary](#))

**And He had (dei) to pass through Samaria** - Jesus was ever in communication with His Father to do the Father's will and clearly the will of the Father was for Jesus to **pass through Samaria**. (Compare John 14:31).

**THOUGHT** - O, to have a heart like Jesus, one that hears and obeys without hesitation, procrastination or argumentation! Indeed, to have as our "daily bread" to do the will of our Father and to accomplish His work as did Jesus.

Later in this chapter Jesus reiterates why He had to pass through Samaria, explaining to His dim disciples (a lot like me much of the time!)...

"My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work" (John 4:34+)

**THOUGHT:** Are you as convicted as I am? Fulfilling His Father's will was more important than filling His stomach! Ouch! Would I (you) have gone through Samaria knowing the "heat" I would take from the "religious crowd?" How often do we miss God's will, because we judge that it will be fraught with feedback of the negative variety?

*"I have learned much more from the things I **had** to do than from the things I **chose** to do." (Woe!)*

--- Anonymous

Indeed, Jesus perfectly, fulfilled His mission and was able to confidently pray to His Father in heaven

"I glorified You on the earth, **having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do**" (Jn 17:4)

It is notable that here Jesus is not with the masses in John 4, but is seeking a single person, even a Samaritan woman. Unlike Nicodemus who has sought Him, this woman was not seeking Jesus! Jesus knows the precious value of a single soul (cf Lk 15:10+)

**THOUGHT-** Is there a single soul that God's Spirit has specifically laid on your heart to pray for their salvation or to speak to them of the great Good News? Then pray! Then speak! Accomplish the work for which He has called you to out of darkness and into His marvelous light (1Pe 2:9+), for "the night is coming when no one can work." (Jn 9:4+)

**NET Note** - Travel through **Samaria** was not geographically necessary; the normal route for Jews ran up the east side of the Jordan River (Transjordan).

**James Smith** - "He **must needs** go through Samaria." There was a **must needs** for every word Christ spoke, and for every act that He did. Those Jews, which had "no dealings with the Samaritans," usually avoided going through Samaria when journeying from Judea to Galilee; but Christ's love for sinners constrained Him to go that way (cp Paul - 2Cor 5:14-note). He lived not to please Himself, but to seek and to save the lost. In this He has left us an example that we should follow His steps. Meanwhile let us centre our thoughts on the woman. ([John 4:1-30 The Woman Of Samaria](#))

**Spurgeon** - It is true that it was the nearest way, yet he might have gone round about; but he would not do so, for there were souls in Samaria who were to be blessed by his presence. He had a constraint upon him, an inward impulse, so that "He must needs go through Samaria." Dear friends, whenever you feel the drawings of the Spirit in any particular direction, do not resist them, but yield yourself entirely to his gracious influence, even as your Lord did.

**Boa** - God has divine appointments. He didn't necessarily leave Judea with any fixed intention of ministering in Samaria, He just planned to pass through but the Spirit will always blow wherever He wishes. True messengers of God are never subject to fixed programs and to prejudices. We need to keep that in mind for ourselves. You don't know what you're called to do. You don't know what ministry you're going to have and very often your greatest moment might be something that was not planned- something may appear to be an interruption or something that might not seem very productive. ([John - Chapter 4](#))

**Rich Cathers** makes an interesting comment on going from ministering to many, now to one - Ministry, not numbers It's easy in ministry to fall into the trap of comparing yourself with other ministries. One of the first ways that pastors measure themselves is by comparing the size of their churches to the other guy. Yet here Jesus purposely pulls out of the "horserace". He quits the game. **Jesus' priority was actual ministry, actually impacting lives, not being the biggest church on the block** You see this in the life of the early church, as they learned to **follow the leading of the Holy Spirit** (**Ed comment:** And although it does not state it in the text, there is little doubt that Jesus is led about by the Holy Spirit - cp Mt 4:1, Lk 4:1, 14, Acts 10:37-39) Philip was an evangelist, having great success in the land of Samaria. (Acts 8:5-6NKJV) Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. {6} And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. It was during this time of great success that God changed Philip's direction: (Acts 8:26NKJV) Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, "Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is desert. God would have an appointment with one person for Philip, just like Jesus will have an appointment with a single individual. We might just miss the boat if we begin to think that success in life or success in ministry is all about big numbers. I think it's probably more important that we learn to have the heart of God, that we would be willing to do the smaller, quieter thing, even if it only involves one small, seemingly insignificant person. ([John 4:1-14](#))

**Pritchard on pass through Samaria** - Geography is all-important in understanding this story. In Jesus' day there were three regions stacked on top of one another. There was Galilee in the north, Samaria in the middle, and Judea in the south. The easiest and quickest way to get to Galilee from Judea was to go due north right through Samaria. ([The Woman at the Well](#))

Jesus had to go through Samaria  
—and so must we!

**Ray Stedman** - This direct route from Judea to Galilee was about 70 miles, or two and a half days' walk. But many of the Jews chose not to go through Samaria. They traveled the hot desert road from Jerusalem to Jericho, and up the Jordan valley. Thus, because of the terrible prejudice that prevailed against the Samaritan people, they journeyed almost twice the distance on a much hotter and more uncomfortable road. But our Lord cut right through that ignorant, narrow-minded prejudice and went through Samaria. ([The Man Who Understood Woman](#))

**THOUGHT** - Who is the Samaritan in your life? Who is that you absolutely detest and even feel defiled by? Who do you do not want to share the Gospel with? Jesus gives us an example of the [summun bonum](#), the highest good, the greatest goal, indeed the supreme purpose for which He came to die - "**For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.**" (Lk 19:10+) He did not come to seek and save those who were likable, those who were worthy, those who were good, etc. If He had, no one would have been saved, for no one is in any of those categories! We were ALL "detestable" and "defiled" by our sins of thought, word and deed, and yet Jesus came to sit beside us and speak the Gospel to our calloused hearts, saving us from the guttermost to the uttermost! As His disciples we too **MUST GO** to the detestable, the defiled, the downcast, the derelict, the dirty, etc. and engage them in a Gospel centered conversation, allowing God's Holy Word and Holy Spirit to open their hearts like He did Lydia's heart in Acts 16:14+. **Will you go share the news of "Living Water" with a "Samaritan" this year?**

*Prejudice is a great timesaver:*

*It enables you to form opinions without getting the facts.*

- Source: Our Daily Bread

**Deffinbaugh** ([The Woman at the Well](#)) - D. A. Carson (BORROW [The Gospel according to John](#)), citing Josephus, maintains that Jews much more commonly passed through Samaria. It would therefore seem that only a few strict Jews refused to do so.

**Samaria** - **John Kitto** (one of Spurgeon's favorite writers) has this note - Sama'ria (watch-height), a city, situated near the middle of Palestine, built by Omri, king of Israel, on a mountain or hill of the same name, about B.C. 925. It was the metropolis of the kingdom of Israel, or of the ten tribes. The hill was purchased from the owner, Shemer, from whom the city took its name (1Ki 16:24-25). **Samaria** continued to be the capital of Israel for two centuries, till the carrying away of the ten tribes by Shalmaneser, about B.C. 722. During all this time it was the seat of idolatry, and is often as such denounced by the prophets... It was the seat of a temple of Baal, built by Ahab (1Ki 16:31-32, 21:25-26), and destroyed by Jehu. It was the scene of many of the acts of the prophets Elijah and Elisha, connected with the various famines of the land, the unexpected plenty of Samaria, and the several deliverances of the city from the Syrians. After the exile of the ten tribes, Samaria appears to have continued, for a time at least, the chief city of the foreigners brought to occupy their place; although Shechem soon became the capital of the Samaritans as a religious sect... Augustus (Caesar) bestowed Samaria on Herod; who eventually rebuilt the city with great magnificence, and gave it the name of Sebaste. Here Herod planted a colony of 6000 persons, composed partly of veteran soldiers, and partly of people from the environs; enlarged the circumference of the city; and surrounded it with a strong wall twenty stades in circuit. In the midst of the city—that is to say, upon the summit of the hill—he left a sacred place of a stade and a half, splendidly decorated, and here he erected a temple to Augustus, celebrated for its magnitude and beauty. The whole city was greatly ornamented, and became a strong fortress. Such was the Samaria of the time of the New Testament, where the Gospel was preached by Philip, and a church was gathered by the apostles. ([Samaria - Kitto's Popular Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature - click for full article](#)) ([Samaria - Wikipedia](#))

The [Samaritans](#) (Hebrew: Shomronim) are an [ethno-religious group](#) named after and descended from ancient Semitic inhabitants of Samaria, since the [Assyrian exile](#) of the Israelites.<sup>[25]</sup> Religiously, the Samaritans are adherents of Samaritanism, an [Abrahamic religion](#) closely related to [Judaism](#). Based on the [Samaritan Torah](#), Samaritans claim their worship is the true religion of the ancient Israelites prior to the [Babylonian exile](#), preserved by those who remained in the [Land of Israel](#). Their temple was built at [Mount Gerizim](#) in the middle of 5th century BC and was destroyed by the [Macabbean \(Hasmonean\) John Hyrcanus](#) late in 110 BC, although their descendants still worship among its ruins. The antagonism between Samaritans and Jews is important in understanding the Bible's [New Testament](#) stories of the "[Samaritan woman at the well](#)" and "[Parable of the Good Samaritan](#)". ([Wikipedia](#))

**Gary Burge** has an excellent summary of **Samaritans** - The apostasy of the Old Testament northern kingdom of Israel (finally based in the city of Samaria) was well known. When the Assyrians conquered and exiled the northern kingdom in 722 B.C., they

repopulated the region with people from throughout their empire (2 Kings 17:23–24). Remnants of the defeated Israelite kingdom now mixed with Persians and other conquered peoples. The paganism known to Jeroboam now was mixed with countless other practices, making the religious impurity of the land infamous (2 Kings 17:25ff.). In time, the monotheism of Judaism prevailed, but it suffered important modifications. The Samaritans rejected the writings of the Prophets (including the histories [1–2 Samuel, 1–2 Kings, 1–2 Chronicles]) and wisdom literature (Proverbs, Psalms, etc.) because of these writings' emphasis on Judea and David's line centered on Jerusalem. Their Scriptures were limited to the Pentateuch (Genesis through Deuteronomy), and their worship was centered on a new temple on Mount Gerizim, towering above ancient Shechem, while Jerusalem was rejected as a place of pilgrimage. Following the Babylonian exile when Zerubbabel led the rebuilding of the temple, Samaritan help was adamantly refused (Ezra 4:2–3), which fueled more conflict. When Alexander the Great and later Greek generals controlled Palestine (beginning about 330 B.C.), they made Samaria an important base, knowing that here they could find sympathetic, anti-Jewish allies. When the Jews had their opportunity (128 B.C.) they attacked Samaria, destroyed Shechem, and burned the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim. By Jesus' day, a smoldering tension existed between the regions of Judea and Samaria. Partly based on race and religion, it echoed many centuries of terrible political fights. (See [John - NIV Application Commentary](#) scroll up and down for more text or [BORROW John - The NIV Application Commentary](#))

**Kostenberger** adds that "In Jesus' day, relations between Jews and Samaritans were generally characterized by bitter hostility (e.g., Pseudepigrapha of the OT = Testament of Levi 7:2, which calls Shechem "City of the Senseless" or "city of imbeciles"). In an apparent attempt to ease the tension, Herod the Great married a Samaritan woman named Malthace, who bore him both Antipas and Archelaus (Josephus, J.W. 1.28.4 §562; Ant. 17.1.3 §20), but to little avail. On the whole, Samaritans were considered to be irretrievably impure... Despite their recognition of the five books of Moses, they were suspected of being an idolatrous cult on the basis of their veneration of Mount Gerizim as a holy mountain (cf. m. ?ul. 2:8). The Jewish historian Josephus portrays the Shechemites as a refuge for Jewish religious apostates (Ant. 11.11.7 §§346–47). He also records an occasion (between A.D. 6–9) when some Samaritans tried to desecrate the Jerusalem temple on the eve of the Passover (Ant. 18.2.2 §§29–30) and another instance (in A.D. 52) when they attacked Jewish pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem (Ant. 20.6.1–3 §§118–36). To call someone—especially a fellow-Jew—a "Samaritan" was a gross insult (cf. b. Sotah 22a) (see [John](#) scroll up and down for more text).

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**Had to** (must) [\(1163\)](#)(**dei** from **deo** = to bind or tie objects together, put in prison and also root of **doulos**, bond-servant) refers to what is not optional but needful (binding) out of intrinsic necessity or inevitability. **Dei** refers to inward constraint which is why it is often translated **must**. (as in Jn 4:24 = "**must** worship in spirit and truth") **Dei** describes that which is under the necessity of happening or which must necessarily take place. Jesus' trek into Samaria was His Father's will and as He stated "I do nothing on My own initiative." (Jn 8:28) Again Jesus clearly stated "I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." (Jn 5:30) Although some take **dei** here to indicate logical necessity only, in John's Gospel its use involves **God's will or plan** (see below). John has 10 passages that speak of the sense of **divine necessity**. In other words, whenever John uses the impersonal verb **dei** the necessity involves God's will or plan:

1. John 3:7 "Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You **must (dei)** be born again.'
2. John 3:14 "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so **must (dei)** the Son of Man be lifted up;
3. John 3:30 "He **must (dei)** increase, but I **must (dei)** decrease.
4. John 4:4KJV And he **must (dei)** needs go through Samaria.
5. John 4:20 "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men **ought (dei)** to worship."
6. John 4:24 "God is spirit, and those who worship Him **must (dei)** worship in spirit and truth."
7. John 9:4 "We **must (dei)** work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work.
8. John 10:16 "I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I **must (dei)** bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd.
9. John 12:34 The crowd then answered Him, "We have heard out of the Law that the Christ is to remain forever; and how can You say, 'The Son of Man **must (dei)** be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?"
10. John 20:9 For as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that He **must (dei)** rise again from the dead.

"A love that gives and takes—that seeth faults,  
Not with flaw-seeking eyes like needle-points,  
But loving, kindly, ever looks them down  
With the overcoming faith of meek forgiveness."

—Lowell.

"He must needs go through Samaria." There was a must needs for every word Christ spoke, and for every act that He did. Those Jews, which had "no dealings with the Samaritans," usually avoided going through Samaria when journeying from Judea to Galilee; but Christ's love for sinners constrained Him to go that way. He lived not to please Himself, but to seek and to save the lost. In this He has left us an example that we should follow His steps. Meanwhile let us centre our thoughts on the woman. See her as—

**I. A Flagrant Sinner.** It is quite clear from verse 18 that this woman lived in a condition of shameless immorality. She seems to have been the chief among this class of sinners. But Jesus knew when and where to find her. It is no mere chance-work to come into contact with the Son of God. He knoweth the way that we take.

**II. An Awakened Questioner.** "How is it that Thou... askest of me?" etc. (Jn 4:9). As soon as she comes into His presence her curiosity is aroused. Whoever could come into touch with Christ without being moved in one way or another. Yet some dare to pronounce Him nothing more than human. This Samaritan knew that He was a Jew, although the Jews, in their hate, declared that He was a Samaritan (John 8:48). It is interesting to note that it was the un-Jewish largeheartedness of Christ that first awakened her interest in Him. This is His chief characteristic as the Saviour of sinners.

**III. A Carnal Reasoner.** Jesus answered the woman's inquiry with a revelation of Himself, as the Giver of "living water." He sought to make her conscious of her need of the "Gift of God" (v. 10). Her answer shows that she was in total darkness as to spiritual things. "Sir," she said, "Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep" (v. 11). As if this life-giving water was to come out of Jacob's well. But she was not more blind than Nicodemus was when he said, "How can a man be born when he is old?" Through sin, the descent of man from God is so great that, without a miracle of grace he cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 2:14). Carnal reason has never yet understood the Word of God.

**IV. A Bewildered Trifler.** "Sir, give me this water that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw" (v. 15), She has now got a faint glimmering that He is not speaking of the water in the well of Jacob; but she has the idea that the water He gives is but a substitute for that which was in Sychar's Well. So her quick, flippant answer is: Oh, that would be very convenient; just give it me that I may be saved the pain of thirst, and the trouble of carrying it from the well. Her curiosity seems now turned into a sort of half-puzzled spirit of ridicule. As yet she is unfit to receive the Kingdom of God by faith. The deep things of God are never revealed to a frivolous soul. The plough of conviction must be driven deeper down. The seed of the Word must have an honest heart.

**V. A Religious Inquirer.** The Lord met her flippant reply with these stinging words: "Go, call your husband" (vv. 16-20). This led up to the confession: "Sir, I perceive that Thou art a prophet." All lightness and frivolousness seems now to vanish, and in downright earnestness she asks Him to settle for her that vexed question as to "where men ought to worship." The mental and moral process through which this woman passed is in beautiful harmony with the teaching of all the New Testament, and with present-day Christian experience. The question now with this anxious soul is: Where should I worship? How am I to be put right with God? What must I do to be saved?

**VI. An Earnest Listener.** Now that the conversation had so wonderfully turned upon the most vital point for a sin-smitten seeking soul, with what eagerness would she drink in the message of light and life from her Saviour's lips. What a message this is (vv. 21-24). "Woman, believe Me... worship the Father in spirit and in truth...God is a Spirit." This was a new revelation to her, and was the death-blow to all her prejudice, self-righteousness, and sectarianism. It was also the opening of a new door of hope for her, in bringing salvation within her reach there and then. "I know that Messiah cometh," she said. "When He is come, He will tell us all things." Jesus saith unto her, "I that speak unto thee am He." What a transforming revelation this was!

**VII. A Fearless Testifier.** She went and said to the men of the city, "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" (vv. 28-30). Yes, this is the Christ, who tells us plainly what we are, and what we need, and who offers to supply that need without money or price (v. 10). She was not ashamed to own Him, as the revealer of her sins, and the Anointed One of God; and her earnest, faithful testimony was blessed to the salvation of many (v. 39). She had no commission, but the expulsive power of a new revelation became in her irresistible. We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen. The love of Christ constraineth us.

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### Cyril Hocking - John 4:1-9 GIVE ME TO DRINK

WHAT PROMPTED the Lord to leave, now that He was attracting more followers in Judaea than John had done, followers who in turn were being baptized by His own disciples? The Lord 'knew' that the Pharisees 'had heard' this, and as His hour had not yet

come He would do nothing to precipitate the further hardening of their jealous and hard hearts. Prophets generally were not honoured in their own country; this He meekly accepted. His departure to Galilee is evidence of His submission to His Father's programme for Him.

His route to Galilee also is subject to inner divine compulsion; 'he must needs go through Samaria', and in particular He will break his journey for two days at a city called Sychar, vv. 5, 39, 40. Not the shortness of the way, but the seasonableness of a divine visitation to Sychar and its people constrained the Lord to go this way. Beautiful on these mountains were the feet of Him who was to bring good tidings of salvation to Sychar!

However, to seek and to save the firstfruit of that harvest, He must initiate a disarming dialogue between Himself and a woman of that city. There were so many obstacles to be overcome; so much to be unlearned as well as to be learned by her. So it is today. Sacred traditions, true and false, provide props for many forms of piety which do not know the power, or satisfaction of true godliness, the springs of which are in God. This woman has no personal God-given inheritance in the neighbourhood, though she dwells 'near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph', v. 5. She remains dissatisfied though she draws water at Jacob's well (lit. 'spring', vv. 6 (2), 14, the source of its supply, cf. the word used in vv. 11, 12), which tradition knows well even if God's word knows nothing of it!

This Jewish Stranger sat 'as he was', wearied and thirsty, on the well-side and asked her, 'Give me to drink', ct. 19:28. That any Jew should ask drink of her, a Samaritan woman, startled her, for her people were a mixed race whose religious syncretism fostered schism and rivalry. More surprises were in store for her as the Stranger speaks to her, Himself the spring of all satisfying and lasting blessing.

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#### **QUESTION - [What can we learn from the woman at the well?](#)**

**ANSWER** - The story of the nameless Samaritan woman at the well, recorded only in the Gospel of John, is a revealing one, full of many truths and powerful lessons for us today. The story of the woman at the well follows on the heels of the account of Jesus' interaction with Nicodemus, a Pharisee and prominent member of the Jewish Sanhedrin (John 3:1–21). In John 4:4–42 we read about Jesus' conversation with a lone Samaritan woman who had come to get water from a well (known as Jacob's well) located about a half mile from the city of Sychar in Samaria.

This was an extraordinary woman. She was a Samaritan, a race of people that the Jews utterly despised as having no claim on their God, and she was an outcast and looked down upon by her own people. This is evidenced by the fact that she came alone to draw water from the community well when, during biblical times, drawing water and chatting at the well was the social highpoint of a woman's day. However, this woman was ostracized and marked as immoral, an unmarried woman living openly with the sixth in a series of men.

The story of the woman at the well teaches us that God loves us in spite of our bankrupt lives. God values us enough to actively seek us, to welcome us to intimacy, and to rejoice in our worship. As a result of Jesus' conversation, only a person like the Samaritan woman, an outcast from her own people, could understand what this means. To be wanted, to be cared for when no one, not even herself, could see anything of value in her—this is grace indeed.

But there are many other valuable truths we glean from this story. We learn that:

- 1) Only through Jesus can we obtain and receive eternal life: "Jesus answered, 'Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life'" (John 4:13–14; cf. John 14:6).
- 2) Jesus' ministering to those outcasts of the Jewish society (the Samaritans) reveals that all people are valuable to God and that Jesus desires that we demonstrate love to everyone . . . including even our enemies (John 4:7–9; Matthew 5:44).
- 3) Jesus is the Messiah (John 4:25–26; 1:41; Matthew 27:22; Luke 2:11).
- 4) Those who worship God, worship Him in spirit and truth (John 4:23–24; Psalm 145:18).
- 5) Our testimony about Jesus is a powerful tool in leading others to believe in Him: "Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, 'He told me everything I ever did.' So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers. They said to the woman, 'We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world'" (John 4:39–42).

Additionally, we learn from Jesus' dialogue with the woman at the well three absolute truths about salvation:

- 1) Salvation comes only to those who recognize their desperate need for the spiritual life they do not have. [Living water](#) can be obtained only by those who recognize that they are spiritually thirsty.
- 2) Salvation comes only to those who confess and repent of their sin and desire forgiveness. Before this immoral woman could embrace the Savior, she had to concede the full burden of her sins.
- 3) Salvation comes only to those who take hold of Jesus as their Messiah. For the absolute truth is that salvation is found in no one else (John 14:6; Acts 4:12).

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**David Guzik**- Sychar was ancient Shechem, and was the capital city of the Samaritans.

- This is where Abram first came when he arrived into Canaan from Babylonia. (Genesis 12:6)
- This is where God first appeared to Abram in Canaan, and renewed the promise of giving the land to him and his descendants. (Genesis 12:7)
- This is where Abram built an altar and called upon the name of the Lord (Genesis 12:8)
- This is where Jacob came safely when he returned with his wives and children from his sojourn with Laban. (Genesis 33:18)
- This is where Jacob bought a piece of land from a Canaanite named Hamor, for 100 pieces of silver (Genesis 33:19)
- This is where Jacob built an altar to the Lord, and called it El Eloe Israel (Genesis 33:20) This established the connection between Jacob and what became known as Jacob's well there in Sychar.
- Sychar (Shechem) was also the place where Dinah, the daughter of Jacob, was raped—and the sons of Jacob massacred the men of the city in retaliation. (Genesis 34)
- This is where the bones of Joseph were eventually buried when they were carried up from Egypt (Joshua 24:32)
- This is where Joshua made a covenant with Israel, renewing their commitment to the God of Israel and proclaiming, as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. (Joshua 24)

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**Question: "Who were the Samaritans?"**

**Answer:** The Samaritans occupied the country formerly belonging to the tribe of Ephraim and the half-tribe of Manasseh. The capital of the country was Samaria, formerly a large and splendid city. When the ten tribes were carried away into captivity to Assyria, the king of Assyria sent people from Cutha, Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim to inhabit Samaria (2 Kings 17:24; Ezra 4:2-11). These foreigners intermarried with the Israelite population that was still in and around Samaria. These "Samaritans" at first worshiped the idols of their own nations, but being troubled with lions, they supposed it was because they had not honored the God of that territory. A Jewish priest was therefore sent to them from Assyria to instruct them in the Jewish religion. They were instructed from the books of Moses, but still retained many of their idolatrous customs. The Samaritans embraced a religion that was a mixture of Judaism and idolatry (2 Kings 17:26-28). Because the Israelite inhabitants of Samaria had intermarried with the foreigners and adopted their idolatrous religion, Samaritans were generally considered "half-breeds" and were universally despised by the Jews.

Additional grounds for animosity between the Israelites and Samaritans were the following:

1. The Jews, after their return from Babylon, began rebuilding their temple. While Nehemiah was engaged in building the walls of Jerusalem, the Samaritans vigorously attempted to halt the undertaking (Nehemiah 6:1-14).
2. The Samaritans built a temple for themselves on "[Mount Gerizim](#)," which the Samaritans insisted was designated by Moses as the place where the nation should worship. Sanballat, the leader of the Samaritans, established his son-in-law, Manasses, as high priest. The idolatrous religion of the Samaritans thus became perpetuated.
3. Samaria became a place of refuge for all the outlaws of Judea (Joshua 20:6-7; 21:21). The Samaritans willingly received Jewish criminals and refugees from justice. The violators of the Jewish laws, and those who had been excommunicated, found safety for themselves in Samaria, greatly increasing the hatred which existed between the two nations.
4. The Samaritans received only the five books of Moses and rejected the writings of the prophets and all the Jewish traditions.

From these causes arose an irreconcilable difference between them, so that the Jews regarded the Samaritans as the worst of the human race (John 8:48) and had no dealings with them (John 4:9). In spite of the hatred between the Jews and the Samaritans, Jesus broke down the barriers between them, preaching the

gospel of peace to the Samaritans (John 4:6-26), and the apostles later followed His example (Acts 8:25). ([GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org))

#### Related Resource:

- [What is a Samaritan? | GotQuestions.org](http://What is a Samaritan? | GotQuestions.org)

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**Wringing Skills** - He needed to go through Samaria. —John 4:4 - As a little girl, I disliked some of the chores I had to do, especially washing the dishes. The only pleasure I found in this task was a secret challenge: to see if I could wring the last drop of water out of the dishcloth. My mother, however, always managed to wring more out of it, for years of practice had made her hands strong. Whatever our age, life is made up of things we must do. While some people oppose these duties, others focus on the challenge—wringing every drop of purpose and opportunity out of them they can.

Jesus faced such a necessity. On His journey from Judea to Galilee, He needed to go through the hostile territory of Samaria (Jn. 4:4). Although His disciples must have wondered why they had to take that route, Jesus knew it was necessary. While He was there, He reached a Samaritan woman and her village with His message of salvation.

A wise person once remarked, "I have learned much more from the things I had to do than from the things I chose to do." Do you want to be able to say that? Then don't rebel against the things you have to do. Instead, wring from them great lessons of life. But remember, such "wringing skills" need years of practice. - Joanie Yoder ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries. Grand Rapids. MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](http://Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries. Grand Rapids. MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved))

Help us, Lord, to see potential  
In the mundane tasks we do;  
May we view them as a challenge  
In our quest to follow You.

—Sper

Duty can be a delight if seen as a divine opportunity.

#### John 4:5 So He came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph

BGT John 4:5 ρηεται ο ν ε ς π λιν τ ς Σαμαρε ας λεγομ νην Συχ ρ πλησ ον το χωρ ου δωκεν ακ β [τ ] ω σ φ τ υ α το ·

NET John 4:5 Now he came to a Samaritan town called Sychar, near the plot of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.

NLT John 4:5 Eventually he came to the Samaritan village of Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

ESV John 4:5 So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.

NIV John 4:5 So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph.

GNT John 4:5 ρηεται ο ν ε ς π λιν τ ς Σαμαρε ας λεγομ νην Συχ ρ πλησ ον το χωρ ου δωκεν ακ β [τ ] ω σ φ τ υ α το ·

KJV John 4:5 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.

YLT John 4:5 He cometh, therefore, to a city of Samaria, called Sychar, near to the place that Jacob gave to Joseph his son;

ASV John 4:5 So he cometh to a city of Samaria, called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph:

CSB John 4:5 so He came to a town of Samaria called Sychar near the property that Jacob had given his son Joseph.

NKJ John 4:5 So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

NRS John 4:5 So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.

NAB John 4:5 So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.

NJB John 4:5 On the way he came to the Samaritan town called Sychar near the land that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

GWN John 4:5 He arrived at a city in Samaria called Sychar. Sychar was near the piece of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.

- Genesis 33:19; Ge 48:22; Joshua 24:32

## JESUS THE SOUL WINNER

**Ray Pritchard** introduces this fascinating dialogue - The story of Jesus and the woman at the well is very familiar. As I have studied it this week, I have been struck by how simple and profound it is. A man meets a woman in a seemingly chance encounter. In a few brief moments her life is changed forever. There are lessons here about racial prejudice, religious hatred, and dealing with moral outcasts. This story also conveys valuable truth about how to do evangelism. As we begin, I should note that this is the longest recorded conversation anyone ever had with Jesus. It is longer than any recorded conversation with any of his disciples. ([The Woman at the Well - Christ Speaks to the Problem of a Guilty Past](#))

**So (oun)** - always pause to ponder this **term of conclusion**, for this discipline will engage your mind (**active** reading in contrast to far less productive **passive** reading - See **Mortimer Adler's** great book - [How to Read a Book - Pdf online](#)) and slows you down allowing your Teacher, the Spirit, more time to speak to you (See related discussion of [The Bible and Illumination](#))

**Sychar** - Located about 30 miles north of Jerusalem, approximately half-way between Jerusalem and Nazareth, at the base of [Mt Gerizim](#), which the Samaritans claimed was the true center of worship of Jehovah. Jacob's well was about a half mile outside the village. Sychar is "mentioned only once, in connection with the visit of Jesus to Jacob's Well." ([ISBE article and location on map](#)). The location appears to be near the ancient town of [Shechem](#) in the vicinity of [Mount Ebal](#) and [Mount Gerizim](#), two mountains famous in Israel's history as the place where Joshua read ALL the words of Moses to the people (Joshua 8:33-35) in preparation for possessing the promised land. The principle still holds - the "law" while not able to save us, is ever able to instruct us in the way of righteousness, and obedience (enabled by the Spirit, not our fallen flesh - to attempt to obey by the latter mode is to fall into the sticky wicket of legalism!) is the way to "possess our promised possessions." (cp The Word, our life in Deut 32:47, see context Dt 32:45-46, see also how Caleb possessed his possessions! Nu 14:24).

**THOUGHT** - May God grant all of us a "Caleb-like" mindset that we too enabled by His Spirit, might follow the Lord fully, so that He might bring us into the fullness of our possessions of every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ (Eph 1:3). Amen

**Parcel of ground Jacob gave to his son Joseph - Beale and Carson** note that this "reference reflects the customary inference from Ge 48:21-22 and Josh. 24:32 that Jacob gave his son Joseph the land at Shechem that he had bought from the sons of Hamor (Ge 33:18-19) and which later served as Joseph's burial place (cf. Ex. 13:19; Josh. 24:32) (Commentary on the New Testament use of the Old Testament)

Ge 33:19 He bought the piece of land where he had pitched his tent from the hand of the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father, for one hundred pieces of money.

Ge 48:21 Then Israel said to Joseph, "Behold, I am about to die, but God will be with you, and bring you back to the land of your fathers. 22 **"I give you one portion** more than your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow."

Joshua 24:32 They buried the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, in [Shechem](#), in the **parcel of ground** which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for a hundred pieces of money. They became the inheritance of the children of Joseph.

**John 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**

BGT John 4:6 ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐκεκοπιακὸς κτὲς δόποιπος καθέζετο ὁ τῶς πτ πηγῶν ἕξ ὥρας.

NET John 4:6 Jacob's well was there, so Jesus, since he was tired from the journey, sat right down beside the well. It was about noon.

NLT John 4:6 Jacob's well was there; and Jesus, tired from the long walk, sat wearily beside the well about noontime.

ESV John 4:6 Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.

NIV John 4:6 Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

GNT John 4:6 ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐκεκοπιακὸς κτὲς δόποιπος καθέζετο ὁ τῶς πτ πηγῶν ἕξ ὥρας.

KJV John 4:6 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.

YLT John 4:6 and there was there a well of Jacob. Jesus therefore having been weary from the journeying, was sitting thus on the well; it was as it were the sixth hour;

ASV John 4:6 and Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

CSB John 4:6 Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, worn out from His journey, sat down at the well. It was about six in the evening.

NKJ John 4:6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

NRS John 4:6 Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

NAB John 4:6 Jacob's well was there. Jesus, tired from his journey, sat down there at the well. It was about noon.

NJB John 4:6 Jacob's well was there and Jesus, tired by the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

GWN John 4:6 Jacob's Well was there. Jesus sat down by the well because he was tired from traveling. The time was about six o'clock in the evening.

- **being** - Matthew 4:2; 8:24; Hebrews 2:17; 4:15
- **sat** - Luke 2:7; 9:58; 2 Corinthians 8:9
- **sixth**- 11:9; Matthew 27:45).

## **JESUS JUST HAPPENED TO GO TO JACOB'S WELL**

**And Jacob's well was there** - Where is **there**? See discussion on preceding passage regarding this geographical area.

"Jacobs Well at Shechem April 17th 1839"

**and Jacob's well was there** - "Jacob's well, at the eastern entrance of the charming valley of Shechem, is still in existence (Ed: This dictionary was published circa 1859), though now little used and often nearly dry. It is covered by a vaulted roof, with a narrow entrance closed by a heavy rock. Around it is a platform, and the remains of a church built over the spot by the empress Gelena. Close at hand is mount Gerizim, which the woman of Sychar no doubt glanced at as she said, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain." On the west is the broad and fertile plain of Mukna, where the fields were "white already to the harvest." The woman

intimated that the well was "deep," and had no steps. Actual measurement shows it to be seventy five feet deep, and about nine feet in diameter. Dr. Wilson, in 1842, sent down with ropes a Jew named Jacob, to explore the well and recover a Bible dropped into it by Rev. Mr. Bonar three years before. This was found, almost destroyed by lying in water. As the traveler stands by this venerated well and thinks of the long series of men of a hundred nations and generations who have drunk of its waters, thirsted again, and died, he is most forcibly affected by the truth of Christ's words to the Samaritan woman, and made to feel his own perishing need of the water "springing up into everlasting life," John 4:1-54 . ([Wells and Springs - American Tract Society Bible Dictionary](#))

#### Related Resources:

- [Jacob's Well](#) - Fausset's Bible Dictionary
- [Jacob's Well](#) - Wikipedia

**So (oun)** - Always pause and ponder this **term of conclusion** - you will often be pleasantly surprised at the added illumination the Spirit provides. At the very least, this discipline slows you down and allows you time to better digest the Word. Notice that in this passage (as is often the case) you are forced to go back and read the preceding passage in order to have an accurate **context**.

**Max Alderman** - Jesus declared to Nicodemus the necessity of being born again. While speaking to Nicodemus he used the common term of birth. He now uses the common phenomenon of thirst while still relating to man's greatest need. It was even the rich man in hell, who had enjoyed all that there was on earth yet was pleading for one drop of water to cool his parched tongue while in hell (Lk 16:24). **A thirst of that kind, in that place will never be satisfied The thirst there will never end.** ([The Gospel of John](#))

**Jesus, being wearied ([kopiao](#)) from His journey** - The fact of His **being wearied ([kopiao](#))** is another of a multitude of evidences supporting Jesus' humanity. **His ministry was not based on His divinity, but His humanity enabled by divinity.** In other words, Jesus' was empowered for ministry by the Holy Spirit, just as we can and should be! (For more detailed discussion of this important truth see The Holy Spirit.)

**THOUGHT** - It is vital that believers understand that they are to be imitators of Paul and Jesus (1Cor 11:1+) while entails that we be filled with and empowered by the Spirit, just as were Paul and Jesus! The pattern has not changed, but too many believers (I fear even pastors and other Christian leaders) are woefully ignorant of their vital need for the ministry of the Spirit. This ignorance and failure to appropriate the Spirit's power may well account for the large number of men burning out and leaving the pastorate! Just a thought to ponder ([Pastor Burnout Statistics](#))! (Especially if you are **being wearied** like Jesus! See word study of [kopiao](#) below). (See [The Holy Spirit-Walking Like Jesus Walked!](#))

**Scofield** - As we are wearied in His service, though never wearied of it, so was He in His Father's service... **NOTE:**—(a) That weariness does not keep the model Servant from working. (b) That the Wise Servant began at some point of common interest, Jn 4:7. (c) That He refused to be drawn into a sectarian discussion, Jn 4:8–10. (d) That He responded to the woman's first gleam of personal interest by touching her conscience, Jn 4:16–18. (e) That He swept aside ceremonialism and mere religiousness as the resource of an awakened conscience, Jn 4:19–24. Too many moderns would have said: "Join the church, and live right." (f) That He revealed Himself as the alone resource for a sinner, Jn 4:25–26. (Things New and Old: Old and New Testament Studies - Compiled by A C Gaebelain)

John uses the **perfect tense** for **wearied** which describes Jesus' weariness beginning at a certain point in time and persisting. It describes not just momentary fatigue, but a state of weariness. **Can you identify with this dear reader, dear Christian worker?** Then see the discussion of the power Source - **The Holy Spirit**. The writer of Hebrews reminds us "we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin." (Heb 4:15+)

**A T Robertson** - John emphasizes the human emotions of Jesus (John 1:14; John 11:3, John 11:33, John 11:35, John 11:38, John 11:41.; John 12:27; John 13:21; John 19:28). ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

Teachings such as Jesus' weariness are strong, clear evidence against the false teaching of **Docetism** (from [dokeo](#) = to seem), the thought that Jesus only "appeared" to have human body, but was not really incarnate. John directly refuted this false teaching in 1Jn 4:2-3. (cp 2 John 1:7) **Docetism** was condemned at the Council of Chalcedon in 451 ([Chalcedonian Creed A.D. 451](#)).

As an aside **being wearied ([kopiao](#))** is not necessarily a reflection of burnout. Note Paul's weariness and Paul's power as he sought to bring disciples to spiritual maturity (Col 1:27-28), the apostle recording "For this purpose (Always pause and ask "What purpose?" - see Col 1:28b+) also I labor ([kopiao](#)), striving (agonizomai) **(THE NEXT PHRASE GIVES THE KEY TO AVOIDING BURNOUT EVEN WHEN WE FIND MINISTRY EXHAUSTING!) according to His power**, which mightily works (present tense) within me." (Clearly "within me" is a description of the indwelling Spirit, our Enabler for fruitful ministry - cp Jn 15:5) (Col 1:29+)

**Was sitting thus by the well** ([pege](#)) - This is another description of God's perfect providence. Jesus was at the right time and the right place to save the soul of a Samaritan woman. O, to have the sensitivity for souls that Jesus continually had!

**Alan Carr** adds that "All along the way of life Jesus positions Himself directly in our pathway. We kind of cruise through life without much thought for God or His plan. Then, out of the blue, there Jesus is, right in our faces. He establishes these crossroads to bring us to salvation. Thank God for the strategic crossroads of life!" ([Sermons and Outlines](#))

**About the sixth hour** - If this refers to Roman time, it would be about 6 P.M., but considering the context, it is most likely a reference to Jewish time, which would be **noon**, in the heat of the day. The majority of modern conservative commentators agree with this "Jewish" interpretation of the "sixth hour." Some writers contrast the Samaritan woman meeting Jesus at high noon, with the clandestine meeting of Nicodemus the teacher of Israel under the cover of night! Interesting! (John 3:1-2+) Another fact to support the 12 noon time is that this woman would not want to be at the well when most of the other women were coming to draw water, which would have been in the cool of the evening.

**Köstenberger** notes "In an intriguing parallel, Josephus speaks of Moses, who, upon reaching a given town, "sat down on the brink of a well and there rested after his toil and hardships, at midday, not far from the town" (Ant. 2.11.1 §257)." (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament)

**Ray Stedman** sees the **sixth hour** differently - According to this account, it was "the sixth hour" when Jesus stopped at the well. By Jewish reckoning that would be noon. But according to Roman time, which I think John uses throughout his gospel, it was six o'clock in the evening. So it was no surprise that Jesus was weary. He had been walking in the hot sun all day. He was thirsty, so he sat beside the well to rest while the disciples went into the city to find something to eat. Thus we have here a very beautiful picture of our Lord's humanity. ([The Man Who Understood Woman](#))

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**Being wearied** ([2872](#))(**kopiao** from **kopos** = labor, fatigue, and used in secular Greek of a "beating") speaks of intense, hard, wearisome toil even to the point of utter exhaustion. **Kopiao** describes not so much the actual exertion as the weariness which follows the straining of all one's powers to the utmost. The person (in this case Jesus) has become physically worn out, weary or faint. In fact the work described by **kopiao** left one so weary it was as if they had been beaten.

**Well** ([4077](#))(**pege**) literally refers to a fountain or well which supplies water. In classic Greek **pege** was a designation for the source of streams or rivers. The fact that **pege** was used of "Jacob's well" indicates that it was apparently supplied with running water from an underground source. **Pege** is used metaphorically to speak of life-giving truth in John 4:14. It is also used metaphorically in Proverbs 13:14, 14:27. **Pege** is used several times as a symbol of the highest degree of joy. **Liddell-Scott** says **pege** is "mostly in plural of running waters, streams... metaphorically "streams of tears... metaphorically the fount, source, origin."

**TDNTA** - **pēge** occurs some 100 times in the LXX for various Hebrew terms, some of which are also rendered by *krenē*, which means a "well" (cf. also *phréar*). The sources of water mentioned in the OT are usually artificial fountains or wells. The aridity of the country means that there is a need to bore for water and also to conserve it in cisterns. Many springs are mentioned either with or without names, and their importance may be seen from the judgments of Hos 13., the promises of Isa 35:7; 41:18, etc., and the eschatological image of Joel 3:18 (cf. also the use of *pēge* in Jer. 8:23; Song 4:12, 15; Pr 5:16; 10:11). With God himself is the *pēge zōēs* ("the fountain of life") in Ps 36:9, and God complains that his people have forsaken him, the fountain of living waters, in Jer. 2:13 (cf. Jer 17:13).

**Friberg** on **pege** - (1) literally spring, fountain, (living) well, as a source of water; to be distinguished from [phrear](#) (cistern or reservoir for storing surface water) (cf. Jn 4.6 and 4.11); (2) metaphorically, the fountain of the water of life, identified in Jn 4.14 as eternal life; (3) figuratively in Mk 5.29 as a hemorrhaging, issue or flow of blood; (4) metaphorically and plural in 2Pe 2.17 presumptuous sinners who resemble dried up springs. (Analytical Lexicon)

**NIDNTT** notes that in classic Greek, **pege** could "assume the general figurative meaning of source. Early on in popular Gk. belief, rivers and springs were personified as inferior divinities." Other metaphorical uses include a "fountain" of tears, blood or some other liquid. **Liddell-Scott** says that some of the metaphorical uses of **pege** describe "source" or "origin" of something.

**BDAG** - 1. a source of someth. that gushes out or flows, spring, fountain, flow 2. the place of origin or the cause of a full abundance of someth., fountainhead, fig. ext. of 1

**Pege** can describe the flow of something (blood - Mk 5:29, Lev 12:7).

In the 5 uses in the Revelation, observe the striking contrast between **pege** used of the **natural world** (Rev

14:7) versus the **supernatural world** (Rev 7:17, 21:6), and **pege** associated with **judgment** (Rev 8:10, 14:7) versus the uses associated with **life** (Rev 7:17, 21:6).

One use in Isaiah is particularly noteworthy as it was a passage that was apparently chanted at the **Feast of Tabernacles** when the water was drawn from the **Pool of Shalom** (the waters of which originated from the **Gihon Spring**) and was transported with great celebration and joy back to the Temple for the priest to pour out. And so the Jews would sing

"Therefore you will joyously draw water from the **springs** (Heb = mayan; Lxx = pege) of **salvation** (Heb = Yeshuah, cp **Name of Messiah Yeshua**)." (Isaiah 12:3-note)

**Pege** - 11x in 10 v - Usage: flow(1), fountain(1), spring(1), springs(5), well(3).

Mark 5:29 Immediately the **flow** of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction.

John 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.

John 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."

James 3:11 Does a **fountain** send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water?

2 Peter 2:17-note These are **springs** without water and mists driven by a storm, for whom the black darkness has been reserved.

**Wuest** - "**Springs**" is pege, "a spring." The Greek word for a "well" is **phrear**. The word pege speaks of an ever-overflowing living fountain. The words "without water" are an oriental expression where the green verdure excites the traveler's hope of water, only to have it often disappointed. Such are these false teachers. Where one looks for a clear spring of water, the living Word of God, there is a spring gone dry.

Revelation 7:17-note for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their Shepherd (cp Heb 13:20-21-note, 1Pe 2:25-note, 1Pe 5:4-note), and will guide them to **springs** of the **water of life** (cp Ps 23:2, Rev 21) and God will wipe every tear from their eyes."

Revelation 8:10-note The third angel sounded, and a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the **springs** of waters.

Revelation 14:7-note and he said with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and **springs** of waters."

Revelation 16:4-note Then the third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the **springs** of waters; and they became blood.

Revelation 21:6-note Then He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the **spring** (pege) of the **water of life** without cost (**dorean** - as a gift, without payment, undeservedly).

**Pege** - 89x in 79v in the **Septuagint (Lxx)** - Ge 2:6 (Pege translates "**mist**"); Ge 7:11; 8:2; 14:7; 16:7; 24:13, 16, 29f, 42f, 45; Ex 15:27; Lev 11:36; 12:7 (Pege translates "flow" cp Mk 5:29); Lev 20:18; Nu 33:9; 34:11; Dt 8:7, 15; 33:13; Josh 15:7, 9; 17:7; 18:15-17; 19:29, 37; 21:29; Jdg 7:1; 15:19; 2Sa 17:17; 1Kgs 1:9; 18:5; 2Kgs 3:19, 25; 2Chr 32:3-4; Neh 2:13; Esther 1:1; 10:3; Job 38:16; Ps 18:15 (pege translates "**channels**"); Ps 36:9; Ps 42:1; 68:26; 74:15; 104:10; 114:8; Pr 4:21; 5:15f, 18; 6:11; 8:23, 28; 9:18; 10:11; 13:14; 14:27; 16:22; 18:4; 25:26; Eccl 12:6; Song 4:12, 15; Isa 12:3; 35:7; 41:18; Isa 49:10; 58:11; Jer 2:13; 9:1; 17:13; 51:36; Ezek 25:9; Hos 13:15; Joel 3:18.

Notable uses of **pege** in the **Septuagint (Lxx)**...

Ps 36:9 For with You is the **fountain** (Hebrew = maqor; Lxx = pege) of life; In Your light we see light.

**Spurgeon** - From the Lord, as from an independent self-sufficient spring, all creature life proceeds, by Him it is sustained, through Him alone can it be perfected (cp Ro 11:36). Life is in the creature, but the **fountain** of it is only in the Creator. Of spiritual life, this is true in the most emphatic sense; "it is the Spirit Who gives life," (Jn 6:63) and "have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God." (Col 3:3)

Ps 42:1 For the choir director. A Maskil of the sons of Korah. As the deer pants for the waterbrooks (Heb =

aphiq = channel; Lxx = pege), So my soul pants for You, O God.

**Spurgeon** - As after a long drought the poor fainting deer longs for the streams, or rather as the hunted deer instinctively seeks after the river to soothe its smoking flanks and to escape the dogs, even so my weary, persecuted soul pants after the Lord my God. Debarred from public worship, David was heartsick. Ease he did not seek, honor he did not covet, but the enjoyment of communion with God was an urgent need of his soul; he viewed it not merely as the sweetest of all luxuries, but as an absolute necessity, like water to a stag. Like the parched traveler in the wilderness, whose leather bottle is empty, and who finds the wells dry, he must drink or die -- he must have his God or faint. His soul, his very self, his deepest life, was insatiable for a sense of the divine presence. As the deer brays so his soul prays. Give him his God and he is as content as the poor deer which at length slakes its thirst and is perfectly happy; but deny him his Lord, and his heart heaves, his bosom palpitates, his whole frame is convulsed, like one who gasps for breath, or pants with long running. Dear reader, do you know what this is by personally having had this same experience? It is a sweet bitterness. The next best thing to living in the light of the Lord's love is to be unhappy till we have it, and to pant hourly after it -- hourly, did I say? Thirst is a perpetual appetite, and not to be forgotten, and is a continual longing of our heart after God. When it is as natural for us to long for God as for an animal to thirst, it is well with our souls, however painful our feelings. We may learn from this verse that the eagerness of our desires may be pleaded with God, and the more so, because there are special promises for the importunate and fervent.

Proverbs 10:11 The mouth of the righteous is a fountain (Heb = maqor = something dug, fountain; Lxx = pege) of life, But the mouth of the wicked conceals violence.

Pr 13:14 The teaching (torah = original sense of this Hebrew word is "direction" or "instruction") of the wise is a **fountain** (Heb = maqor = something dug, fountain; Lxx = pege) of life **NET** = like a life-giving fountain), To turn aside from the snares (Hebrew = moqesh = bait or lure in a fowler's trap; Lxx = pagis) of death (Death is "personified" as a hunter, a fowler if you will, who lays bait to tempt us and cause us to fall unexpectedly and suddenly as do wary wild animals when they are suddenly ensnared by the noose! Oh my, if they with their finely honed instincts can be trapped, how much great is our danger. Praise God for passages like 1Pe 1:5-note)

**Note:** How are the **teachings a fountain of life**? He tells that they (their "instruction" or "directions") turn us aside from the snares of death, which is the opposite of life! When you do your morning Bible reading (you do read your Bible EVERY morning, do you not? See Jesus' loving instruction - Mt 4:4), do you walk away from the "mirror" of the Word, into your workplace, your school, etc, immediately forgetting (Read James 1:21-24-note and contrast with the promise in James 1:25-note) what the wise teaching has told you about yourself and the deceptive snares of the world that lies in the power of the evil one (1Jn 5:19)

**Charles Bridges** - "Reverence (holy filial fear) for God's commands have just been highlighted (Pr 13:13). Now the blessing of the law or instruction, **the teaching of the wise**, is shown. It is a fountain of life to a teachable and thirsty heart. There is no safe path to tread except God's way." (Oh, to have that last statement emblazoned on the heart of all God's children, and begin with me!) "Where there is no actual law given, let the spirit of the law keep your heart and life. Do not do anything that is questionable in the law. Think of everything that upsets your praying and your communion with God as unlawful. Never go into any company, business, or situation in which the presence and blessing of God cannot be conscientiously asked and expected. "By the help of these ... rules, I soon settle all my doubts and find that many things I have hitherto indulged in are, if not utterly unlawful, at least inexpedient, and I can renounce them without many sighs" (Dr. Payson). Such rules are the spirit of the law and are well worth adopting."

Pr 14:27 The fear of the LORD is a **fountain** (Heb = maqor = something dug, fountain; Lxx = pege) of life, That one may avoid the snares of death.

Pr 16:22 Understanding is a **fountain** (Heb = maqor = something dug, fountain; Lxx = pege) of life to him who has it, But the discipline of fools is folly.

Isa 49:10 "They will not hunger or thirst (**Note:** Every human thirst, so this is metaphorical and in context Isa 49:11-12] describes the supernatural, spiritual provision during the **Millennium [see description]! Maranatha!** Come Quickly!), Nor will the scorching heat or sun strike them down; For He who has compassion on them will lead them And will guide them to **springs** (Heb = mabbua = spring; Lxx = pege) of water.

Jer 2:13 “For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, The **fountain** (Heb = maqor = something dug, fountain; Lxx = pege) of living waters (Lxx = hudatos zoes), To hew for themselves cisterns, Broken cisterns That can hold no water.

**Comment:** Yahweh is here referred to metaphorically as the fountain (or spring in Lxx) of living water.

**Spurgeon** - If a man should change for the better, his selfishness might be a little excuse for leaving his old love, but when he changes for the worse —leaves a fountain for a cistern — a flowing fountain for a broken cistern that holds nothing — why, there is madness in his sin. “Be astonished, O ye heavens and be horribly afraid.”

**Henry Morris** - The Samaritan woman had come to draw water out of a public well—Jacob’s well in this case—that was very similar in construction to the cisterns of antiquity, which were pits dug around a ground spring (living water) or an underground water table, then enlarged and plastered to hold a significant quantity of water. Most villages and nearly all cities had such a cistern that was maintained by the responsible government of the area and made available to the local citizens. Some private homeowners built private cisterns, usually on the top of their houses, that were used to catch rainwater or to conveniently store enough for household needs. These private cisterns were rarely used for drinking water since they could easily be contaminated. But the “government cisterns” were constantly cleaned and routinely purged to provide fresh “living water” for the population. The Samaritan woman came to the well to draw the water she needed to live. Jesus told her that He could give her “living water”—an internal spring of water—that would provide eternal life (John 4:11-14; compare John 7:38). That is the sense in which the Lord told Jeremiah that the people of Judah had forsaken the “fountain of living waters” and were attempting to construct “cisterns” that would not, and indeed, could not, hold any of the eternal water that came only from God. **Any cistern we create for ourselves will be a broken cistern** ([Broken Cisterns](#) - Read the entire article which also discusses King Hezekiah's provision of "living waters" in preparation for the Assyrian siege - beloved, the only way you or I can withstand the continual, seemingly overwhelming onslaught of godlessness ["Assyrians"- ] daily besieging the fortress of our hearts is by relying on Jesus' provision of Living Water, the empowering Spirit! = excellent!)

Joel 3:18+ And in that day (**Millennium**) the mountains will drip with sweet wine, and the hills will flow with milk, and all the brooks of Judah will flow with water; and a spring (Heb = mayan; Lxx = pege) will go out from the house (Temple) of the LORD (During Millennium = Ezek 47:1-12, Zech 14:8+; Cp during the New Earth = Rev 22:1-2) to water the valley of Shittim (Shittim = acacia trees - It is the dry valley near the northern end of the Dead Sea).

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### Spurgeon’s Sermon Notes on John 4:6

Many things may well remind us of our Lord.

Chiefly may we think of him when we see a well, or a weary peasant resting at noon.

How truly human was Jesus! To him a long walk brought weariness; his weariness needed rest; to rest he “sat thus on the well.”

How worn was his humanity! He was more weary than the disciples.

He had a greater mental strain than they.

He had a weariness that they knew not of.

His self-denials were even then remarkable.

He would in all points be made like unto his brethren.

He would not exempt himself from fatigue.

He would not work a miracle for his own refreshment.

He would not refuse to bear heat, thirst, exhaustion.

He has thus made himself able to sympathize with—

The traveller who rests by the roadside.

The labourer who is worn-out with toil.

The sufferer who feels pain in bone and flesh.

The poor man who must rest on a cold stone, and look for refreshment to the public fountain.

The weary mind, oppressed by life’s long way, which has no luxurious comfort prepared for it, but finds a measure of repose in the simple arrangements of nature.

Reading this text, let it set a picture before you, and—

I. LET YOUR CONSCIENCE DRAW A SPIRITUAL PICTURE OF YOUR WEARIED SAVIOUR.

1. He is wearied with our sins. Is. 43:24.
2. He is wearied with our formal worship. Is. 1:14.
3. He is wearied with our errings through unbelief. Ps. 95:10.
4. He is wearied with our resistance of his Spirit. Is. 63:10.
5. He is wearied with our cavillings and rebellions. Mal. 2:17.

Perhaps we have specially wearied the Lord, as we read in Amos 2:13, where singular provocations are mentioned. That is a grave question asked by the prophet Isaiah, "Will ye weary my God also?" Is. 7:13.

II. LET YOUR CONSCIENCE DRAW A SPIRITUAL PICTURE OF YOUR WAITING SAVIOUR.

1. He waits for comers to the well: he seizes on all occasions to bless, such as affliction, the hearing of the Word, the recurrence of a birthday, or even the simplest event of life. Men have other errands; they come to the well only to draw water, but the Lord meets them with his greater errand.

2. He waits for the most sinful; she that had had five husbands.
3. He waits to enlighten, convince, convert.
4. He waits to accept, and to commission.
5. He waits to begin by one convert the ingathering of a great harvest of souls, as in the case of the Samaritans.

How long he has waited for some of you!

At how many points has he been on the outlook for you!

Is he not waiting for you at this very hour?

Will you not yield to his patient love?

III. LET YOUR PENITENCE DRAW ANOTHER PICTURE.

Alter the position of the character.

1. Be yourself weary of your sinful way.
2. Sit down on the well of your Lord's gracious ordinances.
3. Wait and watch till your Saviour comes.
4. Ask him to give you to drink, and, in so doing, give him to drink for this is his best refreshment.
5. Drink yourselves of the living water, and then run to tell others.

Will you not do this at once?

May his Holy Spirit so direct you!

**MUSINGS**

It was the hour of noon, and weary as he was with the long journey, possibly also with the extreme heat, our Lord sat "thus on the well." The expression in the original is most pathetically picturesque. It implies that the Wayfarer was quite tired out, and in his exhaustion flung his limbs wearily on the seat, anxious, if possible, for complete repose.—Archdeacon Farrar.

When hard-working people sit down at mid-day for their few minutes of rest and refreshment, let them recall their Master's noon-day rest at the well. He was tired, like we are, yet his rest was short, and his work scarcely broken. He was tired with seeking for us. Our stubborn hearts brought him all this way from heaven. He has long sought for our love, and hardly finds it. Think on this verse. With whom did Jesus find his portion in this life? Not with the great and luxurious, but with the common people, sharing their toils.—Practical Reflections on the Gospels. By a Clergyman.

While we sympathize with the bodily weariness of our Lord, it will be well to remember the soul-weariness which sin must have occasioned him. He hungered to bless men, and they refused the bread of life. He would have gathered them, but they would not be gathered. He must have been specially wearied with the ostentatious hypocrisy of the Pharisees, and the silly legalisms of the Scribes with their tithing of mint and anise. He was often wearied with the dogged unbelief of the Jews, and the provoking want of faith among his own disciples. The sin, the cavilling, the slander, the selfishness, the hardness of heart of those about him, must have worn down his holy soul, and made him every day a Man of sorrows. Yet he never left the well, never refused to give the living water to a thirsting soul, never ceased to entreat men to come to him and drink.—C. H. S.

"Jesus, therefore, being wearied."—And in that he himself had suffered, he was the more able and apt to help this poor Samaritan. So the apostle bids us pity those in adversity, as being ourselves in the body, i.e., the body of flesh and frailty, subject to like misery.—Trapp.

When wearied, let us still be on the watch to do good. Wearied, and sitting on the well, our Lord is still in the attitude of observation. "I am never too tired to pray," said a minister, who, after a hard day's toil, found his host ready to excuse him from conducting family prayer. When God is blessing the Word, true ministers forget their fatigue, and hold on long into the night with enquirers. Alas! when

the Holy Spirit has nothing to do with a man's heart, the man excuses himself from "making overtime", as I once heard a professor call it, when he quitted the room the instant the service was over. Another, in describing a minister, said, "Oh, he is so cold! He is one who thinks it is wrong to be too religious. He cannot endure zeal." Be it ours to show a more excellent way. Holy Brainerd, when he could not preach, because he was on his dying bed, called to him a little Indian boy, and tried to teach him his letters. Let us live soul-saving, and so let us die.—C.H.S.

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**Tony Garland** comments on the phrase **spring of the water of life** in Revelation 21:6...

The **water of life** is redemption, portrayed in many different aspects throughout the Scriptures. "In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness" (Zec. 13:1). These are the wells of salvation which Isaiah spoke about (Isa 12:3-**note**). The **water of life** is only available from God (Jesus), the fountain of life (Ps 36:6). He is the "fountain of living waters" (Jer 2:13).

In the wilderness wandering, Moses' struck the rock (representing Christ, 1Cor. 10:4) from which life-giving waters came forth (Ex. 17:6). The promise of redemption by the Holy Spirit is compared to life-giving water (Isa. 44:3; John 7:37-38, John 4:10-14)

Those coming out of the Great Tribulation were led by the Lamb to living fountains of waters (Rev. 7:14). During the **Millennial Kingdom** living water flowed from the **Millennial Temple** (Ezek 47:1, 8-9; Joel 3:18; Zec. 14:8). A pure river of water of life flows from the throne of God and the Lamb in the New Jerusalem (Rev. 22:1). The final invitation given by the Spirit and the bride in the book of Revelation is to take the water of life freely (Rev. 22:17).

Because redemption is infinitely costly, only God could pay the price. The price was the death of God in the person of the Son of God (Rev. 1:18). It was the Lamb who redeemed (agorazō, purchased) sinners from among men by His blood (Rev. 1:5; 5:9). Since the price has already been paid in full (John 19:30), no man can add to the finished work. To even suggest such a possibility is to devalue the life of the Son of God and declare His purchase inadequate. The joyous result of God's work is that eternal life, which would otherwise be infinitely expensive, is now available simply for the asking:

Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. (Isa. 55:1)

This is the essential difference between **religion** and **relationship**. Religion looks to find, in the puny self effort of man, something of value to present before God by which man may be justified. Relationship sees man's utter incapability and throws itself upon the grace and mercy of God, accepting that which God has already provided as a remedy. Self-righteousness, which is no real righteousness, is the primary stumbling block leading to God for it recoils at the idea that restoration to God is completely without cost:

Independent, rebellious man says the opposite—"Something in my hand I bring." This is the one thing common to all systems of religion. They quarrel and fight to the death over the question as to what that "Something" is to be: but they are all at one agreement that it must be something. and as the weary conflict has gone on, and will continue to the end.

If this gift is free, without cost, how can it be that so many refuse to accept it? The answer is found in their lack of thirst. It is free for him who thirsts! Do you know the Lamb as your redeemer? Are you thirsty for this water which will become a fountain in you springing up into everlasting life? It is available for the asking to all who come to Him in humility and need. ([A Testimony of Jesus Christ - Commentary on Revelation 21](#))

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**Question:** [What is the significance of Jacob's well?](#)

**Answer:** Jacob's well is only mentioned in John's Gospel, so biblical information about it is quite limited. However, tradition and archaeology provide more detail about the well's original owner and its location.

In chapter 4 of his Gospel, John recorded the story of Jesus talking with the Samaritan woman. Samaria was located in the northern half of the formerly united Israel, and Jesus was passing through it on His way from Judea to Galilee. Outside the town of Sychar, "Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well" (John 4:6). He asked a woman to give Him something to drink from what she drew (John 4:7), and she wondered why a Jewish man would speak to a Samaritan woman—Jesus was breaking a cultural taboo because of both race and gender (John 4:9). Jesus then offered her "living water" (John 4:10). This confused her, and she responded, "Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?" (John 4:11-12). Apparently, the history of the well was common knowledge.

The traditional site of Jacob's well cannot be located by finding Sychar, as that city is no longer in existence. However, the site

thought to be the biblical Shechem, called Tel Balata by archaeologists, is near a well. This is important because the Bible says Jacob bought land from Shechem and lived at that place for a long time (Genesis 33:19). He would have required a well, and it is perfectly reasonable that he dug one. Also, the well at Tel Balata is indeed of ancient origin. These biblical and geographical facts point to the site as a good match for what the Samaritan woman called "Jacob's well."

Today, the well is inside the Church of St. Photina (the name traditionally given to the Samaritan woman by the Orthodox Church—the name is Svetlana in Russian). The church was originally built in A.D. 380. Through the years, the church was destroyed a number of times by natural and military forces. The current building is administrated by the Greek Orthodox Church, which obtained the site in 1893. The church and the well can be visited today in the West Bank.

The significance of Jacob's well is that it provided an opportunity for Jesus to present Himself as the life-giving Messiah to a Samaritan woman and, later, to her whole village. The woman had asked, "Are you greater than our father Jacob?" The answer is a resounding "yes." Jacob may have provided his children with physical water in an arid land, but Jesus provides His children with "living water" in a spiritual wasteland. The life Jesus gives satisfies all our needs and springs up to eternal life (John 4:14). [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

**John 4:7 There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, 'Give Me a drink.'**

BGT John 4:7 ρηεται γυν κ τ ς Σαμαρε ας ντλ σαι δωρ. λ γει α τ ησο ς· δ ς μοι πε ν·

NET John 4:7 A Samaritan woman came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me some water to drink."

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

ESV John 4:7 A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."

NIV John 4:7 When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?"

GNT John 4:7 ρηεται γυν κ τ ς Σαμαρε ας ντλ σαι δωρ. λ γει α τ ησο ς, Δ ς μοι πε ν·

KJV John 4:7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

YLT John 4:7 there cometh a woman out of Samaria to draw water. Jesus saith to her, 'Give me to drink;'

ASV John 4:7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

CSB John 4:7 A woman of Samaria came to draw water. "Give Me a drink," Jesus said to her,

NKJ John 4:7 A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink."

NRS John 4:7 A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."

NAB John 4:7 A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."

NJB John 4:7 When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, 'Give me something to drink.'

GWN John 4:7 A Samaritan woman went to get some water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink of water."

- Jn 4:10; 19:28; Genesis 24:43; 2Samuel 23:15-17; 1Kings 17:10; Matthew 10:42

JESUS MEETS SAMARITAN WOMAN

## A DIVINE APPOINTMENT

**There are two major topics in this dialogue with the Samaritan woman - (1) Living Water (Jn 4:7-18) and (2) Worship (Jn 4:19-26)**

**Ray Pritchard** - As the woman looks at Jesus and He at her, four invisible walls stand between them. There is a religious wall, a gender wall, a racial wall, and a moral wall. Yet our Lord found a way through all of them. He found her ... and then she found Him! ... Nothing happens by chance in this story. Every detail is part of the outworking of God's will. And that, I think, is a hugely important point. The woman isn't looking for Jesus. All she wants is water. But Jesus is looking for her. You have to go to Samaria if you want to reach Samaritans. He doesn't avoid Samaria and he doesn't hurry through it. Though she does not know it, this woman has a "divine appointment" with the Son of God. From this we can take a very important principle for evangelism. Reaching people for Christ is not always comfortable and may at times be difficult. But you have to go where people are if you want to reach them at all. Comfort is not the issue. The firefighter goes into the burning house to rescue those inside. He can't stand outside and say, "Come

on out before the house burns down." Jesus intended to save this woman so he went where she was... He is tired and thirsty and she has the water he needs. But he has the water she needs. He was thirsty and knew it. She was thirsty and didn't know it. The woman did not come to the well seeking Christ, but he came to the well seeking her. In his approach we see the great heart of our Lord Jesus is without prejudice. It matters not to him that others would not go to Samaria and others would not speak to this woman. He welcomes all and shuns none. Luke 19:10 tells us that the Lord Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. This story tells us what that means. John 4 is all about sovereign grace. He found her. She didn't find him. The same is true for all of us. You will never come to Christ until Christ first comes to you. What happens in this chapter looks like a chance encounter but it was nothing of the kind. The time and place and all the circumstances had been arranged by God before the world began. ([The Woman at the Well](#))

**There came a woman of Samaria to draw water** - Don't miss this clear example of the **Providence of God**. While the Samaritan woman had free will, God in His providence somehow arranged for her to be at the well at the same time Jesus was there and His disciples were gone to town! To add to the providential aspect of this chance meeting, the time was most likely noon, when the sun was highest and hottest. Why would this make this scene unusual? Normally, water was drawn early in the morning or at dusk (when it was not as hot), but not on this day for this woman! (cp Ge 24:11, 29:7-8) Unbeknownst to her, she had a **divine appointment** with the Messiah. Indeed, Jesus seeks sinners who aren't seeking Him. (cp Lk 19:10)

**Matthew Henry**: Shechem yielded the first proselyte that ever came into the congregation of Israel (Ge 24:24), and now it is the first place where the Gospel is preached out of the commonwealth of Israel; so Dr. Lightfoot observes.

This unnamed woman reminds me of another despised Moabite woman named Ruth whose "hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz." (Ru 2:3-**note**) She just **happened** to arrive at Boaz's field and Boaz just **happened** to arrive at his field while she was gleaning, leading to a "chance romance" and to birth of a son who would be in the lineage of David and ultimately in the lineage of the Messiah! There is no such thing as chance in God's economy! He is **sovereign** and in total control of EVERYTHING, no exceptions!

**Tasker** - The Samaritan woman is a timeless figure – not only a typical Samaritan but a typical human being. As she converses with Jesus, it becomes clear that like most men and women she is almost exclusively concerned with the provision of what will satisfy her physical needs, particularly thirst-quenching water which can often be obtained only by the expenditure of much time and energy.

[Brian Bell](#) - Here His unsuspecting appointment arrives at a Samaritan well (1/2 m. out of town). A thirsty sun-parched woman, carrying a water-pot on her head Women normally drew water at dawn & dusk, the cooler hours of the day. It was time to visit & exchange news. But here we are at noon, the hottest time of the day, which hints to her reputation. Maybe braving the brazen sun to avoid the searing stares of the more reputable. She comes bearing an empty waterpot, a telling symbol of her parched, barren heart. Give Me a drink - The One who spoke forth Niagara; the One who shaped the Nile w/his finger nail in the sand; the One who could bring forth gallons of wine...now sits thirsty?

**Jesus said to her** - Jesus a Jew speaking to a woman who even worse was a Samaritan shows us that His mission to save men and women transcends cultural and religious barriers. It did then and it still does!

Samaritan women, like Gentiles, were considered to be in a continual state of ritual uncleanness. For example the [Mishnah](#) stated "Samaritan women are deemed menstruants from their cradle." (Niddah 4:1).

It is interesting to observe the "role reversal" at play in this section - When the conversation begins, Jesus is the thirsty one, and she the one with the water. As the dialogue evolves Jesus spoke as if she were the thirsty one and He the one with the water.

**Max Alderman** comments on **give Me a drink** - "The most uncommon one of all has a very common need! Yet in that humble request begins one of the greatest encounters of all time. Such a simple request was this. Yet in this simple request, He was able to build a bridge of communication from Himself to her that otherwise may have never taken place. When illustrating the very common aspect of thirst, Jesus was able to teach great spiritual truths. Throughout His ministry the application of common things characterized His teaching ministry. In this study, He uses the concept of thirst to teach how men are thirsty spiritually. He used the wind to teach about the Holy Spirit. He used the sower and the seed to teach evangelism. He identified with the fisherman and said, "I will make you fishers of men." He performed a miracle involving bread to show that He was the "Bread of Life." Abraham Lincoln said, "The Lord sure must have loved the common man, for He sure made a bunch of us." The Lord, in His teachings, always puts the "cookies on the bottom shelf" where anyone who desires may have one. Thanks be unto God for the simple application of truth while using the common things."

**Spurgeon** on **give Me a drink** - This was quite a natural way of beginning a conversation; and they will best touch other people's minds and hearts who do not harshly interject religion, but who wisely introduce it, leading up to it with a holy dexterousness such as our Lord always exhibited. He begins, not with any remarks about the woman's life, or her sin, or even about his great salvation, but with the simple request, "Give me to drink."

**William Barclay** - "The strict Rabbis forbade a Rabbi to greet a woman in public. A Rabbi might not even speak to his own wife or daughter or sister in public. There were even Pharisees who were called 'the bruised and bleeding Pharisees' because they shut their eyes when they saw a woman on the street and so walked into walls and houses!"

**David Guzik** - In all this, we see many of the seeming paradoxes of Jesus' work.

- He who gives rest is weary.
- He who is Israel's Messiah speaks to a Samaritan woman.
- He who has living water asks for a drink from a well.

**D L Moody** - Twice on earth our Lord asked a favor and twice was he refused:— (1.) Here, when He asked for a drink. (2.) On the cross, when He asked for water, they gave Him vinegar. John 19:28, 29.

**Paul Apple** discusses different aspects of evangelism - Many different types of evangelism: Friendship, Confrontational, Visitation Programs, Crusades, Literature Distribution, etc. But how would you categorize Christ's dealing with the Samaritan woman at the well and her townspeople? Coin a phrase: "Opportunistic Evangelism" - being alert to seize every opportunity for evangelism (for both sowing and reaping) - being creative to turn the occasion towards spiritual things without forcing things - following the leading of the Holy Spirit. Def. of "opportunistic" is usually negative: the practice of taking advantage of opportunities or circumstances (fine so far -- we will stop with this) esp. with little regard for principles or consequences. We minister with the highest possible regard for principles and consequences -- but we minister aggressively because our confidence is in the God who can change people's hearts. Jn 4:9 - Contact initiated without prejudice. Jn 4:10 - Curiosity stirred. John 4:11-12 - Confusion surfaces. Jn 4:13-14 Contrast defined (between physical and living water). ([John Commentary - Believe and Live](#))

**Rich Cathers** - He got thirsty. He even got tired. Illustration - Joseph Mallord Turner, English painter, invited Charles Kingsley to his studio to see a picture of a storm at sea. In rapt admiration, Kingsley exclaimed, "It's wonderful! It's so realistic! How did you do it?" The artist replied, "I went to the coast of Holland and engaged a fisherman to take me out to sea in the next storm. Entering his boat as a storm was brewing, I asked him to bind me to the mast. Then he steered his boat into the teeth of the storm. "The storm raged with such fury that at times I longed to be in the bottom of the boat where the waves would blow over me. I could not, however. I was bound to the mast. Not only did I see the storm in its raging fury, I felt it! It blew into me, as it were, until I became a part of it. After this terrible ordeal, I returned to my studio and painted the picture." You could say that Mr. Turner "got it" when it came to storms. Jesus "gets it" when it comes to life. This means that we have someone to turn to when we encounter life's storms. We have someone we can go to when we get tired. (Heb 4:16NKJV) He knows how to help us. He understands. ([John 4:1-14](#))

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### John 4:1-26 Jesus Three Steps with the Woman at the Well

1. First, He gave the revelation concerning new life. He stated that He came to give everlasting life.
2. Second, He revealed the spiritual need of the woman. He spoke of her immoral relationship with the man with whom she was living. This caused the woman to suppose Jesus was a prophet. Third, He revealed the nature of the Father declaring that "God is spirit" and consequently can be worshiped in any geographical place.
3. Finally, He revealed Himself to her as the Messiah. (J. Dwight Pentecost in Today in the Word, June 24, 1989)

STRIKING CONTRAST BETWEEN NICODEMUS AND SAMARITAN WOMAN	
NICODEMUS	SAMARITAN WOMAN
Cover of darkness	"High Noon"
Devoutly religious	Immoral woman
Learned theologian	Uneducated peasant
Recognized Jesus as Teacher	Had no clue Who Jesus was
Wealthy	Poor
Of the social elite in Israel	From dregs of Samaritan society

**John 4:8 For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.:**

BGT John 4:8 ο γ ρ μαθητα α το πεληλ θεισαν ε ς τ ν π λιν να τροφ ς γορ σωσιν.

NET John 4:8 (For his disciples had gone off into the town to buy supplies.)

NLT John 4:8 He was alone at the time because his disciples had gone into the village to buy some food.

ESV John 4:8 (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.)

NIV John 4:8 (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

GNT John 4:8 ο γ ρ μαθητα α το πεληλ θεισαν ε ς τ ν π λιν να τροφ ς γορ σωσιν.

KJV John 4:8 (For his disciples were

gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

YLT John 4:8 for his disciples were gone away to the city, that they may buy victuals;

ASV John 4:8 For his disciples were gone away into the city to buy food.

CSB John 4:8 for His disciples had gone into town to buy food.

NKJ John 4:8 For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

NRS John 4:8 (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.)

NAB John 4:8 His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.

NJB John 4:8 His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.

GWN John 4:8 (His disciples had gone into the city to buy some food.)

BBE John 4:8 For his disciples had gone to the town to get food.

- Jn 6:5-7; Luke 9:13

## DISCIPLES GO GROCERY SHOPPING

**For** - A **term of explanation** - discipline yourself to pause and ponder what (why?, why now?, etc) is being explained. It will literally change the way you read the Bible as there are thousands of terms of explanation. Expositor's says ". This gives the reason for the request."

**His disciples had gone away** - This just "happened to happen!" This is clearly part of God's **providential** outworking of this incredible divine appointment in God's drama of redemption.

**Into the city to buy (agorazo) food** - This is an interesting, somewhat surprising, statement that the disciples were willing to purchase food from Samaritans, something strict Jews would not have been willing to do. For example, in the Mishnah records this statement - "R. Eliezer used to say, 'One who eats bread [baked by] Samaritans is like one who eats pork.' " (Shebiit 8:10 A)

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**Buy (59)**(**agorazo** from **agora** = the market place, place of public assembly, town square where things such as slaves were presented for sale or where trials were held) literally means to buy or make purchases in the marketplace, doing business in the **agora** (Mt 13:44), acquiring something (goods or services) in exchange for money, transferring ownership from seller to buyer.

## THE JESUS WAY: Introducing a Person to Jesus

- (1) Go to where the non-Christians are found (Jn 4:4)
- (2) Speak to them with respect and not with a sense of superiority or in a patronizing way (Jn 4:7)
- (3) Meet them where they are, focusing especially on any need you can discern in them (Jn 4:10)
- (4) Speak about God's great gift (not necessarily quoting verses but just telling them that God has a free gift) (Jn 4:10)

- (5) Try to use illustrations or pictures from daily life (Jn 4:10-12)
- (6) Tell them of the real satisfaction available to meet one's needs (Jn 4:14)
- (7) Give them an opening to be honest about their sin (which speaks of their greatest need) (Jn 4:16)
- (8) Don't be sidetracked (Jn 4:11-12, 19-21)
- (9) Try to differentiate genuine concerns or questions from those that are not (Jn 4:25)
- (10) Answer questions with the truth about Jesus (Jn 4:26)
- (11) Don't fear potential results (Jn 4:29-30)
- (12) Encourage them to share with others what you have shared with them (Jn 4:39)
- (13) Most importantly, imitate the Jesus Way but making people and their need for salvation your highest priority (I have found when I pray for people to be saved, I often get opportunities to share Jesus with them). (Jn 4:34-35).

**John 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)**

BGT John 4:9 λ γει ο ν α τ γυν Σαμαριτις· π ς σ ουδα ος ν παρ μο πε ν α τε ς γυναικ ς Σαμαριτιδος ο σης; ο γ ρ συγχρ νται ουδα οι Σαμαριταις.

NET John 4:9 So the Samaritan woman said to him, "How can you— a Jew— ask me, a Samaritan woman, for water to drink?" (For Jews use nothing in common with Samaritans.)

NLT 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?"

ESV John 4:9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)

NIV John 4:9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

GNT John 4:9 λ γει ο ν α τ γυν Σαμαριτις, Π ς σ ουδα ος ν παρ μο πε ν α τε ς γυναικ ς Σαμαριτιδος ο σης; ο γ ρ συγχρ νται ουδα οι Σαμαριταις.

KJV John 4:9 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.

YLT John 4:9 the Samaritan woman therefore saith to him, 'How dost thou, being a Jew, ask drink from me, being a Samaritan woman?' for Jews have no dealing with Samaritans.

ASV John 4:9 The Samaritan woman therefore saith unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a Samaritan woman? (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)

CSB John 4:9 "How is it that You, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" she asked Him. For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.

NKJ John 4:9 Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

NRS John 4:9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.)

NAB John 4:9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" (For Jews use nothing in common with Samaritans.)

NJB John 4:9 The Samaritan woman said to him, 'You are a Jew. How is it that you ask me, a Samaritan, for something to drink?' -- Jews, of course, do not associate with Samaritans.

GWN John 4:9 The Samaritan woman asked him, "How can a Jewish man like you ask a Samaritan woman like me for a drink of water?" (Jews, of course, don't associate with Samaritans.)

- Jn 4:27; 8:48; Luke 10:33; 17:16-19
- 2 Kings 17:24-41; Ezra 4:1-24; Nehemiah 4:1,2; Luke 9:52-56; Acts 1:8; 10:28

**Therefore (oun)** - To reiterate, it is always a good practice in reading God's Word, to pause and ponder this **term of conclusion**. This simple discipline serves to engage your mind and causes you to slow down and allow your Teacher, the Spirit, more time to illuminate the Scripture.

**A T Robertson on the Samaritan Woman** - Different idiom from that in John 4:7, "the woman the Samaritan." The Samaritans were a mixture by intermarriage of the Jews left in the land (2Chronicles 30:6, 2Chronicles 30:10; 2Chronicles 34:9) with colonists from Babylon and other regions sent by Shalmaneser. They had had a temple of their own on Mt. Gerizim and still worshipped there. ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**How is it... ask me for a drink** - Jesus ignores her question and as seen in the next verse immediately shifts the conversation to spiritual matters.

How interesting that the text never mentions her name. We'll meet her in heaven, but for now she remains anonymous.

**Max Alderman** comments on her anonymity - The unidentified woman at the well could have been anyone. She could symbolize the unknown by-product of this worldly system who has tried many ways to satisfy the deep thirst of her carnal nature. Her name is not important here; her need is! She recognizes that she is perceived as a member of an inferior race... In many ways she was the contaminated scum and the filth of the earth, but Jesus did not label or indict her that way; He simply honored her as a fellow human being and asked for a drink of water. This wonderful trait of Christ revealed in our study shows how sympathetic He is to others. It shows how considerate He is of others and how unprejudiced He is of others.

**Boa** - The woman is a timeless figure because like most men and women she's almost exclusively concerned with the provision of what will satisfy physical needs, not spiritual needs- particularly the idea of Christ quenching water which can be obtained only by the expenditure of a good deal of time and energy in that particular culture. As a consequence then she is really more concerned for the welfare of her body more than the welfare of her soul. In that way she points beyond to ourselves because we're often in that condition too. ([John - Chapter 4](#))

**James Smith** - An Awakened Questioner. "How is it that Thou... askest of me?" etc. (John 4:9). As soon as she comes into His presence her curiosity is aroused. Whoever could come into touch with Christ without being moved in one way or another. Yet some dare to pronounce Him nothing more than human. This Samaritan knew that He was a Jew, although the Jews, in their hate, declared that He was a Samaritan (John 8:48). It is interesting to note that it was the un-Jewish largeheartedness of Christ that first awakened her interest in Him. This is His chief characteristic as the Saviour of sinners. ([John 4-1-30 The Woman Of Samaria](#))

**Ask me for a drink** - The woman was shocked that Jesus did not seem to know that even her water jar was considered unclean by His fellow Jews!

**You being a Jew** - It is ironic that Samaritans in John's Gospel call Jesus "a Jew," while the Jews call Him "a Samaritan" with a demon (Jn 8:48+)

**Expositor's Bible Commentary** - There was a trace of sarcasm in the woman's reply, as if she meant, "We Samaritans are the dirt under your feet until you want something; then we are good enough!" Jesus paid no attention to her flippancy or to her bitterness. (See [The Expositor's Bible Commentary](#))

**For (gar)** is a term of explanation (see discussion), which should always prompt at least the question "What is the writer explaining?"

**Jews have (absolutely) no dealings with Samaritans** - The Greek word for "no" is "ou" which means absolute negation. She understood clearly that Jews totally shunned all contact with Samaritans. The disciples' astonishment in Jn 4:27 underscores the Jewish aversion of Samaritans.

**Gary Burge** comments on the fact that she is a woman - In this world men rarely speak to women in public, even if they are married to them. Single men never speak to or touch women at any time... Today in the outlying villages of the Arab Middle East, these values are still at work. I have mistakenly addressed women in remote Palestinian villages (not far from ancient Shechem), to my own and the woman's embarrassment and the shock of the village men. (See [John](#) scroll up and down for more text) (See [John - NIV Application Commentary](#) scroll up and down for more text)

**Brian Bell** - How is it a Jew talks to me? - Most Jews looked down on Samaritans because: 1. Ethnicity - 1/2 breed; Assyrian invasion 722 bc would intermarry to cause loss of racial purity 2. Religiously - only held to the 1st 5 books of Moses; also, different

style of worship. 3. Geographically - Most Jews went out of their way to avoid Samaria (3 days to cut across vs. 6 days around the Jordan) 4. But not Jesus, Samaria was part of His mission.

**Spurgeon** - But our Lord did not come to maintain these distinctions of race and caste. It is altogether foreign to the spirit of Christianity for nationalities to be despised. We sometimes hear people say of a person, "Oh, he is only So-and-so!" mentioning some nation that happens to be in the background. Christ was cosmopolitan, he loved men of every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people. To him, there was neither Jew nor Samaritan; all such distinctions were banished from his mind. The woman might well say what she did, but her words would have sounded strangely out of place from the lips of Christ.

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**Generous Receivers** - How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman? —John 4:9 - In today's Bible reading, we see Jesus weary, hungry, and thirsty. He was just as human as we are. He was also God and could have met all His own needs. But Jesus didn't insist on doing everything without the help of others. On this occasion He graciously (and no doubt gratefully) allowed His disciples to go and buy food while He sat by the well to rest and wait. And when a Samaritan woman of questionable character came to draw water, He did what many of us might hesitate to do—He asked her for a drink.

For years I missed an important lesson in our Lord's vulnerability, until He taught me, through a friend, the subtle selfishness of not letting others help us. One day this friend tried to do a kindness for me, and as usual I resisted. In frustration she said, "You know what? You're an ungenerous receiver!" Instantly I saw it! Quite rightly, I had always tried to live by Jesus' words, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). The trouble was, in the name of being unselfish, I always had to be the giver. Others desire to experience the blessedness of giving, but we often frustrate their giving by refusing their help. Let's learn to be generous receivers—just like Jesus. - Joanie Yoder ([Our Daily Bread](#))

O to be like Thee! Lord, I am coming  
Now to receive the anointing divine;  
All that I am and have I am bringing—  
Lord, from this moment all shall be Thine.  
—Chisholm

**Be as gracious in receiving as you are in giving.**

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**A Matter of the Heart** - How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman? —John 4:9 -

I have a confession to make. From time to time old feelings of prejudice and intolerance well up within me. Even though I seldom express them, and never want to, these sinful thoughts still spring up in my heart.

I grew up as a white, lower middle-class, midwestern, blue-collar American. My prejudices came from hearing such absurd statements as:

- "Rich people are arrogant snobs."
- "Minorities just want a handout."
- "Women are weak and can't think rationally."
- "Management is out to rip off the working man."
- "Jews can't be trusted in business dealings."

I know that these are untrue stereotypes. I sensed it even before I became a Christian. As a follower of Jesus, I know too that I must treat all people with respect because they have been created in the image of God. The Savior modeled this accepting attitude with the Samaritan woman. She was surprised when He spoke to her and asked her for a drink. Even the disciples marveled when they found Him speaking with her (John 4:27). I'm ashamed to admit my prejudicial thoughts. But I pray that the Lord will keep working in my heart until I am as free of prejudice and intolerance as He is. -- David C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread](#))

Lord, cleanse me from all prejudice,  
Remove its subtle lie;  
Then help me share Your love with those  
For whom You came to die.  
—Fasick

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**Wisdom For Witnessing** - The woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" —John 4:9 - We can learn a lot about effective witnessing by examining our Lord's encounter with the woman at the well

(John 4:5-26). He broke all social protocol by talking to this Samaritan woman. And asking her for a drink of water was a compliment of sorts. Later, He had a perfect opportunity to condemn her sinful lifestyle, but He didn't.

Author Paul Little points out that unlike Jesus we are quick to condemn. He writes, "Often we have the mistaken idea that if we don't condemn a certain attitude or deed, we will be condoning it." He adds, "Not only must we avoid condemning people, we need to learn the art of legitimate compliment."

He then related an encounter that writer Charles Trumbull once had on a train. A profanity-spewing, drunken man boarded and lurched into the seat next to him. When the man offered him a drink from his flask, Trumbull didn't condemn his condition. Instead he replied, "No thank you, but I can see you are a very generous man." The man's eyes lit up. As they talked, he heard about the One who offers the satisfying water of life. Later, he gave his life to Christ.

When you share your faith, remember the effectiveness of giving a compliment and avoiding condemnation. - Joanie Yoder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, help us show compassion  
To a world that's lost in sin,  
So when we share the gospel,  
Hungry souls for Christ we'll win.

—Sper

**Loving the lost is the first step in leading them to Christ.**

**John 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."**

BGT John 4:10 πεκρθη ησο ςκα επεν ατ· ε δεις τν δωρε ν το θεο κα τς στιν λ γων σοι· δ ς μοι πε ν, σ ν τησας α τ ν κα δωκεν ν σοι δωρ ζ ν.

NET John 4:10 Jesus answered her, "If you had known the gift of God and who it is who said to you, 'Give me some water to drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

NLT 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."

ESV John 4:10 Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

NIV John 4:10 Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

GNT John 4:10 πεκρθη ησο ςκα επεν ατ, Ε δεις τν δωρε ν το θεο κα τς στιν λ γων σοι, Δ ς μοι πε ν, σ ν τησας α τ ν κα δωκεν ν σοι δωρ ζ ν.

KJV John 4:10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest 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.

YLT John 4:10 Jesus answered and said to her, 'If thou hadst known the gift of God, and who it is who is saying to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked him, and he would have given thee living water.'

ASV John 4:10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest 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.

CSB John 4:10 Jesus answered, "If you knew the gift of God, and who is saying to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would ask Him, and He would give you living water."

NKJ John 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."

NRS John 4:10 Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

NAB John 4:10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God and who is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

NJB John 4:10 Jesus replied to her: If you only knew what God is offering and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me something to drink,' you would have been the one to ask, and he would have given you living water.

GWN John 4:10 Jesus replied to her, "If you only knew what God's gift is and who is asking you for a drink, you would have asked him for a drink. He would have given you living water."

- **If** - Jn 3:16; Isaiah 9:6; 42:6; 49:6-8; Luke 11:13; Romans 8:32; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 9:15; Ephesians 2:8
- **Who** - Jn 4:25,26; 9:35-38; 16:3; 17:3; 1 John 5:20)(2 Chronicles 33:12,13,18,19; Ps 10:17; Isaiah 55:6-9; Luke 11:8-10; 18:13,14; Luke 23:42,43; Acts 9:11; Revelation 3:17,18
- **Living** - Jn 4:14; 6:35,51; 7:37-39; Exodus 17:6; Ps 36:8,9; 46:4; Isaiah 12:3; 35:6; Isaiah 41:17,18; 43:20; 44:3; 49:10; 55:1-3; Jeremiah 2:13; Ezekiel 47:1-9; Zechariah 13:1; 14:8; 1 Corinthians 10:4; Revelation 7:17; 21:6; 22:1,2,17

## JESUS OFFERS LIVING WATER

**D L Moody** - This woman was not interested in the gospel, but she was interested in the water business; so Christ spoke to her about that.

**If** - This introduces a condition of the second class, determined as unfulfilled. It strikes me that many people I have shared the Gospel with knew the gift (because I stated it plainly) and even knew (about) the Giver (Jesus), but they, unlike this Samaritan woman, refused to ask for a drink of the only gift that would ever quench their dead, dry soul - living water!

It is interesting to note the role reversals - At first Jesus was the one asking the woman for physical water, but now He becomes the one able to give supernatural water, regarding which He encourages the woman to ask.

**If you knew the gift (dorea) of God** - She knew neither **the Gift** or **the Giver**! How many nameless souls, like this Samaritan woman, stand on the brink of eternity knowing neither **the Gift** nor **the Giver**, for they have never even heard the Name **"Jesus"** by which they must be saved (Acts 4:12).

The **Gift (dorea)** primarily refers to the Living Water or salvation, but in a real sense Jesus is the ultimate Gift from the Father. This gift however was not free to God for He first had to pay in sinless blood before He could say **"Finished! (Tetelestai!) Paid in Full!"** (Jn 19:30+) This Gift cannot be earned by depraved sinners, but only received from God by grace through faith (Eph 2:8-9, Jn 1:11-13).

**THOUGHT** - Consider praying daily for the thousands of thirsting, unreached people groups, for Jesus wants to offer them a drink through you! I highly recommend the daily prayer devotional [Joshua Project](#) which each day prays for a different unreached people group. Make it part of your daily devotional time - your eternity (and those you pray for) will be richer for so doing (see 1Th 2:19-20+) Beloved, gather much fruit for eternal life and you will be eternally grateful you did! (Jn 4:36+).

Notice how Jesus drew out the Samaritan woman's curiosity --

(1) He made her curious about the things of God (If you knew the gift of God);

(2) He made her curious about who Jesus is (who it is who says to you).

(3) He made her curious about what He could give her (He would have given you living water). (From [David Guzik](#))

**Spurgeon** on **if you knew... you would have asked** - Holy knowledge is very advantageous; it often is the means of breeding prayer: **"If you knew... you would have asked... and he would have given."** Therefore, beloved, let us teach the truth to all who come in our way, for it may be that we, too, shall meet with many of whom it can be said that, if they know what the gift of God is, they will ask for it; and if they ask for it, Christ will give it to them.

**New things in John** - The **new wine**, John 2, the **new birth**, John 3, the **new water** and the **new worship**, John 4. It is the great 'I AM' (Jn 4:26) Who is the Supreme Supplier and Who makes **ALL THINGS NEW** (Rev 21:5+)! Hallelujah!,

**Pritchard** - Ponder those three little words: **"If you knew."** "If you knew who I was, you would ask and I would give you eternal life." Do you know who He is? If so, will you ask Him for **Living Water**? If you want to go to heaven, all you have to do is ask. That's how simple salvation is. It's like asking for a refreshing drink of cool, clear water. ([The Woman at the Well](#))

**Hendricksen** has an interesting comment - When Jesus spoke about **"the gift of God,"** he meant "living water." But "living water" could mean spring-water (Gen. 26:19), which bubbles up by itself, in distinction from rain water, which must be collected in a cistern or reservoir. Of course, it happens at times that a shaft is sunk into the earth until a spring is reached. Jacob's Spring illustrates the point exactly. Hence, when Jesus said, "he would have given you living water," the woman interprets this to mean, "he would have given you not the water which has for some time been standing in the well but the spring-water at the bottom of it. (BNTC-John)

As with His interaction with Nicodemus in John 3, Jesus immediately shifts the conversation from the literal physical to the metaphorical spiritual! Jesus uses this statement to draw the woman deeper into the conversation. Who wouldn't want a gift from God? Ultimately Jesus was speaking of Himself as the Divine Gift (Jn 3:16), the inexpressible gift (2 Corinthians 9:15, Eph 4:17+)!

**James Smith** - A Carnal Reasoner. Jesus answered the woman's inquiry with a revelation of Himself, as the Giver of "living water." He sought to make her conscious of her need of the "Gift of God" (Jn 4:10). Her answer shows that she was in total darkness as to spiritual things. "Sir," she said, "Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep" (Jn 4:11). As if this life-giving water was to come out of Jacob's well. But she was not more blind than Nicodemus was when he said, "How can a man be born when he is old?" Through sin, the descent of man from God is so great that, without a miracle of grace he cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God (1Cor. 2:14). Carnal reason has never yet understood the Word of God. ([John 4:1-30 The Woman Of Samaria](#))

**James Smith on if you knew the gift of God** - Out of the great depths of UNFATHOMABLE LOVE. God so loved the world that He gave His Son. This stream gushing out from the heart of God is as broad as the world, and as deep as human need for time and eternity.

**College Press NIV Commentary** - What was the gift of God? Numerous answers have been offered to this question: (1) For the Jews God's greatest gift was the Torah or law. (2) In Gnostic thought the gift of God was the life-giving revelation, e.g., Corpus Hermeticum 4:5.28 (3) The gift of God is Jesus himself and his ability to transmit eternal life to those who receive him (see 2 Cor. 9:15). This verse thus is identical with the thought of John 3:16. Some refer the gift to the Holy Spirit but it is Jesus who gives the Spirit (Acts 2:33).

[David Guzik](#) - Jesus drew the woman into conversation, making her curious about several things.

- He made her curious about the things of God (**if you knew the gift of God**).
- He made her curious about who Jesus is (**who it is who says to you**).
- He made her curious about what He could give her (**He would have given you living water**).

**Marcus Dods** - The woman stands on the brink of the greatest possibilities, but is utterly unconscious of them.

**Ironside** comments on **the gift of God** - What a wonderful revelation concerning the gift of God! Do you know the gift of God? Do you know that salvation is the gift of God? Do you know that eternal life is a gift? Do you know that God is not a merchantman seeking to bargain with people, but God is a Giver, offering everything freely? It is so hard for people to understand that, and so they have devised all kinds of ways and means whereby they hope to earn salvation and thus to win, at last, a place in God's heaven. My dear friend, the God of this Bible is too rich to sell His salvation to anyone, and if He put a price on it in any degree comparable with its value, you and I are altogether too poor to purchase it. But, thank God, it is a gift. "If thou knewest the gift of God." ([Ironside's Notes](#))

**Boa** - She was ignorant of three important facts... She was ignorant of Who He was. She was ignorant of what He had to offer. She was ignorant of how she could receive it. When you stop to think about it, that's the Gospel. Who is this Jesus? What does He have to offer? How do you receive Him? That's the essence of the Good News. ([John - Chapter 4](#))

What can we say but "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!"  
(2Cor 9:15)

**Steven Cole** - One of the most common spiritual errors is that we get into heaven by our good works. Every religion, except for biblical Christianity, operates on the principle that you must work for or earn salvation... In total contrast, the Bible states (Ro 4:4-5+): "Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness"... Actually, it's often good, religious people who exclude themselves from receiving this gift. They're proud of their accomplishments and want some reward for what they've done. They don't want to associate with people like this sinful woman or admit that they need living water from Jesus just as much as she did. But the gift is freely offered to notorious sinners and to self-righteous religious sinners. Both equally need the gift. ([Living Water for a Thirsty Woman](#))

**Alford** who sees **the gift** primarily as the living water explains "The **water** is, in this first part of the discourse, the subject, and serves as a point of connection, whereby the woman's thoughts may be elevated, and her desire aroused. The process of the discourse in this particular is similar to that in Acts 14:17." ([Greek Testament Critical Exegetical Commentary](#))

**Alford on Who it is** - These pregnant words form the second step in our Lord's declaration. He who speaks with thee is no ordinary Jew, nor any ordinary man, but One who can give thee the gift of God; One sent from God, and God Himself.

**Spurgeon** - What does a thirsty man do to get rid of his thirst? He drinks. Perhaps there is no better representation of faith in all the Word of God than that. To drink is to receive-to take in the refreshing draught-and that is all. A man's face may be unwashed, but yet he can drink; he may be a very unworthy character, but yet a draught of water will remove his thirst. Drinking is such a remarkably easy thing, it is even more simple than eating." (Good News for Thirsty Souls)

## LIQUID WATER VS LIVING WATER

**Living (zao) water** - Jesus uses this phrase again in John 7:38+ to refer to the Holy Spirit flowing into, through and out from (so to speak) the believer. In the context of the arid water starved nation of Israel (and Samaria) the expression "living water" conveys the highly desirable water flowing fresh from springs (as it "bubbled" from the ground it seemed alive!), in contrast to the still, stagnant water in cisterns (cp this sense in Ge 26:19 = "flowing water" where Hebrew for "flowing" = chay = alive, life, live and Lxx = zao = living; Lev 14:6 = "running water" - also chay and zao.) In the Wilderness Wanderings, God (Jesus) had provided **living water** from a rock (which Paul says was a "spiritual rock" = Christ - 1Cor 10:3) as in Nu 20:8-11.

A Jew familiar with the OT Scriptures would have (or should have) understood that the Lord Himself was the spiritual fountain or source for in Jeremiah, Jehovah lamented the poor "water" choices of His people declaring "My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, **the fountain** (Lxx = pege = same word for "well" Jesus used in Jn 4:14) **of living waters**, to hew for themselves cisterns, Broken cisterns That can hold no water." (Jer 2:13)

Again in Jeremiah we read words Jews should have been familiar with - "O LORD, the hope of Israel, All who forsake You will be put to shame. Those who turn away on earth will be written down, Because they have forsaken the **fountain** (Lxx = pege = same word for "well" Jesus used in Jn 4:14) **of living water**, even the LORD." (Jeremiah 17:13)

**David Guzik** - In ancient times they called spring water **living water** because it seemed alive as it bubbled up from the ground. At first glance, it might seem that Jesus told this woman about a nearby active spring. But Jesus used a play on words with the phrase "living water," because He meant the spiritual water that quenches our spiritual thirst and gives life.

**Leon Morris** - "In the Old Testament living water is sometimes associated with Jehovah. He is called 'the fountain of living waters' (Jeremiah 2:13, 17:13)." (BORROW [The Gospel according to John : NICNT](#)).

**Spurgeon** - The Samaritan woman "had caught the Lord's meaning so far as the perpetuity of the water was concerned, but still she did not know what the living water was. It was all a riddle to her, as I am afraid it is to some of you. There is many a Doctor of Divinity who cannot explain what the living water is."... Oh, that I might be like a well of **living waters** in my speech at all times; and that you, my beloved brethren and sisters in Christ, whenever you are dealing with others, might be a well of living waters to every thirsty soul! Speak of Jesus wherever you go; talk of Jesus whenever you can. You have been shut up, and Christ has been in you; now be opened to give forth to others what he has given you... Hence he will always be contented. He who has grace in his heart is a happy man; he grows more and more satisfied with the grace as it wells up increasingly in living power in his character and life. Oh, if you have never received that living water, may God give it to you just now! You shall never regret receiving it; but you shall rejoice over it evermore.

Jesus was clearly speaking metaphorically, accusing the Jews in Jeremiah of forsaking and foregoing the "spiritual water" that gives true life in lieu of putrid "religious water" that only brings death to one's soul! So here in John 4 Jesus is stating to the woman that He Himself is the Source of this **life giving water**, but she misunderstood Him to be speaking of fresh, flowing, physical water as from a spring or fountain (Gk = pege).

As an aside some Rabbinic teachings associated the provision of water in the OT passages with the coming of the Messiah: "As the former redeemer made a well to rise [cf. Nu. 21:17-18], so will the latter Redeemer bring up water" (Eccl. Rab. 1:9).

**Henry Alford on living (zao) water** - Designedly used in a double sense by our Lord, that the woman may lay hold of the material meaning, and by it be awakened to the higher (spiritual) one. The words bring with them, and in our Lord's inner meaning involved, the performance of all such prophetic promises as Ezekiel 36:25; Zechariah 13:1 (cp Jer 2:13); but, as regarded the woman, the ordinary sense was that intended for her to fasten on, which she does accordingly. On the question, how this **living water** could be

now given, before Jesus was glorified, see John 7:38-39-note. ([Greek Testament Critical Exegetical Commentary](#))

**Augustine** - Water issuing from a spring is what is commonly called **living water**. Water collected from rain in pools and cisterns is not called living water. It may have originally flowed from a spring; yet if it collects in some place and is left to stand without any connection to its source, separated, as it were, from the channel of the spring. It is not called "living water." Water is designated as "living" when it is taken as it flows. This is the kind of water that was in that fountain. Tractates on the Gospel of John 15.12.21

**A T Robertson** - Running water like a spring or well supplied by springs. This Jacob's Well was filled by water from rains percolating through, a sort of cistern, good water, but not equal to a real spring which was always preferred (Genesis 26:19; Leviticus 14:5; Numbers 19:17). Jesus, of course, is symbolically referring to himself as the Living Water though he does not say it in plain words as he does about the Living Bread (John 6:51). The phrase "the fountain of life" occurs in Proverbs 13:14. Jesus supplies the water of life (John 7:39). Cf. Revelation 7:17; Revelation 22:1. ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**Steven Cole on living (zao) water** - Jesus is referring to the eternal life that the Holy Spirit gives... "Living water" is the same thing as the "new birth," but just a different analogy.

God is not a dead god like the idols but is the "Living Father" (Jn 6:57) and the "Living God" (Mt 16:16, Acts 14:15, Ro 9:26, 2Co 3:3, 6:16, 1Ti 3:15, 4:10, Heb 3:12, Heb 9:13, 10:31, 12:22, Rev 7:2). Jesus is referred to as the "living One" (Luke 24:5, Rev 1:18) and the "Living Bread" (Jn 6:51) which all must "eat" (clearly speaks of belief as explained in Jn 11:25. Eating probably speaks of entering an unbreakable union of eternal covenant with Jesus - pictured by married couples feeding each other cake) of Him will live (Jn 6:51, 57). His Word is more life giving than physical bread (Mt 4:4, Lk 4:4). Living water (Jn 4:10,11) in context describes Jesus' message of salvation, the Gospel. In the future we will drink from "springs of the water of life" (NIV = "Living water" = Rev 7:17) Jesus is our living Stone (1Pe 2:4 and because of our union with him, we are "living stones" 1Pe 2:5). In John 7:38 living water refers to the Holy Spirit. Believers are to present themselves to God as a living... sacrifice (Ro 12:1) which is our act of worship. God's word is described as living (living oracles = Acts 7:38, living and active = Heb 4:12; living and abiding Word of God = 1Pe 1:23). "Living creatures" describes those around the Throne of God (Rev 4:9, 5:14, Rev 15:7).

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**Gift (1431)(dorea** from **didomi** = to give) refers to a free gift and emphasizes the gratuitous character of the gift. **Dorea** carries the sense of a bountiful, free, honorable gift which is bestowed freely, without price or compensation. Friberg - gift, free gift, benefit; in the NT used only of spiritual and supernatural gifts that are freely given by God to believers, including eternal life (Jn 4.10), the Holy Spirit (Acts 2.38), righteousness, i.e. state of being put right with God (Ro 5.17), enabling grace for appointed ministry (Eph 3.7) (BORROW [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

**Dorea - 19v** - freely(1), gift(12), needlessly(1), without a cause(1), without charge(1), without cost(2), without paying(1). Matt. 10:8; Jn. 4:10; Jn. 15:25; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:20; Acts 10:45; Acts 11:17; Rom. 3:24; Rom. 5:15; Rom. 5:17; 2 Co. 9:15; 2 Co. 11:7; Gal. 2:21; Eph. 3:7; Eph. 4:7; 2 Thess. 3:8; Heb. 6:4; Rev. 21:6; Rev. 22:17

**Asked (154)(aiteo)** means to ask for something with a sense of urgency and even to the point of demanding. In contrast to the related verb erotao, aiteo more frequently suggests attitude of a suppliant, the petition of one who is lesser in position than the one to whom the petition is made. For example, aiteo is used of men in asking something from God = Mt 7:7 Jas 1:5 1Jn 3:22; a child from a parent = Mt 7:9-10; a subject from a king = Acts 12:20; priests and people from Pilate = Lk 23:23; beggar from a passer by = Acts 3:2.

**Living (alive) (2198)(zao)** refers literally to natural physical life, but in John 4:10 Jesus uses **zao** to refer to supernatural, spiritual life (cf Jn 11:25, 26). In Ro 1:17 **zao** refers to the new birth.

**Friberg** - (1) of natural physical life; (a) live, be living, be alive (1Co 15.45 ), opposite die; (b) of return from death become alive again (Mt 9.18); (c) of recovery from sickness get well, recover, be well (Jn 4.50); (d) with mention of the sphere or basis of life live in (Acts 17.28); live by (Mt4.4); (2) of supernatural, spiritual life, including resurrected life for the body and eternal life for the soul (Jn 11.25, 26); (3) of the conduct of life live (as) (Ga 2.14); continue (to sin) (Ro 6.2); live (for) ( 2Co 5.15); (4) participle zon living, of things deriving from God as the source of life (1Pe 1.3) (BORROW [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

**Zao in John's Gospel** - Jn. 4:10; Jn. 4:11; Jn. 4:50; Jn. 4:51; Jn. 4:53; Jn. 5:25; Jn. 6:51; Jn. 6:57; Jn. 6:58; Jn. 7:38; Jn. 11:25; Jn. 11:26; Jn. 14:19;

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**Question:** [What did Jesus mean when He spoke of living water?](#)

**Answer:** Jesus uses the phrase "living water" in two instances in the Bible. The first instance is found in John chapter 4. Jesus was tired and sat at a well while His disciples went into town to buy food. A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus asked her for a drink. The Samaritan woman was quite shocked because Jesus was a Jew, and Jews simply hated the Samaritans. Of course,

she had no idea who Jesus was and asked Him how He could ask her for water since He was a Jew.

**Jesus ignored the question and went right to the point,** "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you **living water**" (John 4:10). Notice that He does not say that He is the **living water**, but that He would give **living water** to her, and when she received it, she would never thirst again. Of course, that does not tell us what the **living water** is! For that, we must go to another passage of Scripture. In this case, Jesus is in the temple surrounded by a throng of worshipers. He suddenly cried out, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scriptures 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" (John 7:37–39+, emphasis added).

Here Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as the living water. External influence of the Spirit had always been given in the conversion and sanctification of the Old Testament saints and prophets, but the gift of the Spirit who would indwell believers had not yet been received (Acts 10:44–45). So, though many people say that Jesus is the living water, Jesus Himself intended the phrase to mean the Holy Spirit who dwells in believers and seals them for salvation (Ephesians 1:13–14). It is the ministry of the Spirit, flowing out of a heart redeemed by God, that blesses believers and, through them, brings life and light to the world. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

## SCRIPTURAL CHAIN ON "LIVING WATER"

**Scriptural Chain for Living (running, flowing) water** - The Hebrew phrase in each of the following passages is literally "al-mayim hayyim" = "water living" and in the Lxx the word for "living" (Hebrew = hayyim) is translated with the verb **zoa** = to live. And so we see this beautiful phrase scattered from Genesis to Revelation. The beautiful phrase, **CHAY MAYIM**, "living water" occurs 1st in Ge 26:19 & then in Lv 14:5,v6, 50, 51, 52, 15:13 > running water, Nu19:17 > flowing water Song4:15 > fresh water, Je 2:13 > living waters, Je17:13 > living water, Zec14:8 > living waters from Jerusalem during 1000 YEAR reign of Messiah.

- First use = Ge 26:19 = "a well of living water" (Young's Literal)
- Lev 14:5-6, 50, 51, 52, Lev 15:13 = "running water"
- Nu 19:17 = "flowing water" > (related to the healing waters of the red heifer - see commentary - Lxx = "*hudor zon* [present tense]" = literally "water continually living" - [What is the significance of a red heifer in the Bible?](#))
- Song 4:15 = "fresh water"
- Jer 2:13 "living waters"
- Jer 17:13 = "living water"
- Zec 14:8 = "living waters" > living waters from Jerusalem during 1000 YEAR reign of Messiah. (see commentary)
- Jn 4:10 = "living water"
- Jn 4:14 = "well of water springing up to eternal life"
- Jn 7:38 "living water" (see commentary)
- Rev 7:17 = "springs of the water of life" (see [commentary](#))
- Rev 21:6 = "the spring of the water of life without cost" (see [commentary](#))
- Rev 22:1 = "river of the water of life" (see [commentary](#))
- Rev 22:17 = "take the water of life without cost." (see [commentary](#))

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**LIVING WATER** - The Bible frequently pictures spiritual life as water.

- Jesus is the source of this living water

"Jesus answered her [the Samaritan woman], 'If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.'" John 4:10

- This living water reaches our deepest needs. Jesus said:

"Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." John 7:38+

- This living water is like a spring which never dries up:

"For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water." Revelation 7:17+

- This living water produces a fruitful life:

“On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.” Revelation 22:2+ (The Gospel of John made easy)

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**David Guzik** - Jesus an amazing offer. What he offered—to this woman and to anyone who would drink—was something to give lasting satisfaction. The key is to drink of the water that Jesus shall give.

1. It's common for people to try and satisfy their God-created inner thirst for many things, or any thing except for what Jesus gives. People are thirsty—they want, they long, they search, they reach; but only what Jesus gives satisfies to the deepest levels of man's soul and spirit.
  2. Drinking and thirst are common pictures of God's supply and man's spiritual need. Drinking is an action, but an action of receiving—like faith, it is doing something, but it is not a merit-earning work in itself.
  3. “What does a thirsty man do to get rid of his thirst? He drinks. Perhaps there is no better representation of faith in all the Word of God than that. To drink is to receive-to take in the refreshing draught-and that is all. A man's face may be unwashed, but yet he can drink; he may be a very unworthy character, but yet a draught of water will remove his thirst. Drinking is such a remarkably easy thing, it is even more simple than eating.” (Spurgeon, Good News for Thirsty Souls)
  4. Someone might object: “I drank of what Jesus offers, and I feel thirsty and empty again.” The answer is simple: drink again! It isn't a one-time sip of Jesus that satisfies forever, but continual connection with Him.
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**Ray Pritchard** on the Holy Spirit as **Living Water** - Water is one of the most common symbols for the Holy Spirit in the Bible. Since water is indispensable for human life, the phrase “living water” is an apt metaphor for the Spirit's work in the human heart. Zechariah 14:8 looks forward to a time after the return of Christ when the climate and geography of earth will be changed as Jesus Christ sets up His kingdom on the earth. There will be a great earthquake, splitting the Mount of Olives in two (Zech 4:4), followed by enormous changes in the normal pattern of daytime and nighttime (Zech 4:6–7). On that day “living water” will flow from Jerusalem. This is no doubt both literal and symbolic. There will be a literal river, but the river will symbolize the free flow of the Spirit throughout the entire earth. Jesus used this word picture in John 4 during His conversation with the woman at the well. Although she came seeking literal water, He promised to give her “living water” which would satisfy her thirst forever (John 4:10). That “living water” becomes a “spring of water” within the heart of the believer, welling up to eternal life. As the water rises rapidly in the well, it comes to the surface and flows over the edges. What a wonderful picture of how the Spirit works in the human heart. Those who come to Christ find “living water” that satisfies the deep thirst within. Through the indwelling Holy Spirit, that “living water” produces a new life that eventually bubbles to the surface and becomes evident to others. Living water won't become stagnant. It always produces a dynamic, abundant, exciting new life. Water is also necessary for cleansing. Ephesians 5:26 pictures this aspect of the Spirit's work when it mentions the “washing with water through the Word.” The Word is the cleansing agent; the Spirit is the cleansing power. As the Spirit applies the Word to our lives, we are cleansed from the stain of sin and the filth of the world. The Holy Spirit flows through believers like a mighty river of living water, bringing new life and providing deep, inner cleansing. As we yield ourselves to Christ, the abundance of His life (the “living water”) flows out to those around us. River of God, I live in a dry, barren land. All around me men and women die of thirst. Make me a channel of living water to those who desperately need it. Amen. (BORROW [Names of the Holy Spirit](#))

#### **Related Resource:**

- [The Names of the Holy Spirit](#) - 145 pages (see page 108 for list of names) - Elmer Towns - Excerpt - The Holy Spirit is the agent of new spiritual life, or revival, so it is not surprising that several of the terms Scripture uses to describe Him emphasize His work in revival. These names include the Anointing (the contemporary term for the filling of the Holy Spirit), My Blessing, the Breath of Life, Dew, the Enduement of Power, Floods on the Dry Ground, the Fullness of God, the Glory of the Lord, the Oil of Gladness, the Power of the Highest, Rain, Rivers of **Living Water**, Showers that Water the Earth, the Spirit of Glory, the Spirit of Life and the Spirit of Power.....Several of the revival terms for the Holy Spirit are tied to the picture of the Spirit watering the ground. These descriptive terms include “the dew” (Hos.14:5), “floods, on the dry ground” (Isa. 44:3), “a fountain of water” (John 4:14), “rain upon the mown grass” (Ps. 72:6), “**rivers of living water**” (John 7:38), “showers that water the earth” (Ps. 72:6) and “water” (Isa. 44:3). In each case, the Holy Spirit is described symbolically as the means by which God pours out His blessing to revive and refresh Christians, much as rain is the means by which the earth is refreshed. These revival names should not be taken as denials of the personality of the Holy Spirit, but rather as descriptions that picture His influence in refreshing people who are spiritually thirsty, wilted or dying.....Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would be like rivers of living water. “He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water” John 7:38). This picture serves to remind us that the source of life is the Holy Spirit, who will constantly spring up within us.
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**F B Meyer - Our Daily Homily** - If thou knewest the gift of God.... - There are wonderful contrasts here! He who gives rest sits weary on the well-head; He who was the Jews' Messiah utters his deepest lessons to a woman of Samaria; He that gives living water asks for water from the dark, cool depths that lay beneath them.

**God's best things are gifts.** — Light, air, natural beauty, elasticity of the spirits, the sense of vigorous health, human love, and, above all, his only begotten and beloved Son. Among all other gifts is there one to be compared to this? The living spring of eternal life, which Jesus opens up in our hearts, and which so greatly differs from the pit of outward ordinance, is an altogether unspeakable bestowment. Nothing can purchase it. If a man would give all the substance of his house for it, it would be utterly contemned. It must be received as a gift, or not at all.

**God's gifts must be asked for.** — "Thou wouldest have asked, and He would have given." This is the law of Heaven. Prayer is a necessary link between the Divine hand that gives and the human heart that receives. We have not, because we ask not. There is nothing in our Lord's words of the dreamy and languid pietism which refuses to ask because it will not dictate to the perfect wisdom of God.

**If we had fuller knowledge we should pray more.** — "If thou knewest ... thou wouldest ask." If thou knewest who He is that stands beside thee, in thy hours of private prayer — if thou knewest all the possibilities of the life of prayer — if thou knewest what gains would accrue to thee on thy knees, thou wouldest give thyself to prayer, as though it were the main object of thy life.

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**Anne Ortlund - Fix your eyes on Jesus and not on the church**- Have you noticed how when you "talk church" to Christians you don't know, you've immediately built a wall between you?

But if you "talk Jesus" -- if you fix your eyes on Him -- you're united?

The Samaritan woman who talked to Jesus at the well (John 4) fell into the "talk church" trap. Jesus was talking about "living water" -- Himself -- and she didn't know what to make of it except that it must be related to organized religion.

So she brashly waded in:

"Our [Samaritan] fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

See how when we "talk church," we put labels on each other and we're immediately divisive?

"You Jews, we Samaritans."

"You're charismatic, we're not."

"You're Lutheran, we're Baptist."

"You worship on Sunday, we worship on Saturday."

"You raise your hands, we never do that."

"You're independent, we're denominational."

"You're formal, we're informal."

"You ordain women, we don't allow that."

And on and on.

No church is good enough to be on a level with Jesus. No "denominational distinctives" are important enough to overshadow Him. No cause, no creed, no baptism, no party, no ministry, no customs, no rules, no doctrine, no doctrine teacher, no movement, no movement leader, no local pastor, no vision, no specialty -- no aspect of Christianity, whatever it is and however good it may be, can be on a par with the firstness of Jesus.

Ray was asked one Sunday to preach at a church in San Diego, no far from where we live. He and Nels and I got the brilliant idea of going for the weekend and incorporating the preaching into a little mini-vacation.

Settled in our motel on Saturday, we bought a newspaper and discovered that Sunday afternoon the San Diego Symphony Orchestra was going to be giving a free concert on the campus of the University of California at San Diego. It sounded great.

So after Ray preached, we dropped by a cafeteria for some lunch and then headed for the campus. We hauled a blanket out of the trunk of the car, and spread it on the grass in the sunshine -- along with thousands of others.

Some had obviously come, as we had, from church; the guys peeled off their coats and ties, and the gals kicked off their heels ...

Some had just as obviously come from the beach; they had on their cut-offs and thongs or their bikinis and bare feet ... Some got out their beer bottles ...

But when the orchestra began playing, nobody thought any more about how each other looked or what each other did. We were all concentrating beyond ourselves; we were all caught up in the same beauty. For Christian unity in the midst of Christian variety, fix your eyes on Jesus.

Prayer: O Lord, we Christians tend to get confused in the midst of diversity! Like Peter on the Mountain of Transfiguration, we start to build three tabernacles, or more. Father, to make my heart broad, keep my vision narrowed. Help me to look up and see no one except Jesus (Matthew 17:8).

In His matchless name, amen. ([Fix Your Eyes On Jesus - Chapter 41 - Anne Ortlund](#))

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**Question:** [What did Jesus mean when He spoke of living water?](#)

**Answer:** Jesus uses the phrase “living water” in two instances in the Bible. The first instance is found in John chapter 4. Jesus was tired and sat at a well while His disciples went into town to buy food. A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus asked her for a drink. The Samaritan woman was quite shocked because Jesus was a Jew, and Jews simply hated the Samaritans. Of course, she had no idea who Jesus was and asked Him how He could ask her for water since He was a Jew.

Jesus ignored the question and went right to the point, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water” (John 4:10). Notice that He does not say that He is the living water, but that He would give living water to her, and when she received it, she would never thirst again. Of course, that does not tell us what the living water is! For that, we must go to another passage of Scripture. In this case, Jesus is in the temple surrounded by a throng of worshipers. He suddenly cried out, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scriptures 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” (John 7:37–39, emphasis added).

Here Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as the living water. External influence of the Spirit had always been given in the conversion and sanctification of the Old Testament saints and prophets, but the gift of the Spirit who would indwell believers had not yet been received (Acts 10:44–45). So, though many people say that Jesus is the living water, Jesus Himself intended the phrase to mean the Holy Spirit who dwells in believers and seals them for salvation (Ephesians 1:13–14). It is the ministry of the Spirit, flowing out of a heart redeemed by God, that blesses believers and, through them, brings life and light to the world. [GotQuestions.org](#)

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**Question:** [What is the water of life?](#)

**Answer:** Water is absolutely indispensable for human life. The average human body is more than 50 percent water. Water is also refreshing, whether it is used to drink or to bathe or swim in. In developed countries, water is often taken for granted. But in many nations the lack of clean water is the primary public health problem; even when clean water is available, it takes significant time and effort to get it. The concern for clean water was often primary in ancient times as well.

Water is so critical to our existence that it has become a symbol for life itself. There is a Brothers Grimm fairy tale called “The Water of Life” in which a dying king’s sons attempt to locate “the water of life” so that their father can live. Similar scenarios are common in literature. Spanish explorer Ponce de León is said to have been on a quest for the “Fountain of Youth” in the New World. Of course, he died without ever finding it. There is no “water of life,” that is, water that one can drink or bathe in which will grant eternal life, healing, or perpetual youth.

The Bible uses water as a metaphor in some places, and it does speak of “the water of life.” John 4:10–26 is sometimes called the **Water of Life Discourse** (the counterpart to the [Bread of Life](#) Discourse in John 6:22–59). In John 4, Jesus is sitting at a well in Samaria when a woman comes to draw water. This would have been a daily task for her and would have involved significant effort and time on her part. Jesus asks her for a drink. This simple request was significant because Jesus was publicly speaking to a woman (see John 6:27) and a Samaritan woman at that (John 4:9). The woman asks Jesus why He is willing to associate with her, assuming that most Jews would not stoop to ask a Samaritan for a drink. Jesus uses the occasion to turn the conversation in another direction.

Jesus answers the [Samaritan woman at the well](#), “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water” (John 4:10).

The woman wonders how Jesus can provide this water, especially since He had no means to draw it. In fact, didn’t He just ask *her* for a drink?

Jesus answers, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life” (John 4:13–14).

The woman misunderstands, thinking that, if she could get this water, she would not have to spend any more time laboring to get water daily from the well. At this point, she is thinking that Jesus is talking about some kind of magical water that would meet her physical needs.

Jesus turns the conversation from physical needs to spiritual needs by telling the woman to go and get her husband. She responds that she does not have a husband. Jesus says, “You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true” (John 4:17–18). In saying this, Jesus puts His finger on an area of sin and shame in this woman’s life. The water that He speaks of is not to quench a physical thirst, but a spiritual thirst—a thirst that has manifested itself in this woman’s life by a series of broken and sinful relationships. The conversation ends with Jesus telling her plainly that He is the promised Messiah, and she goes and tells the whole town to come out and listen to what Jesus has to say. The water of life that Jesus spoke of is a metaphor for spiritual washing and refreshment, which this woman needed more than she needed the water that she drew from the well each day.

In John 7, Jesus mentions this water of life or living water again. “Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, ‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.’ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive” (verses 37–38). Once again, Jesus uses the physical to point to the spiritual. People need “living water” to give life to their spirits more than they need water to give life to their bodies. Here, we are told that the “living water” Jesus offered is really the Holy Spirit. He is the one who will be able to cleanse and satisfy the thirsty spirit.

Finally, the water of life is mentioned in Revelation 21—22, which tells of the blessings of those who will spend eternity with God in the new heavens and new earth. In Revelation 21:6 God says, “To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life.” This is a picture of bountiful spiritual supply. Revelation 22:1 expounds further: “Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb.” A final invitation is issued in Revelation 22:17, “Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life.”

We need not understand the references to the “river” in the [New Jerusalem](#) literally. The picture is of a place where God lives with His people and meets all of their needs. In ancient times, a city with a continual supply of fresh, clean water would be considered a great place to live. The abode of God and of the believer for all eternity is pictured as having a pure, clear river running through the heart of it; in other words, it is a place where no need will be left unmet.

It is not necessary to wait for the new heavens and the new earth to experience the blessings of the water of life. Because the Holy Spirit comes to [live within the believer](#), the Christian can experience a taste of this now. The Holy Spirit within the believer will quench every spiritual thirst, as long as the believer will simply take what the Spirit has to offer and follow the Spirit’s leading on a moment-by-moment basis.

In summary, the water of life is a metaphor that speaks of the Holy Spirit’s work in the life of the believer, providing spiritual cleansing and constant refreshment. [GotQuestions.org](#)

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**Question:** [What can we learn from the woman at the well?](#)

**Answer:** The story of the nameless Samaritan woman at the well, recorded only in the Gospel of John, is a revealing one, full of many truths and powerful lessons for us today. The story of the woman at the well follows on the heels of the account of Jesus’ interaction with Nicodemus, a Pharisee and prominent member of the Jewish Sanhedrin (John 3:1–21). In John 4:4–42 we read about Jesus’ conversation with a lone Samaritan woman who had come to get water from a well (known as Jacob’s well) located about a half mile from the city of Sychar in Samaria.

This was an extraordinary woman. She was a [Samaritan](#), a race of people that the Jews utterly despised as having no claim on their God, and she was an outcast and looked down upon by her own people. This is evidenced by the fact that she came alone to draw water from the community well when, during biblical times, drawing water and chatting at the well was the social highpoint of a woman’s day. However, this woman was ostracized and marked as immoral, an unmarried woman living openly with the sixth in a series of men.

The story of the woman at the well teaches us that God loves us in spite of our bankrupt lives. God values us enough to actively seek us, to welcome us to intimacy, and to rejoice in our worship. As a result of Jesus’ conversation, only a person like the Samaritan woman, an outcast from her own people, could understand what this means. To be wanted, to be cared for when no one, not even herself, could see anything of value in her—this is grace indeed.

**But there are many other valuable truths we glean from this story. We learn that:**

1) Only through Jesus can we obtain and receive eternal life:

“Jesus answered, ‘Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life’” (John 4:13–14; cf. John 14:6).

2) Jesus’ ministering to those outcasts of the Jewish society (the Samaritans) reveals that all people are valuable to God and that Jesus desires that we demonstrate love to everyone . . . including even our enemies (John 4:7–9; Matthew 5:44).

3) Jesus is the Messiah (John 4:25–26; 1:41; Matthew 27:22; Luke 2:11).

4) Those who worship God, worship Him in spirit and truth (John 4:23–24; Psalm 145:18).

5) Our testimony about Jesus is a powerful tool in leading others to believe in Him:

“Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, ‘He told me everything I ever did.’ So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers. They said to the woman, ‘We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world’” (John 4:39–42).

**Additionally, we learn from Jesus’ dialogue with the woman at the well three absolute truths about salvation:**

1) Salvation comes only to those who recognize their desperate need for the spiritual life they do not have. Living water can be obtained only by those who recognize that they are spiritually thirsty.

2) Salvation comes only to those who confess and repent of their sin and desire forgiveness. Before this immoral woman could embrace the Savior, she had to concede the full burden of her sins.

3) Salvation comes only to those who take hold of Jesus as their Messiah. For the absolute truth is that salvation is found in no one else (John 14:6; Acts 4:12). [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org) (Bolding added)

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**Cyril Hocking - John 4:10–15 SIR, GIVE ME THIS WATER**

WHAT IMPOVERISHING IGNORANCE can compare with that of not knowing the most gratuitous ‘gift of God’, the Lord Himself? What amazing pity brought Him within the reach of this Samaritan woman with the request that she give Him to drink! How poor He became to make poor sinners rich in knowing Him! How real was His testing, in this instance that of bodily weariness and thirst, in order to seek, to save and to satisfy the lost!

As this double cycle of the dialogue already opened by the Lord develops, His control of their conversation made even the woman’s evasive responses serve to deepen her discovery of who He is, vv. 7, 26,

He is the Giver of living water, v. 10. The shallowness of the woman’s thinking is exposed by her occupation with the great depth of the well, and in her noting the absence of any jar with which the One she respectfully addresses twice as ‘Sir’, vv. 11, 15, might draw and deliver its water. His claim was preposterous; was He indeed ‘greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well?’ Jacob in Samaritan tradition had ‘given us this well’, though the scriptures remain quiet about it. The simple answer to her incredulity was ‘Yes’, as He is greater than Abraham, greater than Melchisedec, greater than Moses, greater than Aaron, greater than Solomon. However, how little she would have been profited had He made such a bald claim.

His water becomes within every recipient a well of water springing up to eternal life, v. 14. Jacob had not hewn a broken cistern that had no water. However, all those who came to its unfailing supply of ‘this water’ needed to return again and again; its thirst-quenching property was short-lived. Not so with the life-giving, soul-satisfying water which the Lord gives. The Samaritan woman turned to the One who had asked, ‘Give me’, seeking now of Him, ‘Sir, give me’! Her mind was still dull; such water would satisfy her thirst, and remove the need for constantly coming to draw! She has no thirst for the One who is ‘the fountain of living waters’, or for His gift of eternal life. This He must yet create before she will receive ‘the water of life freely’, see Rev. 21:6.

**John 4:11 She said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water?"**

BGT John 4:11 λ γει α τ [ γυν ]· κ ριε, ο τε ντλημα χεις κα τ φρ αρ σ τ ν βαθ · π θεν ο ν χεις τ δωρ τ ζ ν;

NET John 4:11 "Sir," the woman said to him, "you have no bucket and the well is deep; where then do you get this living water?"

NLT John 4:11 "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?"

ESV John 4:11 The woman said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?"

NIV John 4:11 "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water?"

GNT John 4:11 λ γει α τ [ γυν ], Κ ριε, ο τε ντλημα χεις κα τ φρ αρ σ τ ν βαθ · π θεν ο ν χεις τ δωρ τ ζ ν;

KJV John 4:11 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?"

YLT John 4:11 The woman saith to him, 'Sir, thou hast not even a vessel to draw with, and the well is deep; whence, then, hast thou the living water?"

ASV John 4:11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: whence then hast thou that living water?"

CSB John 4:11 "Sir," said the woman, "You don't even have a bucket, and the well is deep. So where do You get this 'living water'?"

NKJ John 4:11 The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water?"

NRS John 4:11 The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?"

NAB John 4:11 (The woman) said to him, "Sir, you do not even have a bucket and the cistern is deep; where then can you get this living water?"

NJB John 4:11 'You have no bucket, sir,' she answered, 'and the well is deep: how do you get this living water?"

GWN John 4:11 The woman said to him, "Sir, you don't have anything to use to get water, and the well is deep. So where are you going to get this living water?"

- John 3:4; 1 Corinthians 2:14

## HER NATURAL NON SPIRITUAL RESPONSE

**She said to Him Sir** - She replies as if Jesus had been speaking of natural water, failing to understand He was speaking of supernatural water! Paul well described this woman (and all who fail to comprehend Jesus' words of life) writing "a natural man (or Samaritan woman!) does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him (her); and he (she) cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised." (1Cor 2:14-**note**)

**Sir** (also in Jn 4:15, 19) ([2962](#))(**kurios**) normally means the supreme one, one who is sovereign and possesses absolute authority, absolute ownership and uncontested power. Indeed, her addressing Jesus as **kurios** with the sense of "sir" would soon turn to addressing Him as kurios in the sense of Lord and Master! Note that her first mode of address was "you being a Jew" (Jn 4:9) suggesting that her use of kurios reflects an increasing degree of respect. See similar uses of **kurios** in Jn 4:49; 5:7; 6:34; 9:36; 12:21. The **NET Bible** notes on this use of **kurios** agree that "there is probably a gradual transition from one ("sir") to the other ("**Lord**") as the woman's respect for Jesus grows throughout the conversation." (Jn 4:11, 15, 19)

**You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep** - Jacob's well is today reported to be over 75 feet deep and it likely was even deeper 2000 years ago! How would Jesus draw this water?

**NET** = "Sir," the woman said to him, "you have no**bucket** and the well is deep; where then do you get this living water?" - **Comment** - The **NET** is somewhat more accurate than **NAS** because the Greek text has the

noun **antlema** (used only here in the NT) and referred to "a bucket for drawing water." (BDAG)

**Barclay** on no **bucket** to draw with - When people were on a journey they usually carried with them a bucket made from the skin of some beast so that they could draw water from any well at which they halted. No doubt Jesus' band had such a bucket; and no doubt the disciples had taken it into the town with them. The woman saw that Jesus did not possess such a traveler's leather bucket, and so again she says in effect: "You need not talk about drawing water and giving it to me. I can see for myself that you have not a bucket with which to draw water." H. B. Tristram begins his book entitled *Eastern Customs in Bible Lands* with this personal experience. He was sitting beside a well in Palestine beside the scene of the inn which figures in the story of the Good Samaritan. "An Arab woman came down from the hills above to draw water; she unfolded and opened her goatskin bottle, and then untwined a cord, and attached it to a very small leather bucket which she carried, by means of which she slowly filled her skin, fastened its mouth, placed it on her shoulder, and bucket in hand, climbed the mountain. I thought of the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well, when an Arab footman, toiling up the steep path from Jericho, heated and wearied with his journey, turned aside to the well, knelt and peered wistfully down. But he had '**nothing to draw with and the well was deep.**' He lapped a little moisture from the water spilt by the woman who had preceded him, and, disappointed, passed on." It was just what the woman was thinking of when she said that Jesus had nothing to draw water from the depths of the well. ([William Barclay's Daily Study Bible](#))

**Living water** - It is of note that in the Samaritans' own liturgy it is said of the **Taheb** (means "Restorer" and is the Samaritan "equivalent" of the Messiah) that "water shall flow from His buckets." (Nu 24:7) Here is a quote from **Wikipedia** "Many Samaritans believe that at the end of days, the dead will be resurrected by Taheb, a restorer (possibly a prophet, some say Moses)." ([Samaritans - Wikipedia](#)) Here is another related quote...

"Moreover, for the Samaritans, Moses is the Taheb ("Restorer"), the expected messiah-like eschatological figure who will bring about a golden age and will pray for the guilty and save them. The Samaritans alone give prominence to the title "man of God" for Moses...Moses is a second God, God's vice-regent upon earth (Memar Marqah 1.2), whose very name includes the title "Elokim" (God) (Memar Marqah 5.4), so that he who believes in him believes in his LORD (Memar Marqah 4.7)." (p. 397, footnote 47, Feldman, Josephus's interpretation of the Bible) ([Taheb – The Samaritan Messiah - Think Hebrew](#))

This historical information (if indeed accurate), helps us gain some understanding of the Samaritan woman's later statement "he woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a **prophet.**" (Jn 4:19). The Samaritans considered "Taheb" as a Moses-like figure (based on their reading of Dt 18:15, 18 - keeping in mind that they believed only in the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible - [See Samaritan Pentateuch](#)). And in light of the fact that the Samaritans were looking for a "Messiah like" figure in the Taheb, it is interesting that she asks Jesus if He is the Messiah -- "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." Jesus \*said to her, "I who speak to you am [He]." (John 4:25-26)

**Well** (5421)(**phrear**) describes a relatively deep pit or shaft in the ground. It is in essence a hole in the ground and could be a **cistern** (a place to store runoff water, especially rain water), something made by man. Or it could be a well. In Revelation, John uses it to describe an abyss or "bottomless pit" (Rev 9:1-2), probably representative of a prison. **BDAG** - (1) a construction consisting of a vertical shaft, covered with a stone, for water supply, a well (2) an opening that leads to the depths of the nether world, pit, shaft. **Friberg** - (1) as a place for storing runoff water cistern, reservoir, a sealed-in well, distinguished from pege, (spring, fountain) (Jn 4.11); (2) as the opening into a deep hole in the ground shaft, pit (Analytical Lexicon) The wordplay **pege**... **phrear** sets the stage for the saying in Jn 4:13-14, and the shift to **phrear** in Jn 4:11 is made to focus on the depth of the shaft, which requires use of a bucket. In contrast, Jesus supplies water that 'wells up' or jumps up as it were. The former speaks of human effort, the latter speaks of divine provision. When the woman spoke of the well she used the word phrear (Jn 4:11-12), but Jesus use the word pege (Jn 4:14).

**Phrear** - 7x in 5v -Usage: pit(4), well(3).

Luke 14:5+ And He said to them, "Which one of you will have a son or an ox fall into a well, and will not immediately pull him out on a Sabbath day?"

John 4:11 She said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water? 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?"

Revelation 9:1+ Then the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth; and the key of the bottomless pit was given to him. 2 He opened the bottomless pit, and smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit.

**Phrear** - 48v in the Septuagint - Ge 14:10; 16:14; 21:14, 19, 25, 30-32; 22:19; 24:11, 20, 62; 25:11; 26:15, 18-20, 25, 32-33; 28:10; 29:2-3, 8, 10; 46:1, 5; Ex 2:15; Nu 21:16-18, 22; 1Sa 19:22; 2Sa 3:26; Ps 55:23; 69:15; Pr 5:15; 23:27; Song 4:15; Isa 15:8; Jer 14:3; 41:7, 9; Amos 5:5

Ge 14:10 Now the valley of Siddim was full of tarpits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and they fell into them. But those who survived fled to the hill country.

**Where then do You get that living water?** - The woman knew there was no free flowing spring or stream in Shechem would qualify as living water.

The [NET Note](#) states that "The woman's reply is an example of the "***misunderstood statement***," a technique appearing frequently in John's Gospel. Jesus was speaking of living water which was spiritual (ultimately a Johannine figure for the Holy Spirit, see Jn 7:38–39), but the woman thought he was speaking of flowing (fresh drinkable) water. Her misunderstanding gave Jesus the opportunity to explain what he really meant."

**Where** (4159) (**pothen**) is an adverb used to introduce questions especially questions that begin with "Where?" or "How?". **Pothen** - An "interrogative adverb; (1) of place from where? from what place? (Jn 3.8); (2) of origin from what source? born of what parentage? (Jn 7.27); (3) of reason how is it that? in what way? (Mk 12.37); in a question expressing surprise why? (Luke 1.43)" (Friberg) **Pothen** is used 13 times in John and points to the source or origin of things. Thus pothen is a key term in John's Gospel. Most persons in John did not know from where Jesus came, as the woman here did not know from whence Jesus received this living water.

**BDAG** summarized - 1. interrogative expression of extension from a local source, from what place? from where? (Mt 15:33, Mk 8:4) 2. interrogative expression of derivation from a source, from what source? brought about or given by whom? born of whom? (Mt 13:27, 54, 56) 3. interrogative expression of cause or reason, how, why, in what way? (Mk 12:37)

**Thayer** - Pothen is an adverb (from Homer down), whence; **a. of place**, from what place: Mt. 15:33; Luke 13:25,27; John 3:8; 6:5; 8:14; 9:29,30; 19:9; Rev. 7:13; from what condition, Rev. 2:5. **b. of origin or source**, equivalent to from what author or giver: Mt. 13:(27),54,56; 21:25; Mark 6:2; Luke 20:7; John 2:9; James 4:1; from what parentage, John 7:27f (cf. 6:42), see Meyer at the passage, **c. of cause**, how is it that? how can it be that? Mark 8:4; 12:37; Luke 1:43; John 1:48; 4:11.

**Pothen** - 29x in 26v - NAS translates - how(3), what(1), what... source(1), what sense(1), where(22).

Matthew 13:27 "The slaves of the landowner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? **How** then does it have tares?'

54 He came to His hometown and began teaching them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, "**Where** did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?

56 "And His sisters, are they not all with us? **Where** then did this man get all these things?"

Matthew 15:33 The disciples said to Him, "Where would we get so many loaves in this desolate place to satisfy such a large crowd?"

Matthew 21:25 "The baptism of John was from **what** source, from heaven or from men?" And they began reasoning among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say to us, 'Then why did you not believe him?'

Mark 6:2 When the Sabbath came, He began to teach in the synagogue; and the many listeners were astonished, saying, "**Where** did this man get these things, and what is this wisdom given to Him, and such miracles as these performed by His hands?

Mark 8:4 And His disciples answered Him, "**Where** will anyone be able to find enough bread here in this desolate place to satisfy these people?"

Mark 12:37 "David himself calls Him 'Lord'; so in **what** sense is He his son?" And the large crowd enjoyed listening to Him.

Luke 1:43 "And **how** has it happened to me, that the mother of my Lord would come to me?

Luke 13:25 "Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, 'Lord, open up to us!' then He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know **where** you are from.'

27 and He will say, 'I tell you, I do not know **where** you are from; DEPART FROM ME, ALL YOU EVILDOERS.'

Luke 20:7 So they answered that they did not know **where** it came from.

John 1:48 Nathanael said to Him, "**How** do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."

John 2:9 When the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know **where** it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom,

John 3:8 "The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know **where** it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

John 4:11 She said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; **where** then do You get that living water?"

John 6:5 Therefore Jesus, lifting up His eyes and seeing that a large crowd was coming to Him, said to Philip, "**Where** are we to buy bread, so that these may eat?"

John 7:27 "However, we know **where** this man is from; but whenever the Christ may come, no one knows **where** He is from."

28 Then Jesus cried out in the temple, teaching and saying, "You both know Me and know **where** I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know.

John 8:14 Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I testify about Myself, My testimony is true, for I know **where** I came from and **where** I am going; but you do not know **where** I come from or where I am going.

John 9:29 "We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know **where** He is from."

30 The man answered and said to them, "Well, here is an amazing thing, that you do not know **where** He is from, and yet He opened my eyes.

John 19:9 and he (Pilate) entered into the Praetorium again and said to Jesus, "**Where** are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer.

James 4:1 **What** is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members?

Revelation 2:5 'Therefore remember from **where** you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place-- unless you repent.

Revelation 7:13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and **where** have they come from?"

**Pothen** - 27x in 27v in the Septuagint - Gen 16:8; 29:4; 42:7; Num 11:13; Josh 9:8; Jdg 13:6; 17:9; 19:17; 1 Sam 25:11; 30:13; 2 Sam 1:3, 13; 2Kgs 5:25; 6:27; 20:14; Job 1:7; 2:2; 28:12, 20; 38:24; Ps 121:1; Pr 22:27; Isa 39:3; 41:24, 28; Jer 15:18; 36:17; 48:9; Jonah 1:8; Nah 3:7;

**Barclay on living water** - Just as Nicodemus did, the woman took the words of Jesus quite literally when she was meant to understand them spiritually. It was living water of which Jesus spoke. In ordinary language to the Jew living water was running water. It was the water of the running stream in contradistinction to the water of the stagnant cistern or pool. This well, as we have seen, was not a springing well, but a well into which the water percolated from the subsoil. To the Jew, running, living water from the stream was always better. So the woman is saying: "You are offering me pure stream water. Where are you going to get it?"... But the Jews had another way of using the word water. They often spoke of the thirst of the soul for God; and they often spoke of quenching that thirst with living water. Jesus was not using terms that were bound to be misunderstood; he was using terms that anyone with spiritual insight should have understood... Sometimes the Rabbis identified this living water with the wisdom of the Law; sometimes they identified it with nothing less than the Holy Spirit of God. All Jewish pictorial religious language was full of this idea of the thirst of the soul which could be quenched only with the living water which was the gift of God. But the woman chose to understand this with an almost crude literalism. She was blind because she would not see. ([William Barclay's Daily Study Bible](#))

Jesus' use of living water should not surprise us, nor should it have surprised a Biblically literate Jew, for the OT repeatedly refers to living water in non-literal, spiritual sense. Of course, the Samaritan woman would not have been familiar with these passages for her "Bible" was only the Pentateuch and did not include the Psalms or the Prophets, the latter books being an especially rich source of teaching on living (spiritual) water...

In Isaiah we read the promise to the chosen people "Therefore you will joyously draw water From the springs of salvation." (Isa 12:3). Most commentaries on the "living water" at the Feast of Tabernacles in John 7:37-39 have noted that this passage was

daily on the lips of the jubilant Jewish crowd as they carried water from the Pool of Siloam to the Temple.

The Psalmist spoke of spiritual (soul thirst "As the deer pants for the water brooks, So my soul pants for You, O God." (Ps 42:1).

Again in Isaiah Jehovah promised "I will pour out water on the thirsty land And streams on the dry ground; I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring And My blessing on your descendants." (Isa 44:3)

The summons was "Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; And you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk Without money and without cost." (Isaiah 55:1)

Jehovah's complaint through His mouthpiece Jeremiah was "My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, The fountain of living waters, To hew for themselves cisterns, Broken cisterns That can hold no water. (Jeremiah 2:13, cp Jer 17:13).

Ezekiel describes a future time when "water was flowing from under the threshold of the house (the Millennial Temple) toward the east." (Ezekiel 47:1-12).

The prophet Zechariah also gives us a description of the living waters in the Millennium - "And in that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter." (Zechariah 14:8).

**Gary Burge** explains **living water** - As with Nicodemus, earthly questioners cannot understand heavenly things. They stumble over misunderstandings, which lead to humorous, ironic double meanings. As a resident of Shechem, the woman knows the location of every water source. But here Jesus says something unexpected: He is able to provide "**living water**" (Jn 4:10b). "**Living water**" refers to water that flows as in a spring, river, or stream, that is, moving water. Other water stood still, and one could find it in a well, cistern, or pond (A **cistern** is an underground reservoir or cavity generally dug into the soft limestone and lined with plaster. Rainwater is directed into the cistern's small opening and a lid keeps out light thereby keeping algae from growing. Villages throughout Palestine still use cistern systems today. Some were small for a household. Masada's 12 cisterns on its western slope held 1.5 million cubic feet of water.). **Living water** was precious and valued and, according to rabbinic law, was the only water that could be used in ritual washings to make pure unclean worshipers. (A good example of this is found at Qumran where numerous ritual baths are fed by the requisite amounts of "running water" caught from the mountain valley just west of the site.) Everyone knew that Shechem had no rivers or streams. Even Jacob had to dig a well in order to water his flocks here (Jn 4:12). How could a Jewish outsider, someone who barely knew the terrain, offer water that no one else had found? There is no living water in Shechem. (See [John - NIV Application Commentary](#) scroll up and down for more text)

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**Henrietta Mears** summarizes **Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well** - Jesus brought an immoral woman face to face with Himself and showed her what kind of life she was leading. Christ did not condemn her or pass judgment upon her, but He did reveal to her that He is the only One who could meet her **needs**. Christ revealed the wonderful truth to her that He is the water of life. **He alone can satisfy. The wells of the world cannot provide satisfaction.** This woman's loose view of marriage is not unlike the view of marriage held by many people today. People try every kind of **well**—money, power, clothes, food, possessions, drugs—but they still are **unhappy** and **unsatisfied**. Did the woman believe Christ? What did she do? Her actions spoke louder than any words could have. She went back to town, and by her simple testimony brought a whole town to Christ (see John 4:1–42). This story gives us Christ's estimate of a single soul. (Discover Jesus in the Pages of the Bible: Amazing Facts About the Greatest Person Who Ever Lived).

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**Oswald Chambers** - Inferior misgivings about Jesus - Sir, Thou hast nothing to draw with. John 4:11. - 'I am impressed with the wonder of what God says, but He cannot expect me really to live it out in the details of my life!' When it comes to facing Jesus Christ on His own merits, our attitude is one of pious superiority—'Your ideals are high and they impress us, but in touch with actual things, it cannot be done.' Each of us thinks about Jesus in this way in some particular. These misgivings about Jesus start from the amused questions put to us when we talk of our transactions with God—'Where are you going to get your money from? How are you going to be looked after?' Or they start from ourselves when we tell Jesus that our case is a bit too hard for Him. 'It is all very well to say "Trust in the Lord," but a man must live, and Jesus has nothing to draw with—nothing whereby to give us these things.' Beware of the pious fraud in you which says—'I have no misgivings about Jesus, only about myself.' None of us ever had misgivings about ourselves; we know exactly what we cannot do, but we do have misgivings about Jesus. We are rather hurt at the idea that He can do what we cannot. My misgivings arise from the fact that I ransack my own person to find out how He will be able to do it. My questions spring from the depths of my own inferiority. If I detect these misgivings in myself, let me bring them to the light and confess them—'Lord, I have had misgivings about Thee, I have not believed in Thy wits apart from my own; I have not believed in Thine Almighty power apart from my finite understanding of it.' (My utmost for his highest)

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**Oswald Chambers** - The impoverished ministry of Jesus - From whence then hast Thou that living water? John 4:11. - "The well is

deep”—and a great deal deeper than the Samaritan woman knew! Think of the depths of human nature, of human life, think of the depths of the ‘wells’ in you. Have you been impoverishing the ministry of Jesus so that He cannot do anything? Suppose there is a well of fathomless trouble inside your heart, and Jesus comes and says—“Let not your heart be troubled”; and you shrug your shoulders and say—‘But, Lord, the well is deep; You cannot draw up quietness and comfort out of it.’ No, He will bring them down from above. Jesus does not bring anything up from the wells of human nature. We limit the Holy One of Israel by remembering what we have allowed Him to do for us in the past, and by saying—‘Of course I cannot expect God to do this thing.’ The thing that taxes almightiness is the very thing which as disciples of Jesus we ought to believe He will do. We impoverish His ministry the moment we forget He is Almighty; the impoverishment is in us, not in Him. We will come to Jesus as Comforter or as Sympathizer, but we will not come to Him as Almighty. The reason some of us are such poor specimens of Christianity is because we have no Almighty Christ. We have Christian attributes and experiences, but there is no abandonment to Jesus Christ. When we get into difficult circumstances, we impoverish His ministry by saying—‘Of course He cannot do any thing,’ and we struggle down to the deeps and try to get the water for ourselves. Beware of the satisfaction of sinking back and saying—‘It can’t be done’; you know it can be done if you look to Jesus. The well of your incompleteness is deep, but make the effort and look away to Him. (My utmost for his highest)

### **John 4:12 "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?"**

BGT John 4:12 μ σ με ζων ε το πατρ ς μ ν ακ β, ς δωκεν μ ν τ φρ αρ κα α τ ς ξ α το πιεν κα ο υ ο α το κα τ θρ μματ α α το ;

NET John 4:12 Surely you're not greater than our ancestor Jacob, are you? For he gave us this well and drank from it himself, along with his sons and his livestock."

NLT John 4:12 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?"

ESV John 4:12 Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock."

NIV John 4:12 Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?"

GNT John 4:12 μ σ με ζων ε το πατρ ς μ ν ακ β, ς δωκεν μ ν τ φρ αρ κα α τ ς ξ α το πιεν κα ο υ ο α το κα τ θρ μματ α α το ;

KJV John 4:12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

YLT John 4:12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, who did give us the well, and himself out of it did drink, and his sons, and his cattle?"

ASV John 4:12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his sons, and his cattle?

CSB John 4:12 You aren't greater than our father Jacob, are You? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and livestock."

NKJ John 4:12 "Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?"

NRS John 4:12 Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?"

NAB John 4:12 Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us this cistern and drank from it himself with his children and his flocks?"

NJB John 4:12 Are you a greater man than our father Jacob, who gave us this well and drank from it himself with his sons and his cattle?"

GWN John 4:12 You're not more important than our ancestor Jacob, are you? He gave us this well. He and his sons and his animals drank water from it."

## ARE YOU GREATER THAN JACOB?

**You are not greater than our father Jacob, are You** - Is she asking a sincere question or is she expressing a degree of cynicism? Unfortunately we cannot discern the "tone" of her voice! Why did she ask this question is the question? While we cannot be dogmatic, the context suggests that she presumed Jesus could tap into a better source of living (running) water, one that was not so deep that it could only be reached by letting down a bucket. So the Jesus well would be better than a Jacob well and thus Jesus would be greater than Jacob. She seems to imply that Jesus was either a truth teller or a deceiver, although the Greek order of the question expects a negative answer. The woman clearly did not understand that the living water Jesus referred to was spiritual water and that He indeed was greater than Jacob! (cp similar question by the Jews to Jesus in Jn 8:53).

**THOUGHT** - A ministry in India uses this concept as a means of spreading the Gospel (the real "living water") among unreached people groups in India (many of these groups also be veritable outcasts from their society, like the Samaritan woman!) by digging wells referred to as "[Jesus Wells](#)."

As **Vincent** says "The interrogative particle indicates that a negative answer is expected: **Surely thou art not.**" But notice that Jesus does not even answer this question, refusing to be side tracked from His main objective which was to give her the "Good News" of "living water." ([John 4 Commentary](#))

**THOUGHT** - I fear that too often when I am sharing the Gospel with others, I (unlike Jesus) allow myself to be side-tracked from the main objective of clearly and simply speaking the Gospel!

**Brian Bell** - "Jesus doesn't always answer our questions...but our needs!... She tries to mildly put Jesus in His place with her "who-do-you-think-you are" question. Jesus patiently appeals to her immediate desire for physical water. In doing so He appeals to her greater, though less obvious, spiritual thirst." ([Spiritual Dehydration](#))

**Barclay on our father Jacob** - She goes on to speak of "**our father Jacob**." The Jews would, of course, have strenuously denied that Jacob was the father of the Samaritans, but it was part of the Samaritan claim that they were descended from Joseph, the son of Jacob, by way of Ephraim and Manasseh. The woman is in effect saying to Jesus: "This is blasphemous talk. Jacob, our great ancestor, when he came here, had to dig this well to gain water for his family and his cattle. Are you claiming to be able to get fresh, running stream water? If you are, you are claiming to be wiser and more powerful than Jacob. That is a claim that no one has any right to make." ([William Barclay's Daily Study Bible](#))

**Alford on greater than Jacob** - for his (Jacob's) gift was of water which cannot satisfy: but the water which He should give has living power, and becomes an eternal fountain within. This however, 'that He was greater than Jacob,' lies only in the background: the water is the subject, as before. ([Greek Testament Critical Exegetical Commentary](#))

**Ironside on greater than our father Jacob** - Jesus might have said to her, "Greater than Jacob! My poor woman, did you ever read in the first book of Moses the story of your father Jacob, as you call him. How one night he had sent his family and flocks across the ford, and he was bowed in prayer alone when there came to him a mysterious personality with whom Jacob struggled all night. Then the unknown one said, 'Let me go, for the day breaketh,' and Jacob said, 'I will not let thee go, except thou bless me'" (Ge 32:26). Jesus might have said to the woman, "Do you remember that story? Well, I am the One who met Jacob there in the darkness and overcame his stubborn will." But I am afraid that if He had told her that, she would have shrunk from Him, thinking that He was insane. Instead of alarming her, He sought to reach her heart and conscience. ([Ironside's Notes](#))

In John 8, the "**believing**" Jews (see the "**fruit**" of their **belief** - compare Jn 8:30 and John 8:42-44, especially Jn 8:45, 59) asked Jesus "**Surely You are not greater than our father Abraham, who died? The prophets died too; whom do You make Yourself out to be?**" Later, in this same scene Jesus declared to them "**Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am**" (John 8:58), which would mean that He was also "before" (greater than) Jacob, because Abraham was the first great patriarch, and preceded Jacob. Elsewhere, John clearly differentiates Jesus' ministry from Moses (Jn 1:17) and also states that Jesus was greater than Jonah and Solomon (Mt 12:41-42)

**Jacob... who gave us the well** - **Arnold** notes that her statement "is sheer tradition. The book of Genesis does not record Jacob ever digging a well, much less drinking from it himself or giving it to any of his sons. Mention is merely made of Jacob's buying and giving Shechem to Joseph (Ge 33:19; 48:22), in the vicinity of which Jacob's well is located." (Ibid)

**The well** ([phrear](#)) - It speaks so a man-made cistern. Jesus used a different Greek word (pege) for well in Jn 4:14, which means as discussed above refers to a spring or fountain. On the other hand, the woman was talking about what is in essence a hole in the ground. What a striking contrast - a hole in the ground (temporal, natural, sustaining physical life) versus a bubbling spring (eternal, supernatural, giving spiritual life)! **Jesus' way is ALWAYS THE BEST!**

BGT John 4:13 πεκρθη ησο ςκα ε πεν ατ· π ς π νων κ το δατος του διψ σει π λιν·

NET John 4:13 Jesus replied, "Everyone who drinks some of this water will be thirsty again.

NLT John 4:13 Jesus replied, "Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again.

ESV John 4:13 Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,

NIV John 4:13 Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again,

GNT John 4:13 πεκρθη ησο ςκα ε πεν ατ , Π ς π νων κ το δατος του διψ σει π λιν·

KJV John 4:13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

YLT John 4:13 Jesus answered and said to her, 'Every one who is drinking of this water shall thirst again;

ASV John 4:13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

CSB John 4:13 Jesus said, "Everyone who drinks from this water will get thirsty again.

NKJ John 4:13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again,

NRS John 4:13 Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,

NAB John 4:13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again;

NJB John 4:13 Jesus replied: Whoever drinks this water will be thirsty again;

GWN John 4:13 Jesus answered her, "Everyone who drinks this water will become thirsty again.

- Jn 6:27,49; Isaiah 65:13,14; Luke 16:24

## "I CAN'T GET NO SATISFACTION"

**Everyone** (whoever in Jn 4:14) - Praise God for Jesus' use of this all inclusive pronoun **EVERYONE!** We were ALL thirsty outcasts in His eyes, all lost without Him and yet He cam for EVERYONE, and EVERYONE who believes in Him will live forever with Him. Hallelujah! We can go for weeks without food, but only a few days without water. **EVERYONE** needs to periodic rehydration in order to sustain physical life. But on the spiritual plane Jesus is alluding to the failure of anything and everything earthly which has the power to quench our spiritual thirst!

**THOUGHT** - While we as believers have drunk of the LIVING WATER and have been made spiritually alive by the Holy Spirit ("past tense salvation"), until we are glorified (1 Jn 3:2+), we are still in a "wilderness" in this godless, God-hating world (cf Amos 8:11) and must daily drink of the God's WATER OF LIFE to sustain and sanctify our souls (present tense salvation) (Jn 17:17, cf "pure milk of the word" 1 Pe 2:2+, Eph 5:26+).

**Drinks** (present tense = continually drinks) of this (physical) water. Note the striking contrast between "two drinks" - here Jesus describes continually drinking from the world's water, which can never fully satisfy, versus just one drink (aorist tense in Jn 4:14) of the water Jesus offers, which satisfies and gives life for all eternity! What a contrast! Have you partaken of the "drink that refreshes" today and forever? **Drinks** is in the active voice which speaks of a choice of one's will. While we would never (in our natural sinful state) crave spiritual water, the Spirit stirs our heart to desire it, but we must still make the conscious, volitional choice to drink (Mystery of divine sovereignty and free will!)

**Alan Carr** comments on Jesus' use of different tenses for **drinks**, explaining that "This is the nature of salvation. One can drink of the pleasures of this world, like this poor woman, and will still have to try to find more ways to satisfy themselves. However, one trip to the fountain of living water will forever satisfy the thirsty soul. Coming to Jesus will forever meet the needs of life and of the heart." ([Sermon](#))

**This water** - This refers to physical water. **Robertson** is probably correct writing that "Jesus pointed to the well ("this water")."

**Thirst** (1372) (**dipsao** from **dipsa** = thirst) is used to refer to literal thirst (Mt 25:35, 37, 42, 44; Jn 19:28) and figurative thirst (Mt 5:6, Jn 4:13, 14, 6:35, 7:37, Rev 7:16, 21:6, 22:17). And so we see that dipsao is used to describe both physical thirst and the deep spiritual longing that is in every heart.

**Max Alderman on will thirst again** - This illustrates **thirst** from a Biblical position. The world also has its own ways of expressing its thirst. When I was a teenager, the words of a popular rock song went something like this, "I can't get no satisfaction ..." **This group was expressing not only its thirst, but also its inability to quench that thirst.** The world thirsts after so many different things. There are those thirsting after money, sex, fame, popularity and a host of many other things yet not having that thirst quenched. Satan offers many "oases" in this dry thirsty world (**Ed comment:** I would prefer to refer to them as mirages or, if water, pools of poison water at best!). But the thirst always returns. Though Jesus was referring to drinking water when He said, "Whosoever drinks of this water shall thirst again," the results are the same when man attempts to satisfy his thirst apart from the Lord's living water.

**Alford on thirst again** - The words apply to every similar quenching of desire by earthly means: the desire springs up again—is **not satisfied, but only postponed.** The manna was as insufficient to satisfy hunger,—as this water, thirst, see Jn 6:49; 6:58. It is only the **living water** which can satisfy. ([John 4 Commentary](#))

**Brian Bell on thirst again** - Love, success, wealth, fame but a few of the countless springs at which men had stooped to drink. Imagine a handful of stickers that read "will thirst again!" and placing them everywhere you went. On the TV set; on bars & pubs; on bottles of alcohol; on a joint; on a prostitute; on the desk of the business exec who made it to the top... "you will thirst again!" It seems like we all have to "test the waters" ourselves though. No, we can't learn from Adam & Eve who tried the forbidden fruit that didn't satisfy... it made them thirst again! Samson saw a woman in Timnah ("go get her for me"); took a Gaza strip harlot; then Delilah... and still died a thirsty man. We don't know if Solomon ever quenched his thirst? (700 wives; 300 concubines) (**Ed comment:** See Eccl 1:2-3) ([Spiritual Dehydration](#))

**Barclay** - Jesus went on to make a still more startling statement that he could give her living water which would banish her thirst for ever. The point is that again the woman took this literally; but in point of fact it was nothing less than a Messianic claim. In the prophetic vision of the age to come, the age of God, the promise was: "They shall not hunger or thirst" (Isa49:10). It was with God and none other that the living fountain of the all-quenching water existed. "With thee is the fountain of life," the Psalmist had cried (Ps 36:9). It is from the very throne of God that the river of life is to flow (Rev 22:1). It is the Lord who is the fountain of living water (Jer 17:13). It is in the Messianic age that the parched ground is to become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water (Isa 35:7). When Jesus spoke about bringing to men the water which quenches thirst for ever, he was doing no less than stating that he was the Anointed One of God who was to bring in the new age. Again the woman did not see it. ([William Barclay's Daily Study Bible](#))

**Rich Cathers** - Jesus is talking about the deepest thirst man has, the thirst for eternal life, the thirst for God. Pascal said there was a "God shaped vacuum" inside every person. We try all sorts of things to fill that emptiness inside. Some try physical things – It might be sensual pleasures like sex. Others will venture into drugs or alcohol, all trying to fill that void inside. Some try spiritual things – venturing into Eastern mysticism, occult practices, or even joining a church. Some try to fill that emptiness by doing good things – joining the Peace Corps or volunteering at a homeless shelter. Others try to fill the hole by attaining greatness – getting a place in the Guinness Book of World Records, becoming the boss of a Fortune 500 company, becoming President of the United States. Jesus said that if we drink from this well, we will thirst again. None of these things will fill that emptiness that only God can fill. ([John 4:1-14](#))

**Franzmann** (Bible history commentary: New Testament) on **will thirst again** applies this principle to every life noting that "no one can ever satisfy the thirst of the soul with what the world has to offer. Profit, pleasure, power, prestige—all leave the soul thirsty. As an extreme case, I take the words Lord Byron, a famous poet, but a worldling and a wastrel, wrote on his thirty-third birthday:

Through life's dull road, so dim and dirty,  
I have dragged to three and thirty.  
What have these years left to me?  
Nothing—except thirty-three.  
Through life's dull road, so dim and dirty,  
I have dragged to three and thirty.  
What have these years left to me?  
Nothing—except thirty-three.  
But Jesus with his living water  
can quench the thirst of every heart:

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**J R Miller** - There is said to be a strange plant in South America which finds a moist place and rests there for a while, sending its roots down and becoming green. When this bit of earth dries up, the plant draws itself together and is blown along by the wind until it finds another moist spot, where it repeats the same story. On and on it rolls, stopping wherever it finds a little water, and staying until the water is exhausted. But after all its journeyings, it is nothing but a bundle of dead roots and leaves. The life of this plant, tells the story of those who drink only at this world's springs. They go from spring to spring, and at the last, at the end of the longest life—

they are nothing but bundles of unsatisfied desires and burning thirsts. (Devotional Hours with the Bible)

"I tried the broken cisterns, Lord,  
But ah! the waters failed!  
E'en as I stooped to drink they'd fled,  
And mocked me as I wailed.

Now none but Christ can satisfy,  
None other name for me;  
There's love, and life, and lasting joy,  
Lord Jesus, found in Thee."

**John 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."**

BGT John 4:14 ς δ ν π κ το δατος ο γ δ σω ατ, ο μ διψ σει ε ς τ ν α να, λ λ τ δωρ δ σω ατ γεν σεται ν ατ πηγ δατος λλομ νου ε ς ζω ν α νιον.

NET John 4:14 But whoever drinks some of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again, but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up to eternal life."

NLT John 4:14 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."

ESV John 4:14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

NIV John 4:14 but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

GNT John 4:14 ς δ ν π κ το δατος ο γ δ σω ατ, ο μ διψ σει ε ς τ ν α να, λ λ τ δωρ δ σω ατ γεν σεται ν ατ πηγ δατος λλομ νου ε ς ζω ν α νιον.

KJV John 4:14 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.

YLT John 4:14 but whoever may drink of the water that I will give him, may not thirst -- to the age; and the water that I will give him shall become in him a well of water, springing up to life age-during.'

ASV John 4:14 but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life.

CSB John 4:14 But whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will never get thirsty again-- ever! In fact, the water I will give him will become a well of water springing up within him for eternal life."

NKJ John 4:14 "but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

NRS John 4:14 but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life."

NAB John 4:14 but whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

NJB John 4:14 but no one who drinks the water that I shall give will ever be thirsty again: the water that I shall give will become a spring of water within, welling up for eternal life.

GWN John 4:14 But those who drink the water that I will give them will never become thirsty again. In fact, the water I will give them will become in them a spring that gushes up to eternal life."

- **never** - Jn 6:35,58; 11:26; 17:2,3; Isaiah 49:10; Romans 6:23; Revelation 7:16
- Jn 7:38,39; 10:10; 14:16-19; Romans 5:21; 8:16,17; 2Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13,14; Ephesians 4:30; 1Peter 1:22; 1John 5:20

## THE REAL THIRST QUENCHER!

The ultimate "thirst quencher" is not Gatorade but "God-aid!"

**But** - A strategic, even dramatic term of contrast, which radically and plainly brings out the difference between physical water and living, spiritual water. Whenever you encounter a term of contrast, it is a good practice to pause and ponder, asking what is being contrasted? What is the writer's "change of direction?"

Observe three facts that set Jesus' water apart from all other water - (1) Will never thirst again, (2) the one drinking this water has a veritable spring within (cf Jn 7:38+) and (3) it gives eternal life.

**Marcus Dods** - Jesus contrasts the water of the well with the water He can give; and the two characteristic qualities of His living water are suggested by this contrast. The water of Jacob's well had two defects: it quenched thirst only for a time, and it lay outside the town a weary distance, and subject to various accidents. Christ offers water which will quench thirst lastingly, and which will be "in" the person drinking... The **living water** lastingly quenches human cravings and is within the man, inseparable from him, and always energetically and afresh shooting up. ([The Expositor's Greek Testament](#))

**Drinks** - Here the verb is aorist tense which speaks of a one time action, and clearly in context speaks of the initial belief in Jesus which results in regeneration of our dead spirit (Eph 2:1, Titus 3:5-6). The active voice calls for the subject to make a volitional choice, a choice of their will. **Drinks** is a key point - you can know water is available and you can be thirsty, but if you fail to take a drink of the water, you will remain thirsty! Many people in the "reached people groups" know about Jesus and they are spiritually thirsty (as evidenced by their endless quest to try to satisfy their spiritual need) but they refuse to come and drink of Jesus!

**Whoever drinks** (cp parallel passages = **anyone** in Jn 7:37, **every one** in Isa 55:1) - The fountain of living water is open to **whoever**, regardless of race, creed, color, sordid past, etc. There is one requirement - they must "drink," which in the context of the NT means they must believe the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus, for that "water" alone can give life that endures eternally.

*I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.*

*I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost.*

-- Revelation 21:6+

The impartiality of the Gospel is repeated emphasized in Scripture, Paul for example writing...

For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; for **"WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."** (Ro 10:12-13+)

**I will give** - It is a gift. It cannot be earned or merited. Jesus is the Giver, just as He had alluded to in John 4:10.

**Shall never thirst** (1372) (**dipsao**) speaks here primarily of spiritual thirst. When one "drinks" of Jesus, His thirst is forever quenched. O yes, we can never get enough of Jesus, the Infinite One, but we will never suffer from spiritual thirst that we did when we did not believe in Jesus.

**Never** (ou me) - Notice this is a strong **double negative** which means never, not ever, by no means! The **Amplified Version** has "shall never, no never, be thirsty any more." This statement alone indicates that this water is "other worldly" for worldly water (including the "trinkets and baubles" of this passing world) can never satisfy our recurring thirst! Why? Because only "spiritual water," supernatural "water," can penetrate into our deepest, innermost being and therein nourish our soul and give true contentment! Only Jesus gives this "brand" of water! Belief in Jesus equates with "drinking" from this ever flowing, supernatural stream, the "living waters" that come bubbling out being a beautiful picture of the Holy Spirit in us (Jn 7:37-39+)! Oh my, thank God for the Spirit's inspiration of such precious word pictures which open the eye of our heart to the beauty and greatness of our salvation in Christ! Amen.

This passage is the **first seven great "NEVERS"** in John's Gospel:

1. John 4.14 **Never** Thirst
2. John 6.35 **Never** Hunger/Thirst
3. John 8.12 **NET Never** walk in darkness
4. John 8.51 **Never** see death
5. John 8.52 **Never** taste death
6. John 10.28 **Never** Perish
7. John 11.26 **Never** Die

Notice also that the phrase **never thirst** conveys to some degree an element of eternal security for the believer.

**Henry Alford on shall never thirst** - shall never have to go away and be exhausted, and come again to be filled;—but shall have the spring at home, in his own breast,—so that he can “draw water with joy out of the wells of salvation” (Isaiah 12:3+) at his pleasure.” ([John 4 Commentary](#))

**Steven Cole on shall never thirst** - He means that we who have drunk this living water are satisfied with Him in the sense that we know that He has rescued us from sin and judgment (Ro 8:1+). He has given us eternal life and that nothing can separate us from His love (Ro 8:31-39). We're His children, under His loving care in every situation (1 John 3:1+). He has given us every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Eph 1:3). We have His Word, which is like water to our soul. Jesus does not mean that our thirst is forever quenched in the sense that we cease to long for more and more of Him. We still hunger and thirst after righteousness (Mt. 5:6). Our hearts still pant after God like the thirsty deer for the water brook (Ps. 42:1). We still pray (Ps. 63:1), “O God, You are my God; I shall seek You earnestly; my soul thirsts for You, my flesh yearns for You, in a dry and weary land where there is no water.” John Calvin sums up both sides of this (Calvin's Commentaries [Baker], p. 151): “Although we thirst throughout our whole life, yet it is certain that we have not received the Holy Spirit for a single day, or for any short period, but as a perennial fountain, which will never fail us.” ([Living Water for a Thirsty Woman](#))

**H A Ironside** - No one has ever yet found satisfaction in the things of the world. They cannot satisfy a heart that has been created for eternity. ([John 4 Commentary](#))

**Ray Stedman** - How do we keep from thirsting? We have water piped in, available to us all the time, so that when we feel even a little thirsty we take a drink of it. This is what Jesus means here. The water he would give would be available constantly so that when one was thirsty one could drink immediately and so would never get terribly thirsty. ([The Man Who Understood Woman](#))

**Marvin Vincent** on the strong negative **shall never thirst** - It must not be understood, however, that the reception of the divine life by a believer does away with all further desire. On the contrary, it generates new desires. The drinking of the living water is put as a single act, in order to indicate the divine principle of life as containing in itself alone the satisfaction of all holy desires as they successively arise; in contrast with human sources, which are soon exhausted, and drive one to other fountains. Holy desire, no matter how large or how varied it may become, will always seek and find its satisfaction in Christ, and in Christ only. Thirst is to be taken in the same sense in both clauses, as referring to that natural craving which the world cannot satisfy, and which is therefore ever restless. Drusius, a Flemish critic, cited by Trench (“Studies in the Gospels”), says: “He who drinks the water of wisdom thirsts and does not thirst. He thirsts, that is, he more and more desires that which he drinks. He does not thirst, because he is so filled that he desires no other drink.” The strong contrast of this declaration of our Lord with pagan sentiment, is illustrated by the following passage from Plato: ([John 4 Commentary](#))

In John 6 Jesus again alludes to the promise of supernatural “water” that alone is able to eternally quench the deep God-given thirst of one's soul. Notice that He was addressing the crowd who was following Him seeking physical bread! It seems that Jesus is ever trying to pry our eyes from the paltry portions of this passing planet and focus them on the things above where He is seated at the right hand of God (Col 3:1-note, Col 3:2-note)

(John 6:35) Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me (come = believing in Him as the context shows) will not hunger, and **he who believes in Me will never** (Gk = “ou me” = strong double negative conveying the thought that he will NEVER, EVER) **thirst**.

**Shall... thirst** ([1372](#)) (**dipsao** from **dipsa** = thirst) is used to refer to literal thirst (Mt 25:35, 37, 42, 44; Jn 19:28) and figurative thirst (Mt 5:6, Jn 4:13, 14, 6:35, 7:37, Rev 7:16, 21:6, 22:17). And so we see that dipsao is used to describe both physical thirst and the deep spiritual longing that is in every heart.

**Vincent** on will become in him - “A supply having its fountain-head in the man's own being, and not in something outside himself.” While I agree in part with Vincent, the truth is that the Source is the Spirit of Christ and while He does indwell a believer, ultimately He is from outside of us. ([John 4 Commentary](#))

**Alford** on a **well springing up to eternal life** - All earthly supplies have access only into those lower parts of our being where the desires work themselves out—are but local applications; but the heavenly gift of spiritual life which Jesus gives to those who believe on Him, enters into the very secret and highest place of their personal life, the source whence the desires spring out;—and, its nature being living and spiritual, it does not merely supply, but it lives and waxes onward, unto everlasting life, in duration, and also as producing and sustaining it. It should not be overlooked, that this discourse had, besides its manifold and wonderful meaning for us all, an especial moral one as applied to the woman,—who, by successive draughts at the ‘broken cistern’ of carnal lust, had been vainly seeking solace:—and this consideration serves to bind on the following verses (John 4:16ff.) to the preceding, by another link besides those noticed below. ([John 4 Commentary](#))

This is an old chorus based on this story of the woman at the well in John 4...

[Fill My Cup, Lord](#)

Like the woman at the well  
I was seeking  
For things that could not satisfy  
And then I heard my Savior speaking,  
“Draw from the well  
that never shall run dry.”

Fill my cup, Lord  
I lift it up, Lord.

Come and quench  
This thirsting of my soul

Bread of Heaven,  
Feed me till I want no more.  
Fill my cup, fill it up  
And make me whole.

**Well** - Jesus used a different Greek word for **well** (pege) in contrast to the word the woman had used for **well** (phrear). The former is alive, dynamic, active, a spring, a fountain, but the latter is but a hole in the ground, more like a cistern, with water at the bottom.

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**Spurgeon** ([John 4:14 Life's Ever-Springing Well](#)) - Not a pool (or cistern) of water standing still and becoming stagnant, nor even a stream of water gently gliding on, but a spring perpetually forcing itself upward. You have seen springs at work, and you have noticed that they never cease, they never pause, there is never a moment in which they are quiet. Let all things else change its occupation, the spring could fairly say—“Men may come, and men may go, But I go on for ever.” In the silent night watches, when no eye gazes upon them, the springs bubble on; and when the hot and broiling sun is parching the meadows, cool and clear is the up-leaping, ever-flowing springs. Springs are in perpetual motion, and no known power could stop them. If for mischief heaps of rubbish are piled upon them, they somehow percolate the mass, upheave and find a vent for themselves at last, for their force must win a course for itself. So brethren, when God puts the new life into a man, it is a very active and vigorous principle... The divine life is such a thing of force, that surrounding circumstances do not operate upon it as you might have supposed. In frosty weather, when we have seen the rivers frozen across, we have been told by peasants, that the old spring-head on the side of the hill was flowing on the same as ever. Decorated with icicles up to the edge of the old spout, still the stream gushes out. So a Christian may be placed in the worst imaginable circumstances; he may live in a family so ungodly, that the name of Christ is only used to blaspheme with; he may scarcely ever meet with a Christian associate, he may even be denied the means of grace, the Bible itself may be taken from him, but if the inner life be there, such is its native heat, that you cannot freeze it; such is its constant force and power, that it will continue flowing still. It might have been more happy with the man, it certainly would have been more for his comfort and usefulness, if he had been under other conditions, but here is joy for our heart to recollect that under the worst possible conditions, such is the energy of the grace which God implants, that it will continue to spring upward into everlasting life... I tell you the living spring cannot be stayed in its action. If you have but a cistern full of water, it will be quiet enough, but if it be a spring, it is for ever seething, bubbling, gushing. When I have watched certain springs, I have seen them apparently casting up little particles of sand and dust, making and casting down little circular mounds of earth; and so the inner life within the spirit often brings to light to our own minds our faults and our imperfections, so that nothing appears to be so active as our corruptions, and we anxiously ask, “Is it living water that is bubbling up, or is it only the sand of my sin that is so full of energy?” Beloved, grace lives and aspires; it is an up-going flame, a springing well, and not a down-going cataract. It is a great mercy when the master principle within our spirits is not a going down, but a springing up. Be thankful for upward tendencies, and say unto the Lord:—

Thou of life the fountain art—  
Freely let me take of thee;  
Spring thou up within my heart,  
Rise to all eternity.

**A PICTURE OF  
THE HOLY SPIRIT**

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It is fascinating that the verb **hallomai** which Jesus choose for **springing up** is the same verb used in the OT (**Septuagint = Lxx**) to describe the **Holy Spirit** coming upon ("leaping upon" as it were) Samson (Jdg 14:6, 14:19, 15:14) and Saul (1Sa 10:10). **Vine** writes that in John 4:14 **hallomai** is used as a "figurative of the **Holy Spirit** in the believer." How interesting also to note that in both the Old and New Testament the **Spirit** is described in terms of **pouring out**, as one does with literal water...

Isaiah 32:15 **Until** (Note this important **expression of time!** Pentecost was a partial fulfillment but the latter part of this prophetic promise has not been fulfilled - It will be in the **Millennium**) the **Spirit** is **poured out** upon us from on high, and the wilderness becomes a fertile field and the fertile field is considered as a forest.

Isaiah 44:3 'For I will **pour out** water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground; I will **pour out My Spirit** on your offspring (**Ed**: Sounds like "thirsty souls" in a "thirsty land"! ) and My blessing on your descendants;

Ezekiel 39:29 "And I will not hide My face from them any longer, for I shall have **poured out My Spirit** on the house of Israel," declares the Lord GOD.

Joel 2:28-29 (Acts 2:17-18) "And it will come about after this That I will **pour out My Spirit** on all mankind; And your sons and daughters will prophesy, Your old men will dream dreams, Your young men will see visions. "And even on the male and female servants I will **pour out My Spirit** in those days.

**Henry Morris** (Defender's Study Bible - an excellent conservative resource) - This great promise of the Holy Spirit was precursively fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-21), though He was not given to "all flesh" at that time. The remaining parts of this prophecy (Joel 2:30-31) were not fulfilled at that time, but all will be fulfilled as Christ's return draws near. ([Online Source - click notes in right margin](#))

Zechariah 12:10 "I will **pour out** on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the **Spirit** of grace and of supplication, so that (a strategic **terms of purpose or result**) they will look on Me whom they have pierced (When the Deliverer returns, He will remove ungodliness from Israel before He establishes His Messianic Kingdom on earth - see Ro 11:25-27-**note**); and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.

Acts 2:33 "Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the **Holy Spirit**, He has **poured forth** this which you both see and hear.

Acts 10:45 And all the circumcised believers who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the **Holy Spirit** had been **poured out upon** the Gentiles also.

Romans 5:5-note and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God **has been poured out (ekcheo - perfect tense** which speaks of the effect as lasting, indeed lasting throughout eternity!) **within** our hearts through the **Holy Spirit** Who was given to us.

Titus 3:5-6-note He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the **Holy Spirit**, 6 Whom He **poured out upon** us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior

**Gary Burge** observes that "Jesus' image is dramatic: The woman in search of a well discovers that the Spirit could transform her life into a well that does not require reaching and dipping, but which roils and gurgles with water until it spills over its rim. (See [John - NIV Application Commentary](#) scroll up and down for more text)

**Steven Cole** on **will become in him a well of water spring up - In him** shows that true Christianity is not primarily a matter of rituals and ceremonies, but rather an inward, personal relationship with the living God. It must be in each person's heart. The picture of this living water springing up points to the continual source of life that the indwelling Holy Spirit supplies to believers. It's active and always flowing. There may be times of greater and lesser flow, but it never dries up, as so many Arizona rivers do. ([Living Water for a Thirsty Woman](#))

**Spurgeon** on **a well of water spring up** - Hence he will always be contented. He who has grace in his heart is a happy man; he grows more and more satisfied with the grace as it wells up increasingly in living power in his character and life. Oh, if you have never received that living water, may God give it to you just now! You shall never regret receiving it; but you shall rejoice over it evermore.

**James Smith** - On the sands at Saltcoats there is a spring of fresh water, but as it is within the tide-mark, it is frequently buried beneath the briny waves. But every time the tide recedes the spring appears as fresh and full as ever. If there is within us what our Lord offers to give us, "a well of living water springing up within," it will manifest itself. The billows of temptation or the flood-tide of

sorrow and affliction may overflow for a season, but as sure as every living thing must move, so sure will it spring up again untainted by the contact. Its source is not in its surroundings, but deep in the heart of God, the Fountain of eternal life and love (John 4:14). (Handfuls on Purpose)

**The world offers a stagnant cistern.  
Christ offers a satisfying well.**

PICTURE OF THE SPIRIT SPRINGING UP WITHIN US

**Springing up** (242) (**hallomai** - **Vine** say akin to **halma** = "a leap") means to leap, leap up, jump, spring, spring up, to gush. "Used of quick movement by living beings like jumping." (Brown). To leap, to dance, to rejoice much with song and dance! The two literal uses in Acts (Acts 3:8, 14:10) describe men lame from birth who jump up after being healed by one of the apostles (first Peter, then Paul). Jesus applies **hallomai** metaphorically to the picture of water bubbling up as from an underground spring. There are 3 uses in the NT (see below) and 8 in the Septuagint with 4 of these uses referring to the Holy Spirit "leaping upon" individuals (Samson in Jdg 14:6, 19, 15:14 and Saul in 1Sa 10:10)! The use in Isaiah 35:6 refers to the **Millennium** when the lame will leap! Given these "supernatural" uses of **hallomai** in both the OT and the NT, it is not surprising to see Jesus use it in a similar context describing the supernatural effects of "drinking" the "living waters," which in context means to believe in Him.

**What a glorious picture of the Holy Spirit - inward, irrepressible, inexhaustible!**

**Louw-Nida Semantic Domains** on **Hallomai** - The action of water forming bubbles and welling up from underneath the ground. (UBS)

**Boa** says **springing up** is "a beautiful metaphor. It's like an **artesian well** that springs up and it has no boundaries, no limits. It continues to spring from the inside to the outside. This is a marvelous metaphor of the Spirit of God Who is ultimately going to be given."

**Keri Wyatt** - Even a sacred well, when compared to the living water of Jesus, becomes a mere cistern. The things we think will bring us life are dry and lifeless in comparison to the wellspring of life that we can find in relationship with Him. (Deeper into the word: reflections on 100 words from the new testament)

A derivative is **ephallomai** which means to leap upon and describes the demoniac in Acts 19:16!

Another great derivative of **hallomai** (see also below) is the verb **exallomai** which means to leap out (as from a house), to leap up or forth as from the place where one sat (All uses in Scripture = Isa 55:12; Joel 2:5; Mic 2:12; Nah 3:17; Hab 1:8; Acts 3:8).

**Hallomai** was used in classic Greek work Homer's Iliad to describe an arrow "leaping" from the string ("the bow twanged, and the string sang as the arrow flew **gladly** on over the heads of the throng.").

The derivative verb is **agalliao** which means to leap for joy. Agalliao means to experience a state of great joy and gladness, often accompanied by verbal expression and appropriate bodily movements. It speaks of great rejoicing and exultation. The idea is this person shows their excessive, ecstatic joy by leaping and skipping. It describes jubilant exultation, a quality of joy that remains unhindered and unchanged by what happens. Barclay writes that agalliao "is the joy which leaps for joy. As it has been put, it is the joy of the climber who has reached the summit, and who leaps for joy that the mountain path is conquered." (**Daily Study Bible**) For example it is used as a command by Jesus to "**be glad**" continually when you are persecuted! Clearly this response is ONLY possible as we are filled with the "**well of living water springing up**", the Holy Spirit! (See Mt 5:12-note),

**Hallomai** is in the **present tense** signifying that this source of "**living water**" will be continually leaping, jumping, gushing, bubbling up within the believer for eternal life! This is "supernatural water" and in context (and comparison with Jn 7:38-39) is a description of the Holy Spirit in believers! This water will endure eternally, echoing Jesus' promise to the disciples that the Spirit "may remain with you forever." (NLT = "Who will never leave you.") (Jn 14:16) Hallelujah! **Thank God we have such a sure promise from Jesus of a permanent reservoir of spiritual strength for the long journey, a journey marked by many trials and tribulations!**

**Hallomai** - 3x in the NT -

John 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."

Acts 3:8+ (After Peter spoke to the man lame from his mother's womb) With a leap (**exallomai** [**ex** + **hallomai**] = to spring up to a standing position. Only here in NT but 5x in Lxx = Isa 55:12, Joel 2:5, Mic 2:12, Nah 3:17, Hab 1:8) he stood upright and began to walk; and he entered the temple with them, walking and **leaping** (**hallomai**) and praising God.

**Comment** on the related verb **exallomai** - exallomai was an ancient medical term for the socketing of the heel and ankle. The process, which would have taken corrective surgery and months of prolonged healing and learning to walk, took place in a split second. (Lloyd Ogilvie - Preacher's Commentary Series)

Acts 14:10+ (Paul to the man lame since birth - Acts 14:8-9) said with a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he **leaped up** (hallomai) and began to walk ([imperfect tense](#)).

**Hallomai** - 8v in the Lxx - Jdg 14:6, 19; 15:14; 1Sa 10:2, 10; Job 6:10; 41:25; Isa 35:6. Here are several interesting uses in the OT...

Judges 14:6+ The Spirit of the LORD **came upon** (**Hebrew** = tsalach = rushed; **Lxx** = Hallomai ~ "jumped upon" or "leapt upon" - same phrase in Jdg 14:19, 15:14) him (Samson) mightily, so that he tore him as one tears a young goat though he had nothing in his hand; but he did not tell his father or mother what he had done.

1 Samuel 10:10 When they came to the hill there, behold, a group of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God **came upon** (**Hebrew** = tsalach = rushed; **Lxx** = Hallomai ~ "jumped upon" or "leapt upon") him mightily, so that he prophesied among them.

Isaiah 35:6 (Read context - Isa 35:1-10 which describes the time of Messiah's earthly reign - see [commentary](#)) Then (Note: Whenever you spot a "then" ask what leads up to it and what follows - it is a very important time phrase in prophetic passages, as it often marks the sequence of events in a succession) the lame **will leap** (**Heb** = dalag = to leap; **Lxx** = **hallomai**) like a deer, And the tongue of the mute will shout for joy. For waters will break forth in the wilderness and streams in the Arabah.

**ESV Study Bible** on **Hallomai** - A rare word (Gk. hallomai), which is found in the Septuagint (Greek OT) of Isa. 35:6 with reference to the Messianic Age. (BORROW [ESV Study Bible](#))

**Eternal life** - We need to remember that eternal life does not begin when you die, but when you believe. Notice in Jn 5:24 where "**has eternal life**" in context is clearly referring to our present possession! How can you lose what is your eternal possession? You can't and it logically, clearly follows that you cannot lose your salvation! Thus even this phrase supports the doctrine of eternal security!

**Eternal life** - This exact phrase 41x in 41v in the NAS with **almost 50% of uses by John** in his Gospel and first epistle which helps understand his purpose in John 20:31 - Mt 19:16, 29; 25:46; Mk 10:17, 30; Luke 10:25; 18:18, 30; John 3:15-16, 36; 4:14; 5:24, 39; 6:27, 40, 47, 54, 68; 10:28; 12:50; 17:2-3; Acts 13:46, 48; Rom 2:7; 5:21; 6:22f; Gal 6:8; 1Tim 1:16; 6:12; Titus 1:2; 3:7; 1John 1:2; 2:25; 3:15; 5:11, 13, 20; Jude 1:21.

**A T Robertson** - "The woman's curiosity is keenly excited about this new kind of water." (That's an understatement!) [John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#)

**Barclay** speaks of the inner longing in every man for something eternal - At the heart of all this there is the fundamental truth that in the human heart there is a thirst for something that only Jesus Christ can satisfy. Sinclair Lewis in one of his books draws a picture of a respectable little business man who kicked over the traces. He is talking to the girl he loves. She says to him: "On the surface we seem quite different; but deep down we are fundamentally the same. We are both desperately unhappy about something--and we don't know what it is." In every man there is this nameless unsatisfied longing; this vague discontent; this something lacking; this frustration.

In Sorrell and Son Warwick Deeping tens of a conversation between Sorrell and his son. The boy is talking about life. He says that it is like groping in an enchanted fog. The fog breaks for a moment; you see the moon or a girl's face; you think you want the moon or the face; and then the fog comes down again; and leaves you groping for something, you don't quite know what. Wordsworth, in the Ode on the Intimations of Immortality, speaks of,

Those obstinate questionings  
Of sense and outward things,  
Fallings from us, vanishings;  
Blank misgivings of a creature  
Moving about in worlds not realized.

Augustine talks about "our hearts being restless till they find rest in thee."

Part of the human situation is that we cannot find happiness out of the things that the human situation has to offer. As Browning had

it:

Just when we're safest, there's a sunset touch,  
A fancy from a flower-bell, someone's death,

A chorus ending from Euripides--

And that's enough for fifty hopes and fears

As old and new at once as Nature's self.

To rap and knock and enter in our soul.

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We are never safe from the longing for eternity which God has put in man's soul (Eccl 3:11KJV). There is a thirst which only Jesus Christ can satisfy. ([Daily Study Bible](#))

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**At The Well** - With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. —Isaiah 12:3 A guide in Israel was preparing to lead a tour into the desert. His instructions to the group were simple and clear: "If you do not have these two items, I will not allow you to accompany us. You must have a broad-brimmed hat and a full bottle of water. These will protect you from the sun, and from the thirst caused by wind and dryness."

Water. It's essential to survival. That's why a woman came to the well in Samaria (John 4:7). She came at noon, when few people were there. She was startled when a young Jewish man asked her for something to drink. Jesus broke huge barriers with His request—she was a woman, had been married many times, and wasn't a Jew.

Jesus offered her water far better than that from the well. He had "living water," which only He could give (John 4:10,13-14). I believe she took that water and was spiritually cleansed, for she told everyone what she had experienced: "Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" (John 4:29).

Are you at the well? Is your soul thirsting for God? Do you need the cleansing and refreshment He offers? He is waiting there to satisfy you with the "living water" of salvation and the gift of everlasting life. - David C. Egner

Gracious and Almighty Savior,  
Source of all that shall endure,  
Quench my thirst with living water,  
Living water, clear and pure.  
—Vinal

Jesus is the only fountain who can satisfy the thirsty soul.

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**Spoil Yourself** - Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain. —John 4:14 - The old saying "The proof of the pudding is in the eating" is true. We can't prove the quality of something until we've tried it. If we find it to be superior, we become spoiled and can never again be satisfied with less.

That's the discovery the Samaritan woman made as she talked with Jesus (Jn. 4). When He offered her "living water" (Jn 4:10), she thought He was referring to better drinking water. She was convinced that the water from the well was the best available—until she met the One who offered her spiritual water. Her testimony led many others to put their trust in Christ (Jn 4:39).

The late Malcolm Muggeridge, English journalist and broadcaster, made a similar discovery. Before meeting Christ, he had been drinking from the finest earthly fountains—fame, success, pleasure, and fulfillment. "Yet I say to you," he once testified, "and I beg of you to believe me, multiply these tiny triumphs by a million, add them all together, and they are nothing, less than nothing, measured against one draught of that living water that is offered to the spiritually hungry."

Are you drinking from earthly fountains and still feeling thirsty? Turn to Christ, and drink so deeply that you'll be spoiled forever from wanting anything less. - Joanie Yoder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Now none but Christ can satisfy,  
None other name for me;

There's love and life and lasting joy,  
Lord Jesus, found in Thee.  
—McGranahan

Only Jesus, the Living Water, can satisfy the thirsty soul.

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**Desert Pete** - In the 1960s, the Kingston Trio released a song called "Desert Pete." The ballad tells of a thirsty cowboy who is crossing the desert and finds a hand pump. Next to it, Desert Pete has left a note urging the reader not to drink from the jar hidden there but to use its contents to prime the pump. The cowboy resists the temptation to drink and uses the water as the note instructs. In reward for his obedience, he receives an abundance of cold, satisfying water. Had he not acted in faith, he would have had only a jar of unsatisfying, warm water to drink. This reminds me of Israel's journey through the wilderness. When their thirst became overwhelming (Ex. 17:1-7), Moses sought the Lord. He was told to strike the rock of Horeb with his staff. Moses believed and obeyed, and water gushed from the stone. Sadly, Israel would not consistently follow Moses' example of faith. Ultimately, "the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith" (Heb 4:2). Sometimes life can seem like an arid desert. But God can quench our spiritual thirst in the most unlikely circumstances. When by faith we believe the promises of God's Word, we can experience rivers of living water and grace for our daily needs. - Dennis Fisher ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Drink deep of God's goodness, His faithfulness too,  
Leave no room for doubting and fear;  
His Word is the water of life pure and true,  
Refreshing and cooling and clear.  
—Hess

**Only Jesus, the Living Water,  
can satisfy our thirst for God.**

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**Bibles And Buckets** (Read: Isaiah 12:1-6) - With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. —Isaiah 12:3 - At a women's retreat, one person was carrying a Bible and a bucket. It's easy to understand why she was carrying the Bible, but why the bucket? With a twinkle in her eye, she explained, "The bucket reminds me to draw all the living water I possibly can." Pointing to a crack in the bucket, she said, "Like me, my bucket leaks, reminding me to keep coming back to the Lord for more!"

Isaiah 12 is a hymn of praise to God, our source of living water—the water that forever quenches spiritual thirst (Jn. 4:14). The prophet said we could freely draw this water from God's "wells of salvation" (Isa. 12:3).

Believers of all generations can testify: "The Lord is my strength ... [my] song ... my salvation" (Isa 12:2). F. B. Meyer wrote, "The little possessive pronoun **my** is the bucket with which we draw water from the depths of God. Our pilgrimage way is lined by these wells of saving help."

Yet how often we seem oblivious to God's desire to provide for us! Joanie Yoder ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Nancy Spiegelberg has expressed her own unawareness of that lavish provision:

Lord, I crawled across the barrenness to You  
with my empty cup, uncertain in asking  
any small drop of refreshment.

If only I had known You better,  
I'd have come running with a bucket.

© 1974 Nancy Spiegelberg

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**The Waggle Dance** (Read: John 4:27-36) - Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. —John 4:29 - How do bees lead one another to nectar? Scientists say it's all about the "waggle" dance. The theory was regarded with skepticism when it was first proposed by Nobel Prize-winning zoologist Karl von Frisch in the 1960s. But now, researchers in the United Kingdom have used tiny radar responders attached to worker bees to support von Frisch's theory. They've confirmed that the bee orients its body toward the food source and uses the intensity of its waggle dance to signal the distance to other bees. The woman who met Jesus at Jacob's

well also found a way to lead the rest of her community to what she had found—**living water** (John 4:10). They were drawn to discover why this woman with five ex-husbands and a current live-in was saying, “Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did” (Jn 4:29). As the crowd was on its way, the One who on other occasions had called Himself “the bread of life” (Jn 6:48) was telling His disciples that His food was found in doing the will of God (Jn 4:32,34). Jesus is living water and food for our soul. Joining Him to do the will of God and finish the work He has given us to do is the ultimate source of nourishment. - Mart De Haan ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Keep your witness bright and clear,  
So the world may see and hear  
God’s salvation far and near,  
That others too may know Him.  
—Hess

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### When you have found food for your soul lead others to the Source.

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**Barriers And Blessings** (Read: John 4:27-39) Many... believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, “He told me all that I ever did.” —John 4:39

What did Jesus see when He looked at the woman at the well in John 4? He saw someone who wanted acceptance and desperately needed to know she was loved. Most of all, He saw someone who needed what only He could give—a new heart.

It was no accident that the disciples had all gone to town to buy food. Surely, they would have tried to warn Jesus not to talk to this person—a woman, a Samaritan, and someone with a bad reputation.

Not being one to follow protocol, however, Jesus used this encounter to bless her with the truth of “living water” (John 4:10). In just one conversation, He broke down barriers of old hostilities, of gender bias, of ethnic and racial divides. And this woman became the first of many Samaritans to confess that Jesus was the Messiah (Jn 4:39-42).

When she told others of her encounter with a Man who knew “all that I ever did,” she was already practicing the principle of “sowing and reaping” that Jesus was teaching His followers (John 4:35-38). Many believed that day, and later Philip, Peter, John, and others would preach in Samaria and lead many more to Christ (Acts 8:5-14; 15:3).

When we tell others of our own “encounter” with Jesus, we bless them with living water. Cindy Hess Kasper ([Barriers And Blessings - Our Daily Bread](#))

From sinking sand He lifted me,  
With tender hand He lifted me;  
From shades of night to plains of light,  
O praise His name, He lifted me!  
—Gabriel

A faith worth having is a faith worth sharing.

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**Are You Depleted?** - Mexico City is sinking. According to a New York Times article, “So much water has been pumped out from the aquifer beneath [the city] to satisfy [its] 18 million residents that the ground is collapsing at a stunning rate.” The city has sunk 30 feet in the past century.

Is a similar thing happening to you spiritually? You’ve given so much to others that your energy is gone. You feel drained, depleted, as if your life is collapsing in on itself. What started as a noble venture to help thirsty people has become a journey through the desert for you.

Jesus said, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, ... out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’ But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive” (Jn. 7:37-39). Jesus painted a picture of abundant supply—not a trickle but rivers of living water produced by the Holy Spirit, who is given to everyone who trusts in Christ.

What are you thirsting for? Do you need the forgiveness and peace of God? Or do you need your spiritual reservoir replenished so you can refresh the parched souls around you? Jesus invites all of us to find our deep satisfaction and inexhaustible supply in Him. -

The Lord wants us to come to Him  
To quench our thirsty soul,  
For from Him flow life-giving streams  
To heal and make us whole.  
— Sper

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**F B Meyer - Spring up, O well** (Nu 21:17), **in our hearts.** — Too long has the soil been arid and bare. A great drought has smitten it, and devoured every green thing. The flowers wither, the fruit falls. But Jesus promised to open in believing hearts a well, the waters of which should spring up unto eternal life. Not a stagnant pool, but a spring. Not a failing Cherith, but a perennial Siloam. Let that promise be realized in us here, and now; and if we have permitted rubbish to accumulate, or the weeds to grow rank, may we have grace to put them away, that there may be a clear course for the living water to flow through us and refresh the lives of all with whom we come in contact.

**Spurgeon** on Nu 21:17 - **Spring up, O Well** - Famous was the well of Beer in the wilderness, because **it was the subject of a promise:** “That is the well whereof the Lord spake unto Moses, Gather the people together, and I will give them water.” The people needed water, and it was promised by their gracious God. We need fresh supplies of heavenly grace, and in the covenant the Lord has pledged himself to give all we require. **The well next became the cause of a song.** Before the water gushed forth, cheerful faith prompted the people to sing; and as they saw the crystal fount bubbling up, the music grew yet more joyous. In like manner, we who believe the promise of God should rejoice in the prospect of divine revivals in our souls, and as we experience them our holy joy should overflow. Are we thirsting? Let us not murmur, but sing. Spiritual thirst is bitter to bear, but we need not bear it—the promise indicates a well; let us be of good heart, and look for it. **Moreover, the well was the centre of prayer.** “Spring up, O well.” What God has engaged to give, we must enquire after, or we manifest that we have neither desire nor faith. This evening let us ask that the Scripture we have read, and our devotional exercises, may not be an empty formality, but a channel of grace to our souls. O that God the Holy Spirit would work in us with all his mighty power, filling us with all the fulness of God. **Lastly, the well was the object of effort.** “The nobles of the people dug it with their staves.” The Lord would have us active in obtaining grace. Our staves are ill adapted for digging in the sand, but we must use them to the utmost of our ability. Prayer must not be neglected; the assembling of ourselves together must not be forsaken; ordinances must not be slighted. The Lord will give us his peace most plenteously, but not in a way of idleness. Let us, then, bestir ourselves to seek him in whom are all our fresh springs.

Place Of Water- (Read: Psalm 42:1-5) - The water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life. —John 4:14 - East Africa is one of the driest places on earth, which is what makes “Nairobi” such a significant name for a city in that region. The name comes from a Masai phrase meaning “cold water,” and it literally means “the place of water.”

Throughout history, the presence of water has been both life-giving and strategic. Whether a person lives in a dry climate or a rainforest, water is a nonnegotiable necessity. In a dry and barren climate, knowing where to find the place of water can mean the difference between life and death.

Our spiritual life also has certain nonnegotiable elements. That is why Jesus, upon encountering a spiritually thirsty woman at a well, declared to her that He alone could provide living water. He told her, “Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14).

Like the deer mentioned in Psalm 42:1-2 who pants for water, our souls thirst for God and long for Him (Ps 63:1). We desperately need the sustenance that comes only from Jesus Christ. He is the source of living water that refreshes our hearts. By Bill Crowder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Rivers of living water,  
Rivers of life so free,  
Flowing from Thee, my Savior,  
Send now the rivers through me.

—Wood

Jesus is the fountain of living water.

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**Drink Lots Of Water** - Read: John 4:7-14 - The water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into

everlasting life. —John 4:14

Visitors to Colorado often become dehydrated without realizing it. The dry climate and intense sun, especially in the mountains, can rapidly deplete the body's fluids. That's why many tourist maps and signs urge people to drink plenty of water.

In the Bible, water is often used as a symbol of Jesus as the Living Water who satisfies our deepest needs. So it's quite fitting that one of Jesus' most memorable conversations took place at a well (John 4:1-42). It began with Jesus asking a Samaritan woman for a drink of water (v.7). It quickly progressed to a discussion of something more when Jesus said to her: "Whoever drinks of this [physical] water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:13-14).

As a result of this conversation, the woman and many people in the village where she lived came to believe that Jesus was "the Christ, the Savior of the world" (v.42).

We can't live without water. Nor can we truly live now or eternally without the living water we receive from knowing Jesus Christ as our Savior. We can drink of His life-giving water today. - David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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### Looking For Water -

Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. —John 4:14 -

The United States has spent millions of dollars looking for water on Mars. A few years ago, NASA sent twin robots, Opportunity and Spirit, to the red planet to see if water was present or had been present at one time. Why did the US do this? The scientists who are poring over data sent back from those two little Martian rovers are trying to figure out if life ever existed on Mars. And for that to have happened, there had to be water. No water, no life.

Two thousand years ago, a couple of "rovers" set out across the countryside of an Earth-outpost called Samaria looking for water. One was a woman who lived nearby. The other was a man from Galilee. They ended up meeting at a well near the village of Sychar. When they did, Jesus found the water He was looking for, and the woman found the water she didn't know she needed (John 4:5-15).

Water is essential for both physical and spiritual life. Jesus had a surprise for the woman at the well. He offered her the Water of Life—Himself. He is the refreshing, renewing "fountain of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14).

Do you know anyone looking for water? Someone who is spiritually thirsty? Introduce that person to Jesus, the Living Water. It's the greatest discovery of all time. - Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Gracious and Almighty Savior,  
Source of all that shall endure,  
Quench my thirst with living water,  
Living water, clear and pure.

—Vinal

Only Jesus, the Living Water,  
can satisfy the thirsty soul.

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**Broken Cisterns** - They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water. —Jeremiah 2:13 - Picture yourself swinging a pick, digging from dawn to dusk, chiseling a cistern out of the hard, unyielding stone. You stay on the job, working through the biting cold of winter and the blazing heat of summer. After years of strenuous effort you finally complete the task. Then you step back and wait for your cistern to fill—and it leaks. You discover—too late—that all cisterns, no matter how well constructed, will leak. The story is a picture of the futility of our attempts to find satisfaction in life. It's an age-old problem. God told the prophet Jeremiah that His people "have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters." Instead, they had expended their efforts on "broken cisterns that can hold no water" (Jeremiah 2:13).

Are you driven by soul-thirst, yearning for satisfaction? There is a spring of living water, rising from hidden depths, pouring into our hearts, satisfying us even as it makes us thirst for more. Stoop down and drink. Only God can satisfy your heart. Everything else will

deceive and disappoint. “Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst,” said Jesus. “But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14). - David H. Roper

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### Only Living Water can quench the driving thirst of the soul.

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**Drink Up!** (Read: John 4:7-14) - Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. —John 4:14 - In 1981, Ida’s Pastry Shoppe in Jenison, Michigan, advertised this special offer: “Buy one of our coffee mugs for \$4.79 and fill up your cup for a dime each time you visit.” But the owners never expected that 25 years later, four longtime customers would still be getting their cup of java every day—for 10 cents. You won’t find many deals like that anymore. But Jesus offered something far greater to the woman at the well (John 4:10). He said, “Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but ... the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life” (vv.13-14). The woman at the well was ready to listen. None of her many personal relationships had ever filled up her emptiness. Then Jesus offered her “water” that would soothe her parched life and give her something more—the promise of eternal life. That same promise is ours as well. Jesus said, “I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly” (John 10:10). God’s grace and love come from a bottomless reservoir. Drink from the water He offers, and you will never thirst again. By Cindy Hess Kasper

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**Really Thirsty** (Read: Psalm 42) - As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God. —Psalm 42:1

Have you ever been really thirsty? Years ago, I visited my sister Kathy in Mali, West Africa. During an afternoon of seeing the sights, the temperature had risen far above 100°F. Parched, I told her, “Hey, I need something to drink.” When Kathy told me she had forgotten to bring along a supply of filtered water, I began to get a bit desperate. The longer we drove, the more I wondered what it was like to truly die of thirst. Finally, Kathy said, “I know where we can go,” as she drove up to the gate of an embassy. Inside I beheld the most beautiful sight—a water cooler! I grabbed one of the tiny paper cups and filled it again and again. My body had been deprived too long and now required lots of liquid to reverse the effects of dehydration. The psalmist compared physical thirst with spiritual thirst: “As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God” (Ps. 42:1). His thirst was that of a desperate longing for God—the one and only living God (Ps 42:2).

Do you long for something this world can’t provide? This dissatisfaction is a thirst of the soul for God. Run to the One - who alone can quench that thirst. “He satisfies the longing soul, and fills the hungry soul with goodness” (Ps. 107:9). By Cindy Hess Kasper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

My hunger for the truth He satisfies;  
Upon the Word, the Living Bread, I feed:  
No parching thirst I know, because His grace,  
A pool of endless depth, supplies my need.  
—Sanders

Only Jesus, the Living Water, can satisfy the thirsty soul.

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**At The Well** (Read: John 4:5-26) - With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. —Isaiah 12:3 - A guide in Israel was preparing to lead a tour into the desert. His instructions to the group were simple and clear: “If you do not have these two items, I will not allow you to accompany us. You must have a broad-brimmed hat and a full bottle of water. These will protect you from the sun, and from the thirst caused by wind and dryness.”

Water. It’s essential to survival. That’s why a woman came to the well in Samaria (John 4:7). She came at noon, when few people were there. She was startled when a young Jewish man asked her for something to drink. Jesus broke huge barriers with His request—she was a woman, had been married many times, and wasn’t a Jew.

Jesus offered her water far better than that from the well. He had “living water,” which only He could give (vv.10,13-14). I believe she took that water and was spiritually cleansed, for she told everyone what she had experienced: “Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?” (v.29).

Are you at the well? Is your soul thirsting for God? Do you need the cleansing and refreshment He offers? He is waiting there to satisfy you with the “living water” of salvation and the gift of everlasting life. By David C. Egnor ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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**Showers Of Blessing** - Will You not revive us again, that Your people may rejoice in You? —Psalm 85:6 - When it rains, most people go inside to avoid getting wet. But I remember a summer day in Texas when people ran outside their offices and homes to stand in a downpour. Some shouted, others danced, and everyone was happy. After months of scorching temperatures and crippling drought, the sheer joy of a life-giving rain made getting soaked a pleasure.

Just as a physical drought teaches us that there is no substitute for rain, a time of spiritual dryness burns into us the truth that we cannot live without God's renewing Spirit. Hymn writer Daniel W. Whittle expressed his longing for spiritual revival in these words: "Showers of blessing, showers of blessing we need; mercy drops round us are falling, but for the showers we plead."

During times of spiritual dryness, when we long for a sense of the presence and power of God, we echo the psalmist's prayer: "Will You not revive us again, that Your people may rejoice in You? Show us Your mercy, Lord, and grant us Your salvation" (Psalm 85:6-7).

The spiritual refreshing we crave comes only from above. Christ alone can satisfy our spiritual thirst with the "living water" He promised to all who come to Him (John 4:14). —David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

I reached for God's hand full of blessings,  
Because I was needy and sad;  
And, oh, what a shower He gave me  
From all the rich treasure He had!  
—Simon

**Only Christ the living water can quench our spiritual thirst.**

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**The Unfailing Spring** - Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink." —John 7:37 - Joseph Campbell, a well-known authority on mythology, said that his friends were living "wasteland lives." He said they were "just baffled; they're wandering in the wasteland without any sense of where the water is—the Source that makes everything green."

That could also be said—and with deepest sorrow—about countless people today. They try one thing after another to quench the thirst of their souls. Many people even resort to an empty spirituality, which Campbell did so much to popularize. But as the prophet Jeremiah said, they've made for themselves "broken cisterns that can hold no water" (Jer. 2:13).

Whatever Campbell himself may have believed, "the Source that makes everything green" is Jesus Christ our blessed Savior. He is the One who gives "living water," which becomes "a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jn. 4:10,14).

If you have responded to the gospel and personally received Jesus Christ as your Savior from sin, you have that fountain springing up within your soul (Jn. 7:37-38). Now you can pray for the "baffled" people around you, and offer the "living water" to those who are thirsty and wandering in a parched, Christless wasteland. - Vernon C. Grounds ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

I came to Jesus, and I drank  
Of that life-giving stream;  
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,  
And now I live in Him.  
—Bonar

**Only Jesus, the Living Water, can satisfy our thirst for God.**

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**Big Spring** - The water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life. —John 4:14 - In Michigan's Upper Peninsula is a remarkable natural wonder—a pool about 40 feet deep and 300 feet across that Native Americans called "[Kitch-iti-kipi](#)," or "the big cold water." Today it is known as **The Big Spring**. It is fed by underground springs that push more than 10,000 gallons of water a minute through the rocks below and up to the surface. Additionally, the water keeps a constant temperature of 45 degrees Fahrenheit, meaning that even in the brutally cold winters of the Upper Peninsula the pool never freezes. Tourists can enjoy viewing the waters of Big Spring during any season of the year.

When Jesus encountered a woman at Jacob's well, He talked to her about another source of water that would always satisfy. But He did not speak of a fountain, spring, river, or lake. He said, "Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become **in him** a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14).

Far greater than any natural spring is the refreshment we have been offered in Christ Himself. We can be satisfied, for Jesus alone, the Water of Life, can quench our thirst. Praise God, for Jesus is the source that never runs dry.

Father, it seems that I drink far too often from the waters of the world that cannot satisfy. Forgive me, and teach me to find in Christ the water that can quench the thirst of my heart and draw me ever closer to You. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The only real thirst-quencher is Jesus— the living water.

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**Water For The World** - He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. —John 7:38  
- Although 70 percent of the world is covered by water, less than 1 percent of it is drinkable by humans. Water conservation and sanitation are crucial matters in many parts of the world, as all life depends on having sanitary water.

Jesus went out of His way to introduce a lost woman to another kind of life-giving water. He deliberately chose to go to a town in Samaria, a place where no respectable rabbi would set foot. There, He told this woman about "living water." Those who drink of it, He said, "will never thirst." It will "become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14).

The living water is Jesus Himself (**Ed**: Yes, but in Jn 38 Jesus says the Living Water is His Spirit). Those who receive Him have eternal life (Jn 4:14). But the living water He provides also serves another function. Jesus said of those who receive it: "Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (Jn 7:38). The living water that refreshes us is to refresh others also.

As fresh-water distribution is uneven in the world, so too is the distribution of living water. Many people do not know followers of Jesus who really care about them. It is our privilege to share Him. Christ is, after all, the living water for whom people are thirsting.

Lord Jesus, I want to live for You. May Your life and love flow through me as I go about my duties today so that others may see You through me and be drawn to the living water. Jesus is a never-ending supply of living water for a parched world. - C. P. Hia ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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**James Smith - THE LIVING WATER.** - These words of Jesus Christ about the "Living Water, spoken as they were to the sinful Samaritan, are deeper and more lasting than the well of Jacob. This well is unfathomable! This Water is everlasting!

**I. The Nature of It.** Our Lord calls it "Living Water" (1Jn 4:10). It is living in the sense that it is life-giving. That which Christ gives is not something to keep us alive, but something to make us alive. This water of "grace and truth," which came by Jesus Christ (Jn 4:1-17), is the water which saves and satisfies (Eph. 2:8). It is not given merely to refresh, but to regenerate. The elements of eternal light and life are in it.

**II. The Source of It.** "Thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee." He Himself is the disposer of this living water. Unto Him has been "given power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life" (John 17:2). "This is the pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb" (Rev. 22:1). The original source of this grace and truth is the gracious heart of the eternal God, and has been manifested to us in the life and sufferings of the Lamb.

### III. The Efficacy of It.

**1. IT QUENCHES THIRST.** "Whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst" (Jn 4:14). They never thirst for the muddy waters of sin who have drunk, and keep drinking, of the water that Christ gives. They shall never thirst for any other drink, neither in this life nor in the life which is to come. "They shall not thirst for ever" (Newberry).

**2. IT BECOMES A SPRING WITHIN.** "The water that I shall give him shall become in him a spring of water" (Jn 4:14, Newberry). The idea here is that, when any one drinks this water, or, in other words, receives this grace and truth offered in Christ, there is opened up within that one a fountain of new life and blessedness—a secondary source, within the heart, of perennial joy and satisfaction. **Every saved soul is a citadel of God, and although constantly besieged by the sins and sorrows of earth, they have an unfailing source of supply within.** This fountain flows on for ever, springing up into the ocean of eternal life and praise, in the presence of God and the Lamb.

**IV. The Conditions of It.** "If thou knewest the gift of God, thou wouldest have asked of Him" (Jn 4:10). The conditions are knowing and asking. As soon as we know what the Christ has to give us, this knowledge should surely lead to asking and receiving. How will sinners ask of Him the greatest of all gifts, if they do not know that the gift of God is eternal life? They were blessed who knew the joyful sound of the jubilee trumpet, because they believed and received their liberty through it. If thou knewest the gift of God thou wouldest not frequent those streams which have their source in this sin-poisoned world, and which can never reach down to the thirst of a human spirit. This is eternal life to know Him. Ask and ye shall receive.

**V. The Freeness of It.** "Whosoever drinketh of this water" (Jn 4:14). "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17). Christ Himself, as the Fountain of Living Water; is the Gift of God to a world perishing with a thirst that is unquenchable apart from Him. Whosoever, is the choice word of the infinite grace of God. It was among the first and the last words" used in connection with the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (John 3:15, 16; Rev. 22:17). Does your soul thirst for these waters as the hart panteth after the water brooks? (Ps 42:1) Then here is your hope: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye" (Isa. 55:1). It was on the last and greatest day of the feast that Jesus stood and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." (Jn 7:37) (Handfuls on Purpose)

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**Background on the phrase living water** - The rabbis used to distinguish between the cleansing power of different types of water according to two criteria:<sup>33</sup> "living" water ranked above "drawn" water,<sup>34</sup> and cold above hot. According to these criteria, six grades were established (enumerated in Mishnah, Mikwaot 1:1–8, from the lowest to the highest):

1. the water in ponds, cisterns, etc., containing less than forty seahs of undrawn water
2. the water of a rain-pond before the rain-stream has stopped
3. standing water in a pool of forty seahs or more
4. the water of a well, even if it has to be enriched with drawn water to reach forty seahs
5. smitten waters when running ["smitten": meaning salty or from a hot spring]
6. running water directly from a natural source

Category 6 was the real "heavy duty" cleansing water; it was required for the cleansing for flux (Lev 15:13: "He must immerse himself in living water", [author's translation]), for leprosy (Lev 14:5: cleansing by "living water"), and for the production of the cleansing water with ashes of the red heifer (Num 19:17). For ordinary immersion of men and women, water down to category 3 was acceptable; the same held true for proselyte baptisms. (In the Shadow of the Temple)

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**Jesus promises we will be springs of water bubbling forth** - Are our lives truly like this? Do fresh springs flow out of us day after day? If not, why not? The answer is simple—there can be no outflow unless there is an intake. This is the rhythm of the Holy Spirit—intake and outflow. If there is more intake than outflow, then the intake stops; if there is more outflow than intake, then the outflow stops. The doors open inward to receive, only to open outward to give. When we come to talk about life in the Spirit, we are not to think in terms of a reservoir which has only limited resources. Life is a channel, attached to infinite resources. The more we draw on these resources, the more we have. There is no danger of exhausting one's resources. We do not have to hold back—for the more we give, the more we have. Living on the overflow is what many of us lack today. A sign could be put up over our individual and collective lives saying, "Life Limited." According to Jesus' promise, however, when the Spirit comes, life is unlimited: "From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water." Not rivulets, not trickles, not brooks, not streams—but rivers. Rivers! O God, help me to link my channel to Your infinite resources. Flow through me until I become a flowing river—no, an overflowing river. In Jesus' name. Amen. (Selwyn Hughes - Every Day with Jesus)

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**J Knap** - With endless patience Christ admonished the dull Samaritan woman, to create in the woman, whom the Father placed upon His way, the thirst after the living waters of the Spirit of which He is the generator and distributor. She only saw the deep well that father Jacob had dug, and of which the water only laved the physical thirst for a short time. Over against this He placed the grace of the Spirit and called it a fountain of water, that is in the believer, springing up into everlasting life. First of all a fountain compared to a dug pit. The difference between the two is quite obvious. The water was obtained by the Samaritan woman from the honorable Jacob's well with difficulty. She came with her water vessel from the city, and had to repeat daily the same trip to not be parched with thirst. What Christ offers to His disciples is infinitely greater. His grace does not stay outside of them, but enters into their innermost recesses; it becomes a fountain there from which the waters spring continually, because it is fed by the Spirit continuously. For ever a springing fountain of comfort within us. An incessant rushing vein of the water of grace in our heart. Never without Christ, because He lives by the Holy Spirit within us. Never without His peace, that He commands uninterruptedly in our soul! We bear everywhere that overflowing fountain within us, in days of joy and in days of sorrow, in the wedding apparel and in the garments of mourning. We do not dip for water with the one. We do not seek our comfort with another. All that we need, does descend from above, but it also springs from the depths of the soul, because in those barren depths the Holy Spirit is poured out,—

what a life of spiritual freedom, the blessed freedom of the children of God! Furthermore, it is a well springing up into everlasting life. This means not only that it saturates us incessantly inwardly till eternity begins, but also that the grace of the Spirit works like an elevating force within us. A fountain does not flow out, but brims its waters springing upward. All other waters flow to the depth but water from a fountain rises up. This is how grace works in the heart of God's children. Blessed, if our soul knows of that springing up, and if it feels itself to be lifted up towards the eternal light by the power of the Spirit. Blessed, if inwardly from higher impulse such a springing up may be found, an arising in faith, a lifting up in prayer, an eager reaching towards Him, who made this fountain to spring within us, a fountain, that is only sealed up by our wilful sins, but that otherwise springs up into eternal life! (The Loins Girded)

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**Spurgeon - Morning, October 6 Go To Evening Reading** - "Whosoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." — John 4:14 - He who is a believer in Jesus finds enough in his Lord to satisfy him now, and to content him for evermore. The believer is not the man whose days are weary for want of comfort, and whose nights are long from absence of heart-cheering thought, for he finds in religion (Christ) such a spring of joy, such a fountain of consolation, that he is content and happy. Put him in a dungeon and he will find good company; place him in a barren wilderness, he will eat the bread of heaven; drive him away from friendship, he will meet the "friend that sticketh closer than a brother." Blast all his gourds, and he will find shadow beneath the Rock of Ages; sap the foundation of his earthly hopes, but his heart will still be fixed, trusting in the Lord.

**The heart is as insatiable as the grave till Jesus enters it, and then it is a cup full to overflowing. There is such a fulness in Christ that he alone is the believer's all. The true saint is so completely satisfied with the all-sufficiency of Jesus that he thirsts no more—except it be for deeper draughts of the living fountain. In that sweet manner, believer, shalt thou thirst; it shall not be a thirst of pain, but of loving desire; thou wilt find it a sweet thing to be panting after a fuller enjoyment of Jesus' love. One in days of yore said, "I have been sinking my bucket down into the well full often, but now my thirst after Jesus has become so insatiable, that I long to put the well itself to my lips, and drink right on." Is this the feeling of thine heart now, believer? Dost thou feel that all thy desires are satisfied in Jesus, and that thou hast no want now, but to know more of him, and to have closer fellowship with him? Then come continually to the fountain, and take of the water of life freely. Jesus will never think you take too much, but will ever welcome you, saying, "Drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved."** (Morning and Evening)

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**Quenching the Eternal Thirst** - Many years ago, a crew of Peruvian sailors were heading up the Amazon River when they happened upon an unusual sight. A Spanish ship was anchored off the coast and all the sailors were stretched out weakly on the deck of the ship. As the Peruvians drew closer, they saw that the Spaniards were in terrible physical condition. They looked as if they were one step away from death, their lips parched and swollen. Here, in this ship, these Spanish sailors were literally dying of thirst. "Can we help you," shouted the Peruvians? The Spaniards cried out, "**Water! Water! We need fresh water!**" The Peruvian sailors, surprised at this request, told them to lower their buckets and help themselves. The Spaniards, fearing they'd been misunderstood cried back, "**No, no we need FRESH water!**" Again the Peruvians told the Spanish sailors to lower their buckets. Finally, the sailors did as the Peruvian sailors commanded and when their buckets were brought up to the surface, they discovered fresh water. **Little did they know that they were at the mouth of the fresh-water Amazon River** All they had to do was take a drink and their thirst would be quenched. Jesus Christ offers Living Water to quench man's spiritual thirst. Man doesn't have to do anything but drink this Water. Sadly, many will die thirsty, because they do not know about Jesus Christ, the Living Water. It is our job to tell them. (James Scudder - Living Water)

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**Oswald Chambers - Springs of benignity** - The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water. John 4:14. The picture Our Lord gives is not that of a channel but a fountain. '**Be being filled,**' and the sweetness of vital relationship to Jesus will flow out of the saint as lavishly as it is imparted to him. If you find your life is not flowing out as it should, you are to blame; something has obstructed the flow. Keep right at the Source, and—you will be blessed personally? No, out of you will flow rivers of living water, irrepressible life. **We are to be centres through which Jesus can flow as rivers of living water in blessing to everyone. Some of us are like the Dead Sea, always taking in but never giving out, because we are not rightly related to the Lord Jesus.** As surely as we receive from Him, He will pour out through us, and in the measure He is not pouring out, there is a defect in our relationship to Him. Is there anything between you and Jesus Christ? Is there anything that hinders your belief in Him? If not, Jesus says, out of you will flow rivers of living water. It is not a blessing passed on, not an experience stated, but a river continually flowing. Keep at the Source, guard well your belief in Jesus Christ and your relationship to Him, and there will be a steady flow for other lives, no dryness and no deadness. Is it not too extravagant to say that out of an individual believer, rivers are going to flow? 'I do not see the rivers,' you say. Never look at yourself from the standpoint of—"Who am I?" In the history of God's work you will nearly always find that it has started from the obscure, the unknown, the ignored, but the steadfastly true to Jesus Christ.

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**James Denney** - The decay of the outward man in the godless is a melancholy spectacle, for it is the decay of everything; in the

Christian it does not touch that life which is hid with Christ in God, and which is in the soul itself a well of water springing up to life eternal.

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**J R Miller on a well of water springing up to eternal life** - Thus every Christian becomes a fountain of blessing in this world. As from the great Fountain, Christ, all the streams of life flow—so from the little fountain in the heart of each believer, flows a stream of the water of life to give drink to those who are thirsty. Blessed ourselves, our thirst quenched, our life stratified—we become in turn centers or sources of blessing to others. Are we indeed wells of water at which others quench their thirst? Does our life make us a blessing to all who come near to us? Do we give forth kindness, patience thoughtfulness, gentleness and all helpful influences? Or do we pour out bitterness, impatience, angry words, ill temper, selfishness, and thoughtlessness? (Devotional Hours with the Bible)

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**Springs of Living Water** - In 1896, Sherwood Eddy enthusiastically began his ministry as a missionary to India. But after just a year he was ready to quit—his energy depleted, his spirit broken.

One morning after a sleepless night he begged God for help. Then he remembered the promise of Jesus to the woman at Jacob's well, "The water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jn. 4:14).

Eddy wrote, "I resolved to stop drawing on myself so constantly and begin instead drawing on God." From then on he daily set aside time for prayerfully drinking from the well that never runs dry—the inexhaustible, soul-renewing wellspring of God's grace. "Since that day," Eddy said, "I have known not one hour of darkness and despair. The eternal God has been my refuge, and underneath me I have felt the everlasting arms." (Dt 33:27)

No matter how much energy or talent we have, sooner or later we discover that the well of our personal resources is running dry. But when Christ, the source of living water, indwells our lives, we aren't locked into the drudgery of drawing on our human abilities. Jesus becomes our unfailing source of spiritual renewal. We find that when we have nothing left, He is the well that never runs dry. By Vernon C. Grounds ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

You may have to lose everything  
to find that God is everything you need.

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**Woodrow Kroll** - The importance of water can never be underestimated. Sixty percent of a lean, adult body is composed of water. A person can fast from food for 40 days or longer, but the human body can go only for about 7 days without water even under ideal circumstances. It's no wonder, then, that the Israelites were getting desperate. The wilderness was far from ideal. It was a hot, desert-like stretch of land dotted with huge rocks but little vegetation. Without water they would quickly perish. So God instructed Moses to strike a rock, and out of this flinty hardness flowed sufficient water to meet the needs of all the people and their livestock. The Bible writers later saw this rock as a symbol of Christ (1Cor 10:4). In the midst of a sin-parched life, Christ offers a well of living water that never runs dry, no matter how often we drink from it. Have you received Christ as your Savior? If not, trust Jesus today and you will never thirst again. If you want eternal water, come to Jesus who said, "Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14).

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**Spurgeon** - The seasons change and thou changest, but thy Lord abides evermore the same, and the streams of his love are as deep, as broad and as full as ever. The heats of business cares and scorching trials make me need the cooling influences of the river of His grace; I may go at once and drink to the full from the inexhaustible fountain, for in summer and in winter it pours forth its flood... The tracks of ancient rivers have been found all dry and desolate, but the streams which take their rise on the mountains of divine sovereignty and infinite love shall ever be full to the brim.

**Spurgeon** - "I in them." — John 17:23 If such be the union which subsists between our souls and the person of our Lord, how deep and broad is the channel of our communion! This is no narrow pipe through which a thread-like stream may wind its way, it is a channel of amazing depth and breadth, along whose glorious length a ponderous volume of living water may roll its floods.

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**C I Scofield** offers an interesting spiritualized interpretation of these events, but the reader needs to be a good Berean - "The heart of this lesson is to be found in the contrast between Jacob's well and the upspringing fountain. Jacob's well is the Law, the old order of laborious ceremonial, the old legal system of personal merit by obedience. The water in the well was good, but the well was deep (Jn 4:11). **Every drop gained from that well cost effort. Bucket by bucket, a little at a time—that was the law of the Well at its very best.** But Jacob's well had come to stand for mere traditionalism in religion, for mere intolerance of new light. "Art thou greater than our father Jacob?" was the woman's answer to him who was speaking of the upspringing water. As a matter of fact, Jacob was the father of the Samaritans in no real sense. The Samaritans of our Lord's time were a hybrid race, outside of real

Judaism. Jesus was careful to set that right: "Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews." **Spiritually, the Samaritans drawing water from Jacob's well were precisely in the position of modern Gentile believers who put themselves under the Law; conceiving that as Christians, the Law is their rule of life. That is the very error against which the Spirit by Paul wrote the Epistle to the Galatians.** The upspringing fountain is, first of all, the Holy Spirit Himself, indwelling the believer; and then the nine-fold "fruit of the spirit," which is "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." And that fruit of the Spirit is Christian character. Under the Law, character is sought to be formed by habits of obedience to a rule of life—thou shalt, and thou shalt not. The formula is: "Our choices make our habits, and our habits form our characters." That is drawing water out of Jacob's well. It is that "other" Gospel, of which the Apostle speaks in Galatians. It is Samaritanism—that is, neither pure Judaism nor pure Christianity. Christianity is not a kind of pump in Jacob's well, helping us to draw life out of the law; it is the Spirit of life, and the life of the Spirit implanted in, and outflowing from the believer himself. That is the least understood fact of Christianity to-day, after nineteen hundred years of preaching. "The water that I shall give shall be in him a fountain of water, springing up into everlasting life." The contrast between Jacob's well and the upspringing fountain is just the contrast between Romans 7 and the Romans 8. In the former, a believer is in an agony of effort to do something under the law of merit, the goodness of God. In the later, a believer is, by the indwelling Spirit, made "free from the law," and so finds that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled (not "by," but) "in" him as he walks after the Spirit. It is very remarkable that the Epistle to the Ephesians, after stating in the first three chapters the exalted position into which the believer is brought by grace through faith, in turning to the walk that should characterize one in such a position, gives as the test of the walk, and as that which gives it its distinctive character, not the law, but the new position: "Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called"; "For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth." The transformation of Christian experience from the average one of painfully drawing blessings out of Jacob's well, to the triumphant one of bearing the fruit of the Spirit, is effected by two acts, one of faith, one of the will. The act of faith is just to believe that the Spirit does dwell within (1Cor 6:19). The act of the will is just to live in yieldedness to the Spirit. (Things New and Old: Old and New Testament Studies)

**John 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"**

BGT John 4:15 λ γει πρ ς α τ ν γυν · κ ριε, δ ς μοι το το τ δωρ, να μ διψ μηδ δι ρχωμαι νθ δε ντλε ν.

NET John 4:15 The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water."

NLT John 4:15 "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."

ESV John 4:15 The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water."

NIV John 4:15 The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."

GNT John 4:15 λ γει πρ ς α τ ν γυν , Κ ριε, δ ς μοι το το τ δωρ, να μ διψ μηδ δι ρχωμαι νθ δε ντλε ν.

KJV John 4:15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

YLT John 4:15 The woman saith unto him, 'Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come hither to draw.'

ASV John 4:15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come all the way hither to draw.

CSB John 4:15 "Sir," the woman said to Him, "give me this water so I won't get thirsty and come here to draw water."

NKJ John 4:15 The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw."

NRS John 4:15 The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

NAB John 4:15 The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

NJB John 4:15 'Sir,' said the woman, 'give me some of that water, so that I may never be thirsty or come here again to draw water.'

GWN John 4:15 The woman told Jesus, "Sir, give me this water! Then I won't get thirsty or have to come here to get water."

- Jn 6:26,34; 17:2,3; Ps 4:6; Romans 6:23; 8:5; 1Corinthians 2:14; 1John 5:20; James 4:3
- [John 4 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## STILL SEEING LITERAL WATER

**The woman said to Him, "Sir,** - Her response was reasonable, because this meant she would not have to come daily to draw water from the well. She is still looking at things from a physical perspective. Her eyes were blind to the spiritual truth Jesus was speaking.

**Robertson** - "The woman's curiosity is keenly excited about this new kind of water." ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**Give me this water** - She was reasoning logically, in earthly terms, like Nicodemus (cp Jn 3:4+), for like him she could not fully grasp that Jesus was using literal descriptions in a figurative, spiritual sense. She still thought He was referring to literal, physical water. So while she didn't understand what Jesus meant, she wanted what He had. As stated earlier, she wanted to avoid the work of coming to the well every day. "Jesus, if you want to make my life easier and more convenient, then I'm all for it. Give it to me!"

**Alford** comments that her "request seems to be made still under a misunderstanding, but not so great an one as at first sight appears. She apprehends this water as something not requiring an bucket to draw it;—as something whose power shall never fail;—which shall quench thirst for ever." ( [Greek Testament Critical Exegetical Commentary](#) )

**Steven Cole** on **Give me this water** -

There is a subjective element in interpreting this woman's request (Jn 4:15), **'Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw.'** Some think that she was being sarcastic. She has just pointed out that Jesus has nothing to draw with and the well is deep. She has expressed her doubt that He is greater than Jacob. So perhaps now she is taunting Him or viewing His offer as amusing, but not serious. Others think that she was only thinking in material terms. She was interested in the living water if it would spare her the trouble of coming each day to draw and haul water from this well.

I understand her response to reflect sincere interest in what Jesus is offering, but she's still confused. I think that she recognizes that this unusual Jewish stranger might be talking about something more than physical water, but she's still thinking on too literal of a plane, like Nicodemus when he equated the new birth with returning to his mother's womb (Jn 3:4). She was a woman looking for love, but she had failed in her relationships with men. She probably had a vague discontent with her Samaritan worship, which had not satisfied her spiritual thirst. So she responds to Jesus' invitation to ask for the living water, but she's still mixed up in thinking that it will also satisfy her physical thirst.

**J. C. Ryle** ([John 4 Commentary](#)) observes wisely that it is useless to analyze too closely the first imperfect desires in the hearts of those in whom the Spirit is beginning to move. We should not demand that a person's early motives in coming to Christ must be free from all imperfection. He says (ibid.),

Material water was not out of her thoughts, and yet she had probably some desires after everlasting life. Enough for us to know, that she asked and received, she sought and found. Our great aim must be to persuade sinners to apply to Jesus, and to say to Him, **"Give me to drink."** If we forbid them to ask anything until they can prove that they ask in a perfect spirit, we should do no good at all. It would be as foolish to scrutinize the grammatical construction of an infant's cries, as to analyze the precise motives of a soul's first breathings after God. If it breathes at all and says, **"Give,"** we ought to be thankful.

The point is, this woman recognized some sort of inner need for the living water that Jesus offered, even if she didn't completely understand what that **living water** was. If you want to drink the **living water** of salvation, you have to acknowledge your need for God, even if you're not totally clear about what salvation means. Being self-sufficient will not bring you to Jesus. You have to recognize that you have needs that only God can satisfy. ([Coming to Salvation](#) John 4:15-26)

**So (hina)** - This Greek conjunction (**hina**) often (as here) is used as a **term of purpose or result** - (as do phrases like - so that, in order that, that, as a result). When a term of purpose or result is encountered, it behooves the reader to always ask at least - "What is purpose (or result or effect)?" There are two results in this case. What are they?

**I will not be thirsty** - This is an interesting statement. While she still is thinking literal water, in some sense she believes that the

literal water Jesus gives is a perpetual thirst quencher. She is very close to the deeper, spiritual truth of which Jesus spoke!

**Thirsty** (1372) (**dipsao** from **dipsa** = thirst) is used to refer to literal thirst (Mt 25:35, 37, 42, 44; Jn 19:28) and figurative thirst (Mt 5:6, Jn 4:13, 14, 6:35, 7:37, Rev 7:16, 21:6, 22:17). And so we see that dipsao is used to describe both physical thirst and the deep spiritual longing that is in every heart.

**Come all the way here to draw** - Undoubtedly her daily trek to draw water was a weary task, and here she sees the possibility of being set free from this daily grind. How wonderful it would soon be for this woman when she finally grasped the truth of Jesus' words and was set free (See discussion of Greek verb "set free" - **eleutheroo**) from the yoke of bondage to sin and Satan!

Before the **cleansing** water must come the **confessing** daughter!

No **conversion** without **conviction**!

**Bomkamp** - We do great disservice to people if we try to lead them to pray a sinner's prayer to receive Christ as Savior before we have explained to them what sin is and made them realize that they are presently under condemnation before the Lord because of breaking His laws. People have to flee to the Savior with a sense of fear of impending judgment for their sins in order to realize and receive the salvation that has been provided for them. ([John 4:1-25](#))

**Thirsty** - This **metaphor** speaks of spiritual thirst (albeit that is not necessarily the woman's understanding of course). In the OT we see the related phrase "**my soul thirsts**" for God. Spiritual thirst is a picture of one of our greatest physical needs, our need for water. A man can live many days without food, but cannot survive long without water (cp Amos 8:13). By analogy our greatest spiritual need is for Jesus and the new birth His Spirit brings about when we place our faith in Him. Remember the Sprite commercial which had the tagline **Obey your Thirst**? Jesus is saying "**Obey your spiritual thirst. Come and by faith drink of Me.**" No matter how much we drink from the wells of worldly wealth, fame and pleasure, we will only become more thirsty.

**The only real thirst quencher of our parched soul is Jesus  
The Giver of living water.**

So the devout sons of Korah cry "My soul **thirsts** for God, for the living God." (Ps 42:2). And David cries "O God, You are my God ([Rich Mullins uses this phrase in his song "Sometimes by Step"](#)); I shall seek You earnestly; My soul **thirsts** for You, my flesh yearns for You, in a dry and weary land where there is no water." (Ps 63:1)

**Commenting on Ps 63:1, Spurgeon** adds that "**Thirst** is an insatiable longing after that which is one of the most essential supports of life. There is no reasoning with it, no forgetting it, no despising it, no overcoming it by stoical indifference. **Thirst** will be heard; the whole man must yield to its power; even thus is it with that divine desire which the grace of God creates in regenerate men; only (Jesus) Himself can satisfy the craving of a soul really aroused by the Holy Spirit." Commenting on "**a dry and thirsty land, where there is no water**" he adds that "A weary place and a weary heart make the presence of (Jesus) the more desirable: if there be nothing below and nothing within to cheer, it is a thousand mercies that we may look up and find all we need (Heb 12:2, 1Pe 1:13, Col 3:1-2). How frequently have believers traversed in their experience this dry and thirsty land, where spiritual joys are things forgotten! And how truly can they testify that the only true necessity of that country is the near presence of their (beloved Jesus)! The absence of outward comforts can be borne with serenity when we walk with God; and the most lavish multiplication of them avails not when He withdraws. Only after God, therefore, let us pant. Let all desires be gathered into one. Seeking first the kingdom of God-- all else shall be added unto us (Mt 6:33). ([Ref](#))

Nothing can quench our spiritual thirst but Jesus (Thus He says "come to **ME!**") The dirty **wells** of this world can never satisfy the deepest need of our soul, which can only be satiated by Jesus. As **Augustine** said

You have made us for yourself, O Lord,  
and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.

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**Are you thirsty?** The words of Horatius Bonar's great hymn beautifully testify of **Christ the Smitten Rock** and the Living Waters that flowed forth His pierced side on Calvary's Cross...

[I HEARD THE VOICE OF JESUS SAY](#)

"Behold, I freely give  
The living water; thirsty one  
Stoop down and drink and live."  
I came to Jesus and I drank

Of that life-giving stream;  
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,  
And now I live in Him.

Or listen to Michael Card's Version of  
["I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say"](#)

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**Are You Thirsty?** - How simply our Lord presented the gospel. He often depicted the sinner's response to the salvation He offered in terms of everyday activities like eating, drinking, and receiving.

During a gospel meeting in a town in Ohio, a man was greatly convicted of his need of the Lord Jesus. He concealed his feelings even from his wife, who was a lovely Christian. One evening when she was away, he became so anxious about his condition that he began pacing the floor. His daughter, noticing her father's agitation, asked him what was wrong.

"Oh, nothing," he replied, trying in vain to relieve his pangs of conviction.

The youngster, with the profound simplicity of childhood, said, "Daddy, if you were thirsty wouldn't you go and get a drink of water?"

Her words startled the father. He thought of his thirsty soul, so parched and empty. Then he remembered what he had heard in the meeting—that the gospel was like a freely flowing fountain. He resisted no longer. That night he asked Jesus to save him.

Nothing can quench our spiritual thirst but Jesus. The wells of the world only make us more thirsty. Jesus said, "Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst" (John 4:14). —P R Van Gorder ([Our Daily Bread](#))

No matter how much we drink from the wells of wealth and achievement,  
we will only become more thirsty.

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**Soul Satisfaction** - Nineteenth-century preacher Frederick W. Robertson pastored a church in Brighton, England. Although he was a great pulpiteer, he was troubled by fear of failure. He suffered from painful physical ailments and died at 37. In his loneliest times Robertson often found some consolation in the works of Shakespeare, Wordsworth, and Coleridge. Yet even these great writers left him increasingly unsatisfied, prompting him to write, "I go into the country to feel God; dabble in chemistry to feel awe of Him; read the life of Christ, to understand, love, and adore Him." Robertson concluded with these words: "I turn with disgust from everything to Christ." God may spare us from Robertson's emotional and bodily suffering. He may give us many fulfilling years so that we can say, "My cup runs over" (Ps. 23:5). But no matter what, we should increasingly identify with those beautiful words of Bernard of Clairvaux who wrote in the 12th century: (Vernon C. Grounds [Our Daily Bread](#))

Jesus, Thou Joy of loving hearts,  
Thou Fount of life, Thou Light of men,  
From the best bliss that earth imparts  
We turn unfilled to Thee again.

Yes, Christ alone is the Water that quenches our parched spirit. He alone is the Bread that nourishes our hungry heart. He alone is the Truth that answers our mind's deepest questionings.

**Real soul-satisfaction is found only in Christ.**

**When Jesus is our sole satisfaction,  
We will have true satisfaction in our soul.**

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**J R Miller** - The first desire of our hearts should be to receive the grace of Christ, that we may no longer be dependent upon the world's pleasures and comforts. It is a weary life which those live who have no source of good, save the little springs of earth which soon dry up.

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**Cathy Miller** has a wonderful discussion on the Jesus way of sharing the Good News entitled "**Lessons at the Well**" - Jesus' encounter with a Samaritan woman shows us how to reach our unbelieving friends. **Jesus' motive was love.** - "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (Jn. 3:16). Jesus knew why He had left heaven's glory. It was to bring the good news of God's unfailing love to a lost and lonely world. He came to

"seek and to save what was lost" (Lk. 19:10). Motivated by His abounding love, Jesus entered into the conversation with the Samaritan woman. How can I check my motives in sharing with unbelievers? Here's a short checklist that helps me examine my heart before God: •Am I trying to "fix" this person or love her? •Do I feel "puffed up" after spending time sharing my Bible knowledge with her? •What is my goal in meeting with her? •Who will get the glory for this effort? **Jesus did not allow fear to stop Him** - Jesus' perfect love overshadowed any fear that might have kept Him from sharing His life with the woman at the well. Jesus had come to do God's will (Jn. 6:38) and was willing to lay down His life for the salvation of the world. That commitment enabled Him to love boldly and openly... Why are we afraid to share our faith with unbelievers? Three fears top the list for many: personal rejection, not knowing the answers to their questions or challenges, or sounding like an unpolished salesperson. I've found that most of my fears in this area have to do with how I will look to others or how they will respond to me. When I'm available to God, I can take my eyes off myself and trust Him to love others through me in ways that are meaningful and lasting. **Jesus came to the Samaritan woman.** Jesus could have waited for this woman to seek Him out, but instead He took the initiative to relate to her. Though the woman's heart was far from God and her life was entangled in sin, Jesus had a love message to deliver. Nothing would stop Him. The whole story of the Bible is one of God reaching out in love to His people and drawing close to meet with them. Are we watching for opportunities to share our faith one on one? Not everyone will be interested in learning about Jesus. But for some, the opportunity to meet in this way will feel like a cup of cold water on a simmering summer day. If we're motivated by God's love and have put aside our fears, we'll be more likely to take a step closer to the unbelievers God places in our path. **Jesus initiated the conversation with a question.** Jesus asked, "Will you give me a drink?" (Jn. 4:7). He didn't plunge into a complicated lecture, full of criticism or condemnation. He gently drew out the Samaritan woman by asking her for a drink of water. It can take time to establish trust and begin a meaningful dialogue with another person. Good questions draw nonbelievers into conversation and relationship. When we share our faith with unbelievers, do we ask questions that cause them to think and respond? Sometimes a direct question (asked in love!) can best stimulate deeper thinking. Do our neighbors see us as bulldozers for Christ, or do we trust God to gently lead the conversations we have with unbelievers? **Jesus met with the Samaritan woman one on one.** It's amazing to us, with our jam-packed daily planners, that Jesus spent one-on-one time with anyone. It doesn't seem to be the wisest use of His time. Why didn't He rent the local outdoor amphitheater and throw together a mass gathering? Jesus was not concerned with efficiency but with individuals. His interaction with the woman at the well was a personal act of love. He saw the opportunity, took the time, humbled Himself, and gave of Himself sacrificially to reach one person with God's love. Will we lay down our lives—or busy schedules—for one person? How would we have to reorder our time to carve out an hour for coffee with an unbelieving friend? Creating a safe place for unbelievers to explore their questions and God's answers takes time, prayer, and heart. **Jesus saw the unique value of the woman.** The first thing the Samaritan woman noticed about Jesus was that He was a Jew. "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (Jn. 4:9). But what Jesus saw was a woman whose value was not defined by race and culture or even by her immorality. This woman, who'd had five husbands and was living with another man, was surely rejected by her own culture as immoral. Lonely and hardened by sin, she had little or no value to the world. Jesus, however, was undeterred. There is no partiality with God (Ro. 2:11). He values each of us equally... **Jesus spoke at the woman's level.** Jesus used language that conveyed the lifesaving gospel message in terms the woman at the well could readily understand. Watch how He tailored His words for her. The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" ... Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? ... " Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water." Jn. 4:9–15 Using word pictures instead of theological jargon or Christianese can help people understand unfamiliar concepts. When I talked to Laura about Jesus, I used the analogy of driving on the freeway. Life is like a freeway. You're cruising along with everyone else, changing channels on your radio, feeling frustrated with the traffic, other drivers, and the sameness of it all. Then you notice an exit sign ahead that says, "Jesus." You're interested in taking the "Jesus" exit, but in order to do so, you need to put on your turn signal, change lanes, and move your car to the exit. Knowing that the exit is ahead isn't enough. Taking action is necessary... **Jesus lovingly confronted the woman's need and left the results with God.** Jesus didn't water down His message to make it more acceptable. He pointed out the woman's sin. But because He did it without malice, she could agree with Him. "I can see that you are a prophet" (Jn. 4:19). Though she did not immediately profess her faith, the Samaritan woman later recounted her encounter with Jesus in public, influencing the whole town. Many from the town believed in Jesus because of the woman's testimony. They urged Jesus to stay on and teach them, too. In the end, the townspeople said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world" (Jn. 4:42). How can we share the full message of the Bible, including God's view of sin and the possibility of eternal separation from Him, without driving away our listeners? While this is an important and natural question to ask, we must remember God's promise to draw unbelievers to Himself. Jesus said, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him" (Jn. 6:44). **Our part in God's work is to love unbelievers and hold out the truth to them. We may not see the results of our sharing.** God, however, does see the continuing process in each life. He reveals Himself in His Word and through those who are willing to share His Word and His love with unbelievers. Only He knows how each individual heart responds to Him. We can trust God to do His part perfectly. (From

**John 4:16 He \*said to her, "Go, call your husband and come here."**

BGT John 4:16 λ γει α τ · παγε φ νησον τ ν νδρα σου κα λθ νθ δε.

NET John 4:16 He said to her, "Go call your husband and come back here."

NLT John 4:16 "Go and get your husband," Jesus told her.

ESV John 4:16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."

NIV John 4:16 He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back."

GNT John 4:16 Λ γει α τ , παγε φ νησον τ ν νδρα σου κα λθ νθ δε.

KJV John 4:16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.

YLT John 4:16 Jesus saith to her, 'Go, call thy husband, and come hither;'

ASV John 4:16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.

CSB John 4:16 "Go call your husband," He told her, "and come back here."

NKJ John 4:16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."

NRS John 4:16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back."

NAB John 4:16 Jesus said to her, "Go call your husband and come back."

NJB John 4:16 'Go and call your husband,' said Jesus to her, 'and come back here.'

GWN John 4:16 Jesus told her, "Go to your husband, and bring him here."

- **Go:** Joh 4:18 1:42,47,48 2:24,25 21:17 Heb 4:13 Rev 2:23
- [John 4 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **JESUS THREE COMMANDS "HIT THE TARGET!"**

As [Brian Bell](#) says "He pulls out a full length mirror, forcing her to take a good hard look at herself!" Like the sobering reflection that greets you when you first wake up! The woman's glimpse of herself makes her flush w/ embarrassment. She'll try to tilt the mirror away, but Jesus makes her look head-on to face the emptiness of her heart. We all know the story of the Good Samaritan...this is the story of the **Bad Samaritan!**

Jesus now goes for the heart of the woman's problem, the problem of her heart, and in so doing He begins to bring about conviction of her sin (cf role of Spirit in Jn 16:8)

As **Spurgeon** says "Up till now she has not imbibed a single idea from Christ. The Lord has spoken to her in parables, but she has not seen through the thin veil, so she has missed his meaning. Now he fires another shot, and deals with her in another fashion. It was needful to arouse this woman to a sense of her sinfulness. It was no use putting on plasters where there was no knowledge of a sore, and no use attempting to fill the void where there was no feeling of emptiness. So first she must be brought low, she must be made to see herself in the glass of truth, and then she would begin to understand her need of salvation. Oftentimes, in seeking to bless people, the kindest way is not to build them up, but to pull them down; not to begin to encourage their hopes, but to let them see how hopeless their case is apart from sovereign grace."

As **John MacArthur** says "Since the woman failed to grasp the nature of the water He spoke of, Jesus moved the conversation to her need for repentance and salvation from sin....Jesus responded to the woman's interest by offering her the opportunity to confess her sins and receive forgiveness to be purified and delivered from iniquity to righteousness." (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**He said to her, "Go, call your husband and come here** - This would force her hand. He is going to command her to do something He already knows she cannot do! Jesus in His omniscience knew that she did not have a husband, as He declared in the next passage. He knew that she had had 5 husbands and was now living with a man who was not her husband and so was guilty of the sin of adultery. Even so Jesus is not "put off" by her incredible infidelity and immorality, but is still seeking to save this lost soul, a

person many of us would have said is beyond saving! Jesus gives up on no one, no matter how heinous their past and horrible their present!

*No one values the physician until he feels the disease.*

-- J C Ryle

[Steven Cole](#) observes that "The woman has asked Jesus to give her this living water, even though she is still thinking too much on a material level. If Jesus had led her in a prayer to receive the living water at this point, she would have been a false convert, because something crucial was missing. So Jesus abruptly changes direction." This is an example of Jesus, the Light, shining in the darkness and exposing the evil deeds of this woman (Jn 1:5+; Jn 3:19-20+). Jesus shows her that He supernaturally knows all about her past and present. Jesus knew about Nathanael even before He met him (John 1:48+). He knew what was in the hearts of the superficial believers in Jerusalem, so that He did not entrust Himself to them (John 2:24-25+). We will see Jesus' omniscience on other occasions in John's Gospel (John 6:6; 6:64; Jn 11:14; Jn 13:38; Jn 18:4). It would be more than a little unnerving to have a perfect stranger uncover the sins of your past and present! But Jesus wasn't doing it to be mean. He did it to show her that her real need was spiritual, not material. He was helping her come to terms with the nature of the gift that He was offering

**Lenski** comments "In the case of this woman Jesus has gone as far as he could with the gospel. He has laid the foundation and has laid it well. He now suddenly turns to the law. This thrust of Jesus' is direct and goes home. Jesus bids this woman to do what he knows she cannot do. Such biddings are like the Ten Commandments; like the command to the lawyer, "This do and thou shalt live!" Luke 10:28; and like that to the rich young ruler, "Sell all!" Luke 18:22+. Biddings and commands like these are intended to reveal to the person concerned this very inability and the sin and guilt connected therewith. The divine law demands perfect love and by that very demand shows us, who lack this love, that we are full of sin. The lawyer, ordered to do the commands he recites, by that order is to discover that he cannot do them and must seek a different way to heaven. The rich young ruler, bidden to sell all and to give it away, finds that here lay his guilt in an outwardly moral life—he loved his possessions with an unholy love. This woman, who cannot go and call and bring her husband to Jesus, by that very fact is to see just what kind of a woman she is, what a wretched, sordid, immoral life she had led." (BORROW [The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel](#))

**J C Ryle** - We should mark....**the absolute necessity of conviction of sin before a soul can be converted to God.** The Samaritan woman seems to have been comparatively unmoved until our Lord exposed her breach of the seventh commandment ("You shall not commit adultery." Ex 20:14+). Those heart-searching words, "**Go, call your husband,**" appear to have pierced her conscience like an arrow. From that moment, however ignorant, she speaks like an earnest, sincere inquirer after truth. And the reason is evident. **She felt that her spiritual disease was discovered** For the first time in her life she saw herself. To bring thoughtless people to this state of mind should be the principal aim of all teachers and ministers of the Gospel. They should carefully copy their Master's example in this place. **Till men and women are brought to feel their sinfulness and need, no real good is ever done to their souls. Till a sinner sees himself as God sees him, he will continue careless, triding, and unmoved. By all means we must labour to convince the unconverted man of sin, to prick his conscience, to open his eyes, to show him himself.** To this end we must expound the length and breadth of God's holy law. To this end we must denounce every practice contrary to that law, however fashionable and customary. This is the only way to do good. Never does a soul value the Gospel medicine until it feels its disease. Never does a man see any beauty in Christ as a Saviour, until he discovers that he is himself a lost and ruined sinner. Ignorance of sin is invariably attended by neglect of Christ. ([John 4 Commentary](#))

We should mark, lastly, Christ's gracious willingness to reveal Himself to the chief of sinners. He concludes His conversation with the Samaritan woman by telling her openly and unreservedly that He is the Saviour of the world. "I that speak to thee," He says, "am the Messiah." Nowhere in all the Gospels do we find our Lord making such a full avowal of His nature and office as He does in this place. And this avowal, be it remembered, was made not to learned Scribes, or moral Pharisees, but to one who up to that day had been an ignorant, thoughtless, and immoral person!

Dealings with sinners, such as these, form one of the grand peculiarities of the Gospel. Whatever a man's past life may have been, there is hope and a remedy for him in Christ. If he is only willing to hear Christ's voice and follow Him, Christ is willing to receive him at once as a friend, and to bestow on him the fullest measure of mercy and grace. The Samaritan woman, the penitent thief, the Philippian jailor, the publican Zacchæus, are all patterns of Christ's readiness to show mercy, and to confer full and immediate pardons. It is His glory that, like a great physician, He will undertake to cure those who are apparently incurable, and that none are too bad for Him to love and heal. Let these things sink down into our hearts. Whatever else we doubt, let us never doubt that Christ's love to sinners passeth knowledge, and that Christ is as willing to receive as He is almighty to save.

What are we ourselves? This is the question, after all, which demands our attention. We may have been up to this day careless, thoughtless, sinful as the woman whose story we have been reading. But yet there is hope. He who talked with the Samaritan woman at the well is yet living at God's right hand, and never changes. Let us only ask, and He will "give us living water."

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## Cyril Hocking - John 4:16–20 THOU ART A PROPHET

THE MEEKNESS and gentleness of Christ is mighty! By it He casts down reasonings and all that is against the knowledge of God with a view to, 'bringing into captivity every thought'. If Samaritan-like strongholds of carnal ignorance and religious pretence are to fall, if the deep divide between these peoples is to be crossed, His must be the initiative. He must fuel a woman's curiosity, convict her out of her own mouth, and lead her on to confess Him.

He knows all that is in women, vv. 16–18. John has written already that He knows also all men and what is in them!, 2:23–25. His command to go, to call her husband, and then to return to Him was His means of baring her conscience that He might clothe her with blessing. For this she must confess, with shame, her sins. Yes she avoids candid confession, seeking to cover up with the part-truth that currently she does not have a husband. What was gently owned as 'well (truly) said' as far as it went (and we must note that this was her briefest response by far!), called for the Lord to fill in the whole truth. This concerned her past, the 'five skeletons in her marital cupboard', and her present immoral relationship with yet another man. Who or what is this Stranger who scans her past and present, and puts her on the defensive?

He is a prophet, vv. 19–20. For this woman, this meant that He could discern and expose her secrets with convicting power. However, conviction of sin is one thing; confession of it is quite another. Sinful flesh is practised in the art of procrastination when truth calls for change, though certainly for more than a change of subject!, cf. v. 17. Her own carnal state precludes her from the act of worship, yet she chooses to raise the differences of opinion between their peoples regarding the authentic place of worship. Samaritans have ancient traditions to favour their sanctuary site; 'our fathers worshipped in this mountain (Gerizim)', whereas 'ye (Jews) say, that in Jerusalem is the place men ought to (must) worship'. One more than a prophet is called for now to reveal how the Father's quest for 'true worshippers' will be satisfied. The Son must reveal this! For no one knows 'the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him', Matt. 11:27.

**John 4:17 The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have correctly said, 'I have no husband';**

BGT John 4:17 περὶ θῆ γυνὴ καὶ ἐπεὶ αὐτὸ κῶ χῶ νῶρα· λῆγει αὐτὴ ἰησοῦς· καλὰς εἶπας τί νῶρα οὐκ ἔχω·

NET John 4:17 The woman replied, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "Right you are when you said, 'I have no husband,'"

NLT John 4:17 "I don't have a husband," the woman replied. Jesus said, "You're right! You don't have a husband--"

ESV John 4:17 The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband';"

NIV John 4:17 "I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband."

GNT John 4:17 περὶ θῆ γυνὴ καὶ ἐπεὶ αὐτὸ κῶ χῶ νῶρα· λῆγει αὐτὴ ἰησοῦς, Καλὰς εἶπας τί νῶρα οὐκ ἔχω·

KJV John 4:17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:

YLT John 4:17 the woman answered and said, 'I have not a husband.' Jesus saith to her, 'Well didst thou say - A husband I have not;

ASV John 4:17 The woman answered and said unto him, I have no husband. Jesus saith unto her, Thou saidst well, I have no husband:

CSB John 4:17 "I don't have a husband," she answered. "You have correctly said, 'I don't have a husband,'" Jesus said.

NKJ John 4:17 The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,'"

NRS John 4:17 The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband';"

NAB John 4:17 The woman answered and said to him, "I do not have a husband." Jesus answered her, "You are right in saying, 'I do not have a husband.'"

NJB John 4:17 The woman answered, 'I have no husband.' Jesus said to her, 'You are right to say, "I have no husband";

GWN John 4:17 The woman replied, "I don't have a husband." Jesus told her, "You're right when you say that you don't have a husband.

- [John 4 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE WOMAN'S "CONFESSION"

While her "confession" was true, it was not total. She kept back the lurid detail that she was presently living in an adulterous relationship. Just a small detail, but one which she sought to conceal.

**THOUGHT** - Do we ever do this when we confess our sins? (1 John 1:9+, Jas 5:16+) Do we tell enough of the truth, but not the whole truth? I am not saying we should recount every lurid detail, but we should agree with God about our basic missteps and not try to "sugarcoat" our confession. And if we are led to confess to another believer, we need to be especially careful not to defile them with our description! I have seen this done even in an individual who was "testifying" just prior to being dunked under water (before the entire congregation) and he went into some of the lurid details of his past as the owner of a strip club. I personally felt defiled by his "testimony."

**The woman answered and said, "I have no husband."** - The woman is surely hoping her answer would put an end this is part of the conversation. And yet she is in a sense confessing for even Jesus acknowledges "you have correctly said...."

**Robertson** on husband - The Greek **anēr** means either "man" or "husband." She had her "**man**," but he was not a legal "**husband**." **Her language veils her deceit.** ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**Lenski** on **answered and said** - the doubling of the verbs marking the great importance of her reply (BORROW [The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel](#))

**Jesus said to her, "You have correctly said**(Gk = "Well [[kalos](#)] have you said"), **'I have no husband** - To reiterate his declaration reflects Jesus' omniscience. "Jesus saw through the double sense of her language and read her heart as he only can do, a supernatural gift of which John often speaks (Jn 1:48; 2:24f.; 5:20)." (Robertson [John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**J C Ryle** - Our Lord's commendation of the woman's honest confession deserves notice. It teaches us that we should make the best of an ignorant sinner's words. An unskilful physician of souls would probably have rebuked the woman sharply for her wickedness, if her words led him to suspect it. Our Lord on the contrary says, "Thou hast well said."

**NET Note** - The word order in Jesus' reply is reversed from the woman's original statement. The word "husband" in Jesus' reply is placed in an emphatic position.

**Warren Wiersbe** - We might note the example Christ sets as a soul-winner. He did not allow personal prejudices or physical needs to hinder Him. He met this woman in a friendly way and did not force her into a decision. Wisely, He guided the conversation and allowed the Word to take effect in her heart. He dealt with her privately and lovingly presented the way of salvation. He captured her attention by speaking about something common and at hand—water—and used this as an illustration of eternal life. (Likewise, at the cool midnight hour, He spoke to Nicodemus about wind.) He did not avoid speaking of sin, but brought her face-to-face with her need. (BORROW [Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament](#))

**John 4:18 for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly."**

BGT John 4:18 π ντε γ ρ νδρας σχες κα ν ν ν χεις ο κ σπιν σου ν ρ· το το ληθ ς ε ρηκας.

NET John 4:18 for you have had five husbands, and the man you are living with now is not your husband. This you said truthfully!"

NLT John 4:18 for you have had five husbands, and you aren't even married to the man you're living with now. You certainly spoke the truth!"

ESV John 4:18 for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you

have said is true."

NIV John 4:18 The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

GNT John 4:18 π ντε γ ρ νδρας σχες κα ν ν ν χεις ο κ σιν σου ν ρ· το το ληθ ς ε ρηκας.

KJV John 4:18 For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.

YLT John 4:18 for five husbands thou hast had, and, now, he whom thou hast is not thy husband; this hast thou said truly.'

ASV John 4:18 for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: this hast thou said truly.

CSB John 4:18 "For you've had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true."

NKJ John 4:18 "for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly."

NRS John 4:18 for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!"

NAB John 4:18 For you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true."

NJB John 4:18 for although you have had five, the one you now have is not your husband. You spoke the truth there.'

GWN John 4:18 You've had five husbands, and the man you have now isn't your husband. You've told the truth."

- **is not:** Ge 20:3 34:2,7,8,31 Nu 5:29 Ru 4:10 Jer 3:20 Eze 16:32 Mk 10:12 Ro 7:3 1Co 7:10,11 Heb 13:4
- [John 4 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **THE WOMAN'S IMMORALITY IS EXPOSED**

Jesus is bringing the "mirror" up to her face (cf James 1:23-24+), so that she can see her sin in all its ugliness. He is appealing to her conscience but He does so without condemning or shaming the woman. What she may have thought was hidden from Jesus, is now out in the open, and it forces a response from her.

**For you have had five husbands** - Jesus simply speaks the truth without making a moral judgment. Jesus really zeros in on the woman's morality or better lack of such. Unless she was proficient at adding arsenic to the water of these first 5 husbands it is almost certain every one ended in a divorce. And considering her current state of immorality, the husbands very likely divorced her because of her unfaithfulness!

It is worth noting that famous theologians can make ridiculous interpretations if they fail to interpret the text in its literal sense. Thus Ryle writes that "Augustine regards these five husbands as significant of "the five senses of the body," which are as five husbands by which the soul of the natural man is ruled! I cannot think that our Lord meant anything of the kind." This allegorical approach is one reason so many of the expositors have such a difficult time interpreting prophetic passages. The only safe approach is the literal approach.

**William MacDonald** - The Lord never used His complete knowledge of all things to needlessly expose or shame a person. But He did use it, as here, in order to deliver a person from the bondage of sin. (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**And the one whom you now have is not your husband**- Again Jesus simply states what He knows is true, not to condemn her. She has a live in man, but no husband at present. Will this convict her of her sin? She needed to acknowledge her sin before Jesus could bless her with living water of salvation.

**THOUGHT** - One has to wonder how many couples that are going to church read right over this and go on living together even though they are not married?

**R C H Lenski** - Jesus accepts, Jesus commends, Jesus completes her confession....Instead of wringing the rest of the confession

from the woman, Jesus makes it for her. It is a touch of his gentleness with the sinner. So the father of the prodigal stops him in the middle of his confession—the same gentleness in a different way (Lk 15:21, 22+). (BORROW [The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel](#))

**MacDonald on not your husband** - This is the important point. The woman was a sinner, and until she was willing to acknowledge this, the Lord could not bless her with living water. (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**MacArthur** points out that "It should also be noted that by refusing to call the man she was currently living with her husband, Jesus rejected the notion that merely living together constitutes marriage. The Bible views marriage as a formal, legal, public covenant between a man and a woman (Matt. 19:5–6)." (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**This you have said truly** - To what does this refer? To her answer in Jn 4:17 "I have no husband", which was true up to a point. Jesus' commends her for at least some degree of truthfulness.

#### John 4:19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.

BGT John 4:19 λ γει α τ γυν · κ ρι ε, θεωρ τι προφ της ε σ .

NET John 4:19 The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet.

NLT John 4:19 "Sir," the woman said, "you must be a prophet.

ESV John 4:19 The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet.

NIV John 4:19 "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet.

GNT John 4:19 λ γει α τ γυν , Κ ρι ε, θεωρ τι προφ της ε σ .

KJV John 4:19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

YLT John 4:19 The woman saith to him, 'Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet;

ASV John 4:19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

CSB John 4:19 "Sir," the woman replied, "I see that You are a prophet.

NKJ John 4:19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.

NRS John 4:19 The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet.

NAB John 4:19 The woman said to him, "Sir, I can see that you are a prophet.

NJB John 4:19 'I see you are a prophet, sir,' said the woman.

GWN John 4:19 The woman said to Jesus, "I see that you're a prophet!

- **perceive:** John 4:29 1:48,49 2Ki 5:26 6:12 Lu 7:39 1Co 14:24,25
- **a prophet:** John 6:14 7:40 9:17 Lu 7:16 24:19
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### HER ADMISSION THAT JESUS IS CORRECT

Her dawning perception seems to be a combination of her acknowledgement of her sinful lifestyle and the knowledge of this righteous Man. She is beginning to recognize that Jesus is not an ordinary man.

**The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive ([theoreo](#)) that You are a prophet** - Note first that she does not deny Jesus' words about her present sinful state. **Sir** is **kurios** (which is rendered "Lord" over 600x in the NT) but she has not yet come to understand that Jesus is the her **kurios**! She is just being respectful, but she soon will have her heart opened by the Spirit as did another woman named Lydia (cf Acts 16:14+)! Notice she says "a" prophet, not "the" prophet (Dt 18:15, 18). Since she had some understanding of the Messiah (Jn 4:25), she probably also had some understanding of **the Prophet** foretold by Moses, but she does not address Him in a way that suggests she recognizes Jesus as the fulfillment of that pentateuchal prophecy (cf [Samaritan Pentateuch](#)) **Perceive** is in the present tense which Robertson renders "I am beginning to perceive, from what you say, your knowledge of my private life." She was admitting that His analysis of her life was accurate! The Son's Light is beginning to "dawn" in her heart. Stated another

way, her statement in effect acknowledges that Jesus' description of her married merry-go-round was correct.

**Vincent on perceive** - Not immediate perception, but rather, I perceive as I observe Thee longer and more carefully. In another note of theoreo **Vincent** explains "(theoreo) was more than simple seeing. The verb means looking steadfastly, as one who has an interest in the object, and with a view to search into and understand it: to look inquiringly and intently. (**Ed Note:** And even with a sense of amazement. Who would not be amazed when a stranger recited sordid details of one's past life?)" ([John 4 Commentary](#))

**Robertson on You are a prophet** - She felt that this was the explanation of his knowledge of her life and she wanted to change the subject at once to the outstanding theological dispute. ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**Henderson** comments that "by calling Him a prophet (which to her meant one who can read secrets) she really admits her guilt!" It is clear from Jn 4:29 that this stranger's résumé of her evil conduct shocked her beyond words.

**Leon Morris** has an interesting observation - The Samaritans acknowledged no prophet after Moses other than the one spoken of in Deuteronomy 18:18, and him they regarded as the Messiah. For her to speak of Jesus as a prophet was thus to move into the area of messianic speculation. (BORROW [The Gospel according to John : NICNT](#)).

**Lenski** - Jesus' bidding her to call her husband is really a call to confess her sins, to confess them voluntarily. For in saying "go call" Jesus, indeed, gives her the opportunity to pretend that she has a husband and that she now goes to call him, thus avoiding confession, and thus also getting away from Jesus altogether. When the bidding of Jesus to this woman is contemplated from this viewpoint, the perfect mastery of it comes to view. The woman makes no move to go—she is not trying to get away. She does not lie by pretending that she has a husband, since Jesus mentions "husband." She stands there before this strange Jew and confesses her shame, "I have no husband." Those few words cost the woman something. Cold comment says that she is half lying and does not understand what it takes for a woman to reveal, even partly, her disgrace. Why fault the woman for confessing only so much? Her quick mind surely tells her that Jesus may probe farther, but this does not seal her lips, does not make her evade, does not rouse her temper, does not make her say, "What business are my private matters to thee?" No, she confesses. The fact that she does this before this stranger is the effect of what he has been saying to her. The gospel aids the law, as the gospel is also aided by the law. It helps the sinner by making him ready to confess. To Jesus, whose lips are filled with the gospel, the sinner finds he can confess. (BORROW [The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel](#))

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**Perceive** (2334) (theoreo from theaomai [used in Jn 4:35] = to look at closely or attentively or contemplatively - even with a sense of wonder; cp theoros = a spectator) (Gives us English = theater, theorize) usually refers to physical sight but can also refer to perception and understanding. It connotes intensive, thorough, lingering, astonished, reflective, comprehending, observation.

**Theoreo** is used more in Gospel of John (18x) than in all the synoptic Gospel's combined (15x) - Matt. 27:55; Matt. 28:1; Mk. 3:11; Mk. 5:15; Mk. 12:41; Mk. 15:40; Mk. 15:47; Mk. 16:4; Lk. 10:18; Lk. 14:29; Lk. 21:6; Lk. 23:35; Lk. 23:48; Lk. 24:37; Lk. 24:39; Jn. 2:23; Jn. 4:19; Jn. 6:19; Jn. 6:40; Jn. 6:62; Jn. 7:3; Jn. 8:51; Jn. 9:8; Jn. 10:12; Jn. 12:19; Jn. 12:45; Jn. 14:17; Jn. 14:19; Jn. 16:10; Jn. 17:24; Jn. 20:6; Jn. 20:12; Jn. 20:14; Acts 3:16; Acts 4:13; Acts 7:56; Acts 8:13; Acts 9:7; Acts 10:11; Acts 17:16; Acts 17:22; Acts 19:26; Acts 20:38; Acts 21:20; Acts 25:24; Acts 27:10; Acts 28:6; Heb. 7:4; 1 Jn. 3:17; Rev. 11:11; Rev. 11:12

**John 4:20 "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you [people] say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."**

BGT John 4:20 ο πατρες μν ν τ ρει το τ προσεκ νησαν· κα με ς λ γετε πι ν εροσολ μοις σν τ προς που προσκυνε ν δε .

NET John 4:20 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you people say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem."

NLT 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?"

ESV John 4:20 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship."

NIV John 4:20 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

GNT John 4:20 ο πατρες μν ν τ ρει το τ προσεκ νησαν· κα με ς λ γετε πι ν εροσολ μοις σν τ προς

που προσκυνε ν δε .

KJV John 4:20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

YLT John 4:20 our fathers in this mountain did worship, and ye -- ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where it behoveth to worship.'

ASV John 4:20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

CSB John 4:20 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, yet you Jews say that the place to worship is in Jerusalem."

NKJ John 4:20 "Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship."

NRS John 4:20 Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem."

NAB John 4:20 Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain; but you people say that the place to worship is in Jerusalem."

NJB John 4:20 'Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, though you say that Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.'

GWN John 4:20 Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain. But you Jews say that people must worship in Jerusalem."

- **fathers:** Ge 12:6,7 33:18-20 De 27:12 Jos 8:33-35 Jud 9:6,7 2Ki 17:26-33
- **your say:** Dt 12:5-11 1Ki 9:3 1Ch 21:26 22:1 2Chr 6:6 7:12,16 Ps 78:68 Ps 87:1,2 132:13
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## A DIVERSION OR AN HONEST DECLARATION?

**Our fathers worshiped ([proskuneo](#)) in this mountain** - She is referring to Mt Gerizim (4x - Dt. 11:29; Dt. 27:12; Jos 8:33; Jdg 9:7) to which she probably pointed ([Jacob's Well](#) was said to be at the foot of Mt Gerizim). She is alluding to the different places Samaritans and Jews worshiped. Was she trying to divert the conversation or was this a sincere declaration (as Cole sums up below interpreters differ).

**Brian Bell** Christ's sharp perception pricks her conscience...squirming, she shifts to more comfortable conversation. [Let's argue religion technique] 1. What about the heathen in Africa? What about them Pygmy's in Pygmy-land? How can a good God, allow suffering & evil? What about creation & evolution? Sprinkling or immersion? Wine or grape-juice? King James or Living Bible? This is her Red Herring that she hopes will hide her blemished soul, from His penetrating gaze. So she drags a smoked herring across her trail to cover up her scent, as they use to in England to throw off tracking dogs from the fox. However, this Vixen wont get away from this Terrific Tracker though!

**Robertson** has a lengthy note on **this mountain** - Jacob's Well is at the foot of Mount Gerizim toward which she pointed. Sanballat erected a temple on this mountain which was destroyed by John Hyrcanus B.C. 129. Abraham (Genesis 12:7) and Jacob (Genesis 33:20) set up altars at Shechem. On Gerizim were proclaimed the blessings recorded in Deut. 28. The Samaritan Pentateuch records an altar set up on Gerizim that is on Ebal (over 200 feet higher than Gerizim) in the Hebrew (Deut. 27:4). The Samaritans held that Abraham offered up Isaac on Gerizim. The Samaritans kept up this worship on this mountain and a handful do it still. ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**Leon Morris** on **this mountain** - "Our fathers" points back to the building of altars in this region by Abraham (Gen. 12:7) and Jacob (Gen. 33:20). Mt. Gerizim was the scene of the blessing of the people when they came into the promised land (Deut. 11:29; 27:12). The Samaritans also read in their Bibles that an altar was commanded to be set up in this mountain (Deut. 27:4ff.). They had a tradition that Abraham's offering of Isaac took place on this mountain and they held that it was here that Abraham met Melchizedek. In fact, most of the blessed events in the time of the patriarchs seem to have been linked with Gerizim! (BORROW [The Gospel according to John : NICNT](#)).

**Vincent** on **this mountain** - [Gerizim](#), at the foot of which lies the well. Here, according to the Samaritan tradition, Abraham sacrificed Isaac, and met Melchisedek. By some convulsion of nature, the central range of mountains running north and south, was

cleft open to its base at right angles to its own line of extension, and the deep fissure thus made is the vale of Nâlus, as it appears to one coming up the plain of El Mákhna from Jerusalem. The valley is at least eighteen hundred feet above the level of the sea, and the mountains on either hand tower to an elevation of about one thousand feet more. Mount Ebal is on the north, Gerizim on the south, and the city between. Near the eastern end the vale is not more than sixty rods wide; and there, I suppose, the tribes assembled to hear the "blessings and cursings" read by the Levites (Deut. 27, 28). The panorama seen from the top of Gerizim is about the most extensive and imposing in all Palestine. The summit is a small level plateau. In the midst of the southern end is a sloping rock, said by the Samaritans to be the site of the altar of their temple, and on approaching which they remove their shoes. At the eastern edge of the plateau, a small cavity in the rock is shown as the place on which Abraham offered up Isaac. Ebal is three thousand and seventy-nine feet above the sea-level, and more than two hundred and thirty feet higher than Gerizim.\* ([John 4 Commentary](#))

#### Related Resources:

- [What is the significance of Mount Gerizim in the Bible?](#)
- Wikipedia - [Gerizim](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Gerizim](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Gerizim and Ebal](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Gerizim](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Gerizim](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Gerizim, Mount](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Ebal and gerizim](#) [Gerizim mount](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Gerizim, Mount Gerizim](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Gerizim, Mount](#)

**And you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought (dei = must) to worship** - NIV = "the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem." She is saying that you Jews say the Temple in Jerusalem is the ONLY true place to worship.

**Robertson** sees her remarks as a side maneuver - The woman felt that by raising this theological wrangle she would turn the attention of Jesus away from herself and perhaps get some light on the famous controversy. ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**Steven Cole** comments that "At this point she brings up a point of tension between the Samaritans and the Jews regarding whether people should worship at Mount Gerizim or in Jerusalem. As with Jn 4:15, so here commentators differ in interpreting the woman's reason for bringing this into the conversation. **Some say** that she was trying to divert the conversation from her sins, which made her uncomfortable, to a safer topic: "Let's talk about the religious controversy between the Samaritans and the Jews." **Others argue** that Jesus' exposing her sin made her realize that He truly was a great prophet, so she brought up to Him a sincere, nagging question about the proper way to worship God. Ryle (p. 221) goes so far as to say that her words are just another form of the Philippian jailer's question, "What must I do to be saved?" I think that the truth is somewhere in the middle. She probably was uncomfortable with Jesus' penetrating gaze into her secret life, as we all would be. So perhaps she was trying to divert the conversation to a safer topic. But also, she probably was sincerely confused about whether the Samaritan or the Jewish way of worship was correct. So the issue she raises in 4:20 was not insincere. She wanted to know from this prophet which way was right." (Bolding added)

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**Must** ([1163](#)) see note above on [dei](#) (including the "Ten Must's" in the Gospel of John).

**Worship** (bow down) ([4352](#)) see note below on [proskuneo](#) a key word (verb) in this section (Jn 4:20, 22, 22, 23 24)

**John 4:21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.**

BGT John 4:21 λ γει α τ η σο ς π στευ μοι, γ ναι, τι ρ χεται ρα τε ο τε ν τ ρει το τ ο τε ν εροσολ μοις προσκυν σετε τ πατρ .

NET John 4:21 Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.

NLT John 4:21 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.

ESV John 4:21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.

NIV John 4:21 Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.

GNT John 4:21 λ γει α τ η σο ς, Π στευ μοι, γ ναι, τι ρ χεται ρα τε ο τε ν τ ρει το τ ο τε ν εροσολ μοις προσκυν σετε τ πατρ .

KJV John 4:21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

YLT John 4:21 Jesus saith to her, 'Woman, believe me, that there doth come an hour, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father;

ASV John 4:21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father.

CSB John 4:21 Jesus told her, "Believe Me, woman, an hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.

NKJ John 4:21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father.

NRS John 4:21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.

NAB John 4:21 Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.

NJB John 4:21 Jesus said: Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.

GWN John 4:21 Jesus told her, "Believe me. A time is coming when you Samaritans won't be worshipping the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem.

- **said:** Eze 14:3 20:3
- **when:** Mal 1:11 Mt 18:20 Lu 21:5,6,24 Ac 6:14 1Ti 2:8
- **worship:** John 4:23 14:6 Mt 28:19 Eph 2:18 3:14 1Pe 1:17
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Jesus said to her, "Woman** - While to modern ears this sound a bit "cold," that was not the case in Jesus' address, for even on the Cross, He used the same address to His Own mother (Jn 19:26). Thus woman was actually a term of respect.

**Leon Morris** adds "Jesus used it also in addressing women for whom he was performing miracles (Matt. 15:28; Luke 13:12), the **woman** at the well (John 4:21), the adulteress (John 8:10), and Mary Magdalene at the tomb (John 20:15). In none of these can we detect any harshness." (BORROW [The Gospel according to John : NICNT](#)).

**Believe Me** - Jesus gives her a command in the [present imperative](#) (keep on believing). While He does not yet say "believe in Me," the use of this verb certainly suggests He is moving in that direction.

**Robertson** has a good thought on why Jesus uses **believe** - Unique phrase in place of the common amēn amēn (verily, verily). ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**An hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father**- **Hour is coming** is an idiomatic phrase used seven times by John with no uses by the synoptic writers (Jn 4:21, Jn 4:23, Jn 5:25, Jn 5:28, Jn 16:2, Jn 16:25, Jn 16:32) In other words **this mountain** Gerizim will not be the location of true worship but neither will the Temple **in Jerusalem** be the place of true worship. Jesus knew that the Temple would no longer even be standing in 40 years. And He also knew that His body was the ultimate Temple that would be resurrected and would be the place, or better the Person (Himself), through Whom one would be able to **worship the Father** (cf Jn 2:19-21+, Jn 14:6).

**Vincent on an hour is coming** means it is "even now on its way." ([John 4 Commentary](#))

**Robertson** adds that "The **worship** of God will be emancipated from bondage to place. Both Jews and Samaritans are wrong as to the "necessity" (**dei** = must). "These ancient rivalries will disappear when the spirituality of true religion is fully realized." Jesus told

this sinful woman one of his greatest truths. ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**John MacArthur** - During the Jewish revolt against Rome a few decades later (A.D. 70), the temple at Jerusalem would be destroyed, and thousands of Samaritans would be slaughtered on Mount Gerizim. More significantly, the new covenant renders all external ceremonies and rituals, whether Jewish or Samaritan, obsolete. (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**Vincent** point out that "This absolute use of the title **the Father** is characteristic of John. He speaks of God as **the Father**, and my Father, more commonly the former. (ED: The synoptic Gospels use the Father 10x in 6 verses while John uses the Father 80x in 64 verses.) ([John 4 Commentary](#))

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**Believe** (4100) ([pisteuo](#) from [pistis](#); [pistos](#); related studies [the faith](#), the [obedience of faith](#)) means to consider something to be true and therefore worthy of one's trust. To accept as true, genuine, or real. To have a firm conviction as to the goodness, efficacy, or ability of something or someone. To consider to be true. To accept the word or evidence of. **Vincent** notes that **pisteuo** "means to persuade, to cause belief, to induce one to do something by persuading, and so runs into the meaning of to obey, properly as the result of persuasion

**Worship** (bow down) ([4352](#)) see note below on [proskuneo](#) a key word (verb) in this section (Jn 4:20, 22, 23 24)

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### Cyril Hocking - John 4:21–26 I AM HE (THE CHRIST)

WITH WHAT PERSONAL AUTHORITY He commands this unsure seeker to 'believe me'—an imperative phrase not used elsewhere, cf. Jn 14:8.

Earthly places of worship must yield to the heavenly, v. 21. No servant-seer had prophesied of this coming hour when no earthly sanctuary, whether the schismatic Gerizim of her fathers or the divinely selected Jerusalem, would be the place of approach to God. The Son alone knows the Father, and in revealing Him to all without distinction He opens up a new equality and immediacy of access to the Father. The new sphere of worship is not a tangible temple on earth, but the real, the true tabernacle in heaven.

The Father seeks true worshippers, vv. 22–24. But as the Son of man who came to seek and to save the lost, He must settle first the controversy the woman has raised. Unequivocally, Samaritanism is spurious; it is neither divinely revealed nor approved; its guides and devotees alike are ignorant of what they worship. Conversely, biblical Judaism is the only divinely revealed religion; its sanctuary, sacrifices and service encouraged worship consistent with the holiness of God. Salvation for all, then, is from the Jews alone, v. 22, to whose Messiah the gathering of all peoples is destined to be, as Jacob had prophesied, Gen. 49:10. Truly she is in the presence of a greater than Jacob, vv. 5, 12, who will allow but one source of salvation for her and for the world; for our Lord sprang out of Judah.

In the privileged hour 'that now is', 'true worshippers' belong to a new order altogether. The must of worship here, calls for more than truthfulness and sincerity. Neither procedures nor posture nor place nor personal attitude (important though this has always been) are demanded here. Christ is Himself the truth, 14:6, and on His return to heaven would send the Spirit of truth to indwell, enlighten and equip His own, The true worshipper now worships by the Spirit of God, Phil. 3:3, 'in spirit and (better 'even') truth', boldly entering the true sanctuary and into the presence of the only true God Himself, via the new and living way.

The Messiah declares all things, vv. 25–26. Of this, the woman is sure. The 'prophet' who had exposed her dark secrets now will permit no further delay. He now declares plainly 'I am he' (the first such personal revelation was given to a Samaritan!) so that Sychar also should hear her witness and run with her to Him!

**John 4:22 "You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews."**

BGT John 4:22 με ς προσκυνε τε ο κ ο δατε· με ς προσκυνο μεν ο δαμεν, τι σωτηρ α κ τ ν ουδα ων σ τ ν.

NET John 4:22 You people worship what you do not know. We worship what we know, because salvation is from the Jews.

NLT John 4:22 You Samaritans know very little about the one you worship, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes through the Jews.

ESV John 4:22 You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.

NIV John 4:22 You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.

GNT John 4:22 με ς προσκυνε τε ο κ ο δατε· με ς προσκυνο μεν ο δαμεν, τι σωτηρη α κ τ ν ουδα ων σ τ ν.

KJV John 4:22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.

YLT John 4:22 ye worship what ye have not known; we worship what we have known, because the salvation is of the Jews;

ASV John 4:22 Ye worship that which ye know not: we worship that which we know; for salvation is from the Jews.

CSB John 4:22 You Samaritans worship what you do not know. We worship what we do know, because salvation is from the Jews.

NKJ John 4:22 "You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.

NRS John 4:22 You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.

NAB John 4:22 You people worship what you do not understand; we worship what we understand, because salvation is from the Jews.

NJB John 4:22 You worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know; for salvation comes from the Jews.

GWN John 4:22 You don't know what you're worshipping. We Jews know what we're worshipping, because salvation comes from the Jews.

- **know:** 2Ki 17:27-29,41 Ezr 4:2 Ac 17:23,30
- **worship:** 2Ch 13:10-12 Ps 147:19 Ro 3:2 Ro 9:4-5
- **for:** Ge 49:10 Ps 68:20 Isa 2:3 12:2,6 46:13 Zep 3:16,17 Zec 9:9 Lu 24:47 Ro 9:4,5 Heb 7:14
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## SALVATION IS FROM THE JEWS

**You worship ([proskuneo](#)) what you do not know** - The **NLT** is somewhat blunt in rendering it "You Samaritans know very little about the one you worship." **Do not know** means the Samaritans have absolutely, completely missed the truth about what constitutes true worship. How true today of so many in religious circles who think they are sincerely worshipping God, but who are sincerely wrong! (cf [religious iconography](#) or [use of statutes, relics, etc](#))

The Samaritans were like the Athenians about whom Paul declared "For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship (IN ATHENS), I also found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' Therefore **what you worship in ignorance**, this I proclaim to you....<sup>30</sup> "Therefore **having overlooked the times of ignorance**, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent (MEANING IN CONTEXT TO BE SAVED, REPENT AND BELIEVE, WHICH WOULD GRANT THEM ENTREE TO WORSHIP THE KING IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH),(Acts 17:23,30+)

**MacArthur** - Because they rejected most of the Old Testament (**ED: THEY ONLY ACCEPTED THE PENTATEUCH**), the Samaritans lacked the full revelation that it contained. (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**Vincent** comments on **worship what you do not know** - This worship of the unknown is common to vulgar ignorance and to philosophic culture; to the Samaritan woman, and to the Athenian philosophers. Compare John 7:28; 8:19, 27. The neuter expresses the unreal and impersonal character of the Samaritan worship. As the Samaritans received the Pentateuch only, they were ignorant of the later and larger revelation of God, as contained especially in the prophetic writings, and of the Messianic hope, as developed among the Jews. They had preserved only the abstract notion of God. ([John 4 Commentary](#))

**We worship ([proskuneo](#)) what we know** - Again the **NLT** is blunt = "while we Jews know all about Him." Using **We** Jesus identifies Himself with the Jewish people and in fact He Himself did attend the Temple to worship. The Samaritan worship was false worship, while Jewish worship (when done with a right heart attitude) was true worship of God.

**Worship** (bow down) ([4352](#)) see note below on [proskuneo](#) a key word (verb) in this section (Jn 4:20, 22, 22, 23 24)

**For (hoti)** - In this context [hoti](#) means because or for (this reason), used to introduce a cause or reason based on an evident fact

**Salvation is from the Jews** - **Salvation** is literally "**THE** (indicates specific) **salvation.**" (see Robertson's note below) The word **salvation** ([soteria](#)) is from [soter](#) which means Savior in turn from [sozo](#) which means to rescue from peril! So in a sense Jesus is alluding to the truth that the Savior Who Alone can give salvation is of Jewish origin (not Samaritan or any other ethnicity). This was **the salvation** promised and which was even now about to be revealed to this Samaritan woman in the Messiah.

**Robertson on salvation is from the Jews** - "The salvation," the Messianic salvation which had long been the hope and guiding star of the chosen people (Luke 1:69, 71, 77; Acts 13:26, 47). It was for the whole world (John 3:17), but it comes "out of" ( κ [ek]) the Jews. This tremendous fact should never be forgotten, however unworthy the Jews may have proved of their privilege. The Messiah, God's Son, was a Jew. ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**John MacArthur** comments that "There is a twofold sense in which **salvation is from the Jews**; first, the **revelation** of salvation came first to them and then to the rest of the world (Ro. 3:1–2; Ro 9:3–5); and, second, the **Source** of salvation—namely, the Messiah—was Himself a Jew (Ro. 9:5). (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**Vincent on from the Jews** - The passage illustrates John's habit of confirming the divine authority of the Old Testament revelation, and of showing its fulfillment in Christ. ([John 4 Commentary](#))

#### **Related Passage:**

(JEWS) who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, whose are the fathers, and **from whom is the Christ according to the flesh**, Who is over all (AND WHO MAKES SALVATION POTENTIALLY AVAILABLE TO ALL - Jn 1:29+, Titus 2:11+, 1 Ti 4:10+), God blessed forever. Amen. (Ro 9:4-5+).

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**Salvation** (4991) ([soteria](#) from [soter](#) = Savior in turn from [sozo](#) = save, rescue, deliver) describes the rescue or deliverance from danger, destruction and peril, in this context of course referring to rescue from eternal punishment in Hell. **Salvation** is a broader term in Greek than we often think of in English. Other concepts that are inherent in **soteria** include restoration to a state of safety, soundness, health and well being as well as preservation from danger of destruction. **Sozo** ([see word study](#)) the verb and **soteria** the noun are surely two of the most important words in all of God's Word. For an interesting analysis of soteria by William Barclay click here.

**John 4:23 "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.**

BGT John 4:23 ἄρχεται ἡ ὥρα καὶ νῦν ἐστίν, ὅτε οἱ ἀληθινοὶ προσκυνῆται προσκυνήσουσιν τὸν πατέρα ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ· καὶ γὰρ πατὴρ τοιοῦτους ζητεῖ τοὺς προσκυνήσοντας αὐτοῦ.

NET John 4:23 But a time is coming— and now is here— when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such people to be his worshipers.

NLT John 4:23 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.

ESV John 4:23 But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.

NIV John 4:23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.

GNT John 4:23 ἄρχεται ἡ ὥρα καὶ νῦν ἐστίν, ὅτε οἱ ἀληθινοὶ προσκυνῆται προσκυνήσουσιν τὸν πατέρα ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ· καὶ γὰρ πατὴρ τοιοῦτους ζητεῖ τοὺς προσκυνήσοντας αὐτοῦ.

KJV John 4:23 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.

YLT John 4:23 but, there cometh an hour, and it now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father also doth seek such to worship him;

ASV John 4:23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit

and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers.

CSB John 4:23 But an hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. Yes, the Father wants such people to worship Him.

NKJ John 4:23 "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.

NRS John 4:23 But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him.

NAB John 4:23 But the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth; and indeed the Father seeks such people to worship him.

NJB John 4:23 But the hour is coming -- indeed is already here -- when true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth: that is the kind of worshipper the Father seeks.

GWN John 4:23 Indeed, the time is coming, and it is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. The Father is looking for people like that to worship him.

- **hour:** Joh 5:25 12:23
- **true:** Isa 1:10-15 26:8,9 29:13 48:1,2 58:2,8-14 66:1,2 Jer 7:7-12 Mt 15:7-9 Lu 18:11-13
- **in spirit:** Ro 1:9 8:15,26 Ga 4:6 Eph 6:18 Php 3:3 Jude 1:20,21
- **truth:** Joh 1:17 Jos 24:14 1Sa 12:24 1Ch 29:17 Ps 17:1 32:2 51:6 Isa 10:20 Jer 3:10 4:2
- **Father seeks:** Ps 147:11 Pr 15:8 Song 2:14 Isa 43:21 Eze 22:30 1Pe 2:9
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## **NO LONGER "WHERE" BUT "WHO" ONE WORSHIPS**

**But an hour is coming, and now is** - What does **now is** mean? The conjunction **NOW** means is used here to introduce a change of subject or shift in the emphasis. In Jn 4:21 Jesus said an hour is coming and the phrase **now is** was not appropriate "for local worship was not abolished spiritual independence of place was called for at once So contrast John Jn 5:25 and Jn 5:28; Jn 16:25 and Jn 16:32." (Robertson) Jesus' point is that **NOW**, at this moment in time, the focus of worship shifts from a place (the Temple in Jerusalem) to a Person (Jesus). Jesus is on the scene and it is He would will provide the way for sinners to enter into the Kingdom of God and thus to be able to truly worship God.

**Morris** - "A time is coming and has now come" is a reference to a crisis, to something new. In the person of Jesus we see not only a repetition of old truths (be they held by the Jews or the Samaritans), but the appearing of God's definitive revelation. In due course he would die that atoning death which would bring salvation to the world.(Ibid)

**When the true worshipers** ([proskunetes](#) = one who bows down to deity, only here) **will worship** ([proskuneo](#)) **the Father in spirit and truth** - True worshipers implies not all who claim to worship God are truly born again (cf Mt 7:21-23+). Regarding the meaning of **in spirit and truth**, see the comments on Jn 4:24.

**Robertson** has a good word here - This is what matters, not where, but how (in reality, in the spirit of man, the highest part of man, and so in truth). All this is according to the Holy Spirit (Ro 8:5+) who is the Spirit of truth (John 16:13). Here Jesus has said the final word on worship, one needed today. ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**Believer's Study Bible** - The true worship of God will be afforded by Christ's death (His hour) since it removes the barrier imposed by sin.

**Henry Morris** - True worship and saving faith no longer are mediated through physical aids, now that Christ has come to bring full and free salvation. The truth in Christ, received through the Spirit by faith, is the worship the Father seeks (compare 2 Chronicles 16:9). (Defender's Study Bible)

**Brian Bell** - Not the Location of worship but the Object of worship. Not Where you worship but How you worship. Not just How you worship but ultimately Who you worship! Sincere & Spiritual Worship = the submission of all our nature to God; It's the quickening of conscience by His holiness; the nourishment of mind with His truth; the purifying of imagination by His beauty; the opening of the heart to His love; the surrender of will to His purpose. You don't need to find God in a special place, true worship finds Him in every place! 1. True worship is not a certain place, a certain time in the week, or a certain format. True worship is a relationship.

**True** (adjective) ([228](#))([alethinous](#) from **alethes** = true, one who cannot lie) is an **adjective** which pertains to

being in accordance with historical fact - genuine, real, true, valid, trustworthy (worthy of confidence, dependable). **Alethinós** describes that which has not only the name and resemblance, but the real nature corresponding to the name, in every respect corresponding to the idea signified by the name -- thus genuine not spurious, fictitious, counterfeit, imaginary, simulated or pretended.

**Worship** (bow down) (4352) (**proskuneo** from **pros** = before, towards + **kuneo** = kiss or adore) means to prostrate oneself in homage before another in the full sense of worship, not mere reverence or courtesy. To fall upon the knees and touch the ground with the forehead as an expression of profound reverence (to make a salam), by kneeling or prostration to do homage to one or make obeisance, either in order to express respect or make supplication. When Jesus Christ was born into this world, He was attended and worshipped by angels. (Lu 2:13f+). **Proskuneo** represents the most common Near Eastern act of adoration and reverence and also carries the idea of profound awe and respect. Some believe that the root word **kuneo** may be related to **kuon** which is the Greek word for dog and which then could be picturing a dog licking his master's hand. The word **proskuneo** literally means to kiss toward someone, to throw a kiss in token of respect or homage, to prostrate oneself in homage, to do reverence to, to adore and so to worship and show respect. In the ancient Oriental (especially Persia) the mode of salutation between persons of equal rank was to kiss each other on the lips. When the difference of rank was slight, they kissed each other on the cheek. When one was much inferior, he fell upon his knees touched his forehead to the ground or prostrated himself, and as he was bowing down he would be throwing kisses toward the superior. It is this latter mode of salutation that is intended by the Greek writers in the use of the verb **proskuneo**. All uses of **proskuneo** (clearly a **key word (verb)** in John 4 and the Samaritan woman) - Matt. 2:2; Matt. 2:8; Matt. 2:11; Matt. 4:9; Matt. 4:10; Matt. 8:2; Matt. 9:18; Matt. 14:33; Matt. 15:25; Matt. 18:26; Matt. 20:20; Matt. 28:9; Matt. 28:17; Mk. 5:6; Mk. 15:19; Lk. 4:7; Lk. 4:8; Lk. 24:52; Jn. 4:20; Jn. 4:21; Jn. 4:22; Jn. 4:23; Jn. 4:24; Jn. 9:38; Jn. 12:20; Acts 7:43; Acts 8:27; Acts 10:25; Acts 24:11; 1 Co. 14:25; Heb. 1:6; Heb. 11:21; Rev. 3:9; Rev. 4:10; Rev. 5:14; Rev. 7:11; Rev. 9:20; Rev. 11:1; Rev. 11:16; Rev. 13:4; Rev. 13:8; Rev. 13:12; Rev. 13:15; Rev. 14:7; Rev. 14:9; Rev. 14:11; Rev. 15:4; Rev. 16:2; Rev. 19:4; Rev. 19:10; Rev. 19:20; Rev. 20:4; Rev. 22:8; Rev. 22:9

**For** (gar) - Term of explanation.

**Such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers (proskuneo)** - This is an "amazing grace" statement. The the Father would seek worship from those who were formerly dead spiritually, yea, even His enemies, is a cause itself for praise and worship! Is this not one of those verses filled with "amazing grace?" The holy God seeking unholy men to be His worshipers is an incredible thought that should elicit endless gratitude in our hearts. Have you ever thanked God for seeking you to be His worshiper? Jesus Himself declared that "the Son of Man has come to **seek (zeteo)** and to **save (sozo)** that which is lost (US!)" (Lk 19:10+).

**Leon Morris** - The combination "spirit and truth" points to the need for complete sincerity and complete reality in our approach to God. There is an important point in the concluding statement that the Father seeks such to be his worshipers. It is not simply that he accepts such worship when it is brought to him. He is a God of love, a God who seeks the best for people, and therefore a God who actively seeks them out. (BORROW [The Gospel according to John : NICNT](#)).

**Related Passages** - Yes, the Father seeks, but in the divine mystery of salvation, the Father draws those He seeks!

Jn 6:44 "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.

Jn 15:16 "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name + He may give to you.

1 Jn 4:10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

One thinks of Romans 5:1-2+ which says "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also **we have obtained our introduction** (see Greek word **prosagoge** - WE HAVE ENTREE TO THE KING NOW THROUGH JESUS) by faith into this grace in which we stand (WE SHOULD STAND AMAZED IN HIS PRESENCE AND THIS SHOULD STIR HEARTFELT WORSHIP OF HIM); and we exult in hope of the glory of God."

**Seeks** (2212) (**zeteo** implies giving attention and priority to and deliberately pursuing after, to go in search of. The most striking application of zēteō is the New Testament religious application. Jesus came to seek and to save the lost which implies far more than a mere "looking around" (as seen in Mt 6:32,33; Mt 13:45,46; Lk 15:8) and includes the idea of diligently, earnestly, and tenaciously searching after something, sparing no effort, for the sought object is valued to the highest degree. Likewise, believers are to seek God in

the same way. **Zeteo** is a key word (verb) in John's Gospel where it is found 32x more than in the other synoptic Gospels - Jn. 1:38; Jn. 4:23; Jn. 4:27; Jn. 5:18; Jn. 5:30; Jn. 5:44; Jn. 6:24; Jn. 6:26; Jn. 7:1; Jn. 7:4; Jn. 7:11; Jn. 7:18; Jn. 7:19; Jn. 7:20; Jn. 7:25; Jn. 7:30; Jn. 7:34; Jn. 7:36; Jn. 8:21; Jn. 8:37; Jn. 8:40; Jn. 8:50; Jn. 10:39; Jn. 11:8; Jn. 11:56; Jn. 13:33; Jn. 16:19; Jn. 18:4; Jn. 18:7; Jn. 18:8; Jn. 19:12; Jn. 20:15

#### John 4:24 "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

BGT John 4:24 πνεμα θες, και το ς προσκυνο ντας α τ ν ν πνε ματι και ληθε δε προσκυνε ν.

NET John 4:24 God is spirit, and the people who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

NLT John 4:24 For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth."

ESV John 4:24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

NIV John 4:24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

GNT John 4:24 πνεμα θες, και το ς προσκυνο ντας α τ ν ν πνε ματι και ληθε δε προσκυνε ν.

KJV John 4:24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

YLT John 4:24 God is a Spirit, and those worshipping Him, in spirit and truth it doth behove to worship.'

ASV John 4:24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

CSB John 4:24 God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

NKJ John 4:24 "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

NRS John 4:24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

NAB John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and truth."

NJB John 4:24 God is spirit, and those who worship must worship in spirit and truth.

GWN John 4:24 God is a spirit. Those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

- **spirit** : 2Co 3:17 1Ti 1:17
- **must**: 1Sa 16:7 Ps 50:13-15,23 51:17 66:18 Isa 57:15 Mt 15:8,9 2Co 1:12
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### TRUE WORSHIP IS INTERNAL NOT EXTERNAL

**MacArthur** - Both groups focused on external factors. They conformed outwardly to regulations, observed rituals, and offered sacrifices. But the time had arrived, since the Messiah had come, when true worshipers would no longer be identified by where they worshiped. True worshipers are those who worship the Father in spirit and truth. (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**God is spirit** - Note NAS does not capitalize spirit, whereas it is capitalized in other translations (NLT, KJV YLT), the latter suggesting the Holy Spirit, but the former is a more reasonable interpretation. God (Father, Son, Spirit) is not material but spiritual.

**Grant Osborne** adds that "The KJV has "God is a Spirit," but that is clearly wrong. First, the indefinite article is not mandated by the Greek (cf. Jn 1:1 on this), and even more, it could hardly mean "God is one of the spirits" in this context." (See [The Gospel of John](#))

**Morris** adds "We should omit the indefinite article, which some translations (e.g., KJV, Knox) place before "Spirit." Greek has no such article, and we insert it or not in English as the sense requires. Here Jesus is not saying, "God is one spirit among many"; rather his meaning is "God's essential nature is spirit." The indefinite article is no more required than it is in the similar statements, "God is light" (1 John 1:5) and "God is love" (1 John 4:8). We must not think of God as material, or as bound in any way to places or things." (NICNT-Jn)

**Merrill Tenney** - "God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth" carries one of the four descriptions of God found in the New Testament. The other three are "God is light" (1 John 1:5), "God is love" (1 John 4:8, 16), and "God is a consuming fire" (Heb 12:29). Jesus was endeavoring to convey to the woman that God cannot be confined to one place nor conceived of as a material being. He cannot be represented adequately by an abstract concept, which is intrinsically impersonal, nor

can any idol depict His likeness since He is not material. Only “the Word became flesh” (Jn 1:14+) could represent him adequately. (EBC-Jn)

**MacArthur** - The phrase God is spirit is the classic biblical definition of the nature of God. Despite the heretical teaching of false cults, God is not an exalted man (Num. 23:19), “for a spirit does not have flesh and bones” (Luke 24:39). He is “the invisible God” (Col. 1:15; cf. 1 Tim. 1:17; Heb. 11:27), who “dwells in unapproachable light [cf. Ps. 104:2], whom no man has seen or can see” (1 Tim. 6:16; cf. Ex. 33:20; John 1:18; 6:46). Had He not revealed Himself in Scripture and in Jesus Christ, God would be utterly incomprehensible. (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**And those who worship Him must (dei) worship in spirit and truth** - **Worship** is [proskuneo](#) as in v21-23. **Must (dei)** is not just something desirable but speaks of an absolute necessity or stated another way the only worship acceptable to the Father is that which is **in spirit and truth**. The question arises as to what is the meaning of **spirit**? Is this a reference to the Holy **Spirit** or to the **spirit** of a human being (those whose spirits are alive because of their new birth)? Commentators are divided, but one reasonable interpretation is that spiritual beings filled with the Spirit (or “in the Spirit”) are those who are able to truly worship God. “**In...truth**” would be in the bounds of what the Word of God says about **worship** of God. Whatever Scripture says regarding **worship** is acceptable **worship** to God. Note that “**must**” means this is not optional. This is the **ONLY** way to truly worship God!

**MacArthur** - True **worship** does not consist of mere outward conformity to religious standards and duties (Isa. 29:13; 48:1; Jer. 12:1–2; Matt. 15:7–9), but emanates from the inner **spirit**. It must also be consistent with the **truth** God has revealed about Himself in His Word. The extremes of dead orthodoxy (truth and no spirit) and zealous heterodoxy (spirit and no truth) must be avoided. (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**Robertson on must worship** - Here is the real necessity ([dei](#)), not the one used by the woman about the right place of worship (Jn 4:20). ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**MacArthur** however feels that “**Spirit** does not refer to the Holy **Spirit** but the human **spirit**. Worship must be internal, not external conformity to ceremonies and rituals. It must be from the heart.” (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

While I would agree with MacArthur, the truth is that worship is by nature a supernatural endeavor, so the Spirit Himself must supernaturally “energize” one’s worship, giving him or her first the desire (to worship) and then the power (to worship)(cf Php 2:13NLT+).

**Grant Osborne's** assessment is more balanced - This first (THE IDENTIFICATION OF SPIRIT) involves whether it has (1) an external force, in which *pneuma* refers to the Holy Spirit and the phrase can be taken as “the Spirit of truth” (so Barrett, Schnackenburg, Brown, Michaels, Burge, Thompson [2001:214], Keener); or (2) an internal force pointing to spiritual worship in one’s spirit or with the whole heart (so Hendriksen, Morris, Whitacre, Blomberg, Köstenberger). **But is only an “either-or” approach viable, or is there a “both-and” option?** In the context of John, the latter is more likely. The Spirit is certainly connoted, for it is the Spirit that makes worship possible. At the same time, worship is to be an inner, spiritual act. (See [The Gospel of John](#)) (Bolding added)

**Osborne** goes on to add a related excellent comment on **worship in spirit and truth** - This “expresses the transcendence and holiness of God” (Schnackenburg 1990:1.438) and means that God is “life-giving and unknowable to human beings unless He chooses to reveal Himself (cf. Jn 1:18+)” (Carson 1991:225). Since God is Spirit, there is only one way to worship that is acceptable to Him—“**in spirit and in truth**.” There is double meaning in this. In one sense, it refers to a worship that centers on the whole inner being of the person, deeply spiritual and wholehearted. In another sense, such worship is only made possible by the power of the Spirit. The new birth is “from above” (Jn 3:3), and Jesus is “from above” (Jn 3:31); true worship has a heavenly component and occurs only when one is seeking and thinking “about the things of heaven” (Col 3:1–2+). Moreover, it is both in spirit and truth that “true worshippers” worship: first in the Spirit, Who is truth (as Christ is truth, Jn 14:6), and then in genuine, real worship. Those in the Spirit truly worship with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength. Note also the divine necessity ([dei](#), “must,” Jn 4:24; cf. Jn 3:7, 14, 30; 4:4, 20) of worship. Thompson (2001:214–215) believes this culminates the emphasis in chapters 3–4, which is the centrality of the work of the Spirit and of the individual as recipient of the life-giving Spirit. Worship then is intertwined with the gift of the Spirit. (See [The Gospel of John](#))

**J C Ryle** - We should mark, fifthly, the uselessness of any religion which only consists of formality. The Samaritan woman, when awakened to spiritual concern, started questions about the comparative merits of the Samaritan and Jewish modes of worshipping God. Our Lord tells her that true and acceptable worship depends **not on the place in which it is offered** but **on the state of the worshipper’s heart**. He declares, “**The hour cometh when ye shall neither in this place nor at Jerusalem worship the Father.**” He adds that “**the true worshippers shall worship in spirit and in truth**” The principle contained in these sentences can never be too strongly impressed on professing Christians. We are all naturally inclined to make religion a mere matter of outward forms and

ceremonies, and to attach an excessive importance to our own particular manner of worshipping God. We must beware of this spirit, and especially when we first begin to think seriously about our souls. The heart is the principal thing in all our approaches to God. "The Lord looketh on the heart." (1 Sa. 16:7.) The most gorgeous cathedral-service is offensive in God's sight, if all is gone through coldly, heartlessly, and without grace. The feeblest gathering of three or four poor believers in a cottage to read the Bible and pray, is a more acceptable sight to Him who searches the heart than the fullest congregation which is ever gathered in St. Peter's at Rome. ([John 4 Commentary](#))

**Rod Mattoon** - R. Kennedy visited the Amazon and spoke through an interpreter to a Brazilian Indian who was recently saved. He asked, "What do you like to do the most?" Kennedy expected an answer such as "hunting or fishing." The Indian replied by saying, "Being occupied with God." Kennedy asked the question again, thinking that something was lost in the translation. The answer was the same. The Indian's answer was an excellent definition of worship. How is your worship of the Lord Jesus Christ? Does He really have your adoration, praise, and thanks? Does He have your devotion and obedience to His will? If you are skipping out of church, He doesn't. If there is no change, obedience, or surrender of your will to Christ, there is no worship taking place in your life.

Emotion without devotion is nothing more than commotion.

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#### JOHN 4:9-25 WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH

God, the infinitely holy One, is worthy of our worship. He is our Creator, Sustainer, and Savior. Without His loving care and guidance we would have no hope. We must therefore take the time and put forth the effort to worship Him in a way that brings honor and glory to His name.

When Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman, He said, "God is Spirit; and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." In the devotional classic *The Practice of the Presence of God*, Brother Lawrence explains what this means.

"To worship God in truth is to recognize . . . that God is what He is; that is to say, infinitely perfect, infinitely to be adored, infinitely removed from evil, and thus with every attribute divine."

Brother Lawrence then added, "What man shall there be, however small the reason he may have, who will not use all his strength to render to this great God his reverence and worship?"

We need to ask ourselves if this is the way we worship the One who made us? Do we reverence and adore Him from the deepest part of our minds and souls—from the heart? Are we totally honest before Him about what we are? Do we acknowledge who He is? To give Almighty God the honor of which He is worthy, we must approach Him "in spirit and truth." —D C Egnor ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Christ is not valued at all until He is valued above all

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#### **Norman Geisler - When Cultists Ask -**

JOHN 4:23—Does this verse indicate that only God the Father—and not Jesus—is to be worshiped?

MISINTERPRETATION: John 4:23 says, "An hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers" (NASB). The Jehovah's Witnesses believe that only the Father is to be worshiped. Christ is to be shown "obeisance" (Watchtower, 15 February 1983, 18).

CORRECTING THE MISINTERPRETATION: The same Greek word used for worshipping the Father (proskuneō) is used of worshipping Christ in the New Testament. Jesus was worshiped by Thomas (John 20:28), angels (Heb. 1:6), wise men (Matt. 2:11), a leper (Matt. 8:2), a ruler (Matt. 9:18), a blind man (John 9:38), a woman (Matt. 15:25), the women at the tomb (Matt. 28:9), and the disciples (Matt. 28:17). In the Book of Revelation, the worship that the Father receives (4:10) is exactly the same as the worship received by Jesus Christ (5:11–14).

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#### **Jehovah's Witnesses Answered Verse by Verse - John 4:23**

"Nevertheless, the hour is coming, and it is now, when the true worshipers will worship the Father with spirit and truth, for indeed, the Father is looking for suchlike ones to worship him." (NWT)

Jehovah's Witnesses often use this verse in their house-to-house preaching work. After greeting the householder, they ask, "Whom do you worship as God? What is his name?" If the answer given is "the Lord," or "God," the JW will respond, "That's a title. What is God's name?" Many people will then answer, "Jesus!" whereupon the Witness will read John 4:23 and then comment, "You are not a true worshiper, because you are worshipping the Son. The Bible says here that the true worshipers will worship 'the Father.' Do you

know the Father's name?" Then JW's proceed to present their standard argument about the name Jehovah.

Much of the Witnesses' preaching activity follows this same theme: denying the deity of Christ, while teaching that only the Father (Jehovah) must be worshiped. To establish this doctrine, they take their new students on a guided tour through the Bible, studiously avoiding such passages as Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 28:9; John 1:1; John 8:58–59; John 20:28; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:6; and so on—all of which reveal the deity of Christ and the propriety of worshiping him.

In fact, Watchtower Society translators, in preparing their New World Translation, were careful to translate the Greek word *proskuneo* (worship, reverence, do obeisance to) in a very selective manner. Wherever the word is used of the Father, they translate it as "worship," but wherever it refers to the Son, they render it as "do obeisance to." (See discussion of Heb. 1:6 for further details.)

After agreeing that the Father should be worshiped, ask the Jehovah's Witness if he respects the Father's wishes in other matters, too. Naturally, he will answer, "Yes!" Then direct him in his own Bible to John 5:23, where it says that the Father requires "that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father...." If the Witness does not give worshipful honor to the Son, then his worship of the Father is in vain, because the same verse goes on to read: "He that does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him."

See also Genesis 18:1–2; Exodus 3:14; Psalm 110:1; Isaiah 9:6; Daniel 10:13, 21; and Hebrews 1:6.

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**Question:** [What does it mean that God is spirit?](#)

**Answer:** The teaching that "God is spirit" is found in John 4:24: "God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth." Jesus said this to a woman who thought that physical locale has a bearing on proper worship of God.

The fact that God is spirit means that God the Father does not have a human body. God the Son came to earth in human form (John 1:1), but God the Father did not. Jesus is unique as Emmanuel, "God with us" (Matthew 1:23). Numbers 23:19 emphasizes God's truthfulness by contrasting Him with mortal men: "God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind."

Some question why the Bible sometimes speaks of God as if He has a body. For example, Isaiah 59:1 mentions God's "hand" and "ear." Second Chronicles 16:9 speaks of God's "eyes." Matthew 4:4 puts words in God's "mouth." In Deuteronomy 33:27 God has "arms." All of these verses are examples of [anthropomorphism](#)—a way of describing God with anatomical or emotional terms so that humans can better understand Him. The use of anthropomorphism, a form of figurative language, does not imply that God has an actual body.

To say that God is spirit is to say that God the Father is invisible. Colossians 1:15 calls God the "invisible God." First Timothy 1:17 praises God, saying, "To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever."

Even though God is spirit, He is also a living, personal being. As such, we can know Him personally. Joshua 3:10 speaks of God in this way, saying, "You will know that the living God is among you." Psalm 84:2 declares, "My heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God" (ESV).

Philosophically, God must be a spirit in order to be [infinite](#). Also, if God was limited to a physical body, He could not be [omnipresent](#) (in all places at once). God the Father is not limited to the dimensional restrictions of created things but can exist in all places at one time. God is the uncreated [First Cause](#) that is the power behind all other beings.

Interestingly, in John 4:24 Jesus makes the connection between God being spirit and worshiping Him in spirit and in truth. The idea is that, since God is spirit, people must worship Him accurately (in truth) and in spirit (with their soul or heart), as opposed to relying on traditions, rituals, and physical locales. [GotQuestions.org](#)

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**H A Ironside - John 4:24** In considering the subject of worship, the highest exercise of which the spirit of man is capable, it is important to remember that there is a great difference between the way it is presented in the two Testaments. In former dispensations God was hidden in large measure. His wisdom and His providence were displayed in creation. His love was seen in His care of those who confided in Him. His grace was declared by the prophets as something yet to be revealed. Consequently there was no immediate access into the presence of God. The veil was unrent. His word to Israel was, "Do not draw near this place" (Exodus 3:5); "Worship from afar" (24:1). But since the advent of Christ, all is changed. Grace and truth are now revealed. The veil is rent. The way into the holiest is now made clear. In spirit every believer is invited to "draw near ... in full assurance of faith" (Hebrews 10:19–22). The worship of the new creation is based upon the finished work of our blessed Lord. In spirit we enter the immediate presence of the Father in full consciousness of our sonship. Worship is far more than prayer, or the enjoyment of helpful ministry. It is the spirit's adoring occupation with God Himself, not merely in gratitude for His gifts, but because of what He is. It is

this that the Father seeks. Worship is lowered as we become occupied with the externals even of Christianity. It reaches its highest point as our spirits are absorbed in contemplation of the matchless perfections of the eternal God, in the light of the cross and the empty tomb.

Father, we Thy children, bless Thee  
For Thy love on us bestowed;  
Source of blessing, we confess Thee  
Now, our Father and our God.  
Wondrous was Thy love in giving  
Jesus for our sins to die!  
Wondrous was His grace in leaving,  
For our sakes, the heavens on high!  
—Samuel P. Tregelles

**John 4:25 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."**

BGT John 4:25 λ γει α τ γυν · ο δ α τι Μεσσ ας ρ χεται λεγ μενος χριστ ς· ταν λθ κε νος, ναγγελε μ ν παντα.

NET John 4:25 The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (the one called Christ); "whenever he comes, he will tell us everything."

NLT John 4:25 The woman said, "I know the Messiah is coming-- the one who is called Christ. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

ESV John 4:25 The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things."

NIV John 4:25 The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

GNT John 4:25 λ γει α τ γυν , Ο δ α τι Μεσσ ας ρ χεται λεγ μενος Χριστ ς· ταν λθ κε νος, ναγγελε μ ν παντα.

KJV John 4:25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.

YLT John 4:25 The woman saith to him, 'I have known that Messiah doth come, who is called Christ, when that one may come, he will tell us all things;'

ASV John 4:25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh (he that is called Christ): when he is come, he will declare unto us all things.

CSB John 4:25 The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will explain everything to us."

NKJ John 4:25 The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming " (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things."

NRS John 4:25 The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us."

NAB John 4:25 The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah is coming, the one called the Anointed; when he comes, he will tell us everything."

NJB John 4:25 The woman said to him, 'I know that Messiah -- that is, Christ -- is coming; and when he comes he will explain everything.'

GWN John 4:25 The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah is coming. When he comes, he will tell us everything." (Messiah is the one called Christ.)

- **when:** John 4:29,39 De 18:15-18
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## MESSIAH IS COMING

**Swindoll** - Now Jesus brings the conversation to such a burning focus that her very soul is on the verge of igniting! ([Insights on John](#) - pages omitted or BORROW [Insights on John](#))

**The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah (messias) is coming (He who is called Christ (Christos) - Messiah is the Jewish Name, and clearly this Name was known by the Samaritans. And so she may have been an immoral woman, but she was not totally ignorant of spiritual truth (cf also her mention of "a prophet" suggesting knowledge of Dt 18:15,18+), for this is a strong, clear, and true proclamation on her part! In fact she has the same knowledge that one of John the Baptist's disciple's, Andrew, had expressed (John 1:41+). John, as he does frequently in this Gospel, adds the parenthetical explanation for his readers that the more commonly used name **Christ (Christos)** is synonymous with the word Messiah.**

**HOW might this Samaritan woman know about the Messiah? Walter Kaiser** says there are 5 prophecies in the Pentateuch, the only book the Samaritans accepted with 2 in Ge 1-11, 2 major ones in Ge 12-50, and two in Ex-Dt. Kaiser writes "The first two prophecies in these five books of the Law declared that the coming Man of promise would be from the "offspring" (seed) of a woman (Ge 3:15+)(**ED:** SEE [What is the protoevangelium?](#)), but He would also later on be none less that God come to dwell among the families of Shem (Ge 9:27). The second set of promises announced that there would be two marvelous results that accompany the coming of this Man of promise. By means of Abraham's offspring, blessing would be mediated to all the families of the earth (Ge 12:3+). However, as the plan gathered more specificity and was attached particularly to one of Jacob's sons, namely Judah, it became clear that this coming one would be given not only the rule and authority over all the nation of Israel, but also authority over the nations (Ge 49:10). During the Mosaic era of revelation, two events stood out with regard to this emerging and accumulating doctrine of the coming Man of promise. In the prophecies of a Gentile named Balaam, the same coming Man (in the seed or offspring of Eve, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Judah) would acts as a victorious king as he crushed His enemies (Nu 24:17+). In addition to His function of ruling as a King, Moses declared He would be a prophet as well (Dt 18:15, 18+). (**ED:** I think we must add the Passover lamb in Exodus 12, especially Ex 12:3-7+, given that Paul clearly states "Christ our Passover has been sacrificed." 1Cor 5:7+). Thus, even when sketched in its boldest and simplest strokes, the Pentateuch set forth in rudimentary forms lines of thought that were anchored seminally in truth that would be enlarged in later revelation. Already, this Person would known by His titles of "Seed," "Shiloh," "Scepter," "Star," "King," and "Prophet." (BORROW [The Messiah in the Old Testament, 1995](#))

**NET Note** - Both Greek "**Christ**" and Hebrew and Aramaic "**Messiah**" mean "the one who has been anointed."

**Swindoll** - The woman fell back to her last line of defense, one commonly used today: delay. She tried to backpedal out of the conversation, claiming that all matters of theology are moot until the Messiah comes to resolve them. The Samaritans expected a Messiah to be like Moses, more teacher and prophet, less ruler and priest (Deut. 18:15-18). According to this line of reasoning, "No one can really say what is truth and what isn't until this great Teacher comes to reveal all things." The woman's attempt to back out of the conversation played perfectly into Jesus' hands. John's description of the encounter builds toward a climax. The Lord successfully bypassed all of her defenses in order to lay the ultimate truth before her. He said, in effect, "Good! You don't have to wait any longer. I am the Messiah, and I am here just as promised." ([Insights on John](#) - pages omitted or BORROW [Insights on John](#))

**Grant Osborne** explains that "Jesus' deep explanation of worship triggered a thought, so she explored the possibility of the coming "Messiah," who will "explain everything". This fits the Samaritan messianic beliefs. They normally did not use the term "Messiah" but spoke of a **taheb** or "**restorer**" who would be the new Moses (Deut 18:15-18) and restore true worship by teaching and revealing the final truths of God. She had not yet identified this one with Jesus but had a dim awareness that something extraordinary was happening. Jesus confirmed this when he replied, "I AM the Messiah." There is tremendous emphasis in John on the "I am" sayings, for the Greek phrase found in John (egō eimi), "I am") reflects Exodus 3:14, where God reveals that the meaning of the new covenant name he has revealed to Moses, Yahweh, is, "I AM WHO I AM" (cf. also Isa 41:4; 43:10-13, 25; 45:18-19; 48:12; 52:6; and the discussion on 8:58). Thus, the "I am" sayings (such as this one) in effect mean, "**I, Yahweh, am the Messiah**" (cf. Ridderbos, Keener, Whitacre). Jesus is the true and only **taheb**, Who alone can "explain everything" and provide the living water. (See [The Gospel of John](#))

**A T Robertson on Messiah** - The Samaritans looked for a Messiah, a prophet like Moses (Deut. 18:18). Simon Magus gave himself out in Samaria as some great one and had a large following (Acts 8:9+). Pilate quelled an uprising in Samaria over a fanatical Messianic claimant (see [Josephus Antiquiteis. XVIII. Chapter 4, Section 1](#)). ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**Marvin Vincent on Messiah** - The woman uses the Jewish name, which was known in Samaria. The Samaritans also expected the

Messiah, basing their hopes on such Scriptures as Ge. 3:15+; Ge 49:10; Num. 24:17+; Deut. 18:15. (ED: REMEMBER THEY ONLY ACCEPTED THE PENTATEUCH) They looked for Him to restore the kingdom of Israel and to re-establish the worship on Gerizim, where they supposed that the tabernacle was hidden. They called Him Hushab or Hathab, meaning the *Converter*, or, according to some, *the Returning One*. **The Samaritan idea was less worldly and political than the Jewish** (ED: THIS IS AN INTERESTING THOUGHT!). ([John 4 Commentary](#))(Bolding added)

**Leon Morris** has a similar note on the Samaritan understanding of **Messiah** - The Samaritan name for the Messiah was **Taheb** (תהב), "**He who returns**" or "**He who restores.**" According to Odeberg, "A prominent feature in the **Taeb traditions** was that the Redeemer, in accordance with Deut 18:18 would teach the faithful concerning all things" (FG, p. 183). Dodd reminds us that we should not build too much on this figure, for our information about him is late and we do not know whether or not the **Taheb** was known in New Testament times (IFG, p. 240, n. 2). But Josephus recounts an incident wherein a man gathered armed men to Mt. Gerizim, saying that he would show them sacred vessels hidden there by Moses (see [Josephus Antiquiteis. XVIII. Chapter 4, Section 1](#)). This looks very much like **messianic expectation** during the New Testament period. (BORROW [The Gospel according to John : NICNT](#)).

**Messiah** (3323)(**messias**; see also [Messiah - Anointed One](#)) is the Hellenized transliteration of **mashiach/masiah** and means a consecrated or anointed one. **Messias** is a masculine proper noun which corresponds to the Greek word **Christos**. Christ. **Messias** is used only twice in the NT (not at all in the [Septuagint](#)) both uses illustrating the correspondence of **Messias** and **Christos**. John records Phillip's declaration "We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote (**Messianic Prophecies**), Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." (Jn 1:45+). In summary three English terms are virtually synonymous...**MESSIAH = THE ANOINTED ONE = THE CHRIST** In the Old Testament three major groups were anointed for consecrated (set apart) service - kings, priests and prophets. Jesus fulfilled all three offices - **Prophet** (Dt 18:15), **Priest** (Heb 4:14+), and **King** (Rev 19:16+).

**Marvin Vincent's** lengthy note on **Christ** (Christos) - Christ (Χριστός). Properly an adjective, not a noun, and meaning anointed (χρίω, to anoint). It is a translation of the Hebrew **Messiah**, the king and spiritual ruler from David's race, promised under that name in the Old Testament (Ps 2:2; Da 9:25, 26+). Hence Andrew says to Simon, "We have found the **Messiah**, which is, being interpreted, Christ (John 1:41; compare Acts 4:27; 10:38; 19:28). To us "Christ" has become a proper name, and is therefore written without the definite article; but, in the body of the gospel narratives, since the identity of Jesus with the promised **Messiah** is still in question with the people, the article is habitually used, and the name should therefore be translated "the Christ." After the resurrection, when the recognition of Jesus as **Messiah** has become general, we find the word beginning to be used as a proper name, with or without the article. In this passage it omits the article, because it occurs in the heading of the chapter, and expresses the evangelist's own faith in Jesus as the **Messiah**. ([John 4 Commentary](#))

**Anointing** was applied to kings (1 Sa 9:16; 10:1), to prophets (1 Ki 19:16), and to priests (Ex 29:29; 40:15; Lev. 16:32) at their inauguration. "The Lord's anointed" was a common title of the king (1 Sa 12:3, 5; 2 Sa 1:14, 16). Prophets are called "**Messiahs**," or anointed ones (1 Chr 16:22; Ps. 105:15). Cyrus is also called "the Lord's Anointed," because called to the throne to deliver the Jews out of captivity (Isa. 45:1). Hence the word "Christ" was representative of our Lord, who united in himself the offices of king, prophet, and priest.

It is interesting to see how **anointing** attaches to our Lord in other and minor particulars. Anointing was an act of hospitality and a sign of festivity and cheerfulness. Jesus was anointed by the woman when a guest in the house of Simon the Pharisee, and rebuked his host for omitting this mark of respect toward him (Luke 7:35, 46). In the Epistle to the Hebrews 1:8, 9, the words of the Messianic psalm (Ps 45:7) are applied to Jesus, "God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

**Anointing** was practised upon the sick (Mark 6:13; Luke 10:34; Jas. 5:14). Jesus, "the Great Physician," is described by Isaiah (61:1, 2; compare Luke 4:18) as anointed by God to bind up the broken-hearted, and to give the mournful the oil of joy for mourning. He himself anointed the eyes of the blind man (John 9:6, 11); and the twelve, in his name, "anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them" (Mark 6:13).

**Anointing** was practised upon the dead. Of her who brake the alabaster upon his head at Bethany, Jesus said, "She has anointed My body beforehand for the burial" (Mark 14:8; see, also, Luke 23:56). (WSNT)

**When that One comes, He will declare ([anagello](#)) all things to us** - This sinful Samaritan continues to espouse relatively good theology. She has no doubt He is coming. She also knows He has a message and in His message, He will explain everything. This

reminds us of John 1:18+ which says "No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has **explained Him**." She has a more accurate expectation of **Messiah** than most of the Jews of Jesus' day (including even His own disciples), for they were looking primarily for a **conquering Messiah**, Who would free them from Roman oppression. This Jewish expectation in fact was why Jesus avoided outwardly declaring His Messiahship to the Jews. So while the woman does not understand the concept of the Suffering Messiah, she does associate His coming with an announcement of "**all things**." What she means by "**all things**" is not clear, but this could be an allusion to expected prophet in Dt 18:18 ("*he shall speak to them all that I command him.*") . The irony is that the very One with Whom she is speaking is at that very moment declaring **things** to her that were the most important **things** that a lost sinner could ever hear, the truth that all spiritually thirsty souls desperately need, His offer to drink of the "living water," and, as she would soon discover, He was the Source of that "living water!"

**Vincent on will declare** ([anaggello](#)) - The compounded preposition *ana*, the radical meaning of which is *up*, signifies *throughout, from bottom to top*. ([John 4 Commentary](#))

Jesus uses this same verb [anaggello](#) 3 times ("will disclose") to describe the work of His Spirit Whom He would send on the disciples -

But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He **will disclose** to you what is to come. 14 "He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and **will disclose** it to you. 15 "All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and **will disclose** it to you. (Jn 16:13-15)

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**Declare** (announce) ([312](#))([anaggello/anangelo](#) from **aná** = up to, again, back {like our English prefix "**re-**"= again thus "**re-**port" or "**re-**hearse" = to say again} + **aggello** = tell, declare related to **ággelos** = messenger) means to bring back word and later to announce, to report. To rehearse, to show, to declare or tell of things done. **Anaggello** means to carry back good tidings, to inform, to provide information, with some contexts conveying the implication of considerable detail (see Acts 14:27, 15:4). In the 14 NT uses of **anaggello**, notice that most report or announce something that has to do with God, including His works and/or purposes. All NT uses - Jn. 4:25; Jn. 16:13; Jn. 16:14; Jn. 16:15; Acts 14:27; Acts 15:4; Acts 19:18; Acts 20:20; Acts 20:27; Rom. 15:21; 2 Co. 7:7; 1 Pet. 1:12; 1 Jn. 1:5

## WHAT DO JEWS BELIEVE ABOUT THE MESSIAH?

"Belief in the eventual coming of the **mashiach** is a basic and fundamental part of traditional Judaism. It is part of [Rambam's 13 Principles of Faith \(principle #12\)](#), the minimum requirements of Jewish belief. In the [Shemoneh Esrei prayer](#), recited three times daily, we pray for all of the elements of the coming of the **mashiach**: ingathering of the exiles; restoration of the religious courts of justice; an end of wickedness, sin and heresy; reward to the righteous; rebuilding of Jerusalem; restoration of the line of King David; and restoration of Temple service... The term "**mashiach**" literally means "the anointed one," and refers to the ancient practice of anointing kings with oil when they took the throne. The mashiach is the one who will be anointed as king in the End of Days. The word "mashiach" does not mean "savior." The notion of an innocent, divine or semi-divine being who will sacrifice himself to save us from the consequences of our own sins is a purely Christian concept that has no basis in Jewish thought. Unfortunately, this Christian concept has become so deeply ingrained in the English word "messiah" that this English word can no longer be used to refer to the Jewish concept. The word "mashiach" will be used throughout this page." (Read the full page - [The Messiah](#))

**Messianic Expectations** - Craig A. Evans - "Messianism" and "messianic expectation" are ways of describing the expectation that an anointed person will come to redeem Israel and/or the Church. Christians believe that Messiah has already come in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. The appearance of Messiah is understood to be part of a larger eschatological drama whereby human activity on earth is appreciably altered by the in-breaking of the "kingdom of God," a time when God's will on earth is more tangibly and permanently experienced. It is usually believed that this anointed figure is part of the climax of human history. **The Origin of Messianic Expectation** - The messianic expectations in the Jewish and Christian faiths are traced back to God's covenant with King David (2Sa 7:12-16 - Ed: see [Davidic covenant](#) or more in depth article = [The Davidic Covenant](#)) and the aftermath of exile and cessation of the Davidic dynasty. Hope arose that God would someday restore a godly king to Israel. Some of Israel's prophets foretold the coming of a regal Davidic descendant, and their descriptions seem to portray him as far more than a mere mortal. Isaiah foretold the coming of a "child" and "son" who "will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace," and whose kingdom will never end (Isa 9:6-7+). Again Isaiah prophesied the coming of a Branch of David, on whom the Spirit of God will rest, who will rule the earth with justice and equity (Isa 11:1-5+). Descriptions such as these hinted that the coming anointed one, the Messiah, would be God Himself. **In the intertestament period (ca 400 B.C. to the birth of Christ) several passages of**

**Old Testament Scripture are interpreted in the light of the messianic hope.** Besides Isa 11:1-5+, Ge 49:10 ("The scepter will not depart from Judah or the staff from between his feet.") and Nu 24:17+ ("A star will come from Jacob, and a scepter will arise from Israel") are often appealed to. First-century philosopher Philo of Alexandria and Josephus, historian and survivor of the great rebellion (A.D. 66-70), both allude to these passages as pertaining to Messiah. Isaiah 11 is of special interest in the Dead Sea Scrolls. 1QSb 5 applies portions of Isa 11:2-5+ to the awaited Messiah, while 4Q161, a major commentary on the book of Isaiah, interprets Isa 10:34-11:5+ as a prophecy of the coming Messiah, called the "Branch of David," who will destroy Israel's enemies, the Romans (called the "Kittim"). 4Q285 quotes Isaiah 10:34-11:1 and interprets it as a reference to the coming Messiah, called the "Branch of David" and "leader of the community" (that is, the leader of the Qumran community). It is said that he will put to death the "king of the Kittim," or the Roman emperor (see also the parallel 11Q14). **Jesus and Messianic Expectation** - Jesus' willingness to suffer and die stands in marked contrast to the widespread expectation of a coming Messiah who would slay His enemies. The fact that He did not attempt to overthrow the Roman occupiers and reclaim Israel's throne may explain in part why He was widely rejected by Jewish authorities. They wished for Him to pursue violent, military goals whereas He came instead to usher in the merciful, forgiving rule of God. As for Jesus' fulfillment of the Bible's messianic expectations, it must not be missed that He came first to suffer and die on behalf of sinners (as predicted in Isa 52:13-53:12+), but will come again as conquering King (2Th 1:7-10+). ([A Closer Look- Messianic Expectations](#)) ([John 4 Commentary](#))

#### John 4:26 Jesus \*said to her, "I who speak to you am He."

BGT John 4:26 λ γει α τ η σο ς γ ε μι, (I AM) λα λ ν σοι.

NET John 4:26 Jesus said to her, "I, the one speaking to you, am he."

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

ESV John 4:26 Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."

NIV John 4:26 Then Jesus declared, "I who speak to you am he."

GNT John 4:26 λ γει α τ η σο ς γ ε μι (I AM), λα λ ν σοι.

KJV John 4:26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

YLT John 4:26 Jesus saith to her, 'I am He, who am speaking to thee.'

ASV John 4:26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

CSB John 4:26 "I am He," Jesus told her, "the One speaking to you."

NKJ John 4:26 Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."

NRS John 4:26 Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you."

NAB John 4:26 Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking with you."

NJB John 4:26 Jesus said, 'That is who I am, I who speak to you.'

GWN John 4:26 Jesus told her, "I am he, and I am speaking to you now."

- **I who:** John 9:37 Mt 16:20 Mt 20:15 Mt 26:63,64 Mk 14:61,62 Lu 13:30 Ro 10:20,21
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**MESSIAH IS HERE!**

**MESSIAH IS "HE!"**

**Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."** - Literally the Greek says "I Am." ([Ego Eimi](#)) Many skeptics say Jesus never claimed deity. This passage is about as clear a declaration of His deity as any in the Bible and He speaks it to a despised, sinful Samaritan woman. If you feel unworthy of Jesus, you are in good company, for we all were "despised Samaritans" in our lost, sinful state in Adam (Ro 5:12+). Praise God that Jesus discloses Himself to sinners such as this woman!

**Ego eimi in entire NT** - note predominant usage in the Gospel of John including 13 uses (out of 24x in John and out of 48 total NT uses) in the famous "[SEVEN I AM STATEMENTS](#)" - Matt. 14:27; Matt. 22:32; Matt. 24:5; Matt. 26:22; Matt. 26:25; Mk. 6:50; Mk. 13:6; Mk. 14:62; Lk. 1:19; Lk. 21:8; Lk. 22:70; Lk. 24:39; **Jn.**

4:26; Jn. 6:20; Jn. 6:35; Jn. 6:41; Jn. 6:48; Jn. 6:51; Jn. 8:12; Jn. 8:18; Jn. 8:24; Jn. 8:28; Jn. 8:58; Jn. 9:9; Jn. 10:7; Jn. 10:9; Jn. 10:11; Jn. 10:14; Jn. 11:25; Jn. 13:19; Jn. 14:6; Jn. 15:1; Jn. 15:5; Jn. 18:5; Jn. 18:6; Jn. 18:8; Acts 9:5; Acts 10:21; Acts 18:10; Acts 22:3; Acts 22:8; Acts 26:15; Acts 26:29; Rev. 1:8; Rev. 1:17; Rev. 2:23; Rev. 21:6; Rev. 22:16

**Vincent on I Am** - The less political conception of the Samaritan Messiah (see Vincent's interesting [note above](#)) made it possible for Jesus to announce Himself to the woman without fear of being misunderstood as He was by the Jews. Compare Matt. 8:4; 16:20. ([John 4 Commentary](#))

**Robertson** - In plain language Jesus now declares that he is the Messiah as he does to the blind man (John 9:37 = "You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you."). ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**Tenney** - In Galilee, where there were many would-be Messiahs and a constant unrest based on the messianic hope, such a claim would have been dangerous. (EBC)

**Brian Bell** - Look at her progress, she saw Jesus as: a Jew (9); a Sir (11); greater than Jacob (12); a prophet (19); Messiah (25); Christ (29).

Note that Jesus literally says "I am, who am speaking to thee." The translations add the pronoun "He" but it is not present in the original Greek. In other words, Jesus is making one of the great "I Am" statements, just as He did in John 8:58+ when He declared "Before Abraham was I Am!" The Jews (who had actually professed belief in Him but proved themselves false) "picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple." (Jn 8:59) Why did they seek to stone Jesus? Because they interpreted His "I Am" as a declaration of deity, which in fact it was. In making this declaration Jesus is in essence repeating the words of Jehovah to Abraham in Exodus 3:14+ "God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM (Lxx - [Ego Eimi](#)) has sent me to you.'" "Twenty-three times our Lord says, "I am," and seven times adds rich metaphors (cf. John 6:35, 41, 48, 51 = "The Bread of Life"; Jn 8:12 = "The Light of the world"; Jn 10:7, 9 = "The Door", Jn 10:11, 14 = "The Good Shepherd"; Jn 11:25 = "The Resurrection and the Life"; Jn 14:6 = "The Way, the Truth, and the Life"; Jn 15:1, 5 = "The Vine")."

#### Related Resource:

- See discussion of [Jehovah and Jesus](#)

**Marvin Vincent has a wonderful summary of Jesus' method of evangelizing this Samaritan woman** - This incident furnishes a notable illustration of our Lord's love for human souls, and of His skill, tact, and firmness in dealing with moral degradation and ignorant bigotry. He conciliates the woman by asking a favor. Her hesitation arises less from prejudice of race than from surprise at being asked for drink by a Jew (compare the story of Zachæus). He seizes upon a near and familiar object as the key-note of His great lesson. He does not overwhelm her with new knowledge, but stimulates question and thought. He treats her sin frankly, but not harshly. He is content with letting her see that He is aware of it, knowing that through Him, as the *Discerner*, she will by and by reach Him as the *Forgiver*. Even from her ignorance and coarse superstition He does not withhold the sublimest truth. He knows her imperfect understanding, but He assumes the germinative power of the truth itself. He is not deterred from the effort to plant His truth and to rescue a soul, either by His own weariness or by the conventional sentiment which frowned upon His conversation with a woman in a public place. Godet contrasts Jesus' method in this case with that employed in the interview with Nicodemus. "With Nicodemus He started from the idea which filled every Pharisee's heart, that of the kingdom of God, and deduced therefrom the most rigorous practical consequences. He knew that He had to do with a man accustomed to the discipline of the law. Then He unveiled to him the most elevated truths of the kingdom of heaven, by connecting them with a striking Old Testament type, and contrasting them with the corresponding features of the Pharisaic programme. Here, on the contrary, with a woman destitute of all scriptural training, He takes His point of departure from the commonest thing imaginable, the water of the well. He suddenly exalts it, by a bold antithesis, to the idea of that eternal life which quenches forever the thirst of the human heart. Spiritual aspiration thus awakened in her becomes the internal prophecy to which He attaches His new revelations, and thus reaches that teaching on true worship which corresponds as directly to the peculiar prepossessions of the woman, as the revelation of heavenly things corresponded to the inmost thoughts of Nicodemus. Before the latter He unveils Himself as the only-begotten Son, but this while avoiding the title of "Christ." With the woman He boldly uses this term; but he does not dream of initiating into the mysteries of incarnation and redemption a soul which is yet only at the first elements of religious life and knowledge" ([John 4 Commentary](#))

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#### Allen Ross on "I AM"

Several times in the Gospels Jesus made the amazing claim to be the "I AM" of the Old Testament. In the 8th chapter of John He was debating with the Jewish leaders over identity. They claimed to be of their father Abraham, but He said they were of their father

the devil (Jn 8:44). Towards the end of this confrontation, Jesus said that Abraham rejoiced to see His day (Jn 8:56). The Jewish leaders pointed out that Jesus was not yet fifty years old, and so how could He have seen Abraham. That is when He answered, **“Before Abraham was, I AM.”** At this they picked up stones to stone Him, for they knew what He was claiming.

Likewise in the Garden of Gethsemane when they came to arrest Jesus, Jesus said to them, **I AM** — and they all drew back and fell to the ground (John 18:6,7). It was not the simple boldness of identifying Himself as the one they sought that caused this, but the claim He was making, and had been making throughout His life.

In John 10:30 Jesus declared, **“I and the Father are one.”** And there also they took up stones to kill Him.

In the Old Testament God revealed Himself to Moses as **I AM that I AM** (Exod. 3:13-16:14); and that name was then put into the third person form to be used by the people of God: **“Yahweh.”** Throughout the Old Testament this name **“Yahweh”** revealed the Lord God as the one who was sovereignly independent of all creation. And as the Lord Himself used the name, it came to express His complete provision for all of the needs of the people: **I AM—your healer, your rock, your redeemer, your sustainer, etc.** In Isaiah 41:4 He revealed Himself as the first and the last, an expression that Jesus used to describe Himself in the Revelation (Rev 1:8+) to John (see again Isaiah 44:6). In fact, throughout the Gospel of John Jesus followed this Old Testament use of the **“I AM”**: I am the bread of life (John 6:32-35); I am the light of the world (John 8:12-20); I am the door (John 10:7-10); I am the good shepherd (John 10:11-16); I am the resurrection and the life (John 11:25-27); I am the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6); and I am the vine (John 15:1-8). These are largely statements that only God could make; and the use of **“I am”** in each underscores that connection.

Jesus was claiming to be divine, and that is why they killed Him. People today often say that Jesus never really claimed to be God. But the leaders crucified Him, and the charge was blasphemy. The people of His day surely understood the claim. He was in fact making that claim, because He was, and is, in fact, the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel.

**If the Lord Jesus Christ is the great I AM, then it was He, in a pre-incarnate appearance, who appeared to Moses at the burning bush as “I AM.”** It was He in a pre-incarnate appearance who met with Moses on Mount Sinai as a man speaks to a friend, who put Moses in the cleft of the rock as He passed by, who caused Moses’ face to shine with His glory (compare the transfiguration in Matthew 17). It was He whom the Israelites saw when they **“ate with God”** the peace offering on the slopes of Sinai (Exod. 24:10). What they saw was a glimpse of the God of glory, the expanse that was the base of His throne, something of what Isaiah saw (Isaiah 6), or Ezekiel (Ezekiel 1), or John on Patmos (Rev. 1).

And if our Lord is the I AM of the Old Testament, then Old Testament references to **“Yahweh”** could just as easily refer to Him as to the Father. That is why the New Testament writers often quote Old Testament passages that refer to Yahweh and interpret them to mean Christ. Hebrews 1 is an explanation of who Jesus truly was and is. And after rehearsing the Old Testament passages that predicted His messianic kingship, the writer refers to Him as the Creator by applying Psalm 102 to Jesus: **“In the beginning, O Yahweh, you laid the foundations of the earth.”** The passage goes on to say that they will all wear out, but our Lord remains the same forever.

The writers came to understand that there were three persons in the Godhead, a trinity. One God, but three persons. If the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, is in truth the second person of the trinity, if the title **“Son of God”** means more than a title for a king, then we should not be surprised at all to see Him revealed in the Old Testament Scriptures (see Proverbs 30:4, **“What is His [God’s] name, and what is His Son’s name?”**). After all, the second person of the trinity is the one who reveals the Godhead to all of mankind. So before the Son of God entered the human race in Bethlehem, He did in fact come to earth in various ways in the Old Testament. And He did reveal Himself as the **“I AM,”** as **“Yahweh,”** in the Old Testament. Such an identity for Jesus ought to inspire greater devotion from us, and greater trust as well, for He is the One who can provide all our needs, not only spiritual but physical as well.

<b>JESUS IS JEHOVAH (Yahweh)</b>		
<b>OF JEHOVAH</b>	<b>Mutual Title or Act</b>	<b>OF JESUS</b>
Isa 40:28	Creator	John 1:3
Isa 45:22, 43:11	Savior	John 4:42
1Sam 2:6	Raise Dead	John 5:21
Joel 3:12	Judge	John 5:27, cf Mt 25:31-46

Isa 60:19-20	Light	John 8:12
Exodus 3:14	I Am	John 8:58, 18:5-6
Ps 23:1	Shepherd	John 10:11
Isa 42:8, 48:11	Glory of God	John 17:1,5
Isa 41:4, 44:6	First and Last	Rev 1:17, 2:8
Hosea 13:14	Redeemer	Rev 5:9
Isa 62:5, Hos 2:16	Bridegroom	Rev 21:2, cf Mt 25:1ff
Ps 18:2	Rock	1Cor 10:4
Jer 31:34	Forgiver of sins	Mark 2:7, 10
Ps 148:2	Worshiped by Angels	Heb 1:6
Throughout OT	Addressed in Prayer	Acts 7:59
Ps 148:5	Creator of Angels	Col 1:16
Isa 45:23	Confessed as Lord	Phil 2:11

**QUESTION - [What did Jesus mean when He said "I AM"?](#) | [GotQuestions.org](#) - SEE RELATED VIDEO**

**ANSWER** - Jesus, in response to the Pharisees' question "Who do you think you are?" said, "'Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.' 'You are not yet fifty years old,' the Jews said to him, 'and you have seen Abraham!' 'I tell you the truth,' Jesus answered, 'before Abraham was born, I am!' At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds" (John 8:56–59). The violent response of the Jews to Jesus' "I AM" statement indicates they clearly understood what He was declaring—that He was the eternal God incarnate. Jesus was equating Himself with the "I AM" title God gave Himself in Exodus 3:14.

If Jesus had merely wanted to say He existed before Abraham's time, He would have said, "Before Abraham, I was." The Greek words translated "was," in the case of Abraham, and "am," in the case of Jesus, are quite different. The words chosen by the Spirit make it clear that Abraham was "brought into being," but Jesus existed eternally (see John 1:1). There is no doubt that the Jews understood what He was saying because they took up stones to kill Him for making Himself equal with God (John 5:18). Such a statement, if not true, was blasphemy and the punishment prescribed by the Mosaic Law was death (Leviticus 24:11–14). But Jesus committed no blasphemy; He was and is God, the second Person of the Godhead, equal to the Father in every way.

Jesus used the same phrase "I AM" in seven declarations about Himself. In all seven, He combines I AM with tremendous metaphors which express His saving relationship toward the world. All appear in the book of John. They are

1. [I AM the Bread of Life](#) (John 6:35, 41, 48, 51);
2. [I AM the Light of the World](#) (John 8:12);
3. [I AM the Door of the Sheep](#) (John 10:7, 9);
4. [I AM the Good Shepherd](#) (John 10:11,14);
5. [I AM the Resurrection and the Life](#) (John 11:25);
6. [I AM the Way, the Truth and the Life](#) (John 14:6);
7. [I AM the True Vine](#) (John 15:1, 5).

**John 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?"**

ζητε ς τ λαλε ς μετ α τ ς;

NET John 4:27 Now at that very moment his disciples came back. They were shocked because he was speaking with a woman. However, no one said, "What do you want?" or "Why are you speaking with her?"

NLT 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?"

ESV John 4:27 Just then his disciples came back. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you seek?" or, "Why are you talking with her?"

NIV John 4:27 Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"

GNT John 4:27 Κα π το τ λθαν ο μαθητα α το κα θα μαζον τι μετ γυναικ ς λ λει· ο δε ς μ ντοι ε πεν, Τ ζητε ς Τ λαλε ς μετ α τ ς;

KJV John 4:27 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?

YLT John 4:27 And upon this came his disciples, and were wondering that with a woman he was speaking, no one, however, said, 'What seekest thou?' or 'Why speakest thou with her?'

ASV John 4:27 And upon this came his disciples; and they marvelled that he was speaking with a woman; yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why speakest thou with her?

CSB John 4:27 Just then His disciples arrived, and they were amazed that He was talking with a woman. Yet no one said, "What do You want?" or "Why are You talking with her?"

NKJ John 4:27 And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?"

NRS John 4:27 Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you want?" or, "Why are you speaking with her?"

NAB John 4:27 At that moment his disciples returned, and were amazed that he was talking with a woman, but still no one said, "What are you looking for?" or "Why are you talking with her?"

NJB John 4:27 At this point his disciples returned and were surprised to find him speaking to a woman, though none of them asked, 'What do you want from her?' or, 'What are you talking to her about?'

GWN John 4:27 At that time his disciples returned. They were surprised that he was talking to a woman. But none of them asked him, "What do you want from her?" or "Why are you talking to her?"

- marvelled (KJV): Joh 4:9 Lu 7:39
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE TIMELY RETURN OF THE DISCIPLES

This passage is another reminder of God's sovereignty (and providence), but had the disciples returned earlier, they would have interrupted Jesus' conversation with the woman. God's timing is always perfect.

**At this point** - At this juncture. Just then. At this very moment. It is as if she leaves on cue, the "cue" being the return of the disciples.

**Brian Bell** - Then right at this dramatic cliff-hanging moment, guess who shows up with the burgers & fries? The disciples in a very awkward situation for everyone - well, except for Jesus.

**His disciples** ([mathetes](#)) **came** - The return for getting food to eat in Sychar (Jn 4:8).

**And they were amazed** ([thaumazo](#)) **that He had been speaking with a woman, yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why do You speak with her?"** - Thaumazo is in the vivid imperfect tense picturing something occurring over and over. One can picture the disciples, perhaps even looking at each other in continued amazement! They were incredulous (and even speechless - yes, even "open mouth, insert foot" Peter!). A rabbi speaking with a woman. Unheard of. Not only were they in "enemy" territory (Samaria), Jesus was breaking all culturally accepted norms by speaking with this woman, a Samaritan woman at that. And

yet they are "smart enough" (or shocked enough) to keep their mouths shut this time.

**Steven Cole** - Their amazement stemmed from two sources: cultural conditioning and they didn't understand Jesus' mission (**ED: WHICH HE GOES ON TO EXPLAIN IN Jn 4:31-38**)..... the fact that they did not question Jesus should teach us that if anything in God's Word is disagreeable or puzzling to us, we should not murmur against God, but rather wait in silence until He reveals the matter to us more clearly.

**MacArthur** - In Judaism it was believed that for a rabbi to speak with a woman was at best a waste of time, and at worst a distraction from studying the Torah—which could lead to eternal damnation. That she was a Samaritan made the Lord's action even more astonishing. And had they known the woman's immoral background, the disciples would have been completely stunned. (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

There were sayings of the rabbis like "Let no one talk with a woman in the street, no, not with his own wife" or "A man shall not be alone with a woman in an inn, not even with his sister or his daughter, on account of what men may think. A man shall not talk with a woman in the street, not even with his own wife, and especially not with another woman, on account of what men may say."

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**Were amazed** (imperfect tense - over and over)(2296) (**thaumazo** from **thauma** [from **thaomai** = to wonder] = wonder, admiration) means to wonder, marvel, be struck with admiration or astonishment. To be surprised by the unexpected. **Thaumazo** describes the human response when confronted by divine revelation in some form (Mt 9.33). Be surprised (Gal 1:6). It denotes incredulous surprise. **Thaumazo** was a rhetorical device used in law courts and politics to attack things done by the opposition party.

**Thaumazo** - Jn. 3:7; Jn. 4:27; Jn. 5:20; Jn. 5:28; Jn. 7:15; Jn. 7:21

43 verses in the NT - Matt. 8:10; Matt. 8:27; Matt. 9:33; Matt. 15:31; Matt. 21:20; Matt. 22:22; Matt. 27:14; Mk. 5:20; Mk. 6:6; Mk. 15:5; Mk. 15:44; Lk. 1:21; Lk. 1:63; Lk. 2:18; Lk. 2:33; Lk. 4:22; Lk. 7:9; Lk. 8:25; Lk. 9:43; Lk. 11:14; Lk. 11:38; Lk. 20:26; Lk. 24:12; Lk. 24:41; Jn. 3:7; Jn. 4:27; Jn. 5:20; Jn. 5:28; Jn. 7:15; Jn. 7:21; Acts 2:7; Acts 3:12; Acts 4:13; Acts 7:31; Acts 13:41; Gal. 1:6; 2 Thess. 1:10; 1 Jn. 3:13; Jude 1:16; Rev. 13:3; Rev. 17:6; Rev. 17:7; Rev. 17:8

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### **Cyril Hocking - John 4:27–30 COME, SEE A MAN**

FOR ENTIRELY different reasons, both the disciples and the woman of Samaria were startled by His conversation with her.

The disciples were surprised that Jesus said anything to the woman at all, v. 27. In their sight, Jesus was, among many other things, a 'Rabbi', v. 31 lit. No doubt they marvelled because normally the 'Rabbis' neither spoke to women in public nor taught them spiritual truths. 'A man should not salute a woman in a public place, not even his own wife' typified the rules which governed the Rabbis. The disciples were probably further surprised because this particular woman was a Samaritan, v. 9. We rejoice to know that, when it comes to salvation's blessings, 'there is neither Jew nor Greek ... neither male nor female', Gal. 3:28.

The woman was surprised by what He had said to her, v. 29. The disciples arrived at the very moment when Jesus revealed Himself to her as Messiah. This (for her, untimely) interruption meant that she was unable to ask Him concerning the 'all things' which she expected Messiah to reveal, v. 25. Nevertheless He had already, in a brief but comprehensive manner, revealed to her the 'all things' of her own past life, vv. 16–18, 29. She had discovered that no disguise was proof against His piercing gaze and, as in the earlier case of Nathaniel, Jesus' supernatural knowledge produced a conviction of who He was, 1:47–49; 4:29. With befitting respect, she submitted her conviction to the judgement of the men of Sychar; 'Can this be the Christ?', v. 29 lit. It seemed altogether too wonderful to be true!

She left her waterpot, and went her way, v. 28. The abandoned waterpot signified her thoughtfulness—kindly, she left it behind for Jesus to quench His thirst and enjoy a drink with His food. Her intention—she could afford to be relaxed about leaving the pot because she purposed to return; 'Come' not 'go' was her message, v. 29. Her haste—unburdened, she would be able to get to Sychar and return the faster. She may have feared that, as Jews normally passed through Samaria only if they were in a hurry to travel between Judaea and Galilee, Jesus would soon pass on from the well. Her priority—she had discovered the secret of a deeper satisfaction than could ever come out of either well or waterpot.

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**John 4:28 So the woman left her waterpot, and went into the city and \*said to the men,**

BGT John 4:28 φ κεν ο ν τ ν δ ρ αν α τ ς γ υ ν κα π λθεν ε ς τ ν π λιν κα λ γει το ς ν θ ρ ποι ς

NET John 4:28 Then the woman left her water jar, went off into the town and said to the people,

NLT John 4:28 The woman left her water jar beside the well and ran back to the village, telling everyone,

ESV John 4:28 So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people,

NIV John 4:28 Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people,

GNT John 4:28 φ κεν ο ν τ ν δ ρ α ν α τ ς γ υ ν κ α π λ θ ε ν ε ς τ ν π λ ι ν κ α λ γ ε ι τ ο ς ν θ ρ π ο ι ς,

KJV John 4:28 The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,

YLT John 4:28 The woman then left her water-jug, and went away to the city, and saith to the men,

ASV John 4:28 So the woman left her waterpot, and went away into the city, and saith to the people,

CSB John 4:28 Then the woman left her water jar, went into town, and told the men,

NKJ John 4:28 The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men,

NRS John 4:28 Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people,

NAB John 4:28 The woman left her water jar and went into the town and said to the people,

NJB John 4:28 The woman put down her water jar and hurried back to the town to tell the people,

GWN John 4:28 Then the woman left her water jar and went back into the city. She told the people,

- John 4:7 Mt 28:8 Mk 16:8-10 Lu 24:9,33
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**So the woman left her waterpot, and went into the city and \*said to the men-** Don't miss this small detail that she **left her waterpot!** Waterpots were essential for survival in the arid climate. That is why she had come to the well. But the spiritual truths about the living water Jesus gave far surpassed her desire to obtain physical water. It also shows us that once gripped with the truth of Who Jesus really was and what He had to offer, she simply could not keep quiet. She had heard and received the Good News (the Gospel) and wanted everyone to hear about this incredible Living Water! Beloved, we all should have the same excitement about sharing the Gospel with our family, friends and associates!

**Brian Bell** - The woman left her waterpot - The jar she came to fill stands empty, but the heart she had not come to fill now overflowing with living water! Earlier Jesus turned tepid water into the most festive of wines; He now takes the emptiest of lives & fills it full. He can do that with your life too! 1. No matter how stagnant the water...no matter how empty the pot. 2. All it takes is one sip of faith to be spiritually hydrated!!! a) He freed a Woman from habitual immorality; He freed Worship from the limitation of place. He desires to free you today from a dehydrated, parched, barren, sin filled life.

**Steven Cole** - When Jesus told this woman that He is the Messiah, she had to decide: Is He or isn't He? Although a few commentators question whether she believed in Christ (John never states this explicitly), the great majority believe that she did. How do we know? We know because of her response to Jesus' self-revelation and because of the result that came from her witness: She immediately went to tell others about Jesus resulting in their believing in Him.

**Lenski** - She would have been bold, indeed, to face all these additional strangers. And yet God in his providence had so timed her arrival at the well that her conversation with Jesus could reach the supreme point before the arrival of the disciples. Quick-witted as she showed herself in her answers to Jesus, she now strangely forgets to take her filled waterpot along and in spite of her great reverence for Jesus forgets too all about his original request for a drink. These are exquisite psychological touches in John's narrative, indicating how deeply the words of Jesus had gripped her heart, making her forget all else for the moment. (BORROW [The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel](#))

This woman's enthusiasm caused her to jump the common social hurdles of the day, for a Osborne points out "women did not normally talk to men in this way. In fact, women could not be official witnesses of anything. If a robbery occurred and was witnessed only by women, the thief could not be prosecuted because women could not provide official testimony (cf. m. Rosh HaShanah 1:8)." (See [The Gospel of John](#))

**Rod Mattoon - The fact that she left her water pot indicates several things.**

1. It shows that she is in a hurry to share what she found with people she had avoided. She goes from a convicted sinner to a devoted saint. One of the first instincts of a person who gets born again is to share. Do you share the Gospel with others?
2. This woman found living water.
3. Leaving her water pot has symbolic meaning. That which she depended upon to satisfy her, she left behind. People need to

leave the water pots of good works, religious rituals, and church membership behind them if they are looking to these things for salvation or expect these things to satisfy God. We are to leave the old sinful lifestyle behind us too.

4. Leaving the pot indicated that she planned to come back to the Lord. Her material possession was not as important as the souls of men.

#### John 4:29 “Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is it?”

BGT John 4:29 δε τε δετε νθρωπον σε π ν μοι π ντα σα πο ησα, μ τι ο τ σε σιν χριστ σε;

NET John 4:29 "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Surely he can't be the Messiah, can he?"

NLT John 4:29 "Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah?"

ESV John 4:29 "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?"

NIV John 4:29 "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?"

GNT John 4:29 Δε τε δετε νθρωπον σε π ν μοι π ντα σα πο ησα, μ τι ο τ σε σιν Χριστ σε;

KJV John 4:29 Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

YLT John 4:29 'Come, see a man, who told me all things -- as many as I did; is this the Christ?'

ASV John 4:29 Come, see a man, who told me all things that ever I did: can this be the Christ?

CSB John 4:29 "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could this be the Messiah?"

NKJ John 4:29 "Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?"

NRS John 4:29 "Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?"

NAB John 4:29 "Come see a man who told me everything I have done. Could he possibly be the Messiah?"

NJB John 4:29 'Come and see a man who has told me everything I have done; could this be the Christ?'

GWN John 4:29 "Come with me, and meet a man who told me everything I've ever done. Could he be the Messiah?"

- John 4:17,18,25 Jn 1:41-49 1Co 14:24,25 Rev 22:17
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages (on "come, see")...

Isaiah 1:18+ “Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the LORD, “Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool.

Isaiah 55:1 “Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; And you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk Without money and without cost.

Matthew 11:28+ “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.

Revelation 22:17<sup>±</sup> The Spirit and the bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.

### THE WOMAN'S ENTICING INVITATION

**Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done** So here is a woman with a sordid past and yet she is so excited by the revelation of Jesus that she boldly and enthusiastically describes her encounter with him. She exaggerates a bit, but her point is that this man knew many things about her that were not common knowledge, especially to a stranger! **Robertson** suggests that "a guilty conscience led her to exaggerate a bit." ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#)) **Vincent** suggests that "Jesus' insight in the one case convinced her that He knew everything, and to her awakened conscience it seemed as though He had told everything." ([John 4 Commentary](#)) Notice that she is not telling them what to believe but to come and see for themselves, for then they could make up their own mind. Had she been forceful and direct, the response would very likely not have been so positive. But as we say she **"left**

[the ball in their court.](#)" And they took the "ball" and "ran" with it.

**MacArthur** observes that "Her zeal and enthusiasm provides the clinching piece of evidence that her conversion was genuine." (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**Come see** (deute idete) is the identical invitation the angel gave to "Mary Magdalene and the other Mary (who) came to look at the grave" of Jesus (Mt 28:1, 6) Who had been resurrected.

**This is not the Christ, is it?**- She begins with the interrogative particle ([mete](#)) which in questions expects a negative answer.

**Vincent** adds this reads something like "Surely this cannot be, yet with some hope." ([John 4 Commentary](#))

**NET Note** adds that "The use of [mete](#) normally presupposes a negative answer. This should not be taken as an indication that the woman did not believe, however. It may well be an example of "[reverse psychology](#)," designed to gain a hearing for her testimony among those whose doubts about her background would obviate her claims."

**Tenney** - "You don't suppose this could be the Messiah, do you?" would be a fair translation of her words.

**THOUGHT**- This teaches us that to be effective witnesses, it's often good to ask questions rather than make pronouncements. Bill Fay (audio recording) suggests asking these questions: "

(1) Do you have any kind of spiritual belief?

(2) To you, who is Jesus?

(3) Do you think that there is heaven or hell?

(4) If you died, where are you going?

(5) Why would God let you into heaven?" Then, after listening to the person's answers, ask, "

(6) If what you believe is not true, do you want me to tell you?"

(ED: I use a very simple but powerful tract entitled "[Are You Going to Heaven?](#)" [Order and bunch and hand out a bunch - I handed out 7 today to workers in my cul-de-sac. The tract is available in Spanish and [4 of my handouts today were in Spanish](#)] and that is usually the question I ask people rather than all 6 of these questions. My neighbor came to Christ 20 years ago based on my wife asking her that question while she was working in her yard!)

Fay says that in thousands of encounters, he's never had a firm "no" to that last question. Then you can show the person the Bible verses that explain the gospel. But I think the main reason that this woman's witness was effective was that she was excited about Jesus and these men who knew her could see the change in her. Before, she would not have spoken to any of them. She didn't even want to speak to the other women in the village, which is probably why she was getting water at noon, when no one else would be at the well. But here she was, willing to bring up her own notoriously sinful past, exuberantly telling about this man whom she had met. The change and her excitement about Jesus were evident.

Evangelism and sales have many differences, but there are some parallels. One common feature is that the most successful salesmen are those who are excited about their product. They think that what they're selling will solve your problems. If a salesman is apathetic about his product, you're not likely to buy it. But if he tells you how the product changed his life and he wants you to experience the same thing, you just might be interested.

So here we have a woman who knew far less than Nicodemus did and she had a far worse background than his. But she was far bolder and did far more good than he did because she was excited about Him as the Messiah and she testified about her own experience with Jesus. God will use your witness if you've had a genuine encounter with the Lord Jesus and you're excited about Him. And if you're not excited about Him, you need to figure out why not. ([Steven Cole](#))

**MacArthur** quotes Homer Kent who explains that "The woman immediately wanted to give testimony to others of what she had found. But she did so with utmost tact. It would have been unseemly, presumptuous, and probably ineffective for this woman to attempt to teach the men of the city regarding spiritual truth. Her background hardly qualified her to speak with authority on religious and spiritual matters. Therefore, her statement to them was phrased in a deliberately cautious way so as not to arouse antagonism (ED: AND INSTEAD [PIQUE](#) THEIR CURIOSITY TO SEEK THE ANSWER FOR THEMSELVES). (BORROW [Homer A. Kent Jr. Light in the Darkness: Studies in the Gospel of John \[Grand Rapids: Baker, 1974\], 79-80](#)) (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**Grant Osborne** notes that "Even though this woman was undoubtedly held in contempt for her immoral lifestyle, her witness sparked great curiosity, and the people came to see Jesus for themselves. We hear nothing more of the woman in the story, but the pattern is so close to that of John 1:35–50 (the conversion of Andrew and Philip is implied in their actions) that the Evangelist likely intends us to see that she became a believer, along with the majority of the village." (See [The Gospel of John](#))

**John MacArthur** points out that "Unlike Nicodemus, she knew nothing of any signs and miracles Jesus had performed. But merely because of what He knew about her the woman did not doubt the veracity of His claim. That was great, God-given trust. Indeed, she went and proclaimed it in her village, a fact that strongly suggests that she had genuinely come to saving faith. Jesus' conversation with the woman at the well illustrates three nonnegotiable truths about salvation. **First**, salvation comes only to those who recognize their desperate need for spiritual life they do not have. Living water will be received only by those who realize that they are spiritually thirsty. **Second**, salvation comes only to those who confess and repent of their sin and desire forgiveness. Before this promiscuous woman could embrace the Savior, she had to acknowledge the full weight of her iniquity. And, **third**, salvation comes only to those who embrace Jesus Christ as their Messiah and sin bearer. After all, salvation is found in no one else (cf. Jn 14:6; Acts 4:12)." (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**Calvin** - "And it is the nature of faith that we want to bring others to share eternal life with us when we have become partakers of it. The knowledge of God cannot lie buried and inactive in our hearts and not be made known to men. For that word must be true: 'I believed, and therefore will I speak' (Ps. 116:10)"

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### John 4:5-30 Come, See

Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ? —John 4:29

Christ has done great things in my life. Because of what He has done for me and for other believers, I like to extend to people the same invitation that the Samaritan woman gave to her neighbors: "Come, see" (Jn. 4:29).

Come, see what He did in the life of Joe, a man who had been a slave to alcohol for more than 30 years. One Monday morning, after many previous discussions with me, he came to my house and said, "Last night I got on my knees and told God that I was a rotten sinner and asked Jesus to save me." He was such a transformed man from that time forward that his neighbors were astounded.

Come, see what He did for a young woman dying of leukemia. When the doctors said the disease had returned after a time of remission, she calmly declared, "I'm not afraid, because I know where I am going." During the following weeks she showed more concern for her family than for herself. I saw the presence of Jesus strengthen her and sustain the family.

After more than 65 years of trusting Jesus, I can vouch for the reality of His presence and power. I invite you to receive Jesus as your Savior and start living a life of obedience and trust. What He has done for me, He can do for you.

When you know Christ, you'll want everyone to meet Him. By Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

### John 4:30 They went out of the city, and were coming to Him.

BGT John 4:30 ἔλθον κ τ ς π λεως κα ρχοντο πρ ς α τ ν.

NET John 4:30 So they left the town and began coming to him.

NLT John 4:30 So the people came streaming from the village to see him.

ESV John 4:30 They went out of the town and were coming to him.

NIV John 4:30 They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

GNT John 4:30 ἔλθον κ τ ς π λεως κα ρχοντο πρ ς α τ ν.

KJV John 4:30 Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.

YLT John 4:30 They went forth therefore out of the city, and were coming unto him.

ASV John 4:30 They went out of the city, and were coming to him.

CSB John 4:30 They left the town and made their way to Him.

NKJ John 4:30 Then they went out of the city and came to Him.

NRS John 4:30 They left the city and were on their way to him.

NAB John 4:30 They went out of the town and came to him.

NJB John 4:30 This brought people out of the town and they made their way towards him.

GWN John 4:30 The people left the city and went to meet Jesus.

- Isa 60:8 Mt 2:1-3 8:11,12 11:20-24 12:40-42 20:16 Lu 17:16-18 Ac 8:5-8 10:33 13:42 28:28 Ro 5:20
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE TOWNSPEOPLE'S RESPONSE TO THE WOMAN'S TESTIMONY

**They went out of the city, and were coming to Him- Were coming** is in the imperfect tense, a vivid picture of coming over and over, pictures a stream of souls coming to Jesus. While the Samaritan woman had a questionable reputation in the town, clearly the townspeople gave attention to her testimony and her question. Keep in mind also that the Holy Spirit is active in this process as is the Father, for in John 6:44+ we read "(Absolutely) No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day."

While John had used the term Christ, he has already explained that was a synonym for Messiah, and undoubtedly this possibility coupled with her enthusiasm added credibility to her words. And so they went out to Jacob's well to encounter Jacob's greater ancestor Who unbeknownst to them would soon provide them with better water than the water from the well. As they were going out, the following dialogue occurs between Jesus and His disciples in John 4:31-38. It is fascinating to watch Jesus in action. He continually redeems the opportunities (Eph 5:16+), first with the woman explaining spiritual water, then with His disciples teaching about spiritual food and finally with the crowd reaping a spiritual harvest of souls! O, to have the spiritual eyes and heart of Jesus to be able to recognize the golden, passing opportunities God sends our way each day. Amen!

**Tenney** - It would be unlikely that the elders of Sychar would accept theological information from a woman of her reputation, and she did not venture to make a dogmatic pronouncement. Nevertheless, her manner was so sincere and her invitation so urgent that they immediately proceeded to the well to investigate. (EBC-Jn)

**S. D. Gordon** has an interesting observation that "The disciples had just been down to the town—they who knew the Master much longer and better. **They brought back some loaves.** That was all. The woman went down; **she brought back some men**" (The Sychar Revival)

**Vincent - Went out** is the aorist tense, denoting the coming forth from the city as a single act at a point of time. **Came** is the imperfect, denoting action in progress. The observance of the distinction makes the narrative more graphic. They were coming. Unto should be toward (πρὸς). The imperfect also is required by the following words: "In the meanwhile" (while the woman was still absent and the Samaritans were coming toward Him) "the disciples were praying (urging)" Him to eat. ([John 4 Commentary](#))

**Robertson** adds that **were coming** is the "Imperfect middle, graphically picturing the long procession as they approached Jesus." ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

How many **were coming** is not stated, but probably an appreciable number.

**Steven Cole** - If you're anything like me, you struggle at being an effective witness for Jesus Christ. I've prayed about it for decades, I've read many books, gone to different training seminars, and even taken a seminary class in evangelism, but still I often fail at being a good witness. An hour or two after an opportunity, I think, "I should have said such and such," but I didn't think of it at the time. Our text gives us some help in being the kind of witness that God uses from an unlikely source: A woman who is a brand new convert, who is still living with a man outside of marriage, who knows almost no sound doctrine, and who has not had a training course in how to share her faith. Yet she effectively evangelizes her entire village for Christ! When Jesus tells her that He is the Messiah (Jn 4:26), she gets so excited that she leaves her waterpot, goes back to her village, and tells the men, who normally would have laughed at anything she said (Jn 4:29), "Come, see a man who told me all the things that I *have* done; this is not the Christ, is it?" As a result, they streamed out of the city to meet Jesus. They invited Him to stay with them. He spent two days there, during which time many more Samaritans came to believe in Him. At the end of that time, they proclaimed (Jn 4:42b), "This One is indeed the Savior of the world." This narrative teaches us that...God uses witnesses who are excited about Jesus, have a harvest perspective, and invite others to come to Him.

CONTRASTS BETWEEN NICODEMUS AND THE SAMARITAN WOMAN	
Nicodemus	Samaritan Woman
(Jerusalem) Judah	Samaria
By night	About noon
Planned visit	By chance
Theological	Practical
Initiator - Nicodemus	Initiator - Jesus
Jew	Samaritan (mixed blood)
Highly respected ruler, teacher	Despised woman (immoral)
Male	Female
Polite, calling Jesus Rabbi	First hostility, then respect
Nicodemus faded out, dialogue became monologue	Dialogue carried to the end
Result not mentioned	Woman converted, witnesses, many converted

**John 4:31 Meanwhile the disciples were urging Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat."**

BGT John 4:31 ν τ μεταξ ρ των α τ ν ο μαθητα λ γοντες· αββ , φ γε.

NET John 4:31 Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, "Rabbi, eat something."

NLT John 4:31 Meanwhile, the disciples were urging Jesus, "Rabbi, eat something."

ESV John 4:31 Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, "Rabbi, eat."

NIV John 4:31 Meanwhile his disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat something."

GNT John 4:31 ν τ μεταξ ρ των α τ ν ο μαθητα λ γοντες, αββ , φ γε.

KJV John 4:31 In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.

YLT John 4:31 And in the meanwhile his disciples were asking him, saying, 'Rabbi, eat;'

ASV John 4:31 In the mean while the disciples prayed him, saying, Rabbi, eat.

CSB John 4:31 In the meantime the disciples kept urging Him, " Rabbi, eat something."

NKJ John 4:31 In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat."

NRS John 4:31 Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, "Rabbi, eat something."

NAB John 4:31 Meanwhile, the disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat."

NJB John 4:31 Meanwhile, the disciples were urging him, 'Rabbi, do have something to eat';

GWN John 4:31 Meanwhile, the disciples were urging him, "Rabbi, have something to eat."

- Master (KJV): Ge 24:33 Ac 16:30-34
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## MEANWHILE "BACK AT THE WELL"

The disciples have returned with the "burgers and fries" and they are getting cold.

As an aside, did you notice that **ALL** the disciples went to town to get the food. That is quite strange as it would not take all of them to bring back enough food. Surely the providence of God is at play again, for this gave Jesus the opportunity for focused attention on the Samaritan woman.

**John Phillips** writes "And a hot, tiresome business it was. But now they were back. They had drawn water from the well. They had spread out their provisions on the wall of the well. They were hungry. They looked inquiringly at the Lord for the blessing. But his mind and heart were far away. He was with that woman even now bursting into the city with her good news. "Master, eat!" they said (4:31)." (BORROW [Exploring the Gospels. John](#))

**Meanwhile the disciples (mathetes) were urging Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat."** - The disciples were focused on food, on the physical, the earthly, the needs of the moment. They had no idea that Jesus had just revealed spiritual, heavenly truths that dealt with eternal needs! **Were urging** is [erotao](#) in the imperfect tense picturing the disciples making one request after another for Jesus to take physical sustenance.

**A T Robertson** - "kept beseeching him." ...Their concern for the comfort of Jesus overcame their surprise about the woman. ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**Leon Morris** - The disciples' suggestion that Jesus eat was eminently natural. The whole purpose of their trip into the village had been to buy food. They had left the Master weary, and presumably hungry. Now they brought food and asked him to eat. (BORROW [The Gospel according to John : NICNT](#)).

**John Phillips** - Any woman who has slaved over the kitchen stove, prepared a delicious meal, called her husband to come and eat—only to be told that he's not hungry—can empathize with the disciples at this point. But the Lord was never discourteous, never thoughtless of others. His behavior at this point in the story is all of a piece with his divine purpose in this world. He had forgotten his physical thirst in his greater thirst for the Samaritan woman's soul. Now he forgot his physical hunger in his hunger to reach a lost world. (Exploring the Gospel of John)

**Rabbi** (4461) ([rhabbi](#) from Hebrew [rab](#) 07227 = great one, master) means my master (most common rendering in KJV) or my teacher. It was an respectful title of honor by which one would address a teacher who was recognized for their expertise in the Mosaic Law or Scriptures. Jesus' disciples repeatedly address Him as **Rabbi** (Jn. 4:31; Jn. 6:25; Jn. 9:2; Jn. 11:8) The suffix **-bi** signified "my master" and was a title of respect by which teachers were addressed. The suffix soon lost its specific force, and in the NT the word is used as courteous title of address." (Vine) It is interesting that in Mt. 23:7-8 Jesus forbade His disciples to desire to use it ("do not be called **Rabbi**")." ([Was Jesus a rabbi?](#)) **Rabbi** - 15x in 15v - Matt. 23:7; Matt. 23:8; Matt. 26:25; Matt. 26:49; Mk. 9:5; Mk. 11:21; Mk. 14:45; Jn. 1:38; Jn. 1:49; Jn. 3:2; Jn. 3:26; Jn. 4:31; Jn. 6:25; Jn. 9:2; Jn. 11:8. Not found in the Septuagint.

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### Cyril Hocking - John 4:31–38 THE WILL OF HIM THAT SENT ME

TO THE DISCIPLES' credit, they strove to satisfy, not their own curiosity, v. 27, but their Master's needs, v. 32. Yet He had food to eat of which they knew nothing. And so, just as He had explained to the woman that she needed to drink of water which could not be drawn from Jacob's well, vv. 13–14, so now He explained to His disciples that He ate of food which could not be obtained from Sychar's city, vv. 32–34.

It was not, of course, that He was exempt from satisfying His hunger with material food (cf. Matt. 4:2) but that He had a spiritual source of sustenance too. As so often, however, the inner meaning of His words was missed; cf. 2:20; 3:4; 4:11; 6:52.

His food was, He said, 'to do the will' of the One who had sent Him. If Job treasured God's words more than his necessary food, 23:12, the Lord regarded God's will as His very food. To Him, God's will represented not only His mission—I came down from heaven ... to do ... the will of him that sent me', John 6:38, His goal—I seek the will of the Father', 5:30, and His pleasure—I delight to thy will, O my God', Ps. 40:8, but His nourishment.

Here, as on some forty occasions in John's Gospel alone, the Lord spoke of the Father as the One that had 'sent' Him. But He who had Himself been 'sent', v. 34, had Himself also 'sent' others, v. 37. His words to them were, 'Lift up your eyes ... the fields ... are white already to harvest'.

Perhaps at that very moment He and his disciples could see the men of Sychar on their way to meet Him, vv. 30, 40. As far as the disciples were concerned, they were only passing through the land of Samaria and could expect no additions for the kingdom from there. Surely, they would have argued, much sowing and long patience would be needed before any ripened grain could be forthcoming. But no, He explained, others (notably Moses and the prophets) had laboured in the past and the harvest (in Sychar at least) was already ripe. Thanks to much faithful sowing, many were expecting Christ's coming, v. 25, and were very ready to accept Him.

Let us lift our eyes to the need, John 4:35, our hands to the work, Heb. 12:12, and our heads to the skies, Luke 21:28.

### John 4:32 But He said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about."

BGT John 4:32 ὁ ἐπεὶ αὐτοὶ γὰρ βρῶσιν χωρὶς ἡμεῶν οὐκ ὄντα.

NET John 4:32 But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about."

NLT John 4:32 But Jesus replied, "I have a kind of food you know nothing about."

ESV John 4:32 But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about."

NIV John 4:32 But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about."

GNT John 4:32 ὁ ἐπεὶ αὐτοὶ γὰρ βρῶσιν χωρὶς ἡμεῶν οὐκ ὄντα.

KJV John 4:32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.

YLT John 4:32 and he said to them, 'I have food to eat that ye have not known.'

ASV John 4:32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not.

CSB John 4:32 But He said, "I have food to eat that you don't know about."

NKJ John 4:32 But He said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know."

NRS John 4:32 But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about."

NAB John 4:32 But he said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know."

NJB John 4:32 but he said, 'I have food to eat that you do not know about.'

GWN John 4:32 Jesus told them, "I have food to eat that you don't know about."

- I have: Joh 4:34 Job 23:12 Ps 63:5 119:103 Pr 18:20 Isa 53:11 Jer 15:16 Ac 20:35
- that: Ps 25:14 Pr 14:10 Rev 2:17
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JESUS' SHOCKING REFUSAL OF THEIR MEAL!

**But** - Term of contrast. This sets up the contrast between the disciple's focus on physical food and Jesus' focus on spiritual food! And His words must have totally bewildered the poor disciples as the next verse shows.

**He said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about."** - There is a strong contrast between "I" and "You" in this passage. The disciples clearly took this literally as their next question indicates. Jesus' statement here is somewhat like a parable and would be very difficult to understand regarding the underlying or spiritual message which Jesus intended. They had been away buying food and had not knowledge of the evangelistic dialogue Jesus had carried out with the Samaritan woman. Clearly Jesus would need to "unpack" this parabolic statement about "food."

As **Lenski** explains "Here we catch a remarkable glimpse of how Jesus put his very soul into his work. Instead of doing it mechanically, in a business-like sort of way, with professional ease, he did it with all his heart. It so occupied him that all else for the time being was excluded. The exaltation of it prevented him from at once descending to lesser and lower things. It filled him with such joy and satisfaction that it acted like food and drink to his body, weariness, thirst, and hunger being forgotten. Not having been present when Jesus saved the woman's soul, the disciples could not know the **food** Jesus had enjoyed." (BORROW [The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel](#))

## **Vance Havener - At Jacobs Well      John 4:1-42**

THE account of our Lord's interview with the woman at Jacob's well carries many precious truths which we might easily overlook.

Our Lord was on a detour here, and we observe that some of our best work is often done when we are off the main line. No one knows or cares what the good Samaritan had started out to do that particular day, but he is remembered for what he did not start out to do. Bunyan wrote Pilgrims Progress as a sort of matter "on the side," but by it he is remembered.

Our Lord first broke custom by speaking to the Samaritan woman. We, too, need to shatter precedent—and must, if we are to win souls.

This woman with a hidden thirst knew only the well of Jacob. How many souls are depending today upon broken cisterns that can hold no water and know not the gift of God!

This woman was disposed to raise side issues, but our Lord brought the matter down to the sin in her life: "Go, call thy husband...." Immediately the woman said, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet." The mark of a prophet is to bring people to realize they are sinners. Too much preaching today never exposes sin, never makes people face their iniquities. This woman, sensing her needs, kept speaking to Jesus as the one who told her all things that ever she did; she so described Him to her acquaintances back in the city. There is a pleasant preaching today that tries to prescribe the remedy before people are made to realize that they are sick; tries to lead to the light people who do not know they are in the dark! Men will never be convicted until they are made to see themselves as sinners, and to do that, sin must be condemned and exposed, and it must be made personal. We must get down to the street where people live. Jesus did not give this woman a lecture on sin in general, He spoke of her sin. Paul's epistle to the Romans starts by picturing sin and it names sins, and then proclaims the remedy in justification by faith.

When you get close to the sins of people, do not be surprised if they want to change the subject. This woman immediately raised the issue of where to worship—a liturgical question. How easily sinners shift the subject of conversation when you specify sins in their lives! But our Lord was not to be sidetracked; He held to the subject.

Finally, when she spoke of the coming Messiah, our Lord made a clear and unmistakable claim to be the One who should come. It is strange how anyone can read our Lord's claim here and then deny that He ever professed to be the Messiah.

The woman left her water pot and went into the city to tell others of this prophet she had found. When we find the Living Water, we have no more use of the broken cisterns of earth! She was a good personal worker, for she brought her crowd back with her to see the Lord. The disciples who had been out looking for food came back and marveled at our Lord's conversation with this woman. They were looking for meat. He was looking for men. The church today is too busy looking for tangible things: numbers, money, success. If we made our business soul-winning—which is the business of the church—all other things would be added.

## **Vance Havner - At Jacob's Well, II      John 4:1-42**

OUR Lord must needs go through Samaria. Our byway ministries often are more fruitful than our service on the main road. "Being wearied with His journey," our Lord sat on the well. It is a precious human touch.

Then follows a masterpiece of personal work. This woman, coming at noon to draw water, was a bad character. But our Lord saw a soul to save. We love to preach, but do we love the people to whom we preach? We still snub the Samaritans and need to read James 2:1-9.

"If thou knewest 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." If only men knew the gift of God and the Giver! The "water" here points to John 7:37-39, where we know the Lord speaks of the Spirit.

The woman asks whether our Lord is greater than Jacob, for the well is deep and He has nothing to draw with. Are we not like her?—we let trifling circumstances stand between us and Him! And how we cling to Jacob rather than Jesus! We measure our lives by the things we get from Jacob, by inheritance or circumstance. We cling, as in Jeremiah 2:13, to broken cisterns, but here is one greater than Jacob who can give us living water so that we shall never thirst again! But the water of Jacob's well never satisfies.

When the woman makes a light reply, our Lord strikes at the real problem in her life: "Go, call thy husband." Sin always lies at the base of skepticism. "We are not sinners because we are skeptics, but skeptics because we are sinners." The woman again sidesteps with another issue about where to worship, but our Lord meets it with the declaration of true worship: "in spirit and in truth." Then comes a clear claim to be the Messiah, and the woman leaves her water pot to go tell others. When we come to know Him we shall leave our water pots which we have carried to Jacobs well! The old things are deserted; the water of the natural cannot meet our need—we have found living water!

This woman became a true soul-winner: she told others and brought them to Jesus. Thus they came to know Him for themselves and not only through another. "We have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world." It is the argument of experience.

Our Lord was found by the disciples in the midst of this strong interview, which was astounding to them. Our meat, like His, should be to do the will of God. The world says, "Four months, and then cometh harvest." We are not concerned for the lost. The Samaritans were likely coming across the fields even as our Lord spoke the words: "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." Oh that we might see the lost today with the urgency desired by our Lord! Remember, "He that gathereth not with Me scattereth abroad."

#### John 4:33 So the disciples were saying to one another, "No one brought Him anything to eat, did he?"

BGT John 4:33 λεγον ο ν ο μαθητα πρ ς λλ λους· μ τις νεγκεν α τ φαγε ν;

NET John 4:33 So the disciples began to say to one another, "No one brought him anything to eat, did they?"

NLT John 4:33 "Did someone bring him food while we were gone?" the disciples asked each other.

ESV John 4:33 So the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought him something to eat?"

NIV John 4:33 Then his disciples said to each other, "Could someone have brought him food?"

GNT John 4:33 λεγον ο ν ο μαθητα πρ ς λλ λους, Μ τις νεγκεν α τ φαγε ν;

KJV John 4:33 Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat?

YLT John 4:33 The disciples then said one to another, 'Did any one bring him anything to eat?'

ASV John 4:33 The disciples therefore said one to another, Hath any man brought him aught to eat?

CSB John 4:33 The disciples said to one another, "Could someone have brought Him something to eat?"

NKJ John 4:33 Therefore the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?"

NRS John 4:33 So the disciples said to one another, "Surely no one has brought him something to eat?"

NAB John 4:33 So the disciples said to one another, "Could someone have brought him something to eat?"

NJB John 4:33 So the disciples said to one another, 'Has someone brought him food?'

GWN John 4:33 The disciples asked each other, "Did someone bring him something to eat?"

- Mt 16:6-11 Lu 9:45
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### THE DISCIPLES ARE SPIRITUALLY CHALLENGED!

So the disciples ([mathetes](#)) were saying to one another, "No one brought Him anything to eat, did he?"- Can't you just picture these guys scratching their heads and looking around at each other with a look of "What' going on?" The disciples were puzzled over Jesus' declaration that He had food. They were so focused on the **physical** that they totally missed the **spiritual**. Jesus was "setting the table" for an incredible "spiritual meal!" Lest we are too hard on the disciples, undoubtedly we too fail to see the spiritual truth in some passage or some circumstance (which God allows in our life to teach us), because we are too "horizontally" focused so to speak! We too often "invert" Colossians 3:2+ setting our minds on the things of this earth rather than the things above!

The **disciples** saw their mission here was to make sure Jesus was fed, but with this physical focus they totally miss His mission which would ultimately become their mission once He returned to the Father.

#### John 4:34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work."

Living Bible - Then Jesus explained: "My nourishment comes from doing the will of God Who sent me, and from finishing His work."

NET John 4:34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to complete his work.

GNT John 4:34 λ γει α το ς η σο ς, μ ν β ρ μ σ τ ι ν ν α ποι σω τ θ λ η μ α το π μ ψ αν τ ς με κα τελει σω α το τ ρ γ ο ν.

NLT John 4:34 Then Jesus explained: "My nourishment comes from doing the will of God, who sent me, and from finishing his work.

KJV John 4:34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

ESV John 4:34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.

NIV John 4:34 "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.

ASV John 4:34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work.

CSB John 4:34 "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work," Jesus told them.

NKJ John 4:34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.

NRS John 4:34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work.

YLT John 4:34 Jesus saith to them, 'My food is, that I may do the will of Him who sent me, and may finish His work;

NAB John 4:34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to finish his work.

NJB John 4:34 But Jesus said: My food is to do the will of the one who sent me, and to complete his work.

GWN John 4:34 Jesus told them, "My food is to do what the one who sent me wants me to do and to finish the work he has given me.

BBE John 4:34 Jesus said, My food is to do the pleasure of him who sent me and to make his work complete.

- **My food:** John 4:32 Jn 6:33,38 Job 23:12 Ps 40:8 Isa 61:1-3 Lu 15:4-6,10 19:10 Ac 20:35 Jer 15:16
- **and:** Joh 5:36 17:4 19:30 Heb 12:2
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 8:3 "He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that **man does not live by bread alone**, but **man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD**(NOTE "EVERY WORD" IS WHERE WE FIND THE "WILL OF GOD")

Job 23:12+ "I have not departed from the command of His lips; **I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.**

Jeremiah 15:16+ **Your words were found and I ate them**, And Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; For I have been called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts.

### FOR THE SAVIOR SPIRITUAL FOOD SUPERSEDES LITERAL FOOD

**Supersede** means to replace, take the place of or supplant. To replace in power, authority, effectiveness, acceptance, use, etc., as by another person or thing. In the mind of Jesus, spiritual food is superior to literal food. The former is eternal, the latter temporal.

**Rod Mattoon** entitles this section "The Diet of the Lord."

**Jesus said to them** - Jesus sees their confusion at this statement "**I have food to eat that you do not know about.**" This statement is almost like a "parable in miniature" and the disciple did not have a clue for they interpreted Him literally. And as with many of actual parables, Jesus proceeds to reveal the hidden truth.

**My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me** - TLB = "My nourishment comes from doing the will of God Who sent me." **Food** in this context is a **metaphor** which is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used

in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them. What was the similarity Jesus was emphasizing? That "food" which really nourished His soul was doing the will of His Father. This the the "food" that satisfied Jesus. His delight was doing the will of God. In context that will was to deliver souls from the Kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of light.

**Wiersbe** - The will of God should be food that nourishes us, not medicine that upsets us. The disciples were satisfied with material food, but Jesus wanted the satisfying spiritual food from God. The will of God gives us the strength we need to do our job in the great harvest all around us. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**John Phillips** - The Lord translated for them; "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (Jn 4:34). When Satan, a short time before, had tempted him to turn stones into bread and to satisfy his hunger, Jesus had simply pointed to the word of God: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." He was quoting from Deuteronomy 8:3. That was the principle he lived by. He was hungry above all to do his Father's will in this world and to finish (teleioo, "accomplish," "bring to a perfect end") his work (Jn 4:34). He had just brought to such a perfect end a part of that work in the conversion of the Samaritan woman. The satisfaction that gave him was more real than any ordinary meal could give. This naturally paved the way for a discussion of the disciples and their mission (Jn 4:35–42). The Lord turned their attention to the harvest field of which he had just reaped a token of the firstfruits. (BORROW [Exploring the Gospels. John](#))

*When the work and the worker are matched, work is nourishment, not punishment.*

-- Warren Wiersbe

**John MacArthur** writes that "Doing God's will (cf. Jn 5:30; 6:38; Jn 8:29; Ps. 40:8; Matt. 26:39; Rom 15:3) by proclaiming the truth to a lost sinner gave the Lord far more satisfaction (cf. Luke 15:10; 19:10) than any physical food could provide." (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

*God's will is to be our food, our "daily bread."*

Jesus describes **the will of His Father** in John 6

John 6:38-40 "For I have come down from heaven, **not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.** 39" This is the **will of Him who sent Me**, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. 40 "For **this is the will of My Father**, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."

Again in John 5 we read

John 5:30; "I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but **the will of Him who sent Me.**

In Hebrews we see a parallel passage

"Then He said, "**BEHOLD, I HAVE COME TO DO YOUR WILL.**" He takes away the first in order to establish the second." (Hebrews 10:9+)

Quoting Ps 40:8 I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart."

*The center of God's will is our only safety.*

—[Betsie ten Boom](#)

**Jim Elliot** said "Thank God for "purpose" in life. So many contributive purposes come into existence when one works the will of God that there is no excuse for laziness or wasted time. He is redeeming our lives, as well as our souls. (The Journals of Jim Elliot)

*Seek your life's nourishment in your life's work.*

—[Phillips Brooks](#)

**Adoniram Judson** spoke to Jesus' "food" in doing His Father's will when he said "The motto of every missionary, whether preacher, printer, or schoolmaster, ought to be "Devoted for life."

*Do what God calls you to do and you are a success.*

—[Talmage](#)

In a passage I feel could well be the secret of Job's survival and sustenance in the midst of overwhelming trials, Job in a sense gives us a foreshadowing of the heart of the Messiah when he declared...

"I have not departed from the command of His lips; I have treasured **the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.**" (Job 23:12+).

**Who sent Me** - Jesus repeatedly refers to the Father's sending Him to the world -

John 5:24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him **Whosent Me**, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.

**Comment** - See multiple additional passages - John 5:30, 36–37; Jn 6:38–39, 44, 57; Jn 7:16, 28, 29, 33; Jn 8:16, 18, 26, 29, 42; Jn 9:4; Jn 11:42; Jn 12:44–45, 49; Jn 13:20; Jn 14:24; Jn 15:21; Jn 16:5; Jn 17:8, 18, 21, 23, 25; Jn 20:21; Mt 10:40; Mk 9:37; Lk 4:18; Lk 9:48; Lk 10:16);

**Steven Cole** comments that "The disciples were focused on eating lunch; Jesus was focused on doing the Father's will and accomplishing the work that the Father had sent Him to do. We don't know whether Jesus ever got His drink of water or whether He ever ate the lunch that the disciples had brought back. But He saw a whole village of Samaritans come to faith in Him as they discovered that He is the Savior of the world. Jesus came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10). Food and drink were secondary; reaching lost people was primary. So in three short years, Jesus could pray (John 17:4), "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do."

The real secret of an *unsatisfied life* lies too often in an *unsurrendered will*.

-- Hudson Taylor

**Swindoll** - Jesus "had to pass through Samaria" (4:4) to redeem this woman, who brought her entire town to Christ with her testimony. And, just as important, He "had to pass through Samaria" in order to give His disciples crucial training in evangelism. This was Jesus' purpose for coming to earth and the destiny of His disciples. Moreover, it was a tangible lesson on the first rule of the new kingdom: Obedience to the Word of God is more important and more satisfying than fulfilling any mere physical need (Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4; Luke 4:4). ([Insights on John](#) - pages omitted or BORROW [Insights on John](#))

**And to accomplish (teleioo) His work** - While Jesus was nourished by what He took in, He was also nourished by what He gave out. What was His Father's Work? His **work** was **to give His life a ransom ( lutron) for many**. (Mk 10:45, Mt 20:28).

In Luke's Gospel Jesus succinctly summarizes why He was sent explaining that

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

**Comment** - See similar passages regarding the work Jesus was **sent to accomplish** in John 5:17, 36; Jn 9:4; Jn 10:25, 32, 37–38; Jn 14:10; Jn 17:4, Jn 6:38–40; Mt. 1:21; Lk 5:31–32; 1 John 4:9

Earlier in Luke Jesus declared

"But I have a baptism (SPEAKING OF THE CROSS) to undergo, and how distressed ([sunecho](#)) I am until ([until is an important time phrase](#)) it is **accomplished** (related verb [teleo](#))! (Luke 12:50+)

And so He had been sent to do was finished on the cross, when He cried: **"It is finished!"**, one word in Greek [tetelestai](#) (perfect tense of [teleo](#)).

Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, **"It is finished!"** And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit. (John 19:30±).

In His high priestly prayer Jesus prayed "I glorified You on the earth, **having accomplished the work** which You have given Me to do." (John 17:4)

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**Will** ([2307](#)) ([thelema](#) from [thelo](#) = to will with the "-ma" suffix indicating the result of the will = "a thing willed") generally speaks of the result of what one has decided. In its most basic form, **thelema** refers to a wish, a strong desire, and the willing of some event. Most of the NT uses of **thelema** (over 3/4's) refer to God's will and signify His gracious disposition toward something. God's will usually refers to what He has decreed, but occasionally God's will refers to what He desires but has not decreed (Mt 18:14). "Will, not to be conceived as a demand, but as an expression or inclination of pleasure towards that which is liked, that which pleases and creates joy. When it denotes God's will, it signifies His gracious disposition toward something. Used to designate what God Himself does of His own good pleasure. ([Zodhiates](#))

**Accomplish** ([5048](#)) ([teleioo](#) related to [teleios](#) from [telos](#) = an end, a purpose; cf cognate verb [teleo](#) used in John 19:30+ = "It is finished!") means to accomplish or bring to an end or to the intended goal (telos). It means to be complete, mature, fully developed, full grown, brought to its end, finished, wanting nothing necessary to completeness or in good working order. It does not mean simply to terminate something but to carry it out to the full finish which is picked up in the translation "perfected". **Teleioo** signifies the attainment of consummate soundness and includes the idea of being made whole. Interestingly the Gnostics used **teleios** of one

fully initiated into their mysteries and that may have been why Paul used teleios in this epistle.

**Wuest** commenting on **Teleios** the adjective, and **teleioo** the verb writes "The adjective is used in the papyri, of heirs being of age, of women who have attained maturity, of full-grown cocks, of acacia trees in good condition, of a complete lampstand, of something in good working order or condition. To summarize; the meaning of the adjective includes the ideas of full-growth, maturity, workability, soundness, and completeness. The verb refers to the act of bringing the person or thing to any one of the aforementioned conditions. When applied to a Christian, the word refers to one that is spiritually mature, complete, well-rounded in his Christian character."

**Teleioo - 23v - accomplished(3), carried(1), carry(1), completed(3), finish(1), finished(11), fulfilled(2), fulfilling(1), keeps(1), pay(2), perfected(1), performed(1).** Lk. 2:43; Lk. 13:32; Jn. 4:34; Jn. 5:36; Jn. 17:4; Jn. 17:23; Jn. 19:28; Acts 20:24; Phil. 3:12; Heb. 2:10; Heb. 5:9; Heb. 7:19; Heb. 7:28; Heb. 9:9; Heb. 10:1; Heb. 10:14; Heb. 11:40; Heb. 12:23; Jas. 2:22; 1 Jn. 2:5; 1 Jn. 4:12; 1 Jn. 4:17; 1 Jn. 4:18

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### David Livingstone was a man who imitated Jesus - Two Lives, Two Goals

Nearly 200 years ago there were two Scottish brothers named John and David Livingstone. John had set his mind on making money and becoming wealthy, and he did. But under his name in an old edition of the "Encyclopaedia Britannica" John Livingstone is listed simply as "the brother of David Livingstone."

And who was David Livingstone? While John had dedicated himself to making money, David had knelt and prayed. Surrendering himself to Christ, he resolved, "I will place no value on anything I have or possess unless it is in relationship to the Kingdom of God." The inscription over his burial place in Westminster Abbey reads, "For thirty years his life was spent in an unwearied effort to evangelize."

On his 59th birthday David Livingstone wrote, "My Jesus, my King, my Life, my All; I again dedicate my whole self to Thee." (Billy Graham in Breakfast with Billy Graham)

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### John 4:27-38

Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work." —John 4:34

For me, food is more than a necessity—it's a wonderfully enjoyable part of life! I enjoy sitting down to a well-prepared meal, especially when I'm feeling hungry. I imagine that the disciples were hungry for lunch when they returned to the well where Jesus was interacting with the Samaritan woman. They urged Him, "Rabbi, eat" (John 4:31). His response? "I have food to eat of which you do not know" (v.32), which made them wonder if someone had already brought Him something to eat (v.33).

I wonder if the disciples were so consumed with thinking about food that they couldn't see past their picnic. They didn't understand the significance of what was going on at the well. The most important thing to Jesus was "to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work" (v.34). He was focused on the spiritual needs of this woman who desperately needed what only He could give.

It's easy to become preoccupied with needs of the moment. But Jesus invites us to get beyond our own interests—our own little "lunch"—to open our eyes to the souls who are searching for answers to their deepest needs.

So, join Jesus at the well, and let Him use you to tell others about the spiritual food only He can give.— by David H. Roper [Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

Dear Lord, may my eyes be fixed not just on the things I am interested in, but lift my eyes to see the needy souls around me. Give me passion for the lost and the joy of seeing others satisfied in You. Be hungry to satisfy the needs of others around you. - Star Shepherd

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**George Morrison** - When we turn to the word of Jesus Christ we discover that neither thought nor feeling is laid as the foundation of religion. Christ had no quarrel with the human intellect. He recognized its wonder and its power. His own intellectual life was far too rich for him to be a traitor to the brain. Nor was Christ the enemy of human feeling. He never made light of the most tender emotion. He who wept beside the grave of Lazarus could never be the antagonist of tears. But in the teaching of Christ it is not thought nor feeling that is the wellspring of personal religion. The wellspring is in the region of the will. It is there that one must pass from death to life. It is there the path of piety begins. The first thing is the dedication of the will, the response of a free individual to a great God, the yielding of self to that imperious claim made by the loving Father in the heavens: "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness."

With Christ there was no compulsion of the will except the compulsion of overmastering love. Do not wait then, I beg of you, as if a

day were coming when you must be good. Do not think that the hour will ever strike when you will be swept irresistibly into the kingdom. At the last it is a matter of decision.

Think of the relationship of will to fellowship—our spiritual fellowship with our Redeemer. That friendship is not based on mutual feeling; it is based, according to Christ, on mutual will. “Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.” It is not a question, then, of what you know, if you are to be a brother or sister of the Lord. The one that does the will—though it is often sore, though the way is dark, and though the wind is chill—whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother. That means that on dedication of the will depends all communion with Jesus Christ. And if communion with him is true religion—the truest and purest the world has ever known—you see how it does not rest on thought or feeling but has its wellspring in the surrendered will. Religion founded on feeling is unstable. A religion of intellect is cold and hard. Total surrender is what Christ demands, and in it lies the secret of all peace.

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### **Henry Blackaby - Food**

“My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work,” Jesus told them.—John 4:34

Throughout Jesus' ministry, we see a marked difference between His priorities and the concerns of His disciples. The disciples were often preoccupied with how to meet their physical needs (Matt. 14:15–17; John 4:8; Luke 18:28). Jesus repeatedly assured them that the Father knew their needs and would provide (Luke 11:11–13). Jesus stressed that their priority was to “seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness”; the necessities of daily life would be provided (Matt. 6:33).

When Jesus spoke to the woman at the well, His disciples had gone into a nearby town to get food. While His disciples were seeking earthly nourishment, Jesus was giving this woman “living water” that would satisfy her soul for eternity. When they returned, the disciples urged Jesus to eat. He replied that His “food” was to do the will of His Father. Since their attention was on earthly matters, His disciples misunderstood His reply. Jesus' very life came from obeying His Father. Because of Jesus' obedience that day, the woman received eternal life. In her excitement, she brought many others to Jesus to hear for themselves, and many believed that He was indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world (John 4:39–42).

The apostle Paul understood what Jesus had been teaching His disciples. When Paul wrote to the believers in Rome, he stressed that “the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and approved by men” (Rom. 14:17–18).

When Satan tempted Jesus to turn stones into bread, Jesus quoted the Scriptures, summarizing the focus of His life and ministry: “Know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord” (Deut. 8:3).

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**Warren Wiersbe - God's people should be at work in the world** “I must work the works of Him who sent me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work” (John 9:4). We as Christ's disciples must be like him and be about the Father's business (Luke 2:49). This not only refers to making a living but also to making a life that will influence others to trust Jesus. “My food,” Jesus said, “is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work” (John 4:34). Doing the will of God is not punishment; it is nourishment. It makes people grow and glow so they can help others trust the Savior. Seven times in Revelation 2–3, our Lord says to churches, “I know your works.” One day our works will be examined at the judgment seat of Christ (Rom. 14:10–12) and we will be rewarded according to what we have done for Jesus, how we did it, and why we did it (1 Cor. 4:1–5). If the Holy Spirit is working in us and through us, we have nothing to fear (Phil. 1:6; Acts 1:8). Jesus “went about doing good” (Acts 10:38), and his is the example we should follow.

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### **Spurgeon - Jesus about his Father's business John 4:34**

Satan took him to the brow of a hill, and offered him all the kingdoms of this world—a mightier dominion even than Caesar had—if he would bow down and worship him. That temptation was substantially repeated in Christ's life a thousand times. You remember one practical instance as a specimen of the whole. “They would have taken him by force and would have made him a king.” And if he had but pleased to accept that offer, on the day when he rode into Jerusalem upon a colt, the foal of an ass, when all cried “Hosanna!” when the palm branches were waving, he had needed to have done nothing but just to have gone into the temple, to have commanded with authority the priest to pour the sacred oil publicly upon his head, and he would have been king of the Jews. Not with the mock title which he wore upon the cross, but with a real dignity he might have been monarch of nations. As for the Romans, his omnipotence could have swept away the intruders. He could have lifted up Judaea into a glory as great as the golden days of Solomon: he might have built Palmyras and Tadmors in the desert: he might have stormed Egypt and have taken Rome. There was no empire that could have resisted him. With a band of zealots such as that nation could have furnished, and with such a leader capable of working miracles walking at the head, the star of Judaea might have risen with resplendent light, and a visible

kingdom might have come, and his will might have been done on earth, from the river unto the ends of the earth. But he came not to establish a carnal kingdom upon earth, else would his followers fight: he came to wear the thorn-crown, to bear our griefs and to carry our sorrows.

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### **Bob Gass (A Fresh Word for Today) - Be a Finisher**

“My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.” (John 4:34NIV)

Jesus was a “finisher,” and He wants you to be one, too. (See Hebrews 12:2.) His obsession was to complete His assignment. He thought it, He talked it, He lived it. He even said, “No man, having put his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God” (Luke 9:62). Look out! Satan will always attack when something important is about to be birthed in your life. It may be the birth of a ministry, a revelation, or even a child that God will use. Your difficult child may be a child of destiny; that’s why they come under attack more often than your other children. They have an assignment which the enemy has discerned.

Satan has tried to destroy me many times because he discerned my future. I just heard that the first Spanish edition of The Word for Today has been published. Again I’m reminded of his strategy—destroy the author, and the book will never be born. The battle is always over your future. Discern what the struggle in your life is about, and you’ll take a giant step towards victory.

Sometimes you’ll be tempted to give up. Listen: “From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more” (John 6:66). You may have lost a few battles but the war is not over! You may have been wounded, but He’ll restore you and give you the grace to get back on your feet again. This time you’ll win. If you quit, God can do nothing more for you.

STAND AND FIGHT, AND HE’LL COME TO YOUR AID.

HE’LL GIVE YOU STRENGTH AND BRING YOU THROUGH IN TRIUMPH.

HIS WORD TO YOU TODAY IS “BE A FINISHER!”

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### **William Arnot - THE FOOD THAT JESUS LOVED AND LIVED ON**

“Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.”—JOHN 4:34.

A CERTAIN woman who lived in the Samaritan town of Sychar went out one day at noon to the well for water. Although the path between the town and the well was trodden by multitudes every day, the woman on this occasion had it all to herself. She seems to have had nobody in her company, and to have met nobody by the way. All the well-ordered households had laid in their supply of water early in the morning, or late in the evening of the previous day; for none who can otherwise arrange their plans will bear a burden through an unsheltered plain when the Syrian sun is high. Matters were not well arranged in this woman’s house: she led an irregular life in a disreputable home. On this account, probably, she came to the well at noon. Had she been ready when her neighbours came, she would have missed the living water. How deep are God’s purposes both in creation and providence, and how exactly wheel fits into wheel as the vast machinery moves majestically round! It is intimated at the beginning of the chapter that Jesus must needs go through Samaria. The necessity for taking this route lay deeper than the geography of Palestine. In the counsels of Eternal Mercy he must needs go through Samaria, that he might meet a sinner there; and she must needs go out to the well at noon, because only at that hour could she find on the well’s brink the Saviour of her soul.

As she approaches the well-known spot, alike venerated for its hallowed associations and valued for its continued usefulness, she spies a way-worn stranger resting on the stones at the well’s mouth. Either suspecting him to be a Jew, and therefore avoiding intercourse, or bent only on her own errand without regarding his presence, she proceeded in the usual way to let down her bucket and to draw it up full from the cool depths. Ere she had time to transfer her treasure to her shoulder, in order to bear it to her home, the weary stranger accosted her with a simple request for a drink of water. Now that the ice was broken, and the intercourse begun, she enters freely into conversation; and, as the subject that came easiest to hand, plunged into the feud between Jews and Samaritans. So far from replying to her argument, the Lord instantly glided from the water with which he was refreshing his own parched lips, to the water which would be the life of her soul.

He has requested the woman to give him drink. He has applied his parched lips to the vessel which she presents, and, perhaps in the pauses of his panting draughts, looking into her careworn, uneasy countenance, he mysteriously says, “I will give thee living water.” At a later stage of this episode the disciples, having brought some food from a shop in the town and offered it to their master, knowing that he must by this time be hungry, are surprised when he declines their offer. To account for his unexpected abstinence, they suggest the thought that some person during their absence might have given him food. Gliding off that common theme, What shall I eat?—rising and lifting them with himself up from earth to heaven, he replied, “My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.”

Consider Messiah's ministry of salvation, first, simply as a work which he performed; and next, as the food in which he delighted.

### **I. His work:—"To do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."**

He speaks here in his capacity of Son and servant. He has been sent to execute the Father's will. In his essential nature he is one with the Father, and the purpose of redeeming lost men is his own as well as the Father's; but here the Son speaks in accordance with his place as Mediator. From Father, Son, and Spirit, the one purpose issued; and to Father, Son, and Spirit, will the glory return, when many sons are brought into glory; but in the actual execution of the divine purpose, and during the currency of redemption, the Son of God, the Saviour, stands in a low place, and speaks as a servant charged with a specific mission, and engaged in performing a specific work.

He is doing the will of the Father that sent him. What is the will—the desire of the Sender? You may learn it best by looking to the Sent. Look unto Jesus, if you would know the mind of God. He meant not evil to a fallen world when he sent his Son to dwell amongst us, clothed in our nature. The Gift reveals the Giver's heart. Well may we take up the bright, blessed argument of Manoah's wife, as we meditate on the incarnation, ministry, death, and resurrection of our Lord—well may we adopt faith's strong argument, "If the Lord had meant to kill us, he would not have shown us such things as these." Jesus himself has said, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." The Christ sent into the world is fitted to draw men to God, not to drive them away.

The will of the Father toward the world corresponds with the Messenger who has been sent to accomplish it. God is love; and Christ came to embody divine love in the actual redemption of the lost. Oh, when will the thought spring up in the heart of a prodigal race, "I will arise, and go to my Father"? By the gift of the Son the Father has revealed his own heart; and they are without excuse who still count him hard, and keep at a distance.

"To do the will of him that sent me:" the desire of God could not be carried into effect without Christ sent, the Saviour. As God made the world by his Word, he makes the world anew by the Word made flesh, and dwelling amongst us. The incarnation and dying of the Lord Jesus became the accomplishment of the Father's merciful design. Intention was turned into fact. How precious are God's thoughts towards us! But his thoughts found body in Christ crucified. Here lies the power to carry into effect the love that lay in the eternal covenant.

"And to finish his work." The work is not left half done. His work is perfect. Creation was completed ere God gave over his work and rested. It was all very good ere it left his hands. His next and more glorious work will be finished too. There will be no patches added after the children assemble in the Father's house.

This earth was complete as a habitation for humanity, ere the children were brought to it as their home. The mountains were all raised up, and the rivers all flowing in the valleys, and the sea confined within its capacious basin, and the air mixed and made up, suitable as breath for living creatures, clasping the globe round all its circumference. Then, and not sooner, did God make man in his own image. The home of the holy will be perfect when its inmates enter. All things are ready ere the message is sent round to bid the guests assemble. God's works are all finished works.

At the time that Jesus talked with the woman and with his disciples at [Jacob's Well](#), the work which he had undertaken was not finished. The agony in the garden lay before him, and lay full in view; the hiding of the Father's face, the cup of wrath; all the bearing for his people's sin, and the Father's righteousness, lay before him. This baptism he must yet be baptized with, and he was straitened till it should be accomplished. He hastened to the end. For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame.

### **II. His food:—"To do the Father's will and finish his work, he counted his bread."**

It is not enough to learn from the evangelic histories what Jesus did and suffered. It is not enough to examine his acts; we must look, as far as the Scriptures present an opening, into the secret motives that wrought in his heart. At [Jacob's Well](#) he was carrying forward his great mission as the Saviour of lost men: the twelve looked on, but they looked on as little children look on their father while he is preparing to accomplish some great work of skill. They saw each separate movement, but they could not comprehend the design. Not understanding the whole, they were baffled by the sight of the separate parts. "They marvelled that he talked with the woman."

Knowing full well all that the redemption of his people would bring upon himself, he longed for the work as for his daily bread. It is my meat to do his will, and finish his work. This word we can in some measure understand; for we know what the pain of hunger is, and what the delight of satisfying hunger with convenient food. I can in some measure comprehend the desire that burned in the breast of Jesus that day at [Jacob's Well](#); for I have been hungry, and when hungry have been satisfied with bread. In this glass I can see reflected the nature and intensity of the Saviour's eagerness to save.

On one occasion Jeremiah was commanded to go down to the potter's house, that he might there receive a message from the Lord; and the prophet soon learned the reason why the message was not communicated to him in his own house. It regarded the sovereignty of God in appointing the lot of his creatures, and Jeremiah could more easily understand the lesson while he stood by the potter's wheel, and saw him making from one piece of clay a vessel unto honour and a vessel unto dishonour. Some lessons which God gives us can be more fully taken up in one position than in another. Some texts of Scripture may be most profitably read in a dark night, some beside a stormy sea, and some at the brink of an open grave. You can enter into the spirit of some texts more easily when you are young, and of others when you are old,—of some while you are joyful, and of others when you weep. Methinks this word of the Lord should be thought of when we are hungry, and anticipating the pleasure of enjoying our food. Like hunger was Christ's appetite for saving work—like the satisfying of hunger is his joy when he is winning souls.

What an agony is unappeased hunger! What contrivances will you adopt, what efforts will you make, what pain endure, in order to obtain bread! "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life;" and food is life—the want of it death.

A traveller lost his way in an Eastern desert. His provisions were exhausted, and he had already wandered about for several days without food, when he descried under a palm-tree on his track the marks of a recent encampment. He approached the spot tremulous with hope. He found a bag which the travellers had left behind, filled with something that appeared to be dates. He opened it eagerly, expecting to satisfy his hunger, when lo, it contained only pearls! He sat down and wept. What are pearls to a man who is dying for want of bread?

Jesus is Lord of all. Those glorious stars that stud the heavens are all his. They are the jewels which belong to his crown. He values them; but they do not satisfy his soul. To Christ, these shining orbs are like the pearls to the fainting traveller in the desert. They are precious and pure, but he cannot live on them. Christ does not need to redeem those bright worlds and those unfallen angels, and they cannot therefore satisfy his appetite. To seek the strayed; to redeem the lost; to renew the fallen; to lay down his life for them,—this is his meat: and for this food he must pass those shining worlds. He must leave them, like the ninety-nine unstrayed sheep upon the mountain pastures, and go after the lost one, that when he gets it on his shoulders he may rejoice, with a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

"Blessed are they that hunger; for they shall be filled." This he said: this he felt. He experiences the truth of this saying to-day in the midst of the throne, while ten thousand times ten thousand of the saved are ministering before him. That fainting, hungry traveller by Jacob's well, obtained a foretaste of his joy when the Samaritan woman received life from his hands; and his joy will be full when all the ransomed shall rise and reign with him upon his throne.

Behold the man, fainting, hungry, under a midday sun at Jacob's well! Behold the man, crowned with thorns and mocked at Jerusalem! Behold the man, as he bows his head upon the cross,—what has brought him to this? His appetite: it is that hunger for the doing of his Father's loving will, and the finishing of his Father's mighty work. It was his unquenchable appetite for saving, as for the bread of his life, that brought him to a fallen world, and left him under the curse that was due to sin. This appetite burned in his breast like fire. With this appetite unsatisfied, he would have counted heaven unhappy. Under the control of his own divine love, he left his throne, took upon himself the form of a servant, and suffered unto death, that he might feast upon the work of winning souls.

The same feature of his character appeared when he stood on the Mount of Olives, and wept over Jerusalem. Son of God, why weepest thou? He weeps for hunger. He is like a hungry man in sight of food, but not within reach of it. It is in such a case that hunger gnaws like a worm in the breast. Oh, how he loves!

How deeply and how persistently do the guilty misinterpret and misrepresent the heart of Christ! Men take the devils' opinion of him, "Art thou come to torment us?" instead of the view which the true One gives of himself.

It is difficult for us to take in the conception of Christ's passionate desire to save, and yet retain a due sense of his omnipotence as God. We are apt to think that in such a case his power might have been put forth, as the immediate instrument of accomplishing all his desire. Might not the Almighty Deliverer have made short work with the saving of Jerusalem that day? Might he not have seized a whole cityful, as the angels seized Lot by the hand, and hurried them up to heaven?

But this would not satisfy his soul; this is not food convenient for him. It is not pure. It was a gross and carnal conception that the prosperous man entertained, when he tried to feed his soul with the goods that he had laid up in a barn. Material acquisitions cannot satisfy and sustain spirit. Though the Lord Jesus has all power committed to him in heaven and in earth, he will not command stones to be made bread by a miracle to satisfy his hunger; neither will he lift a multitude to heaven by mere omnipotence. They who are drawn up to him for the satisfying of his soul, rise as the clouds rise from the sea, spontaneous and pure. Nothing shall enter that defileth. He hungers, and saving work is his food; but as with his servant Peter so with the Master himself,—nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered his lips.

He must needs go through Samaria, not only because that province lay in his way, but because he was hungry, and in poor half-

heathen Samaria lay the savoury meat which his soul loved. In the same manner he must needs pass through our nature and our world, as he goes from the glory of the eternity past to the glory of the eternity to come. It was not any physical necessity; for the Maker of all worlds might have found another path from glory to glory without visiting this shooting star. But he must needs pass through the abode of fallen humanity on his way to the throne of the kingdom, because he longed to save the lost with a longing like hunger, and here only could be found the food that would satisfy his soul. His own sovereign love laid the necessity upon himself. The sun, his creature, is under an inherent necessity of giving out light; so Christ, the light of the world, must needs give out the light of life, and therefore he casts himself in the way of a dark world, as the hungry seeks food and the thirsty makes his way towards water-springs.

The Ethiopian found Christ in the desert, and went on his way rejoicing; but also Christ found the Ethiopian in the desert, and went on his way rejoicing that he had tasted his sweetest food.

Within the limits prescribed by our capacity and our condition, the appetite of the Master may be experienced by the servants too, and they after their own way may be satisfied with the food that he loved so well. Our spiritual hunger is first a desire to get and then a desire to give salvation. It is in the second part of the process that the disciple enters in some measure into the joy of his Lord. Out of his own fulness the Lord gives. At first we are empty; but when we have obtained mercy, we shall experience a desire like an appetite to publish it. Oh that we were inoculated with that appetite for doing good that burned in the breast of the man Christ Jesus! We try to do some good, and then we slacken and leave off. When some providential call awakens us, we start into activity again for a season. This is not the way to work deliverance in the earth. The work is not effectually done unless we do it as the Master did it. When saving work is our meat, and idleness gnaws like the pain of hunger, we shall be sent unto our task and kept at it. An appetite is the unslumbering, faithful, effective task-master appointed by our Creator, in the material department, to see that we take our necessary food. When a task-master of the same order keeps our spirits on the stretch for saving work, the work will be vigorously prosecuted, and we shall never be long out of employment. (The Lesser Parables of our Lord)

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Jn 4:34 "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work."

To a child in Botswana, being sent on an errand by an elder is his greatest honor. This idea is captured in the Botswana proverb, "The fat [or delight] of a child is to be sent." The word fat refers to the choicest part of the meat and the fat, which are always served first to the elders at the family meal. After the rest of the men and the women have eaten, there is usually very little meat left for the children—only gravy. Thus, the "fat" came to refer to the most choice or delightful part of anything. Jesus said His "food" was to do the will of the One who sent Him, and to finish His work (John 4:34). As children of God, we too should be eager to please our heavenly Father. Stop and think about it a moment. We have all been commissioned by Christ. He has commanded us to go. For us, the "fat" ought to be the blessing of doing the will of God. We can apply to ourselves the truth of the Botswana proverb, "The fat of a child is to be sent."—D. C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

DUTY ALONE IS DRUDGERY; DUTY WITH LOVE IS DELIGHT.  
CONSCIENCE IS A SAFE GUIDE ONLY WHEN GUIDED BY GOD.

**John 4:35 "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.**

TLB Do you think the work of harvesting will not begin until the summer ends four months from now? Look around you! Vast fields of human souls are ripening all around us, and are ready now for reaping.

BGT John 4:35 ο χ με ς λ γετε τι τι τετρ μην ς σπιν κα θερισμ ς ρχεται; δο λγω μ ν, π ρατε το ς φθαλμο ς μ ν κα θε σασθε τ ς χ ρας τι λευκα ε σιν πρ ς θερισμ ν. δη

NET John 4:35 Don't you say, 'There are four more months and then comes the harvest?' I tell you, look up and see that the fields are already white for harvest!

NLT John 4:35 You know the saying, 'Four months between planting and harvest.' But I say, wake up and look around. The fields are already ripe for harvest.

ESV John 4:35 Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, then comes the harvest'? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest.

NIV John 4:35 Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.

GNT John 4:35 ο χ με ς λ γετε τι τι τετρ μην ς σπιν κα θερισμ ς ρχεται; δο λ γω μ ν, π ρατε το ς φθαλμο ς μ ν κα θε σασθε τ ς χ ρας τι λευκα ε σιν πρ ς θερισμ ν. δη

KJV John 4:35 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.

YLT John 4:35 do not say that it is yet four months, and the harvest cometh; lo, I say to you, Lift up your eyes, and see the fields, that they are white unto harvest already.

ASV John 4:35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white already unto harvest.

CSB John 4:35 "Don't you say, 'There are still four more months, then comes the harvest'? Listen to what I'm telling you: Open your eyes and look at the fields, for they are ready for harvest.

NKJ John 4:35 "Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest '? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!

NRS John 4:35 Do you not say, 'Four months more, then comes the harvest'? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting.

NAB John 4:35 Do you not say, 'In four months the harvest will be here'? I tell you, look up and see the fields ripe for the harvest.

NJB John 4:35 Do you not have a saying: Four months and then the harvest? Well, I tell you, look around you, look at the fields; already they are white, ready for harvest!

GWN John 4:35 "Don't you say, 'In four more months the harvest will be here'? I'm telling you to look and see that the fields are ready to be harvested.

- **for** : Joh 4:30 Mt 9:37,38 Lu 10:3
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## CULTIVATING A "SPIRITUAL HARVEST MINDSET"

**Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest'?**- NIV = "ripe for harvest." CSB = "ready for harvest." Some think this was a quote of a current proverb (Tenny-EBC, Morris-NICNT-Jn, Barrett, Kostenberger, Carson, Comfort, Dods, et al). Some (Hendriksen) think the disciples had just made a statement about the grain fields around them and Jesus is responding to their comment. Either way the main point this statement makes is that in farming there is a period of waiting between the time the seed is sown and the time the crop is harvested. In other words there is a delay.

**Trail** writes "What is the point of this verse? The point of the verse is to contrast the proverb/saying with the present situation—there was no period before harvest, the harvest was right now [EGT, TRT, WBC]. (An Exegetical Summary of John)

**HCSB** says it this way - In agriculture there is always a considerable separation in time between sowing and harvesting. The disciples needed to realize that with the coming of Jesus, sowing (preaching) and reaping (conversions) coincided. The immediate reference ("white for harvest") may be to the approaching Samaritans (Jn 4:39-42). (BORROW [HCSB Study Bible](#))

**MacArthur** notes that "Jesus used the fact that they were surrounded by crops growing in the field and waiting to be harvested as an object lesson to illustrate His urgency about reaching the lost which the "harvest" symbolized. (BORROW [MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**Behold** ([idou](#)) is an command to pay very close attention to what I am going to say next. The principles of this teaching would be vitally important after Jesus ascended to the Father. Then the disciples would be "on their own" (empowered of course by the Spirit of Christ), and it would be a time of sowing and reaping of souls which would result in the birth, growth and spread of the Church, the Body of Christ. And so we see in Acts 2 with Peter's first sermon (sowing of seed) "there were added (reaping the harvest) that day about 3000 souls." (Acts 2:41+). This is why this principle was so important for the disciples to grasp. And is also probably why in this one passage there are in essence three commands Jesus uses to garner their full attention.

**I say to you, lift up** ([epairo](#)) **your eyes and look** ([theaomai](#)) **on the fields** - Phillips = "open your eyes and look." Jerusalem Bible = "Look around you, look" NAB = "Open your eyes and see!" He gave two commands (**lift up...look**) both in the [aorist imperative](#) calling for obedience without delay or procrastination. Do this now! Jesus is not saying look at the literal grain fields because they were not yet ripe for harvest. One would have to wait several months to harvest grain. But Jesus was calling the disciples to see with spiritual eyes a different kind of harvest, a harvest of souls, a harvest that was ripe for harvest.

**Phillips** - "Look!" he seems to be saying. "Just moments ago I sowed the seed and here comes the harvest already!" (BORROW [Exploring the Gospels. John](#))

**On the fields that they are white for harvest**([therismos](#)) - What are the **fields**? In general terms the **fields** would refer to anywhere there were lost souls. Jesus says these "**fields**" are ripe or ready for harvesting! And it is likely that as He made this statement, the Samaritans were approaching Jesus, making their way along the paths that separated grain fields. And it is also possible they were arrayed in white robes. And the disciples would soon see many of these Samaritan souls ("white for harvest") come to believe in Jesus and thus be "harvested."

*As believers in Christ, we are God's fruit,  
but we are commanded to be His farmers as well.*

-- M R De Haan

Note the two parallels in John 4:32-35 contrasting natural with spiritual - In Jn 4:31 we see natural food and in Jn 4:32 we see spiritual food. Then Jesus shifts metaphors in Jn 4:35a referring to natural fields (of grain) and in Jn 4:35b-38 to spiritual fields (of souls). Clearly using the two metaphorical pictures side by side, Jesus is seeking to teach His disciples the incomparable worth of the heavenly (souls in heaven eternally) over things that are earthly and temporal. To repeat the commands (**Behold...lift up...look**) His desire is for them (and us) to lift their eyes off the earthly things and to look with rapt attention to heavenly things (in context, the souls of approaching Samaritans). In short, Jesus is teaching His disciples (and us) what I like to call the importance of **vertical vision** (the things above - heavenly) versus **horizontal vision** (the things below - earthly).

**ESV Study Bible** has an excellent comment - In the physical realm, there is a period of time between sowing and harvesting. But in the spiritual realm, Jesus' coming has already ushered in the end-time harvest in which sowing and reaping paradoxically coincide, so that the "crop" of believers is now being gathered into God's kingdom. (BORROW [ESV Study Bible](#))

**John Phillips** - while waiting for this throng of Samaritans to arrive, he spoke further to his disciples about the joys and rewards of sowing and reaping in the field of the world. He spoke first of the need for reapers (4:35)...**If they were ripe then, what must they be now as we stand at the other end of the long dispensation of grace? The sunset burns across the sky. Millions, still untold, lift up their anguished voices to the heavens. The church has dillied and dallied with the great commission, careless, for the most part, of the tragedy of a soul dying in nature's darkness. The terrible indictment, "No man cared for my soul" (Psalm 142:4), will be raised by a million million voices at the last assize. How will we ever explain our lethargy and neglect when the charge is referred to us by the billions of our own generation who will say to God, "I never knew you had a Son"? Are we any less culpable than those first disciples who saw in the woman of Samaria not a mission field but one whom they could afford to despise?** (BORROW [Exploring the Gospels. John](#)) (Bold added)

#### Related Passage:

Matthew 9:37-38+ Then He \*said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. 38  
"Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."

**MacArthur** on **white for harvest** ([therismos](#)) suggests that the "**white** clothing (OF THE APPROACHING SAMARITANS) seen above the growing grain may have looked like **white** heads on the stalks, an indication of readiness for harvest." (BORROW [MacArthur Study Bible](#))

There's surely somewhere a lowly place  
In earth's harvest fields so wide,  
Where I may labor through life's short day  
For Jesus, the crucified.  
-Gabriel

**Steven Cole** comments that "The disciples needed to develop a harvest mindset. They needed to understand what God was doing in this situation. I've often been just like these clueless disciples, focused on the natural when I should have been awake to what God was doing spiritually around me. Like them, I needed to develop a harvest mindset...(Here in v 35) Jesus seems to be quoting a familiar saying (PROVERB) that means something like, "Rome wasn't built in a day." You don't sow seed and expect to go out the next day and reap a harvest. It takes time for the crop to grow. But in this case, the spiritual harvest was instant. This Samaritan woman was an unlikely prospect for evangelism if there ever was one! She wasn't interested in spiritual things when Jesus turned the conversation in that direction. She had all kinds of mixed up ideas due to her Samaritan religious beliefs. She was an immoral woman, not a "key" person and potential leader, as Nicodemus was. But by crossing cultural taboos and taking the time to talk with this messed up Samaritan woman, Jesus ended up reaping a harvest with the entire village. **You never know how God may use your witness with someone whom you consider to be an unlikely prospect for the gospel.** I would have zeroed in on

Nicodemus, but he proved to be a bit slow in responding and we're not told that he ever reached anyone else with the gospel. Like the disciples, I probably would have kept my distance from this immoral Samaritan woman, but she proved to be the key to reaching an entire village.

**Vincent on white for harvest (therismos)** - Spiritual harvest. The crowd of Samaritans now pouring out toward the well was to Jesus as a ripe harvest-field, prefiguring the larger harvest of mankind which would be reaped by His disciples. ([John 4 Commentary](#))

**Brian Bell** - During WWI there was a great wheat harvest in Australia that rotted in the fields. Because so many men had responded to the call of the colors, nobody was left to gather in the grain harvest. It was a case of "reap or rot". This is exactly the situation we face in our churches today: a plentiful harvest, and few reapers. The vast needs of the world stand as a fresh call to prayer. Christians have been commissioned to the high task of being co-laborers with God in His harvest. In so many nations, it is ripe to be gathered. It is a harvest for which God gave heaven's best. He is not about to let it rot in the fields.

**THOUGHT** - Sometimes Christians excuse themselves from witnessing by saying that their family or friends aren't ready to believe. Jesus, however, makes it clear that around us a continual harvest waits to be reaped. Don't let Jesus find you making excuses. Look around. You will find people ready to hear God's Word. (Life Application Study Bible)

**Barton - HARVEST TIME** Sometimes Christians excuse themselves from witnessing by saying that their family or friends aren't ready to believe. But our excuses don't stand up very well before the example of the Samaritan woman, who spoke to the very people most likely to reject anything she had to say. Her message was attractive because she described how Jesus had met her needs; she did not attempt to expose their needs. Jesus made it clear that a continual harvest awaits reaping. Don't make excuses. If you are watchful and available, you will find people ready to hear God's Word. (BORROW [Life application New Testament commentary](#) )

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**Lift up** (raise)(1869)([epairo](#)) means literally to lift up and here is used in an idiom with "your eyes" (ophthalmos) together meaning to look closely, take notice. Jesus is calling on His disciples (AND US!) to direct their (OUR) attention to something by looking closely. He is not saying pay close attention to the ripening grain fields. Instead He is commanding them to lift their eyes spiritually to see the harvest of souls that was ripe.

**Look** (2300)([theaomai](#) from [tháomai](#) =to wonder) means to have an attentive look, implying an intent contemplative gaze. The point is that it is not a mere glance or quick look, but a searching gaze. Jesus' second command amplifies the first (lift your eyes) and tells them to now focus their attention on the spiritual harvest of souls. This was a harvest that in contrast to delay with the grain harvest, was in fact even now ripe for harvest.

**Harvest** (2326) [therismos](#)

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### David Jeremiah - MAYBE NOT! JOHN 4:35

Tennessee pastor Robert Shockey doesn't believe in chance encounters. To him, every contact is an opportunity to evangelize. When he answers the phone, for example, and hears the person on the other end saying, "Sorry, I must have the wrong number," Bob responds, "Maybe not!"

Usually there is a pause on the line, followed by something like, "What do you mean?" That gives Shockey an opening to initiate a conversation about the Gospel. He has led more than one person to faith in Christ that way.

Evangelist Billy Graham once answered the phone in his hotel room. The person on the other end asked for so-and-so, and Mr. Graham told him he had the wrong number. There was a pause, and the person said, "You sure sound a lot like Billy Graham."

"This is Billy Graham," replied the evangelist. During the ensuing conversation, the caller gave his life to Christ. There are opportunities all around us to witness for Christ, some in unexpected places. We are ambassadors for Christ—harvesters, witnesses. Perhaps the Holy Spirit will lead you to someone today who needs a word from the Lord.

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### John MacArthur - Truth for Today - JOHN 4:35

All believers are responsible to have a passion for the lost. John Harper had such a passion. He was a newly called pastor to the great Moody Memorial Church in Chicago in the early 1900s, but in 1912 He was a passenger on the ill-fated voyage of the Titanic. Four years later, a young Scotsman rose up in a meeting and said he was a survivor of the Titanic. As he drifted in the water on a piece of wood, he encountered a man who was afloat on a piece of wreckage. The man pleaded for the Scotsman to receive Christ.

The young Scotsman refused. The tide brought the man around again, and he asked if the Scotsman was saved yet. Shortly after, the man disappeared into the water, and the Scotsman decided to trust Christ as Savior. At the meeting he identified the man as John Harper—the young Scotsman was John Harper's last convert. Can you be one of the John Harpers of this generation?

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### **Robert Morgan - From this Verse - John 4:35 - White for the Harvest**

Multiplied millions of dollars have poured into overseas missions under the banner of Lottie Moon, the Southern Baptist whose name is used to promote that denomination's annual missionary offering. But who was Lottie Moon and what did she do?

Lottie (short for Charlotte) was born in 1840 and grew up in an old Virginia family. Her father's plantation house, Viewmont, overlooked the Blue Ridge Mountains. Her mother, a staunch Christian, read to her from the Bible, and as a girl Lottie developed a love for Scripture and for missionary biography. Since there was no church nearby, Mrs. Moon conducted services herself every Sunday for family, neighbors, and servants.

Lottie excelled in school and became one of the first Southern women to earn a Master's Degree, all the while pondering what to do with her life. In the spring of 1873, Lottie, 33, heard a sermon on John 4:35. As the preacher spoke of fields "white unto harvest," Lottie made up her mind then and there that she would become a missionary to China, and that fall she was on her way. When her ship was caught in a terrific storm and appeared to be sinking, she wrote:

As I watched the mad waste of waters, howling as if eager to engulf us, I think I should scarcely have been surprised to see a Divine Form walking upon them, so sweetly I heard in my inmost soul the consoling words, "It is I, be not afraid."

For forty years, Lottie Moon worked unafraid in North China, serving faithfully amid storms of war, disease, poverty and plague. When, in her early seventies, a terrible famine swept China, she gave her food and her last dollar for famine relief. She grew so frail and undernourished the doctor ordered her home. She died en route on Christmas Eve, 1912.

"I would that I had a thousand lives that I might give them to the women of China," she said.

She gave her one life, and it has been multiplied a thousandfold.

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### **C H Spurgeon - Fields white for harvest**

'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.' John 4:35

Grind your sickles; you must go to work with such cutting truths as justification by faith, as the total ruin of mankind, as the hope that is laid up in the cross, as the energy of the Holy Spirit; and when you know these truths, and know how to use them, you shall then be made great reapers in the Master's harvest. It is idle to say, 'I will go,' and then go with no tool in your hand. Get the truth; get a hold of it well, get it sharp and in good order, and who knows, under the blessing of God the Holy Spirit, what you may do! The next want of harvest is some close binders. When the wheat is cut down you must tie it up with sheaves. We want some of you who cannot preach, who cannot use the sickle, to go and gather up the wheat which falls under the sickle when it is used by others. Invite them to come into church fellowship; talk to them, get them into union with the people of God. And if you happen to be in the church yourselves, try to keep the church knit together in love. Bind the sheaves together. We cannot have good harvest work without loving hands to bind the people of God in one. Then we want beside these some to take the sheaves home. The church of God is the barn; it is the Master's garner here; he has another garner yonder on the hill-top in heaven, but here we want you to assist in bringing them into the church of Christ. When God has saved them, try if you can get them to practise the ordinances of God, and to be joined with his people. And we want some of you, if you cannot do anything yourselves either in reaping, or binding, or bringing the sheaves home, at least by kind words and loving speeches to bring refreshments to the reapers.

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### **Charles Stanley - DISTURBING YOUR COMFORT ZONE**

Do you not say, "There are still four months and then comes the harvest"? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! John 4:35

Francis Schaeffer, the late Christian thinker and theologian, said the two greatest enemies of the modern church in America are "personal peace and affluence." He was describing the prevailing indifference that envelops the body of Christ today. Christians become complacent when they are preoccupied with meeting only their needs instead of reaching out to others.

The church in America is wealthy and prosperous. But believers in many countries are imprisoned for their faith or punished with loss of their jobs. Christians in Africa and developing countries are poor. Wherever we live, there are emotional, spiritual, and

physical needs, but we must first lift our eyes to the fields (John 4:35).

Complacency is also nurtured when we settle for the wisdom of our age instead of becoming “fools for Christ’s sake” (1 Cor. 4:10 NASB). Paul said he had “become as the scum of the world, the dregs of all things” (1 Cor. 4:13).

Following Christ calls for radical discipleship—denying self and discarding the wisdom of this world for the wisdom of God. Have you allowed God to disturb your comfort zone?

Father, disturb my comfort zone. Change my focus from personal peace and affluence to the harvest fields of the world. Make me a radical disciple.

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### **Vance Havner - Get Your Head Up!**

It is a day of drooping heads and discouraged hearts. Apart from divine intervention, the world situation is absolutely hopeless. No one knows what to do. Even Christians are infected with the mood. “Why doesn’t God do something? There are more heathen than ever. The gospel is not winning the world. It is going to the Communists.” Even stout hearts fail for fear and many, like John the Baptist in prison, feel like asking our Lord: “Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?” (Matthew 11:3).

We ought to get our heads up. Our Lord said: “And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh” (Luke 21:28). But have we not seen all these signs before? Yes, many of them separately and at different times, but never have they all converged simultaneously as now. Our Lord also said: “So also when you see these signs all taken together coming to pass, you may know of a surety that He is near, at the very doors” (Matthew 24:33, amplified new testament).

The frightening headlines today mean one thing to this poor world and something entirely different to the Christian. He does not rejoice in the world’s misery but he lifts up his head because he knows it means the redemption of this earth, racked with all the ravages of sin. It means that our bodies, with all their aches and pains, will soon be exchanged for new bodies like our Lord’s. It means the sons of God will soon come into their own. Get your head up, brother! The wise men of this world shake their heads in perplexity, but the humblest Christian with a dollar Bible knows what time it is. He is not too excited over Communism and astronauts and nuclear war and the population explosion and all the passing fads that come and go. He knows that they are the dying gasps of an expiring age and that, when the kingdoms of this world have knocked each other out, the Lord will set up His rule. For that, the Christian lives every moment. He is not looking for something to happen; he is looking for Someone to come.

We have another reason for getting our heads up. Our Lord said: “Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest” (John 4:35). It is not enough to watch the skies for His return. We have work to do. The returning Lord is also the reaping Lord and there are souls to be won. All around us are men and women who are strangers to the grace of God. There is an academic interest in prophecy that glories in our coming redemption but does nothing about the redemption of men and women today. We still have time to snatch some brands from the burning. The night has not yet come when no man can work. “Soon will the season of rescue be o’er” when men will say, “The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved” (Jeremiah 8:20).

Get your head up! Communism, cocky and confident, has its head up, drunk with the wine of success and sure that it can conquer the world. The church is too often behind closed doors in fear. I am grieved to read and hear so much pessimism from Christian sources, so much hand-wringing among Christian leaders, as though our cause were doomed. Our Lord is doing what He came to do, but we are not doing what we were saved to do. We are not being conformed to the image of God’s Son and we are not making disciples. It is redemption time and reaping time! Heads up to the challenge of the hour and the call of the harvest! “... it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed” (Romans 13:11).

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### **Jon Courson - John 4:35**

See with me in your mind’s eye the Samaritan men to whom the woman had witnessed coming towards Jesus dressed in turbans and robes of white. What harvest was white and ready to reap? To which field was Jesus referring? The field of the Samaritans.

The same is true today. The people in our culture who are ignored and forgotten, the ones no one else wants to be around, the ones others pass by—those are the ones who are ripe for the picking. We say, ‘How can we win the quarterback of the high school football team or the president of the company?’ when the real action lies with the Samaritans—the people that others aren’t interested in, the people who won’t help our business or gain us a reputation in ministry. I am not negating the importance of sharing with those whom the world esteems highly, but here we see our Lord’s wisdom in gleanings from a field which was already ripe.

If you find witnessing difficult, reach out to the unlovely, to the unlovable, to the ignored person where you work, at your school, in your neighborhood. Talk to them about Jesus, and you’ll see they’re prime for harvest.

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## **Rick Renner - The Fields Are White Unto Harvest John 4:35**

Once Denise and I and our team traveled by bus to conduct massive evangelistic campaigns in eight of the largest cities in the nation of Ukraine. Because we had been on television for many years in those particular eight cities, we were anticipating that thousands of people would attend these meetings.

As we drove through the vast wheat fields in eastern Ukraine, the golden wheat waved this way and that as the gentle, late-summer winds blew across the landscape. It was so beautiful that Denise and I asked the driver to stop so we could get out of the bus and walk through the beautiful golden fields. As we stood in the midst of those gorgeous shelves of golden grain, we thought of the vast, spiritual harvest fields of the former Soviet Union where God had called our family and ministry. Of course, we were especially thinking about the harvest of souls we were praying to see in those upcoming meetings.

As we stood in the middle of those beautiful fields of wheat, we looked at each other and quoted Jesus' words in John 4:35, which says, "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."

When Jesus spoke these words, He was just outside the city of Sychar in Samaria. His disciples had gone to the city to find food, and Jesus had just met the woman at the well ( see John 4:1-27).

Jesus' encounter with this woman was life-transforming. He spent a significant amount of time talking to her about her personal life, answering her spiritual questions, and treating her with a level of dignity that had rarely been afforded to her. It was the first seed Jesus ever sowed into the heart of a Samaritan. The woman was so moved by His compassion that when she returned to her village, she told the people, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" (John 4:29).

This woman so enthusiastically shared her testimony of Jesus that the entire village of Sychar went out of the city to find Him (John 4:30). Thus, from the moment Jesus first sowed His seed into the heart of this Samaritan woman to the time He reaped His first major harvest among the Samaritans would only be a matter of hours. This was indeed quite remarkable. Certainly it often takes quite a period of time to reap a sizable harvest of souls in any new region of the world.

As the village of Sychar went out to meet Jesus, He and His disciples were on the outskirts of the city, where He was speaking to them about doing the work of God. From Jesus' words, it seems likely that He and His followers were standing near a wheat field at the time, similar to the one my wife and I stood in that day in the nation of Ukraine.

As Jesus was speaking to His disciples, He was apparently standing in a position that enabled Him to have a wide view of the nearby wheat fields. Meanwhile, His disciples were so focused on what He was telling them that they were unaware of the streams of people coming from the village and making their way through the fields to where they were located. It was at this moment that Jesus told the disciples, "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest...."

Naturally speaking, it should take a minimum of four months for seed to be reaped as a full-grown harvest. But that time frame didn't apply in the case of the Samaritan woman. Seed had been sown into her heart just a short time earlier—yet it was already time to reap! That is why Jesus told his disciples, "... Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

When the disciples turned around and looked, they could see multitudes pushing through the vast wheat field as they made their way to Jesus. It must have been an amazing sight to the disciples. After all, this Samaritan woman had gone to her town only a few hours earlier, and already there was such a large response to her testimony! Jesus had only sown seed into one Samaritan woman's heart, but He was already reaping a massive harvest of souls.

I want you to notice that Jesus said that "... they are white already to harvest." Jesus was not referring to the unripe wheat fields, but to the people who were coming to see Him. One scholar has noted that workers in small villages were known to wear white workers' garments. This village of workers was so affected by the Samaritan woman's testimony that they dropped what they were doing and immediately went to see Jesus, still dressed in their white workers' garments. When the Lord saw a crowd of people coming toward Him dressed in white, He didn't see white garments; He saw a harvest that was white and ready to be reaped among the Samaritans.

As the crowd approached Jesus, He told the disciples, "And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth" (John 4:36, 37).

Jesus was the One who sowed the first seed into the heart of the Samaritan woman, but now it was time to reap—and it requires many more hands to reap than it does to sow. Jesus was the Sower, but the harvest could not be fully reaped and retained without

the help of His disciples. Jesus felt great joy as He watched this harvest of souls coming in so quickly. However, now it would also be the disciples' great joy to help Jesus swing the sickle and bring these souls to God. Jesus sowed the seed, but it was essential for the disciples to help Him reap.

In John 4:38, Jesus said, "I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours." Jesus alone had sown the seed into the heart of the woman at the well. At the time He did this, His disciples were in the village looking for food. But now the disciples were privileged to participate in a huge reaping extravaganza for which they had done no work at all! They were literally entering into a harvest that was white and ready to be reaped because Jesus had taken the time to sow seed into a single person's heart.

Spiritual harvest often comes more quickly than natural harvests. It may take four months for wheat to be ready to be reaped. However, don't think that it will always take a long time before you see people respond to the Word you sow into their hearts. The souls of men are often ready to be reaped for the Kingdom of God very quickly after the initial sowing.

Also, please don't think that your role in sowing seed is small and insignificant. Remember, Jesus sowed a single seed into the heart of one person, yet that isolated, solitary event produced a harvest so huge that an entire village came to Jesus Christ. In the same way, the seed you sow into someone's heart today may be the very seed that produces the next massive harvest for the Kingdom of God!

So the next time you find yourself talking to someone about Jesus Christ or sharing the truths of God's Word with a stranger, don't allow the devil to tell you that you're wasting your time. You may be planting the very seed that will bring salvation to an entire group of people. And when the harvest is ready to be reaped, don't be threatened by people who join you in the reaping process of what you have sown. Harvests always require more reapers than sowers, so be thankful that one plants and others come alongside to help you reap!

As Denise and I finally stood on the stage to preach to the vast crowds that attended those meetings in Ukraine, I thanked God for giving us the awesome privilege of preaching to such huge numbers of people. But I also thanked Him for every single person who uses his or her own private life as a pulpit to share the seed of God's Word with people on the street and at work. Regardless of how or where the seed of God's Word is sown by believers, every seed sown is powerful and has an eternal effect. Never forget that fact as you go through your day using YOUR life as a pulpit for sowing the life-changing seed of the Gospel!

#### MY PRAYER FOR TODAY

Lord, I never realized the power that one single seed could make on such a large group of people. I have mistakenly thought that witnessing to one person was not as important as preaching to multitudes. Please forgive me for overlooking the power of a single seed sown into the human heart. Holy Spirit, I want to be ready when the harvest comes in—and that includes having enough friends and coworkers on hand to pitch in and help. So I ask You to dispatch a group of ready and willing workers who can step into the harvest field and assist me in bringing in the sheaves!

I pray this in Jesus' name!

#### MY CONFESSION FOR TODAY

I confess that the seed I sow into people's hearts has the power to bring great change to entire groups of people. Every time I share the Word of God with people who don't know the Lord, a seed is planted in their hearts and minds that has the power to revolutionize their lives, their families, their friends, and even their entire cities. Every person I touch has the potential of taking the Gospel message further, thus creating a larger harvest for the Kingdom of God. Therefore, I am bold to speak to anyone whenever I see an open door of opportunity to tell the Good News of Jesus Christ!

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#### Standing By

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. John 4:35

A recent news story described a woman who drowned while trying to save her young child. What was so shocking was the reaction of the people around the lake. Apparently, no one jumped in to help the woman. Everyone watched. Most had a look of concern on their faces, but no one stopped to help. One man even boasted, "I got the whole thing on tape!"

It is incomprehensible how a person could stand by and watch a person die, yet as believers we're often guilty of this same crime. Millions of people around the world are "drowning" in sin. They are powerless to rescue themselves. There is someone who can rescue them from perishing. Yet, we, who know the Savior, often turn a deaf ear to the cries of those in danger.

These people are all around us. The gas station attendant where we frequently fill up. The lady at the cleaners. The neighbor next door. The co-worker at the office. The aunt or uncle that visits during the holidays. They are all people within our reach and it is our

duty to point them to Christ.

Those who aren't saved may not accept the Gospel message. If we present it to them in a clear, concise manner, we have done our duty. We have sown a seed that may or may not be harvested later on.

I challenge you today. Are you warning the people in your world who are in peril? Or are you a spectator standing by?

The salvation of a single soul is more important than the production or preservation of all the epics and tragedies of the world.  
C.S. Lewis

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## **The New Harvest**

They are the firstfruits to the Lord. —Leviticus 23:17

I was visiting a friend in a Midwest farming community during harvest season. Huge combines churned through his fields, depositing soybeans into waiting wagons. My friend leaped onto one of the wagons to check out his "firstfruits." What he saw was encouraging. Despite the worst corn crop in 40 years, the soybeans gave him reason to thank God for a good harvest.

Pentecost, which we remember today, has its roots in an agricultural setting. Fifty days after Passover, Jewish farmers celebrated the Feast of Weeks (Lev. 23:15-22), in which they recognized the hand of God who gave the crops.

Centuries later, the Lord chose the Day of Pentecost to celebrate a new harvest. Fifty days from Passover, the Holy Spirit came on a small group of believers and moved through Jerusalem, bringing in a different kind of crop. These firstfruits were men, women, and children added to the church (Acts 2:38-46).

Pentecost's historical farming connection reminds us that a world of lost souls is ready for harvest (John 4:35). As believers in Christ, we are God's fruit, but we are commanded to be His farmers as well.

Are we helping to bring in the new harvest? By Mart De Haan [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

Without the Holy Spirit there would be no harvest.

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## **Message For All Seasons By Joanie Yoder**

Lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! —John 4:35

I'm a novice at growing flowers. But I've learned to appreciate the difference between annuals and perennials. Every spring I usually buy trays of annual bedding plants. Once in the ground, they immediately take root. Their brief life always ends with the autumn frosts, and the soil lies barren until my next annual spring planting. I prefer to plant perennial flowers. They go on living from year to year, and regularly bloom, flower, and reproduce.

Writer Eugene Harrison describes the evangelistic efforts of New Testament believers as "perennial" in nature. They didn't pour all their energies into once-a-year evangelistic efforts. Instead, according to Harrison, sharing the good news of Christ was "the supreme concern of every believer, every day in the year, in every place." In Acts 5:42 and 8:4, the scope of their witness is clear: They shared Christ and the gospel in the temple, in their homes, and in the marketplace, using the Spirit-given methods of preaching, teaching, and personal testimony.

Jesus taught that the season for spiritual harvest is always today (John 4:35). And the apostle Paul said that "now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2).

Be assured, there's never a time when the harvest is out of season. The fields are white today. [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

Help us, Lord, to be a lifeline  
To a dying world today,  
Bringing hope to hopeless people  
As we share salvation's way.  
—Sper

Witnessing for Christ is never out of season.

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## **John 4:27-39 We Need Eyes To See**

By Joanie Yoder

Lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! —John 4:35

A business executive, after hearing an inspiring sermon, said to the preacher, “Your sermon was excellent. However, if you were one of my employees, I would have to fire you.” Then he explained, “You’ve sold me completely, but you didn’t close the deal.” The preacher was convincing, but he didn’t call for a commitment.

Writer Jill Briscoe had a similar experience in the Bible study she was leading. A shy young mother had been coming to the study for weeks. Jill would pray every time she drove this woman home: Lord, don’t let me rush her into making a decision. Help me to give her time to understand.

One day, in exasperation, the woman asked, “Jill, when are you going to help me find Christ? I’ve been praying that you would have the courage to speak to me!” With Jill’s help, the woman tearfully confessed her sin and asked Christ to be her Savior. A week later, her husband received Christ and they began serving the Lord together.

Jesus taught that harvest time can be anytime (John 4:35). He demonstrated this as He helped a Samaritan woman trust Him as her Savior.

Pray for eyes to recognize someone who is already ripe for harvest. [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, lay some soul upon my heart,  
And love that soul through me;  
And may I nobly do my part  
To win that soul for Thee.  
—Tucker

The next person you meet may need to meet Jesus.

**John 4:36 “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.**

TLB - The reapers will be paid good wages and will be gathering eternal souls into the granaries of heaven! What joys await the sower and the reaper, both together!

Phillips - The reaper is already being rewarded and getting in a harvest for eternal life, so that both sower and reaper may be glad together.

BGT John 4:36 ἤρπ ζων μισθ ν λαμβ νει κα συν γει καρπ ν ε ς ζω ν α νιον, να σπε ρων μο χα ρ κα θερ ζων.

NET John 4:36 The one who reaps receives pay and gathers fruit for eternal life, so that the one who sows and the one who reaps can rejoice together.

NLT John 4:36 The harvesters are paid good wages, and the fruit they harvest is people brought to eternal life. What joy awaits both the planter and the harvester alike!

ESV John 4:36 Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together.

NIV John 4:36 Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together.

GNT John 4:36 θερ ζων μισθ ν λαμβ νει κα συν γει καρπ ν ε ς ζω ν α νιον, να σπε ρων μο χα ρ κα θερ ζων.

KJV John 4:36 And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

YLT John 4:36 'And he who is reaping doth receive a reward, and doth gather fruit to life age-during, that both he who is sowing and he who is reaping may rejoice together;

ASV John 4:36 He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal; that he that soweth and

he that reapeth may rejoice together.

CSB John 4:36 The reaper is already receiving pay and gathering fruit for eternal life, so the sower and reaper can rejoice together.

NKJ John 4:36 "And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.

NRS John 4:36 The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together.

NAB John 4:36 The reaper is already receiving his payment and gathering crops for eternal life, so that the sower and reaper can rejoice together.

- **he who reaps:** Pr 11:30 Da 12:3 Ro 1:13 6:22 1Co 9:19-23 Php 2:15,16 1Th 2:19-20 1Ti 4:16 2Ti 4:7,8 Jas 5:19,20
- **he who sows and he who reap:** 1Co 3:5-9
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages: "Spiritual Harvest" passages...

Daniel 12:3+ "Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

1Th 2:19-20+ For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? 20For you are our glory and joy.

1 Corinthians 3:5-9+ What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one. 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. 7 So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth. 8 Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. 9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

Amos 9:13 (HE WHO SOWS AND REAPS) Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "When the plowman will overtake the reaper And the treader of grapes him who sows seed; When the mountains will drip sweet wine And all the hills will be dissolved.

## WAGES OF WORKING FOR GOD

In this next section (vv 36-38) Jesus addresses the nature of rewards with His thick headed disciples.

**R C H Lenski** points out the pattern - From the harvest the thought of Jesus extends to the reapers and backward also to the sowers and then turns (Jn 4:38) to the disciples personally. See the comprehensive grasp it thus reveals and the grip it puts on the souls of the disciples. (BORROW [The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel](#))

**Already he who reaps** ([therizo present tense](#)) **is receiving** ([present tense](#)) **wages** ([misthos](#)) **and is gathering** ([sunago](#)) **fruit** ([karpos](#)) for life eternal - NLT = "The harvesters are **paid good wages**, and the fruit they harvest is people brought to eternal life." Note John parallels **wages** (Jn 4:35 is his only use of [misthos](#)) with **fruit**. The only thing that you cannot do in heaven is share the Gospel, so do it now while you have the golden opportunity. Time is short. The need is urgent! While these principles were directed toward the first disciples, they clearly have a broader application to all disciples of all time. Receiving wages is [present tense](#) indicating continually (even now = "eternity present") as they see a soul come to Christ and then forever and ever in eternity future. The sower may not see it, but as Jesus goes on to say, since they both play a vital role in the harvest of this soul, they both will rejoice.

**THOUGHT - Sowers** may never hear about the person they shared the Gospel with coming to Christ (as the reaper does), but they will hear about it in eternity when they meet that saved soul and as Jesus says, they will rejoice which is in the [present tense](#) which says it will ring out throughout eternity! If that does not encourage you to share the Gospel with someone today, this week, this year (2021), I don't know what will! Just make sure you are filled with/walking in the Spirit so that you will recognize the opportunity God gives you to share the Gospel (And don't procrastinate out of fear, because it is true that some opportunities only knock once!). Paul put it this way "**Conduct** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders (UNSAVED), **making the most of** (redeeming = [exagorazo](#) in the

[present tense](#) = continually) the opportunity ([kairos](#) = "time" - see "Redeem the Time"). 6 Let your speech (cf Eph 4:29+) **always** be with grace (IF YOU ARE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT, YOU WILL BE READY), as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person. (Col 4:5-6+)

**Lange** - The connection with the preceding is this: The field is white for harvest. Be reapers. Reaping in the spiritual field is full of promise.

**Edwin Blum** - As reapers, the disciples had the great and rewarding privilege of leading people to faith in Christ. (SEE [Bible Knowledge Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**Lenski** - The **wages** of the spiritual reaper are the souls gathered for life eternal—here not necessarily only heaven but eternal life also as a present possession reaching unto heaven. (BORROW [The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel](#))

**A T Robertson on reaps is receiving wages** - The spiritual harvester can gather his harvest without waiting four months. Jesus is reaping a harvest right now by the conversion of this woman. The labourer is worthy of his hire (Luke 10:7; 2 Tim. 2:6). John does not use *misthos* (reward) again, but *karpos* (Jn 15:2–16), "fruit for life eternal" (cf. Jn 4:14). ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**So that - Purpose clause.** What's the purpose? Jesus has just referred to rewarding the reaper. Now He says the purpose is for the reaper and sower to rejoice together. This clearly implies they were a "team." Both played vital roles in a soul coming to the Savior. Both would rejoice because they "shared" in the reward. That reward is already...not yet. That is to say we are overjoyed now (already) when a soul is transferred from the Kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of light. And we will rejoice eternally with them in heaven, even as Paul alludes to in 1Th 2:19-20+ referring to the believers he had a part in "harvesting" in Thessalonica (note his triple repetition of "joy!")....

For who is our hope or **joy** or crown of exultation? Is it not even you (YOU BELIEVERS IN THESSALONICA), in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? 20 For you are our glory and **joy**. describing them as His "glory and **joy**." (TLB = "For you are our trophy and joy.") (Present joy and future joy!).

**He who sows ([speiro](#)) and he who reaps ([therizo present tense](#)) may rejoice ([chairo](#)) together** - Some of the sowers are Moses, the Prophets, John the Baptist, Jesus, and even the Samaritan woman. This is a wonderfully encouraging passage, for I have often sown seeds of the Gospel but only seldom actually led someone to the Lord. This passage implies both parties are on "equal ground" so to speak in eternity future (i.e., the sower and the reaper will be rewarded for their role in a soul's salvation). And this makes sense, because ultimately the supernatural work of saving a lost soul is God's business. Sowers and reapers simply have the "opportunity of a lifetime" to join Him in His great drama of redemption.

*Reapers won't be weepers at the Bema Seat!  
Reapers and sowers will both be rejoicers!*

**Vincent on rejoice together** - The construction is peculiar: that both the sower may rejoice together and the reaper. Together signifies not in common, but simultaneously. So quickly does the harvest follow the gospel-seed sown among the Samaritans, that the sower and the reaper rejoice together. ([John 4 Commentary](#))

**Blum** - Harvest time in the ancient world was a time of joy (Ruth 3:2, 7; Isa. 9:3). There is also great joy at the time of salvation (cf. Luke 15:7, 10, 32). The disciples had the greater joy of seeing the completion of the process (John 4:38). (SEE [Bible Knowledge Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**Barton on rejoice together** - Jesus here mentions the sower in addition to the reaper. Jesus, as both sower and reaper, sowed the seed through a single Samaritan woman and reaped a harvest from many in a Samaritan city. This sowing and reaping transpired so quickly that the sower and reaper could rejoice together. Normally, the sower's joy is hopeful, for it is based on a future harvest. The reaper's later joy is complete, for it is based on the stored harvest. But in the context of eternity, the sower and reaper will be together and can rejoice over the harvest they both accomplished. (BORROW [Life application New Testament commentary](#) )

*No matter who reaps, God alone deserves the credit.*  
- Faith Life Study Bible

**LASB** - The wages Jesus offers are the joy of working for him and seeing the harvest of believers. These wages come to planter and harvester alike because both find joy in seeing new believers come into Christ's Kingdom. (BORROW [Life Application Study Bible](#))

**Steven Cole** - Earthly wages are of no value after you die, but wages that pay rewards for eternity are worth working for! A billionaire on his deathbed who has not laid up treasure in heaven is like the man in Jesus' parable who planned to build bigger barns, but was not rich toward God (Luke 12:15-21+). He was a fool. But the one with a harvest mindset who labors for souls is

storing up eternal joy.

**Larry Richards** - God's field is perpetually ripe. Each day is the "today" when some will welcome the Gospel and find salvation. Your part may be sowing the seed. Or encouraging its growth. Or perhaps gathering in a crop over which someone else has labored. No matter. Whenever a person is gathered into God's kingdom, all are filled with joy.

**ILLUSTRATION OF SOWING AND REAPING** - Andrew Meekens did not waste an opportunity to reach others for Christ. He was an elder in the International Evangelical Church of Addis Ababa, and was one of those who died on November 23, 1996, when a hijacked jet ran out of fuel and crashed near the Comoros Islands. According to survivors of the crash, after the pilot announced he would attempt an emergency landing, Meekens stood up and spoke, calming passengers on the Ethiopian Airlines flight. Meekens then presented the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and invited people to be saved. A surviving flight attendant said that about twenty people accepted Christ as their Savior, including a flight attendant who did not survive the crash. Beloved, we are to speak as dying people to dying people. (From Rod Mattoon)

**Bruce Barton - SEEDS AND SHEAVES** God oversees the continual work of planting the seeds of the gospel (Luke 8:4–15) and then reaping the crop. That the fields are ripe for harvest reminds us that many are ready to receive salvation because others have sown the seed. Can you identify the process of sowing and reaping that occurred in your life? Perhaps your mother or father, a Sunday school teacher, a pastor, a camp director, or a youth group leader sowed or nourished the gospel seed in you. Then a "reaper" came along whose gospel message found you ripe to respond, and you accepted eternal life. At the moment of being "harvested," we became sowers and reapers ourselves. Our lives ought to be an effort to sow wherever and reap whenever. As was done for us, we ought to seek to do for others. In the end, the sowers, reapers, and the harvest will all rejoice! (BORROW [Life application New Testament commentary](#) )

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**Reaping** ([present tense](#))(2325)([therizo](#) from **théros** = summer, harvest time ~ time of harvests) conveys the picture of cutting ripe grain and gathering the bundles together. To reap, to harvest, harvest, reaping. The immutable law of sowing and reaping dictates that we can be assured that we will reap what we sow, but we can never know exactly how much we reap until the time of the harvest.

**Wages** (3408)([misthos](#)) literally refers to pay which is due for labor performed or dues paid for work. **Misthos** is used in two general senses in the NT, either to refer to wages or to reward, recognition or recompense. In this latter figurative usage, **misthos** refers to rewards which God bestows for the moral quality of an action, such rewards most often to be bestowed in eternity future.

**Gathering** (4863)([sunago](#) from **sun** = with + **ago** = to lead) means literally to lead together. To gather (in) or gather (up) (Mt 13:47; 25:24, 26; Lk 3:17; 15:13; Jn 6:12f; 15:6). To bring or call together, gather (Mt 22:10; 25:32; Mk 2:2; 7:1; Jn 11:47; 18:2; Acts 13:44; 14:27; 1 Cor 5:4). To invite or receive as a guest (Mt 25:35, 38, 43). This verb gives us our English word synagogue a place where Jews pray and worship.

**Fruit** (2590)([karpos](#)) literally refers to fruit, produce or offspring, which describes that which is produced by the inherent energy of a living organism. Figuratively, **karpos** is used of the consequence of physical, mental, or spiritual action. The author of Hebrews uses **karpos** to picture the results of the disciplined lifestyle (the result of divine discipline) (Heb 12:11+) Human actions and words are often viewed as **fruit** growing out of a person's essential being or character. Scripture has 3 general kinds of **spiritual fruit**:

- (1) **Spiritual attitudes** that characterize a Spirit-filled/led (Eph 5:18+, Gal 5:16, 18+) believer - Gal 5:22-23+
- (2) **Righteous actions** - Ro 6:22+, Php 4:16, 17+; Heb 13:5+
- (3) **New converts** - Ro 16:5+ (AND HERE IN JOHN 4:36). Uses of **Karpos** in John's gospel - Jn. 4:36; Jn. 12:24; Jn. 15:2; Jn. 15:4; Jn. 15:5; Jn. 15:8; Jn. 15:16 (See [Fruit - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#))

**Sows** ([present tense](#))(4687)([speiro](#) from **spao** = draw out, pull) literally means to scatter (seed) and the opposite of reaping or gathering. **Speiro** is used figuratively to describe the sowing of the "seed" of the Word of God, the Gospel (= "the word of the kingdom" - Mt 13:19, cp Mk 4:14 15, 16, 18), "the ideas and precepts that have been implanted like seed in their hearts, ie, received in their hearts (Mk 4:18)." (Thayer). Jesus used **speiro** repeatedly in His parables (Mt 13:3, 18, 24, 31)

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#### **Audi Lewis - Learn and Then Go JOHN 4:36**

He came out from his solitude and began to sow. This is what I mean. At first, a Christian man very wisely lives indoors. There is a lot of cleaning and scrubbing to be done there. When the bees come out of their cells, they always spend the first few days of their life in the hive cleaning and getting everything tidy. They do not go out to gather honey till they have first of all done the housework

at home. I wish that all Christian people would get their housework done as soon as they can. It needs to be done. I mean, acquaintance with experimental matters of indwelling sin, and overcoming grace. But after that, then the sower went forth to sow. He was not content with his own private experience, but he went forth to sow. There are numbers of people who are miserable because they are always at home. Go out, brother; go out, sister. Important as your experience is, it is only important as a platform for real usefulness. Get all right within, in order that you may get to work without.

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### **David Jeremiah - THE GOLDEN RULE JOHN 4:36**

When you hear phrases like "Land of a Thousand Lakes," "Sunshine State," "Famous Potatoes," and "Big Sky Country," you'll probably think of license plates and state slogans. What about "Golden Rule State"?

In the spring of 2003, State Concurrent Resolution 1006 was passed, designating Arizona as the "Golden Rule State." In part, the resolution says, "Living and practicing the Golden Rule will have a powerfully positive effect on each individual and the society in which we all live."

Applying the golden rule to everyday life is contagious even in the secular world. But as Christians, we should treat others the way we want to be treated, not just because it's a decent creed to live by. Matthew 7:12 tells us to "treat people the same way you want them to treat you" (NASB). That's a tall order! But start out by taking it one day at a time—even one minute at a time.

Think about how you can affirm a loved one or a coworker right now. If you would like to receive attention and encouragement, make sure you are giving them out.

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### **Rewards an Inspiration for Service - Robert Neighbor**

"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).

If all that has been set forth concerning rewards, is true, we have certainly found a tremendous inspiration for fidelity in life and faithfulness in service.

No wonder that Paul said "I therefore so run \* \* so fight I", that I may obtain.

No wonder he said, "I press \* \* for the prize".

Surely, if there is to be a crown of life given to those who love Him, we will seek to endure temptation that we may obtain (James 1:12).

Surely, if there is a possibility of our losing the things which we have wrought, we will look to ourselves that we may receive a full reward (2 John 1:8).

Surely, if our God is coming to judge every man's work, without any respect of persons, we should pass the time of our sojourning here with fear (1 Peter 1:17).

We read of Christ, "Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2).

If Christ "endured the Cross" and despised the shame, inspired with the blessed joy of seeing the redeemed, set before Him: should not we also keep before us the joy of seeing those who may be won for Christ, through us? Thus, it was that Paul said in substance, concerning the Thessalonian Christians, "Ye shall be my joy and crown of rejoicing at the coming of the Lord".

Moses forsook Egypt not fearing the wrath of the King; Moses suffered affliction with the children of God, because he saw the "recompense of the reward" and "he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible" (Heb. 11:26, 27).

Should we not then also be inspired to serve and to sacrifice, with the same blessed "recompense of reward," inspiring us?

Let us so run that we may obtain.

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### **John 4:37 "For in this case the saying is true, 'One sows and another reaps.'**

BGT John 4:37 ν γ ρ το τ λ γος σ τ ν ληθι ν ς τι λλος σ τ ν σπε ρων κα λλος θερ ζων.

NET John 4:37 For in this instance the saying is true, 'One sows and another reaps.'

NLT John 4:37 You know the saying, 'One plants and another harvests.' And it's true.

ESV John 4:37 For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.'

NIV John 4:37 Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true.

GNT John 4:37 ν γ ρ το τ λ γος σ τ ν λ η θ ι ν ς τι λ λ ος σ τ ν σ π ε ρ ω ν κ α λ λ ος θ ε ρ ζ ω ν.

KJV John 4:37 And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.

YLT John 4:37 for in this the saying is the true one, that one is the sower and another the reaper.

ASV John 4:37 For herein is the saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.

CSB John 4:37 For in this case the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.'

NKJ John 4:37 "For in this the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.'

NRS John 4:37 For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.'

NAB John 4:37 For here the saying is verified that 'One sows and another reaps.'

NJB John 4:37 For here the proverb holds true: one sows, another reaps;

GWN John 4:37 In this respect the saying is true: 'One person plants, and another person harvests.'

- **One:** Jdg 6:3 Mic 6:15 Lu 19:21
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE GOSPEL IS A "TEAM SPORT"

One team member sows the seed of the Gospel and the other team member reaps the harvest. Sometimes the same person fulfills both functions.

Wiersbe comments that "Each of us has an assigned task and we are all a part of each other's labors (1 Cor. 3:6–9). One sows, one reaps; but each worker gets his honest reward for the work he has done." ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**For in this case the saying is true, 'One sows and another reaps.'** Both workers are necessary but they do not have the same role. Notice also that we do not labor alone. I was raised on a farm and we would have had a poor crop of corn if we had not sown seed in the spring! Sowing of course refers to sharing the "seed" of the Gospel, but few people come to Christ the first time they hear the message. The point is to not become discouraged if the person does not receive the Gospel. Pray and trust God that He will not lose any of the elect. Pray that God brings someone along who reaps the fruit. Paul put it this way "I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth." (1 Cor 3:6)

*There is no competition in the Lord's harvest.*

-- Warren Wiersbe

John Phillips says "The point is, the time is now for sowing and reaping. We are to **seize our opportunities** while we may." (BORROW [Exploring the Gospels. John](#))

**Seize the Day.  
Carpe Diem!**

**Tempus Fugit.  
Time Flies!**

**Steven Cole** says "At the very least, begin praying for opportunities to share the gospel with others. Jot down a list of those that don't know Christ with whom you regularly have contact and begin praying for their salvation and for God to give you an opportunity to talk to them about the Savior. To reap a harvest, we have to sow the seed."

**J C Ryle** - Let it be noted, that in doing work for Christ, and laboring for souls, there are sowers as well as reapers. **The work of the reaper makes far more show than the work of the sower. Yet it is perfectly clear that if there was no sowing there would be no reaping.** It is of great importance to remember this. The Church is often disposed to give an excessive honor to Christ's reapers, and to overlook the labors of Christ's sowers.

**Robertson** - It is sad when the sower misses the joy of reaping (Job 31:8) and has only the sowing in tears (Psa. 126:5f.). This may be the punishment for sin (Deut. 28:30; Mic. 6:15). Sometimes one reaps where he has not sown (Deut. 6:11; Josh. 24:13). It is the prerogative of the Master to reap (Matt. 25:26f.), but Jesus here lets the disciples share his joy. ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**Blum** - A sower has a harder time because he sees no immediate fulfillment. John the Baptist stirred a nation to repent but he died before the day of Pentecost, when the disciples in great joy saw thousands come to faith in Jesus. (SEE [Bible Knowledge Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

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### **Abraham Kuyper ONE SOWS AND ANOTHER REAPS John 4:37**

What's our way of doing things?

Oh, we sow and think that before we came nothing had been done to the field. We also think that after we have sowed, we have to wait a long time before something is produced that can be cut with the scythe.

We think that our mowing always has to be the mowing of our own sowing!

In imagining that everything happens by our hand and that no one else is at work except us, we are always mistaken. We are wrong in thinking that everything comes down to what we do and is to be credited to our account. We err in supposing that every field continues to lie fallow until we drive the plow's blade through it and unless we scatter the seed on it by our own hand.

It's just like Jesus said about his disciples. They thought this way. And we do too.

Jesus put it like this: "You say, 'we have just finished the sowing, and now we have to wait another four months before the harvest comes.'" Their sowing! Their mowing! Doing it all themselves!

So obviously, when things don't move along on schedule, we become impatient. Then we talk about our disappointment. Then we say our work was in vain. We talk about working in vain with our children, working in vain in the Lord's vineyard, and working in vain as a people and nation. It's vanity all around us!

Naturally enough, sowing isn't that enjoyable. It amounts to throwing something away and burying it in the cold ground, where it sinks out of sight. The person who sows leaves with plenty but returns home empty-handed. It's like the poet who versified the Psalms put it so aptly:

The one who carries the seed he sows  
goes out weeping and sows it all.

No, what gives pleasure is not the sowing but the reaping:

For without dreading a catastrophe, before long  
he will return a happy man,  
rejoicing in that fortunate hour  
carrying home the sheaves he stores.

The one who mows always goes out empty-handed, but he comes back with his arms full! The one who sows becomes poorer. But the one who mows becomes wealthier with every swish of the scythe.

The glory and enjoyment lies in the stroke of the sickle and not in the fruitfulness of the bare ground. For sowing is entrusted to the earth, therefore to dying and burying. But mowing has to do with resurrection and living. Its focus is the wealth of the harvest.

Aware of this, the One who comforts our souls calls us first of all to be involved in mowing, not sowing. In his tender love, he has assigned us the lot of rejoicing with the mower, not that of weeping with the sower who goes out to scatter.

Pay close attention to this. Jesus says: "You imagine that you still have to wait for many months before the harvest is yours, but this is due to your pride and spiritual blindness. They are caused because you trust in nothing but your own effort, your own sowing. You are preoccupied with nothing other than the bleak, dark earth. But I tell you now, get rid of that pride. Lift up your eyes and consider the fields, for they are already white unto harvest."

Where is your sickle, O you of little faith? How you hold back, mumbling and complaining to yourself! Oh, you definitely also have to sow, but you first have to mow! You have to mow before anything else. You have to mow and gather into full sheaves all that I have worked for when I plowed and sowed and moistened and watered and caused to ripen. I did this all before you or anyone else realized what was happening. I did it in my mysterious and wondrous grace.

“O that you would simply mow. For mowing is so glorious,” says the Lord! “Even now he who mows receives his wages and gathers a crop unto eternal life, so that the sower and reaper may rejoice together” (v. 36).

Your spiritual mistake is concealed above all in the fact that you always think that you can't mow unless you have first done the sowing yourself. But I tell you: “One sows, and another mows” (v. 37). And “I have sent you out not first of all to sow, but to reap what you have not sown and to gather in the fruit of their efforts” (v. 38).

What a beautiful, glorious way of putting it by my Savior!

My own effort is not self-standing and isolated, therefore. It is connected with the efforts of others.

It is related to all the effort expended during those long centuries that lie behind me. It is connected to what was achieved by grace during those times and prepared for our times. It is also connected with all the effort that those alongside and around me expend in the broader and wider fields that constitute the lush pastures of the Good Shepherd.

Yes, and it is connected above all with what is being accomplished so amazingly by my Savior in the background of all of life generally—quietly, mysteriously, and by the soft and cool rustling of his work everywhere. He is busy in every human heart. He is achieving something every day and in every soul. He is aware of everything. He knows everyone by name and appeals to them “on the basis of his great power and because he is able to do great things.”

And look! Now I'm connected to the complete body of that divine work that has been accomplished through the centuries by all the efforts of God's children. I'm connected not for the purpose of contributing anything major but something modest to it. The main reason why the Lord sends us out is not that we might contribute so much to that work, but that our souls might be inspired and our hearts quickened by the glorious sight of his miraculous work. It is the sight of fields white with a bountiful harvest!

But by our pride we would like to destroy all of that and turn things completely around!

We would like to see it as a bad thing that the sowing was not our doing. Our darkened eyes would like to see the whitened fields as bleak, bare ground. Our self-serving natures have too little of the childlike abandon that would let us play happily in those fields with our sickles.

How ungrateful we still are!

Oh, how miserable we would be if God only put us to work on human hearts where nothing had been done as yet! In human hearts that kick up nothing but the dust of sin and anger and are raw and untamed!

But in his mercy God doesn't do that. He protects so much of the harvest in the lives of our children and congregations. He sometimes even causes it to ripen by his saving grace, when in our evil hearts we would rather complain than rejoice and weep rather than celebrate.

Then we feel like martyrs.

Then we complain about our having become complainers.

Then we plow on rocks.

Then people become discouraged and simply give up.

Then, when we've spoiled everything in our self-serving pride, we think that we've been misunderstood and haven't been appreciated!

Shame on our souls!

But know this! This is exactly how you blow out the candlesticks that have to blaze with the light of Jesus' glory.

What then should weigh heavily on your heart is that this is how you corrupt your child instead of nurturing and building them up properly. This is how you destroy a congregation instead of strengthening and building it. This is how you poison the atmosphere rather than purifying it. Then your face falls. Your eyes become downcast. Everything looks black in your soul and in the depths of your being.

Oh, then lift your eyes again, you elders and pastors and members of Christ's flock. Look at the fields. Look how white they are. It is time for the harvest!

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**REAP - Stewart Custer** -“They that sow in tears shall reap in joy” (Ps. 126:5). “And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth” (John 4:37). “He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also

bountifully" (II Cor. 9:6). "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:7–9).

#### GOLDEN THOUGHT

In due season we shall reap if we faint not.

**John 4:38 "I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored and you have entered into their labor."**

TLB - I sent you to reap where you didn't sow; others did the work, and you received the harvest."

BGT John 4:38 γ π σπειλα μ ς θερ ζειν ο χ με ς κεκοπι κατε· λλοι κεκοπι κασιν κα με ς ε ς τ ν κ πον α τ ν ε σεληλ θατε.

NET John 4:38 I sent you to reap what you did not work for; others have labored and you have entered into their labor."

NLT John 4:38 I sent you to harvest where you didn't plant; others had already done the work, and now you will get to gather the harvest."

ESV John 4:38 I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."

NIV John 4:38 I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor."

GNT John 4:38 γ π σπειλα μ ς θερ ζειν ο χ με ς κεκοπι κατε· λλοι κεκοπι κασιν κα με ς ε ς τ ν κ πον α τ ν ε σεληλ θατε.

KJV John 4:38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

YLT John 4:38 I sent you to reap that on which ye have not laboured; others laboured, and ye into their labour have entered.

ASV John 4:38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye have not labored: others have labored, and ye are entered into their labor.

CSB John 4:38 I sent you to reap what you didn't labor for; others have labored, and you have benefited from their labor."

NKJ John 4:38 "I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors."

NRS John 4:38 I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."

NAB John 4:38 I sent you to reap what you have not worked for; others have done the work, and you are sharing the fruits of their work."

NJB John 4:38 I sent you to reap a harvest you have not laboured for. Others have laboured for it; and you have come into the rewards of their labour.

GWN John 4:38 I have sent you to harvest a crop you have not worked for. Other people have done the hard work, and you have followed them in their work."

- **sent:** Acts 2:41 Acts 4:4,32 Acts 5:14 Acts 6:7 Acts 8:4-8,14-17
- **others:** John 1:7, 2 Chr 36:15 Jer 44:4 Mt 3:1-6 Mt 4:23 Mt 11:8-13 Acts 10:37,38,42,43 1Pe 1:11,12
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored** - In other words Jesus would be sending His disciples into "fields" that other hard working farmers had "plowed" and "cultivated," but who did not reap the crops/fruit thereof. We see Jesus' words come to fruition (pun intended) in the book of Acts (Read Acts 2:41+ Acts 4:4,32+ Acts 5:14+ Acts 6:7+, Acts 15:3+)

**Wiersbe** - John 4:38 indicates that others had labored in Samaria and had prepared the way for this harvest. We do not know who these faithful workers were, nor do we need to know; for God will reward them. Perhaps some of these people had heard John the Baptist preach, or perhaps some of John's followers had reached into this difficult field. Some archeologists have located "Aenon near Salim" where John baptized (John 3:23) near the biblical Shechem, which is close to Sychar and Jacob's well. If this is the case, then John the Baptist prepared the soil and planted the seed, and Jesus and the disciples reaped the harvest. Of course, the woman herself planted some of the seed through her witness to the men. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Others have labored and you** (emphatic contrast) **have entered into their labor** (kopos) - **Have labored** is the same Greek verb ([kopiao](#)) used to describe Jesus weariness in Jn 4:6+ = "Jesus, **being wearied** from His journey." The upshot is that Gospel work can be "gruelling" work! You are engaged in a titanic struggle for souls of men with [inveterate](#), invisible enemies (the [world](#), the [flesh](#) and the [devil](#))! Sowing and reaping for souls of lost men is NOT a "[cakewalk](#)!" Who are the **others** who were sowers? Candidates include the all the OT writers, the OT prophets (including Moses), John the Baptist, and even Jesus sowing in the Gospels and the disciples reaping in Acts. And as Leon Morris ([BORROW The Gospel according to John : NICNT](#)) says "The Christian will necessarily read this saying in the light of the cross. It was there, above all, that Christ sowed the seed. It is only because he so sowed the seed that eternal life may be reaped by anyone." As Jesus Himself later declared...

John 12:24+ "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies (CRUCIFIXION), it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit (JESUS = THE ULTIMATE SOWER - ANY SOWING WE DO IS BASED ON THE TRUTH IN THIS PASSAGE!)

**Robertson** - The disciples had done no sowing here in Sychar, only Jesus and the woman. ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

Jesus' description of the labor to the point of weariness (physically and spiritually) in the sowing of Gospel seed reminds one of Paul's encouraging word to Timothy

The **hard-working** ([kopiao](#)) farmer ought ([dei](#) = must, necessity) to be the first to receive his share ([metalambano](#)) of the crops ([karpos](#) = fruit). (2 Ti 2:6+)

**Wiersbe** - The disciples were learning a valuable lesson that would encourage them in the years to come. They were not alone in the work of the Lord, and they must never look on any opportunity for witness as wasted time and energy. It takes faith to plow the soil and plant the seed, but God has promised a harvest (Ps. 126:5-6; Gal. 6:9). In a few years, Peter and John would participate in another harvest among the Samaritans (Acts 8:5-25). Those who sow may not see the harvest, but those who reap will see it and give thanks for the faithful labors of the sowers. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**William MacDonald** - Some Christians are called on to preach the gospel for many years without seeing very much fruit for their labor. Others step in at the end of those years, and many souls turn to the Lord. Throughout the OT period, the prophets had foretold the coming of the gospel era and of the Messiah. Then, too, John the Baptist came as a forerunner of the Lord, seeking to prepare the hearts of the people to receive Him. The Lord Himself had sown the seed in Samaria, and prepared a harvest for the reapers (**ED**: SEE Acts 8:5-8+ AND NOTICE V.8 "there was much rejoicing!"). Now the disciples were about to step into the harvest field, and the Lord wanted them to know that, although they would have the joy of seeing many turning to Christ, they should understand that they were entering into other men's labors. ([BORROW Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**THOUGHT** - Very few souls are ever saved through the ministry of a single person. Most people have heard the gospel many times before they ever accept the Savior. Therefore, the one who finally leads a person to Christ should not exalt himself as if he were the only instrument God used in this marvelous work. (MacDonald)

[Steven Cole](#) recalls the story of [Adoniram Judson](#) ([read his bio](#)) who labored his entire lifetime in Burma with much hardship, many disappointments, and little visible fruit in terms of converts. But today there are over a million Christians in Burma who trace their roots back to Judson's labors. Your sowing is not in vain if others reap the fruit. Be faithful in sowing the seed!

[Brian Bell](#) - Evangelism is a partnership. Each role is essential. We must be ready to fulfill either. 1. What did Jesus mean, "I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored"? a) He meant, He had been witnessing to the Samaritan woman, & she had been witnessing to her friends & neighbors & now they were coming to the well. b) It would be the disciples privileged to reap them (i.e. teach them more about Jesus & establish them in the kingdom & family of God) Whether you dig, plant, water, or pick the crop, there should never be a competition. All will share in the joy of seeing the kingdom of God advanced! Lighthouse analogy: No matter how many lighthouses you have protecting a coast line, they are never in competition with one another. Each simply warns and protects a different piece of the coastline for travelers.

**Bruce Barton** - **TAKING CREDIT** Think of all that farmers do—plowing, fertilizing, sowing, weeding, watering, harvesting. For the most part, however, farmers are a humble group when it comes to taking credit for the results. So much is out of their hands, yet

what they do is vital. In spreading the gospel, God gives us a significant role, yet he deserves the credit. In fact, we can only claim to have done a small part of the job. Often we have only a slight idea of how others have contributed to what God accomplished in a person. But our testimony, kindness, encouragement, patience, or teaching of the gospel may be the turning point in someone's life. Let us make the most of all our opportunities. (BORROW [Life application New Testament commentary](#) )

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**Being wearied** (2872)(**kopiao** from **kopos** = labor, fatigue, and used in secular Greek of a "beating") speaks of intense, hard, wearisome toil even to the point of utter exhaustion. **Kopiao** describes not so much the actual exertion as the weariness which follows the straining of all one's powers to the utmost. The person has become physically worn out, weary or faint. In fact the work described by **kopiao** left one so weary it was as if they had been beaten ( the secular meaning of the root wordkopos). Jesus uses **kopiao** to describe the lilies "how they grow: they neither **toil** nor spin...." (Lk 12:27+)

**Kopiao - 21v** - diligently labor(1), grown weary(1), hard-working(1), labor(3), labored(4), labors(1), toil(4), wearied(1), weary(1), work hard(1), worked(2), worked hard(1), worked hard worked hard(1), workers(1), working hard(1). Matt. 6:28; Matt. 11:28; Lk. 5:5; Lk. 12:27; Jn. 4:6; Jn. 4:38; Acts 20:35; Rom. 16:6; Rom. 16:12; 1 Co. 4:12; 1 Co. 15:10; 1 Co. 16:16; Gal. 4:11; Eph. 4:28; Phil. 2:16; Col. 1:29; 1 Thess. 5:12; 1 Tim. 4:10; 1 Tim. 5:17; 2 Tim. 2:6; Rev. 2:3

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### John 4:38

Others have labored, and you have entered into their labors. Jn 4:38

In the Lord's kingdom there are sowers and there are reapers.

Some do the unrewarding work of plowing and scattering the precious seed of God's Word, and some reap the benefits of other people's labors and are privileged to gather the abundant harvest. Yet both are vitally needed because no one can do alone the extensive work that Christ commands.

In eastern countries, professional weavers are sometimes unable to complete in a lifetime the large tapestries assigned to them. When one artisan dies, however, another picks up the threads and weaves according to the original pattern.

The same is true with evangelists, missionaries, and everyone who engages in the Lord's work. They labor faithfully until death. Then others build on the work they began. Jesus said, "One sows and another reaps" (John 4:37). How beautiful is the thought that all Christians are working together in one great task that will bring to completion God's eternal plan!—H. G. B. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

No CHRISTIAN HAS NOTHING TO DO!

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### JOHN 4:38

One April morning in the early 1800s John Chapman appeared in Licking Spring, Ohio, staked out a clearing, took some seeds out of a burlap bag that he always carried, and began to plant them. After building a fence around the plot, he departed as quietly as he had come. He then traveled through other towns in Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan, and followed the same procedure.

When Chapman lived in Massachusetts, he had heard that only a few fruit trees existed in the Midwest, so he set out single handedly to remedy the situation. Today this man is known by the name "[Johnny Appleseed](#)."

Reflecting on John Chapman's mission, an unknown author has written, "What the world needs are Christians who will be 'spiritual Johnny Appleseeds,' because men and women all around us are dying in sin. The Word of God is the seed that will give them life—food for their souls, gain for eternity, and beauty for ashes." —H. G. B. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

WE PLANT THE SEED; GOD GIVES THE HARVEST.

**John 4:39 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."**

BGT John 4:39 κ ὁ τ ς π λεως κε νης πολλο π στευσαν ε ς α τ ν τ ν Σαμαρι τ ν δι τ ν λ γον τ ς γυναι κ ς μαρτυρο ς η ς τι ε π ν μοι π ν τ α πο η σα.

NET John 4:39 Now many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the report of the woman who

testified, "He told me everything I ever did."

NLT John 4:39 Many Samaritans from the village believed in Jesus because the woman had said, "He told me everything I ever did!"

ESV John 4:39 Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me all that I ever did."

NIV John 4:39 Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did."

GNT John 4:39 κ ὅ τ ρ π λεως κεν ης πολλο π στευσαν ε ρ α τ ν τ ν Σαμαριτ ν δι τ ν λ γον τ ρ γυναικ ρ μαρτυρο σης τι Ε π ν μοι π ντα πο ησα.

KJV John 4:39 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.

YLT John 4:39 And from that city many believed in him, of the Samaritans, because of the word of the woman testifying, -- 'He told me all things -- as many as I did.'

ASV John 4:39 And from that city many of the Samaritans believed on him because of the word of the woman, who testified, He told me all things that ever I did.

CSB John 4:39 Now many Samaritans from that town believed in Him because of what the woman said when she testified, "He told me everything I ever did."

NKJ John 4:39 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did."

NRS John 4:39 Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I have ever done."

NAB John 4:39 Many of the Samaritans of that town began to believe in him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me everything I have done."

NJB John 4:39 Many Samaritans of that town believed in him on the strength of the woman's words of testimony, 'He told me everything I have done.'

GWN John 4:39 Many Samaritans in that city believed in Jesus because of the woman who said, "He told me everything I've ever done."

- **many** ): Joh 10:41,42 11:45
- **for**: Joh 4:29,42
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Sébastien Bourdon - Christ and the Samaritan Woman

## MANY BELIEVED IN JESUS

**Bruce Barton** - As a result of Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman, her bold witness in town, and the people's curiosity, many became believers. The choice is a significant challenge to the whole person—mind, will, emotions, experience. The response is profound, but not complicated. At some point a person's mind must stop asking how, his will must stop asking why, his emotions must set fear aside, and his experience must not be allowed to say "Jesus can't be trusted either." Jesus' proof was compelling. John was convinced and believed; the Samaritans were convinced and believed; so have millions of others. The unavoidable question each person must ask is, "Have I believed in Jesus?" (BORROW [Life application New Testament commentary](#) )

**From that city many of the Samaritans believed (pisteuo) in Him** - Note the adjective many! Think about this a moment. This woman had a horrible reputation in Sychar and yet when God redeemed her, He made her like a diamond in the rough. You show off a diamond by putting it on a black cloth. This woman's "cloth" background was "black," but when the Spirit transferred her from darkness to light, she sparkled in a way that the townspeople simply could not refute and **many** thankfully chose not to ignore! Notice that they heard her word, but believed in the Word!

**THOUGHT** - We are not responsible for the response, only responsible (albeit we are privileged and are to be good [stewards](#)) to tell ["the old, old story. Of unseen things above, Of Jesus and His glory, Of Jesus and His](#)

[love](#)." That is what she did (even without any theological degree or training). God is not looking for smarter witnesses, just sincere witnesses! Don't be shy in telling the old, old story of what Jesus did in your life. You may be surprised like I am sure this woman was at the response!

**Because of the word of the woman who testified** ([martureo](#)), "**He told me all the things that I have done**- She may have exaggerated a little with the declaration **all the things** but clearly she was excited and convinced of Jesus' supernatural knowledge. "That supernatural knowledge of the details of her past settled for them that He was in fact the Messiah." (MacArthur) Her word did not "save" them but served to direct them or point them to the Messiah in whose Name they would be saved. Notice the woman's focus is on Jesus (**He told me...**). Her testimony elevated Jesus above natural men. Her elevating Jesus [piqued](#) (excited) their attention causing them to go out to meet this Jesus, Who then saved them.

**MacDonald** - All she said was, "He told me all that I ever did," and yet that was sufficient to bring others to the Savior. This should be an encouragement to each of us to be simple, courageous, and direct in our witness for Christ. (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**Robertson** - She bore her witness clearly and with discretion. She told enough to bring her neighbours to Christ. They knew her evil life and she frankly confessed Christ's rebuke to her. She had her share in this harvest. How timid and cowardly we often are today in not giving our testimony for Christ to our neighbour. ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**Rod Mattoon** - The woman told her people what she knew and what she had found. She spoke of the Lord and pointed the people to Him. No miracles were performed here except for the miracle of a changed life. Her changed life created curiosity. 2 Corinthians 3:2 "You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by all men;" This woman was fruitful. No one knows how many were saved because of her witness or how many have been saved from generation to generation because of the effects of her witness for Christ. Her knowledge of Christ led to the service of Christ. The extent or proportion in which we know the Lord is the proportion in which we are prepared to serve Him. Do you want to walk with God closer each day? If so, then serve Him with all your heart. May the Lord help us to leave our water pots behind and put value on the souls of men than the things of the earth!

**Brian Bell** - A solitary seed has been planted, and within the time it takes to eat lunch, an entire field of humanity becomes ripe for harvest, for the kingdom of God. ([Spiritual Dehydration](#))

**Larry Richards** - As a college student I sold encyclopedias for a time. I was enthusiastic when I began, and sold 11 of my first 13 presentations. But then I began to think about what I was saying as I followed the script for my presentation. And I realized that much of what I was saying just wasn't true. After that, though I kept on trying for a while, I could make no sale at all. That's one thing that's so exciting about presenting Jesus to others, as the Samaritan woman did. We can share with enthusiasm, for God's promised benefits are assured. Whoever comes to see for himself or herself will be saved.

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**Believed** ([4100](#)) ([pisteuo](#)) means to consider something to be true and therefore worthy of one's trust. To accept as true, genuine, or real. To have a firm conviction as to the goodness, efficacy, or ability of something or someone. To consider to be true. To accept the word or evidence of.

**Pisteuo** is clearly a **key verb** in the **Gospel of John** = Jn. 1:7; Jn. 1:12; Jn. 1:50; Jn. 2:11; Jn. 2:22; Jn. 2:23; Jn. 2:24; Jn. 3:12; Jn. 3:15; Jn. 3:16; Jn. 3:18; Jn. 3:36; Jn. 4:21; Jn. 4:39; Jn. 4:41; Jn. 4:42; Jn. 4:48; Jn. 4:50; Jn. 4:53; Jn. 5:24; Jn. 5:38; Jn. 5:44; Jn. 5:46; Jn. 5:47; Jn. 6:29; Jn. 6:30; Jn. 6:35; Jn. 6:36; Jn. 6:40; Jn. 6:47; Jn. 6:64; Jn. 6:69; Jn. 7:5; Jn. 7:31; Jn. 7:38; Jn. 7:39; Jn. 7:48; Jn. 8:24; Jn. 8:30; Jn. 8:31; Jn. 8:45; Jn. 8:46; Jn. 9:18; Jn. 9:35; Jn. 9:36; Jn. 9:38; Jn. 10:25; Jn. 10:26; Jn. 10:37; Jn. 10:38; Jn. 10:42; Jn. 11:15; Jn. 11:25; Jn. 11:26; Jn. 11:27; Jn. 11:40; Jn. 11:42; Jn. 11:45; Jn. 11:48; Jn. 12:11; Jn. 12:36; Jn. 12:37; Jn. 12:38; Jn. 12:39; Jn. 12:42; Jn. 12:44; Jn. 12:46; Jn. 13:19; Jn. 14:1; Jn. 14:10; Jn. 14:11; Jn. 14:12; Jn. 14:29; Jn. 16:9; Jn. 16:27; Jn. 16:30; Jn. 16:31; Jn. 17:8; Jn. 17:20; Jn. 17:21; Jn. 19:35; Jn. 20:8; Jn. 20:25; Jn. 20:29; Jn. 20:31 = " these have been written so that **you may believe** that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that **believing** you may have life in His Name." (cf Christ, our life - Col 3:4+).

**Testified** (witnessed) ([3140](#)) ([martureo](#) from **mártus** = witness = one who has information or knowledge of something and can bring to light or confirm something. English = **martyr**) in its most basic sense refers to a legal witness. Thus the verb **martureo** means to be a witness, to testify, to give evidence, to give testimony, to bear record, to affirm that one has seen or heard or experienced something. The words testified related to fact, not opinion, as in a courtroom setting. In ancient Greek literature the bearing of witness was related to the confirmation of an event. One bore witness to support the truth of an event. **Martureo** is a **key verb** used more in John than in the synoptic Gospels combined -Jn. 1:7; Jn. 1:8; Jn. 1:15; Jn. 1:32; Jn. 1:34; Jn. 2:25; Jn. 3:11; Jn. 3:26; Jn. 3:28; Jn. 3:32; Jn. 4:39; Jn. 4:44; Jn. 5:31; Jn. 5:32; Jn. 5:33; Jn. 5:36; Jn. 5:37; Jn. 5:39; Jn. 7:7; Jn. 8:13; Jn. 8:14; Jn. 8:18; Jn. 10:25; Jn. 12:17; Jn. 13:21; Jn. 15:26; Jn. 15:27; Jn. 18:23; Jn. 18:37; Jn. 19:35; Jn. 21:24;

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## **Billy Graham - ONE WOMAN'S TESTIMONY JOHN 4:39**

The striking thing about this great revival at Sychar, when an entire city listened to the Gospel, is how God used a former sinner like this woman to be an evangelist. The disciples had gone to the city, and there had been little interest in them.

However, an hour or two later a woman who had been a prostitute threw the entire population into a ferment of excitement; and in a few minutes they were streaming out to meet with Christ. God had not chosen to use the church leaders. He had chosen to use a former prostitute.

As we look at history time and again, we are struck time after time by the fact that God has used the most unlikely and the most unworthy instruments to bring about spiritual awakening.

Time after time the principle is found exemplified that Paul laid down in 1 Corinthians: "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the . . . mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are" (1 Corinthians 1:27–28).

Thus, no matter how sinful or unworthy we may feel today, God can use us. Throughout history God has chosen ordinary people and unworthy people and the least likely people.

If God could use such a woman two thousand years ago to bring a revival to the city of Sychar, how much more God could use you and me today if we would put ourselves in His hand! He can use us in our communities, our towns, our cities, our country, our world!

Our Father and our God, thank You for using people like me to spread Your Word to the world. I am the least likely person, I know, to be used for such a glorious work. Show me what You want me to do, Lord, and I'll do it. I know I can do it through the strength of Christ Jesus, my Lord. Amen.

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## **Cyril Hocking - John 4:39–42 THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD**

WE READ THAT both the disciples and the woman had gone 'into the city', vv. 8 (lit), 28. But there the similarity ended: the disciples had gone to bring 'meat' (i.e. 'food'), v. 8; the woman had gone to bring 'men', v. 28. They had sought provisions; she had sought people. To them, Sychar comprised shops and furnished the opportunity to purchase; to her, Sychar comprised souls and furnished the opportunity to witness. What do I see when I am in town?

The men of Sychar not only 'came to him', v. 30, and 'believed' on him', v. 39, but 'they besought him that he would tarry with them', v. 40; cf. Matt. 8:34. How marked the contrast between these Samaritans and those of the Samaritan village who 'did not receive him', Luke 9:52–53.

How blessed the men of Sychar were in return. Although as a general and temporary rule, the Lord and His apostles did not enter 'into any city of the Samaritans' to preach, Matt. 10:5, this particular city benefited from His presence for two whole days. 'He abode there', John 4:40: oh, that He might 'abide with us' too, Luke 24:29.

The high watermark of the Lord's journey through Samaria comes in the very last words of the section—'we . . . know that this is . . . the Saviour of the world', v. 42. The woman at the well had progressed in her appreciation of Jesus from 'a Jew', to 'a prophet', to 'the Christ', vv. 9, 19, 25–26, but the men of the city, with the advantage of two days of His own instruction, reached even higher and confessed Him as 'the Saviour of the world'; that is, of the human race, the 'world' of men which God loved so much, 3:16. It was not to judge this world but to save it that He had been sent and that He had come, 3:17; 12:47. Although 'salvation is of the Jews', v. 22, it is by no means exclusively for the Jews and the faith of the men of Sychar embraced One whose saving ministry, though encompassing Israel, Acts 13:23, is certainly not confined to it. In company with the author of the Gospel, they saw and testified that He had been sent to be 'the Saviour of the world', 1 John 4:14. Adequate provision has been made for the whole world, 2:2; the salvation of God knows no national barriers and no racial discrimination, Acts 28:28.

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## **John 4:27-39 Barriers And Blessings**

Many . . . believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did." —  
John 4:39

What did Jesus see when He looked at the woman at the well in John 4? He saw someone who wanted acceptance and desperately needed to know she was loved. Most of all, He saw someone who needed what only He could give—a new heart.

It was no accident that the disciples had all gone to town to buy food. Surely, they would have tried to warn Jesus not to talk to this person—a woman, a Samaritan, and someone with a bad reputation.

Not being one to follow protocol, however, Jesus used this encounter to bless her with the truth of “living water” (John 4:10). In just one conversation, He broke down barriers of old hostilities, of gender bias, of ethnic and racial divides. And this woman became the first of many Samaritans to confess that Jesus was the Messiah (vv.39-42).

When she told others of her encounter with a Man who knew “all that I ever did,” she was already practicing the principle of “sowing and reaping” that Jesus was teaching His followers (John 4:35-38). Many believed that day, and later Philip, Peter, John, and others would preach in Samaria and lead many more to Christ (Acts 8:5-14; 15:3).

When we tell others of our own “encounter” with Jesus, we bless them with living water. By Cindy Hess Kasper [Our Daily Bread](#).  
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From sinking sand He lifted me,  
With tender hand He lifted me;  
From shades of night to plains of light,  
O praise His name, He lifted me!  
—Gabriel

**John 4:40 So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days.**

BGT John 4:40 ς ο ν λθον πρ ς α τ ν ο Σαμαρται, ρ των α τ ν με ναι παρ α το ς· κα μεινεν κε δ ο μ ρ ας.

NET John 4:40 So when the Samaritans came to him, they began asking him to stay with them. He stayed there two days,

NLT John 4:40 When they came out to see him, they begged him to stay in their village. So he stayed for two days,

ESV John 4:40 So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days.

NIV John 4:40 So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days.

GNT John 4:40 ς ο ν λθον πρ ς α τ ν ο Σαμαρται, ρ των α τ ν με ναι παρ α το ς· κα μεινεν κε δ ο μ ρ ας.

KJV John 4:40 So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days.

YLT John 4:40 When, then, the Samaritans came unto him, they were asking him to remain with them, and he remained there two days;

ASV John 4:40 So when the Samaritans came unto him, they besought him to abide with them: and he abode there two days.

CSB John 4:40 Therefore, when the Samaritans came to Him, they asked Him to stay with them, and He stayed there two days.

NKJ John 4:40 So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days.

NRS John 4:40 So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days.

NAB John 4:40 When the Samaritans came to him, they invited him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days.

NJB John 4:40 So, when the Samaritans came up to him, they begged him to stay with them. He stayed for two days, and

GWN John 4:40 So when the Samaritans went to Jesus, they asked him to stay with them. He stayed in Samaria for two days.

- **they** : Ge 32:26 Pr 4:13 Song 3:4 Jer 14:8 Lu 8:38 10:39 24:29 Ac 16:15
- **He stayed there two days**: Lu 19:5-10 2Co 6:1,2 Rev 3:20

- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JESUS STAYS IN SAMARIA!

**So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days-** Asking is [erotao](#) in the imperfect tense picturing these "former enemies" of the Jewish people asking this Jewish man over and over to stay with them! This is the power of the Gospel in transforming a heart! And so this is an incredible statement in light of the intense animosity and outright hatred between Jews and Samaritans.

Clearly Jesus was teaching (by example) His disciples that while He came **to** the Jews, was **from** the Jews, but was not just **FOR** the Jews, but was **for all** races of mankind (Jn 3:16+). Can you just imagine having Jesus in your city for two days! Clearly He was welcomed by the many believers. Jesus knew that while many had believed because of the word of the woman, the fields were still white for harvest and He would use His Word as the "harvesting implement!"

**Robertson** - They wanted to cultivate the acquaintance of Jesus. So he remained in Sychar in a continuous revival, a most unexpected experience when one recalls the feeling between the Jews and the Samaritans (Jn 4:9). The reaping went on gloriously. ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**Steven Cole** - In light of the centuries of hostility between Samaritans and Jews, the Samaritans' warm acceptance of Jesus is amazing. The Holy Spirit can break down barriers that the world has erected. Just as Nathanael had to "come and see" Jesus for himself (1:46), so now at the woman's invitation to "come," the Samaritans came to Jesus and came to believe that He is the Savior of the world.

### John 4:41 Many more believed because of His word;

BGT John 4:41 κα πολλ πλε ους π στευσαν δι τ ν λ γον α το ,

NET John 4:41 and because of his word many more believed.

NLT John 4:41 long enough for many more to hear his message and believe.

ESV John 4:41 And many more believed because of his word.

NIV John 4:41 And because of his words many more became believers.

GNT John 4:41 κα πολλ πλε ους π στευσαν δι τ ν λ γον α το ,

KJV John 4:41 And many more believed because of his own word;

YLT John 4:41 and many more did believe because of his word,

ASV John 4:41 And many more believed because of his word;

CSB John 4:41 Many more believed because of what He said.

NKJ John 4:41 And many more believed because of His own word.

NRS John 4:41 And many more believed because of his word.

NAB John 4:41 Many more began to believe in him because of his word,

NJB John 4:41 many more came to believe on the strength of the words he spoke to them;

GWN John 4:41 Many more Samaritans believed because of what Jesus said.

- many: Ge 49:10 Ac 1:8 8:12,25 15:3
- because: Joh 6:63 7:46 Mt 7:28,29 Lu 4:32 1Co 2:4,5 Heb 4:13
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## BELIEF IN JESUS' WORD

**Many more believed** ([pisteuo](#)) **because of His word** - Note **Many** in Jn 4:40 and **many** in this passage. The city of Sychar must

have experienced and incredible transformation with so many believers! Presumably these were Samaritans who did not hear the woman's testimony, but came to Him in the city and heard **His word** of salvation and **believed** in Him. **His Word** is tantamount to the Gospel or Good News of salvation available to all who believed in Him, the **Word** incarnate (Jn 1:1+ >> Jn 1:14+).

**John 4:42 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."**

BGT John 4:42 τ τε γυναικ λεγον τι ο κτι δι τ ν σ ν λαλι ν πιστε ομεν, α το γ ρ κηκ αμεν κα ο δαμεν τι ο τ ς σπιν ληθ ς σωτ ρ το κ σμου.

NET John 4:42 They said to the woman, "No longer do we believe because of your words, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this one really is the Savior of the world."

NLT John 4:42 Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not just because of what you told us, but because we have heard him ourselves. Now we know that he is indeed the Savior of the world."

ESV John 4:42 They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world."

NIV John 4:42 They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."

GNT John 4:42 τ τε γυναικ λεγον τι Ο κτι δι τ ν σ ν λαλι ν πιστε ομεν· α το γ ρ κηκ αμεν κα ο δαμεν τι ο τ ς σπιν ληθ ς σωτ ρ το κ σμου.

KJV John 4:42 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.

YLT John 4:42 and said to the woman -- 'No more because of thy speaking do we believe; for we ourselves have heard and known that this is truly the Saviour of the world -- the Christ.'

ASV John 4:42 and they said to the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy speaking: for we have heard for ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world.

CSB John 4:42 And they told the woman, "We no longer believe because of what you said, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this really is the Savior of the world."

NKJ John 4:42 Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."

NRS John 4:42 They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world."

NAB John 4:42 and they said to the woman, "We no longer believe because of your word; for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the savior of the world."

NJB John 4:42 and they said to the woman, 'Now we believe no longer because of what you told us; we have heard him ourselves and we know that he is indeed the Saviour of the world.'

GWN John 4:42 They told the woman, "Our faith is no longer based on what you've said. We have heard him ourselves, and we know that he really is the savior of the world."

- **for** : Joh 1:45-49 17:8 Ac 17:11,12
- **and know**: Joh 4:29 Jn 1:29 Jn 3:14-18 Jn 6:68,69 Jn 11:17 Isa 45:22 52:10 Lu 2:10,11,32 Ac 4:12 Ro 10:11-13 2Co 5:19 1Jn 4:14
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#### Related Passages:

John 3:14 "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; 15so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life. 16"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. 17 "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. 18"Whoever believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the

name of the only begotten Son of God.

## **SAMARITANS' UNDERSTAND JESUS MISSION IS THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD**

and they were saying to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe (see [pisteuo](#) above) - Her word, what you said, was a link in the chain in the salvation of many of her fellow townsmen, but ultimately it was the words of Jesus.

**THOUGHT** - In the same way, while our personal testimony points to Jesus, it is not our testimony that saves, but it is Jesus alone that saves (Acts 4:12+). It therefore behooves us to be diligent to point to the Savior when we give our testimony to others!

**MacArthur** points out that "Such words were not intended to denigrate her testimony, but rather to indicate that their time with Jesus confirmed it." (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**Merrill Tenney** makes an excellent point that "These few verses indicate two necessary and interrelated bases for belief: (1) the testimony of others and (2) personal contact with Jesus... "No longer" implies that they maintained their belief in him, but not solely on the basis of the woman's testimony. They had progressed from a faith built on the witness of another to a faith built on their own experience. (See [The Expositor's Bible Commentary](#) scroll up and down for more pages)

*Testimony helps. But to "know," we have to come to Jesus for ourselves.*

-- Larry Richards

**Leon Morris** - The woman might introduce them to Jesus, but faith is not faith as long as it rests on the testimony of another. There must be personal knowledge of Christ if there is to be an authentic Christian experience. The incident forms something of an exemplification of Jesus' words in verses Jn 4:37-38. (BORROW [The Gospel according to John : NICNT](#)).

*There is a secondhand, by-proxy knowledge of the Lord as a report but not as a reality.*

-- Vance Havner

**For** (term of explanation) **we have heard for ourselves and know ([eido](#)) that this One is indeed the Savior ([soter](#)) of the world ([kosmos](#))** - The woman had called Jesus a prophet. Jesus called Himself the Messiah. And here the people of Samaria have had the eyes of their heart opened by the Spirit to recognize and acknowledge that Jesus was the Savior of the world. He was not just the **Savior** of Jews, but of Jews and Gentiles. It is surprising that this is the only use of Savior in the Gospel of John (the only other uses in the 4 Gospels are in Lk 1:47+, Lk 2:11+). The use of the word Savior conveyed the idea of deliverance. These Samaritans had been worshipping God using a truncated Old Testament and were therefore not really worshipping the True God. Now the True God Jesus had come on the scene as their Deliverer from their spiritual darkness to light.

**Vance Havner** - Our Lord said to Pilate, "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?" (John 18:34). Is your knowledge of Jesus Christ second-hand or is it your own? It was said of Thomas Chalmers that he had "an original experience of Jesus Christ." It is original or nothing. The people of Sychar said to the Samaritan 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" (John 4:42)

**Grant Osborne** makes an interesting comparison with a previous group of "believers" (who in fact were not true believers) - Note also how their faith was centered on his words and not just his miraculous signs (contra those of John 2:23-24-see comments). This culminates in their confession of Jesus as "Savior of the world." This concludes not just the story of the Samaritan mission but the whole of Jn 1:35-4:42. The "one and only Son" sent by God to provide salvation for mankind (Jn 3:16-17) alone removes the sin of the world (Jn 1:29). The one who has become the living Word and provided the living water (Jn 1:1, 18; 4:10), the one who has shed the light of God on every person (Jn 1:4, 7, 8) is indeed the "Savior of the world" (also 1 John 4:14). This would especially be true for the Samaritans who recognized that their taheb (see [commentary](#)) was also the Jewish Messiah and, therefore, the only Messiah for the whole world. (See [The Gospel of John](#))

**Leon Morris** on ([soter](#)) of the world ([kosmos](#))- The expression "sums up the main point of this chapter—that the conversion of Samaritans is the first sign of the universality of salvation in Christ" (Bailey). This is "a great insight from a little people" (Beasley-Murray). Newbigin has an apt comment: "And so what was hidden from the wise and understanding Nicodemus is revealed to these spiritual babes, and while scribes and Pharisees stand aside, the pagan world flecks into the kingdom."

The only other use of the glorious phrase Savior of the world is in John's first epistle...

We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the **Savior of the world**. (1 John 4:14+)

**Comment** - One wonders if John's declaration here was stirred by memories of their great Samaritan

experience?

The abundant harvest of Samaritan souls recalls Jesus' words later in John's gospel...

(Jn 10:16) "**I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also**, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd.

(Jn 11:51-52) Now he did not say this on his own initiative, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation, 52 and not for the nation (ISRAEL) only, but in order that He might also gather together into one **the children of God who are scattered abroad**.

**ESV Study Bible** has an excellent note calling attention to "the pattern of Jesus' mission according to John—from Judea (Nicodemus, John 3:1–15), to Samaria (Jn 4:1–42), to the Gentiles (Jn 4:46–54; cf. Jn 12:20–33)—anticipates the post-Pentecost mission of the early church (cf. Acts 1:8+ = "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."). (BORROW [ESV Study Bible](#))

**Brian Bell** - The term "**Savior of the world**" often was used of the Roman emperor ([Spiritual Dehydration](#))

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**Know** ([1492](#))([eido](#)) means to know beyond a shadow of a doubt.

**Savior** ([4990](#))([soter](#) from [sozo](#) = rescue from peril > from [saos](#) = safe; delivered) refers to the agent of salvation or deliverance, the one who rescues, delivers, saves and preserves. Anyone who saves or delivers can be called a deliverer or rescuer (a soter). The word "Savior" is applied to the Father (Luke 1:47; 1 Tim. 1:1, etc.) as well as to the Son, The **Exegetical Dictionary** notes that "In secular Greek usage the gods are deliverers both as helpers of human beings and as protectors of collective entities (e.g., cities); this is the case with Zeus, Apollo, Poseidon, the Dioscuri Castor and Pollux, Heracles, Asclepius as the helper of the sick, and Serapis; it is true also for philosophers (Dio Chrysostom Or. 32.8) and statesmen (Thucydides v.11.1; Plutarch Cor. 11, also in inscriptions and elsewhere). In the Hellenistic ruler cult "theos soter" (god our savior) is attested in writings and inscriptions as a title of the Ptolemies and Seleucids. Inscriptions in the eastern part of the Empire called Pompey "Soter and Founder," Caesar "Soter of the World," and Augustus "Soter of Humankind." Hadrian had the title "Soter of the Kosmos" ([Balz, H. R., & Schneider, G. . Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans](#)) Greeks used **soter** as a title of divinities such as Asclepius, the god of healing. **Soter** was used by the mystery religions to refer to their divinities. At an early date **soter** was used as a title of honor for deserving men, e.g., Epicurus (300BC) was called "**soter**" by his followers. As discussed below, soter was used as a designation of the "deified" ruler, e.g., [Ptolemy I Soter](#) (323-285BC).

**All 24 uses of soter** all translated **Savior** - Lk. 1:47; Lk. 2:11; Jn. 4:42; Acts 5:31; Acts 13:23; Eph. 5:23; Phil. 3:20; 1 Tim. 1:1; 1 Tim. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:10; 2 Tim. 1:10; Tit. 1:3; Tit. 1:4; Tit. 2:10; Tit. 2:13; Tit. 3:4; Tit. 3:6; 2 Pet. 1:1; 2 Pet. 1:11; 2 Pet. 2:20; 2 Pet. 3:2; 2 Pet. 3:18; 1 Jn. 4:14; Jude 1:25

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**Vance Havner - "By Heart" or "by Hearsay"?**

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. John 4:42.

The Samaritans "believed" (v. 39), and now they knew the Saviour "by heart," for themselves. There is a secondhand, by-proxy knowledge of the Lord as a report but not as a reality. Andrew and Philip were not content for Peter and Nathanael to know Jesus by hearsay, they brought Peter and Nathanael to the Lord Himself. We have heard and believed the report of Him, and we must, for "faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." But how many in our churches have had a personal encounter with the Saviour?

The Samaritan woman, like Philip, said, "Come and see." Much of our personal work, our Sunday-school teaching, our preaching, falls short of that. We disseminate information about Jesus, but we often fail to clinch the matter by bringing men and women into His presence. True, they cannot see Him as the Samaritans saw Him. But they can believe on Him and know Him "by heart," as they did.

And how often is the "deeper Christian life," or whatever you may call it, hearsay? We have heard it in a sermon, read it in a book; but that is all. Job knew it "by heart," not hearsay, when he cried: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear but now mine eye seeth thee."

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**John 4:43 After the two days He went forth from there into Galilee.**

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BGT John 4:43 Μετ ὅτι δύο ἡμέρας ἔλθεν ἐκεῖ εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν·

NET John 4:43 After the two days he departed from there to Galilee.

NLT John 4:43 At the end of the two days, Jesus went on to Galilee.

ESV John 4:43 After the two days he departed for Galilee.

NIV John 4:43 After the two days he left for Galilee.

GNT John 4:43 Μετ ὅτι δύο ἡμέρας ἔλθεν ἐκεῖ εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν·

KJV John 4:43 Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee.

YLT John 4:43 And after the two days he went forth thence, and went away to Galilee,

ASV John 4:43 And after the two days he went forth from thence into Galilee.

CSB John 4:43 After two days He left there for Galilee.

NKJ John 4:43 Now after the two days He departed from there and went to Galilee.

NRS John 4:43 When the two days were over, he went from that place to Galilee

NAB John 4:43 After the two days, he left there for Galilee.

NJB John 4:43 When the two days were over Jesus left for Galilee.

GWN John 4:43 After spending two days in Samaria, Jesus left for Galilee.

BBE John 4:43 And after the two days he went on from there into Galilee.

- two): Mt 15:21-24 Mk 7:27,28 Ro 15:8
- and: Joh 4:46 1:42 Mt 4:13
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## BACK TO GALILEE

**After the two days He went forth from there into Galilee-** After two days in Sychar with the new Samaritan believers He headed for Galilee. See the [map above](#) for Galilee, where He had spent His childhood. Recall that Samaria was a side trip for in John 4:3 we read that "He left Judea and went away again into Galilee." And what a profitable side trip it proved to be! This area of Galilee was known as **Galil ha goyim** or Galilee of the Gentiles.

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### John Henry Jowett - PRAYER AND REVOLUTION John 4:43-54.

THIS miracle began in a prayer. The nobleman went unto Jesus "and besought Him." In such apparently fragile things can mighty revolutions be born! "Prayer," said Tennyson, "opens the sluice-gates between us and the Infinite." It brings the frail wire into contact with the battery. It links together man and God.

Prayer was corroborated by belief. "The man believed the word that Jesus spake unto him." By our faith we cut the channels along which the healing energy will flow. Faith "prepares the way of the Lord." Our faith is purposed to be a fellow-laborer with grace, and, if faith be absent, grace "can do no mighty works."

The healing begins with the faith. "It was at the same hour in which ... he himself believed." These "coincidences" are inevitable happenings in the realm of the Spirit. When we offer the believing prayer, God's mighty energies begin to besiege the life for which the prayer is made. Mr. Cornaby, the Methodist missionary, declares how conscious he is in far-away China when someone is interceding for him in the home-land! The power possesses him in vitalizing flood! Hudson Taylor's mother shuts herself in a little room to pray, and eighty miles away her son is converted.

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### Larry Richard - The Dilemma of Faith (John 4:43-54)

Nobody ever said having faith was easy. Certainly the Apostle John didn't say so. In fact, this story shows just how difficult it is.

Just glance through the story and you see first of all a frantic father hurrying to find Jesus. His son was close to death, and the only one who could possibly save him was Jesus!

When he finally did find Jesus, Christ didn't seem very sympathetic. "Unless you people see miraculous signs and wonders," He said, "you will never believe." The saying wasn't a rebuke. Jesus didn't question the frantic father's motives. In fact, the saying is intended to stimulate faith! For when the father begged Him again to come, Jesus simply said, "You may go. Your son will live" (v. 50).

This is the dilemma of faith.

God, in response to our desperate appeals, speaks to us and says, "You may go." In other words, "It's done. Go home and you'll find the sick healed." And what is there for us to do?

If we keep begging Jesus to come with us, we display unbelief. But to go means to head home with no evidence at all that the promised healing has taken place! How terrifying a choice. Do we keep asking after Jesus has said, "You may go"? Or do we leave, trembling, believing despite the lack of proof?

The royal official made the choice of faith. On the way excited messengers met him. His son was recovering. The fever had broken—at the exact hour Jesus had told him, "You may go."

Faith is still very much the same. We come to God desperate for salvation. And all He says is, "You may go." The work is done, your healing accomplished. And, though we lack evidence then, if we are wise we turn, in faith, and walk away as Jesus said.

But later we discover to our joy just how completely Jesus has performed His miracle within.

Personal Application -- Believe. And go.

Quotable -- "It is the heart that senses God, and not the reason. That is what faith is. God perceptible to the heart and not to reason."—Blaise Pascal

#### Jon 4:44 For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country.

BGT John 4:44 α τ ς γ ρ η σο ς μα ρτ ρη σεν τι προ φ της ν τ δ πα τρ δι τι μ ν ο κ χει.

NET John 4:44 (For Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country.)

NLT John 4:44 He himself had said that a prophet is not honored in his own hometown.

ESV John 4:44 (For Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in his own hometown.)

NIV John 4:44 (Now Jesus himself had pointed out that a prophet has no honor in his own country.)

GNT John 4:44 α τ ς γ ρ η σο ς μα ρτ ρη σεν τι προ φ της ν τ δ πα τρ δι τι μ ν ο κ χει.

KJV John 4:44 For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country.

YLT John 4:44 for Jesus himself testified that a prophet in his own country shall not have honour;

ASV John 4:44 For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honor in his own country.

CSB John 4:44 Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country.

NKJ John 4:44 For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country.

NRS John 4:44 (for Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in the prophet's own country).

NAB John 4:44 For Jesus himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his native place.

NJB John 4:44 He himself had declared that a prophet is not honoured in his own home town.

GWN John 4:44 Jesus had said that a prophet is not honored in his own country.

- **that:** Mt 13:57 Mk 6:4 Lu 4:24
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#### Related Passages:

Matthew 21:11 And the crowds were saying, "This is the **prophet** Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee."

John 7:52 They answered him, "You are not also from Galilee, are you? Search, and see that no **prophet** arises out of Galilee."

## AN UNPOPULAR PROPHET

**For Jesus Himself testified** ([martureo](#)) **that a prophet** ([prophetes](#)) **has no honor in his own country** - There was increasing hostility in His own country of Judea from the jealous, hypocritical religious leaders.

**A T Robertson** - John's explanation of the conduct of Jesus by quoting a proverb often used by Jesus Mark 6:4; Matt. 13:57; Luke 4:24 in reference to Nazareth), but not necessarily used by Jesus on this occasion. ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**Grant Osborne** on **no honor** - At first glance, this statement appears to contradict Jn 4:45, for it says prophets are not honored, while Jn 4:45 says "the Galileans welcomed him." Several solutions have been suggested: (1) His "own hometown" is Judea since he was born in Bethlehem of Judea, so that he had no honor there but was made welcome in Galilee (Origen, Westcott, Hoskyns, Sanders, Lindars). John, however, emphasized Jesus' Galilean roots (Jn 1:46; 2:1; 7:41–42) and said nothing of his Judean birth. (2) It was added by a later redactor (Brown). This explanation is unnecessary in light of the flow of the text; there is no true contradiction. (3) The lack of honor comes from this world as a whole, and Jesus' "homeland" is heaven (Lightfoot, Morris). Yet while this is certainly true in John as a whole, there is no indication this is the meaning here, and if true, it could even necessitate the idea that Jesus is not honored in heaven, his "homeland." The earth/heaven distinction is not in the immediate context. (4) His "**own country**" is "Jewish soil" (both Galilee and Judea, so Carson, Blomberg, Burge, Köstenberger), and the contrast is between true reception (Jn 1:11) and an ironic, apparent reception (Jn 4:45; see commentary below). This is probably the best interpretation since it fits the context better than the others. (See [The Gospel of John](#))

**John MacArthur** - The proverbial statement a **prophet has no honor in his own country** (cf. Luke 4:24) contrasts Jesus' acceptance by the Samaritans with His general rejection by the Jewish people (1:11). It also explains His motive for returning to His home region of Galilee (as the conjunction *gar* [for] indicates). At first glance it seems somewhat perplexing that Jesus went to Galilee because, as He Himself testified, He would receive no honor there. The point, however, is that Jesus was not taken by surprise when many in His home region rejected Him. He went there knowing that He would be given a cold reception, especially at Nazareth, where He had been raised (Luke 4:16ff.). But some in Galilee would believe and, therefore, honor Him. (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**Blum** - Generally Galilee was more favorable to Him, but even there men tried to kill Him (Luke 4:18–30+). (SEE [Bible Knowledge Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**Wiersbe** - Jesus knew that the public response to His ministry in Jerusalem had been insincere and shallow (John 2:23–25), and that it was not honoring to Him at all. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Swindoll** - John inserted his editorial aside to highlight the irony of the Jews' rejection so soon after Jesus had enjoyed great success among the Samaritans. ([Insights on John](#) - pages omitted)

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### **Robert Neighbor - Ye Receive Honor of Men**

"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (John 4:44).

We are finding out the real reasons why men are not saved; not the reasons they themselves give. The fourth reason men are not saved is because they receive the honor of men.

How can men who receive honor from men be Christ's disciples? How can those who desire to make themselves of reputation, become disciples of the One who makes Himself of no reputation?

When a lost sinner comes to Christ, he comes ready to take his place outside the camp, bearing Christ's reproach.

To all men who believe, it is given to suffer. To all men who receive Christ, is promised tribulation. Therefore, those who love the praise of men more than the praise of God, cannot be saved, and those who would rather have man's approval than God's approval cannot be saved.

**John 4:45 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.**

εροσολ μοις ν τ ορτ , κα ατο γ ρ λθον ε ς τ ν ορτ ν.

NET John 4:45 So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him because they had seen all the things he had done in Jerusalem at the feast (for they themselves had gone to the feast).

NLT John 4:45 Yet the Galileans welcomed him, for they had been in Jerusalem at the Passover celebration and had seen everything he did there.

ESV John 4:45 So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast. For they too had gone to the feast.

NIV John 4:45 When he arrived in Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him. They had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, for they also had been there.

GNT John 4:45 τε ο ν λθεν ε ς τ ν Γαλιλα αν, δ ξαντο α τ ν ο Γαλιλα οι π ντα ωρακ τες σα πο ησεν ν εροσολ μοις ν τ ορτ , κα ατο γ ρ λθον ε ς τ ν ορτ ν.

KJV John 4:45 Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galilaeans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.

YLT John 4:45 when then, he came to Galilee, the Galileans received him, having seen all things that he did in Jerusalem in the feast -- for they also went to the feast.

ASV John 4:45 So when he came into Galilee, the Galilaeans received him, having seen all the things that he did in Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.

CSB John 4:45 When they entered Galilee, the Galileans welcomed Him because they had seen everything He did in Jerusalem during the festival. For they also had gone to the festival.

NKJ John 4:45 So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they also had gone to the feast.

NRS John 4:45 When he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, since they had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the festival; for they too had gone to the festival.

NAB John 4:45 When he came into Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, since they had seen all he had done in Jerusalem at the feast; for they themselves had gone to the feast.

NJB John 4:45 On his arrival the Galileans received him well, having seen all that he had done at Jerusalem during the festival which they too had attended.

GWN John 4:45 But when Jesus arrived in Galilee, the people of Galilee welcomed him. They had seen everything he had done at the festival in Jerusalem, since they, too, had attended the festival.

- **the Galilaeans:** Mt 4:23,24 Lu 8:40
- **having:** Joh 2:13-16,23 3:2
- for (KJV): De 16:16 Lu 2:42-44 9:53
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him-** This means they welcomed Him, not that they **received Him** as Savior (cf received Him" in Jn 1:12+)

**Received** (1209)(**dechomai** = **middle voice** of a primary verb) means to to receive something offered or transmitted by another (Luke 2:28). To take something into one's hand and so to grasp (Luke 2:28, 22:17). To be receptive to someone (Mt 10:14, 40). To take a favorable attitude toward something (Mt 11:14).

**Having seen all the things that He did in Jerusalem at the feast-** John explains why they welcomed Him. It was because they were looking for a miracle worker, not a Savior from their sins. John had recorded "when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, **observing His signs** which He was doing. But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men, and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man." (Jn 2:23-25+)

**MacArthur** - They were curiosity seekers, eagerly hoping to see Jesus perform some more sensational feats. Thus the apostle John writes with a sense of irony; the Galileans' reception of Jesus was not genuine, but superficial and shallow....As this incident demonstrates, the reception of the Galileans, like that of most Judeans (Jn 2:23–25), was superficial, curious, thrill-seeking, non-saving, sign-based interest. (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**Blum** adds that "the people's enthusiasm for the Healer (cf. Mark 5:21, 24b) did not always indicate they had faith in Him (Mark 6:1–6)." (SEE [Bible Knowledge Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**For they themselves also went to the feast** - In other words, these Galileans who welcomed Jesus had been at the Passover Feast. "The miracles of Jesus at that first passover made a stir." (Robertson [John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**John 4:46 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.**

BGT John 4:46 λθεν ο ν π λιν ε ς τ ν Καν τ ς Γαλιλα ας, που πο ησεν τ δωρ ο νον. Κα ν τις βασιλικ ς ο υ ς σθ νει ν Καφαρναο μ.

NET John 4:46 Now he came again to Cana in Galilee where he had made the water wine. In Capernaum there was a certain royal official whose son was sick.

NLT John 4:46 As he traveled through Galilee, he came to Cana, where he had turned the water into wine. There was a government official in nearby Capernaum whose son was very sick.

ESV John 4:46 So he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. And at Capernaum there was an official whose son was ill.

NIV John 4:46 Once more he visited Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. And there was a certain royal official whose son lay sick at Capernaum.

GNT John 4:46 λθεν ο ν π λιν ε ς τ ν Καν τ ς Γαλιλα ας, που πο ησεν τ δωρ ο νον. κα ν τις βασιλικ ς ο υ ς σθ νει ν Καφαρναο μ.

KJV John 4:46 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.

YLT John 4:46 Jesus came, therefore, again to Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine, and there was a certain courtier, whose son was ailing in Capernaum,

ASV John 4:46 He came therefore again unto Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.

CSB John 4:46 Then He went again to Cana of Galilee, where He had turned the water into wine. There was a certain royal official whose son was ill at Capernaum.

NKJ John 4:46 So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum.

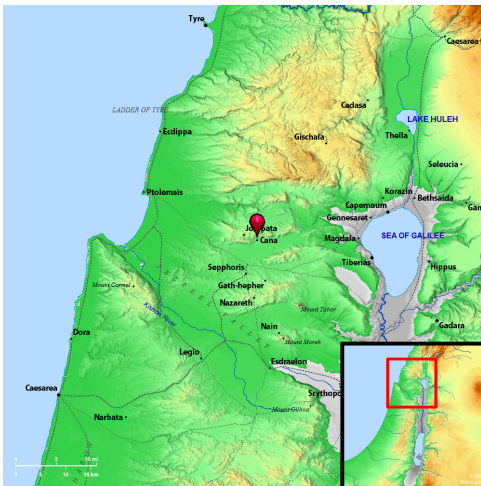
NRS John 4:46 Then he came again to Cana in Galilee where he had changed the water into wine. Now there was a royal official whose son lay ill in Capernaum.

NAB John 4:46 Then he returned to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. Now there was a royal official whose son was ill in Capernaum.

NJB John 4:46 He went again to Cana in Galilee, where he had changed the water into wine. And there was a royal official whose son was ill at Capernaum;

GWN John 4:46 Jesus returned to the city of Cana in Galilee, where he had changed water into wine. A government official was in Cana. His son was sick in Capernaum.

- **Cana:** Joh 2:1-11 21:2 Jos 19:28
- whose: Ps 50:15 78:34 Ho 5:15 Mt 9:18 15:22 17:14,15 Lu 7:2 8:42
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



POSSIBLE LOCATION OF CANA

## AN OFFICIAL WITH AN URGENT NEED

Jesus is good with "urgent needs." Do you have one?

**Therefore He came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine**- This is His second visit to **Cana** of Galilee. John 2:11+ said this was the "beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him. ([More on Cana](#) - see also [clickable map](#))

**Vincent on Cana** - Note the article **the Cana**, (To distinguish it from Cana in Coëlo-Syria). The article defines **the Cana** previously referred to (John 2). ([John 4 Commentary](#))

**Wiersbe** asks "Why did Jesus return to Cana? Perhaps He wanted to cultivate the "seed" He had planted there when He attended the wedding feast. Nathanael came from Cana, so perhaps there was a personal reason for this visit." ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**And there was a royal official whose son was sick at Capernaum** - Royal official is actually an adjective meaning royal and is derived from basileus or king. **Robertson** says the **nobleman** was "One connected with the king (basileus), whether by blood or by office. Probably here it is one of the courtiers of Herod the tetrarch of Galilee." ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#)) See **Capernaum** in the map above to the East of **Cana**. **Was sick** is [astheneo](#) (*a* = not + *sthenos* = strength) in the imperfect tense indicating a continuing illness.

**NET Note** - Capernaum was a town on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, 680 ft (204 m) below sea level. It was a major trade and economic center in the North Galilean region.

**Tenney** has an interesting thought on this **royal official** - It is possible that the official was a Gentile. If so, the three persons Jesus interviewed in this early ministry represented the Jews, the Samaritans, and the Gentiles—in short, the world he came to save. John's Gospel, though it chronicles chiefly the ministry of Jesus in Jerusalem, has a much wider horizon than the area of his residence.

**NET Note on royal official** - Although βασιλικός (basilikos) has often been translated "nobleman" it is almost certainly refers here to a servant of Herod, tetrarch of Galilee (who in the NT is called a king, Matt 14:9, Mark 6:14–29). Capernaum was a border town, so doubtless there were many administrative officials in residence there.

CONTRAST OF TWO SIMILAR MIRACLES	
<b>John 4:46-54</b>	<b>Mt 8:5-13+</b>
Royal official	Centurion
Son healed	Slave healed
Official's faith initially inadequate (v48)	Centurion's faith strong

"He, bounteous of thy faith, for not misspent  
Is confidence unto the Father lent;  
Thy need is sown and rooted for His rain...  
Trust on! One day, beyond all thought of praise,  
A sunny joy will crown thee with its rays:  
Nor other than thy need, thy recompense."

—MacDonald.

Some of God's brightest blessings come to us clothed in the dark weeds of mourning. If this nobleman's heart had not been moved through the sickness of his son, he never would have known the healing power of Jesus Christ through faith. Blessed is that sorrow which constrains us to go believingly to the Son of God.

**I. An Earnest Request.** "When he heard that Jesus was come... he went and besought Him that He would come down and heal his son" (v. 47). He heard, he went, he besought. This is the workings of an honest heart. His request that Christ would "come down" shows faith in the power of His presence, but perhaps a lack of faith in His promise. The Lord would teach the nobleman and us that His Word is as good as Himself. "The words that I speak unto you are spirit and life." They have the same character as Himself.

**II. A Gentle Rebuke.** "Jesus said unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe" (v. 48). "The Jews require a sign" (1 Cor. 1:22). In this reply, Christ was saying to the nobleman, as it were, Are you not prepared to believe Me just now without seeing signs and wonders wrought by Me? You are prepared to believe that I am the Messiah if I come down and heal your son, who is at the point of death. "Ye will not believe except ye see." There is a faith that is more noble than this. "Believe and thou shalt see." What better are they of our own day, who will not believe except they feel. A lame faith is always on the look out for the crutches of "signs and wonders."

**III. A Definite Promise.** When the nobleman had said, in effect: Signs or no signs, in Thy mercy, "come down ere my child die," then the Lord offered to his faith the word of healing, "Go thy way, thy son liveth" (vv. 49, 50). In giving him His Word He was giving him the "bread of life" both for himself and his son. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."

**IV. A Believing Act.** "The man believed the Word... and went his way" (v. 50). Now that he is prepared to believe Christ, without seeing signs, he is satisfied with His Word of promise, and so went his way, asking for nothing else. He had the blessedness of the man who had not seen, and yet had believed (John 20:29). This is the faith that crowns the Christ with glory and honour. The faith that saves is a faith that acts confidently. To have faith in Christ for anything promised, that is yet unseen, is to have the evidence that that thing is in reality for you (Heb. 11:1). "He that believeth on the Son hath." We walk by faith, not by sight. What vital importance our Lord always associates with His words. They are "spirit and life." A man is either blessed or doomed, according to his attitude toward them. To believe His testimony is to set to our seal that God is true (John 3:33). To disbelieve this record is to make God a liar (1 John 5:10)

**V. A Confirming Evidence.** "As he was going down, his servants met him, saying. Thy son liveth... when?... yesterday at the seventh hour. So the father knew that it was at the self same hour in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth" (vv. 51-53). Is such faith not always confirmed by the providence of God? Had Joshua not to confess, at the end of his eventful life, that "not one thing had failed of all that the Lord had promised?" (Josh. 23:14). Believe and thou shalt see, for in the "self same hour" in which the almighty Redeemer says that expected thing shall be done, it will be done. Those who go in faith, and at His bidding, as this nobleman did, will surely find that He is faithful who hath promised. The assurance of salvation must as certainly follow the act of faith.

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#### Spurgeon - The nobleman's faith' John 4:46-47, 50

Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, though only a spark, yet influenced this nobleman. It led him to take a considerable journey to find our Lord. From Capernaum he went up the hills to Cana to plead with Jesus. And he went personally. This is the more remarkable because he was a man of rank and position. I do not know whether he was Chuza, Herod's steward. I should not wonder if he was, because we do not hear of any other noble family being on the side of Christ, but we do hear of 'the wife of Chuza Herod's steward,' as amongst those that 'ministered unto him of their substance.' We hear also of Manaen, foster-brother to Herod. It may have been one of these; noblemen were scarce birds in the church then, as indeed they are now. We expect, therefore, to hear of such a person as this again; as we have honourable mention of those two, we are not rash in conjecturing that this nobleman may have been one of them. Now noblemen do not, as a rule, think of taking journeys themselves while they have so many servants at their disposal, but this nobleman came himself to Christ and personally 'besought him that he would come down, and heal his son'. If your faith is weak in some respects, yet strong enough in others to drive you personally to Christ to pray to him, it is faith of an acceptable order. If it leads you to pray to our Lord with all your heart, beseeching him, then your faith is of the right sort. If it leads you to

beseech Christ to have mercy upon you, it is the faith which saves the soul. It may be little 'as a grain of mustard seed', but its importunity shows that there is pungency in it; it is true mustard.

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### **Spurgeon - The hospital of waiters visited with the gospel John 4:46–54**

A crowd of waiters are waiting for dreams and visions. Perhaps you think these are very few, but they are not so few as you may imagine. They have a notion that perhaps one of these nights they will have such a vivid dream of judgment that they will wake up alarmed, or such a bright vision of heaven that they will wake up fascinated by it. They have been reading in somebody's biography that he saw something in the air, or heard a voice, or had a text of Scripture 'laid home to him', as it is called; they are waiting until the like signs and wonders shall happen to them. I bear them witness that they are very anxious for this thing to happen, but their mistake is that they want it at all or expect it to happen, and they lie there by the Pool of Bethesda waiting and waiting and waiting, as though they could not believe God, but they could believe in a dream. They could not confide in the teaching of Holy Scripture, but they could believe in a voice which they imagined to be sounding in their ears, though it might be the chirp of a bird or nothing at all. They could trust their imagination, but they cannot trust the word of God as it is written in the inspired volume. They want something over and above the sure word of testimony; the witness of God is not enough for them. They demand the witness of fancy, or the witness of feeling, and they are waiting in the porch by the pool until that comes. What is this but an insulting unbelief? Is not the Lord to be believed until a sign or a wonder shall corroborate his testimony? Such waiting provokes the Most High.

**John 4:47 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.**

BGT John 4:47 ο τος κο σας πι ησο ς κει κ τς ουδα ας ε ς τ ν Γαλιλα αν π λθεν πρ ς α τ ν κα ρ τα να καταβ κα σηται α το τ ν υ ν, μελλεν γ ρ ποθν σκειν.

NET John 4:47 When he heard that Jesus had come back from Judea to Galilee, he went to him and begged him to come down and heal his son, who was about to die.

NLT John 4:47 When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and begged Jesus to come to Capernaum to heal his son, who was about to die.

ESV John 4:47 When this man heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.

NIV John 4:47 When this man heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death.

GNT John 4:47 ο τος κο σας πι ησο ς κει κ τς ουδα ας ε ς τ ν Γαλιλα αν π λθεν πρ ς α τ ν κα ρ τα να καταβ κα σηται α το τ ν υ ν, μελλεν γ ρ ποθν σκειν.

KJV John 4:47 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.

YLT John 4:47 he, having heard that Jesus is come out of Judea to Galilee, went away unto him, and was asking him that he may come down and may heal his son, for he was about to die.

ASV John 4:47 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.

CSB John 4:47 When this man heard that Jesus had come from Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and pleaded with Him to come down and heal his son, for he was about to die.

NKJ John 4:47 When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.

NRS John 4:47 When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and begged him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.

NAB John 4:47 When he heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, who was near death.

NJB John 4:47 hearing that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judaea, he went and asked him to come and cure his son, as he was at the point of death.

GWN John 4:47 The official heard that Jesus had returned from Judea to Galilee. So he went to Jesus and asked him to go to Capernaum with him to heal his son who was about to die.

- **he heard** : Mk 2:1-3 6:55,56 10:47
- **that he:** Joh 11:21,32 Ps 46:1 Lu 7:6-8 8:41 Ac 9:38
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Healing the royal official's son by Joseph-Marie Vien, 1752.

## THE OFFICIAL HUMBLER HIMSELF INSISTENTLY BEGGING

The official's perseverance in prayer (so to speak) recalls Jesus' words in Mt 7:7+ "**Ask** ([present imperative](#) - keep on asking!), and it will be given to you; **seek** ([present imperative](#) ), and you will find; **knock** ([present imperative](#) ), and it will be opened to you." This royal official gives us all a good pattern we should seek to emulate!

**When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee-** Jesus clearly had a reputation as a Healer. "He had heard the people talk about the miracles in Jerusalem and the first one in Cana." (Robertson [John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**He went to Him and was imploring Him to come down and heal his son-** The royal official traveled what is estimated to be about 20 miles (some sources say 16 mi) because he was desperate and as we often say "[at the end of his rope](#)." He has a need and sees Jesus as the One Who can fill that need. **Imploring** ([erotao](#)) is in the imperfect tense indicating again and again he was begging, making earnest appeal for Jesus to come to his son's aid (began to beg and kept it up). **Come down** (in aorist tense) conveys the idea of come down at once. "God blessed the nobleman because he was also persistent." (Mattoon)

**MacArthur** - Swallowing his pride, this respected member of Herod's court begged for help from a carpenter's son (cf. Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3). At this point, the official's faith was little more than a desperate hope that led him to ask for Jesus' intervention...his belief in Jesus was not yet driven by a desire for salvation for his own soul, but by desperation for his son. The feebleness of his faith in Jesus' ability to heal is underscored by two erroneous assumptions that he made about Him. First, unlike the centurion (Luke 7:6-7) and the Syrophenician woman (Mark 7:24-30), he assumed Jesus had to be physically present to heal his son. Second, he hoped Jesus had the power to heal his son's illness, but had no hope that He could raise him from the dead. Those two assumptions were behind his insistence that Jesus come at once before it was too late. Unlike the rich young ruler (Mark 10:17-22), he was not seeking spiritual truth, but was instead driven by an overwhelming physical and emotional need. His goal in coming to Jesus was not to obtain eternal salvation for himself, but physical healing for his dying child. (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**Rod Mattoon** points out that "His money cannot help him here. He has nowhere to turn except to Jesus. We find a man with a crisis faith. God allowed a crisis in his life to bring him to Jesus. He does the same thing today. Don't give up on a lost person who seems unreasonable. A crisis can soften his heart. The first miracle at Cana came at the request of His mother (Jn 2:1-5), and the second miracle at Cana comes at the request of a father. The nobleman demonstrated wisdom in taking advantage of the opportunities placed before him. He sought out the Lord while He was near in Cana. The Bible stresses repeatedly the importance of seeking out the Lord in our life and using opportunities of service to glorify Him.

Seek the LORD while He may be found;

Call upon Him while He is near.

Isaiah 55:6

**For** (term of explanation = here reason for urgency) **he was at the point of death-** Literally "he was about (mello) to die." This idiom is used of the impending death of Jesus (John 11:51; Jn 12:33; Jn 18:32).

**John 4:48 So Jesus said to him, "Unless you *people* see signs and wonders, you simply will not believe."**

BGT John 4:48 ε πεν ο ν ησο ς πρ ς α τ ν· ν μ σημε α κα τ ρατα δητε, ο μ πιστε σητε.

NET John 4:48 So Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders you will never believe!"

NLT John 4:48 Jesus asked, "Will you never believe in me unless you see miraculous signs and wonders?"

ESV John 4:48 So Jesus said to him, "Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe."

NIV John 4:48 "Unless you people see miraculous signs and wonders," Jesus told him, "you will never believe."

GNT John 4:48 ε πέν ο υ ν ή σο ς πρ ς α τ ν, ν μ σημε α κα τ ρατα δήτε, ο μ πιστε σητε.

KJV John 4:48 Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.

YLT John 4:48 Jesus then said unto him, 'If signs and wonders ye may not see, ye will not believe.'

ASV John 4:48 Jesus therefore said unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will in no wise believe.

CSB John 4:48 Jesus told him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will not believe."

NKJ John 4:48 Then Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe."

NRS John 4:48 Then Jesus said to him, "Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe."

NAB John 4:48 Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will not believe."

NJB John 4:48 Jesus said to him, 'Unless you see signs and portents you will not believe!'

GWN John 4:48 Jesus told the official, "If people don't see miracles and amazing things, they won't believe."

- **Unless:** Joh 4:41,42 2:18 12:37 15:24 20:29 Nu 14:11 Mt 16:1 27:42 Lu 10:18 Lu 16:31 Ac 2:22 1Co 1:22
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JESUS LAMENTS THE SPIRITUAL CLIMATE IN GALILEE

**So Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders** - In His address of the nobleman as **you people** Jesus clearly is making reference to the Galilean population of which the royal official was representative. He addressed their "[Seeing is Believing](#)" mentality of this world. We saw the fruit of this type of inadequate faith in John 2:23 where their belief was only profession, not true possession (Jn 2:24-25+)! Note that the royal official was not deterred by Jesus' somewhat harsh remark.

**Tenney** - They were disappointed to discover that Jesus had no intention of exhibiting his powers to satisfy their curiosity. In Nazareth he performed few miracles, and it was probably the attitude of these people that caused him to rebuff the nobleman (v. 48)

**Robertson** - Jesus is not discounting his "signs and wonders" (sēmeia kai terata), both words together here only in John, though common in N. T. as in Matt. 24:24; Mark 13:22; Acts 2:19, 22, 43; 2 Thess. 2:9; Heb. 2:4), though he does seem disappointed that he is in Galilee regarded as a mere miracle worker. ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**You simply will** (absolutely) **not believe** ([pisteuo](#)) - **Not** is the double negative (ou me) signifying absolutely **not believe** reflecting the hardness of their hearts and stubborn refusal to believe in Jesus without miracles. He is referring of course to belief in Himself as the Savior of the world. He did countless miracles in Israel in His 3 years of ministry, but most of those who witnessed the miracles refused to put their faith in Him.

**Merrill Tenney** - The reply of Jesus seems like a heartless rejection. He seemed to insinuate that the official, like the rest of the Galileans, was only giving an excuse for eliciting a miracle from him. On the other hand, Jesus' words may express his hope more than his exasperation. He desired a belief characterized by dedication rather than amazement, and the second half of the episode shows that his aim was to inculcate a genuine commitment rather than merely to perform a cure.(EBC)

**Blum** - Jesus' address to him, though sharp, was necessary. A faith built only on miraculous signs is not a complete faith (cf. 2:23–25). Many (you people) hesitate to believe in Jesus apart from seeing miraculous signs (sēmeia) and wonders (terata). Faith in Jesus is absolutely necessary, but not all believers are given public portents (cf. Matt. 16:1–4; 1 Cor. 1:22). (SEE [Bible Knowledge Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

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**Believe** (4100) ([pisteuo](#) from [pistis](#); [pistos](#); related studies [the faith](#), the [obedience of faith](#)) means to consider something to be true and therefore worthy of one's trust. To accept as true, genuine, or real. To have a firm conviction as to the goodness, efficacy, or ability of something or someone. To consider to be true. To accept the word or evidence of. **Vincent** notes that **pisteuo** "means to persuade, to cause belief, to induce one to do something by persuading, and so runs into the meaning of to obey, properly as the result of persuasion."

**Signs** (4592) ([semeion](#) from **sema** = sign) a sign is something that serves as a pointer to aid perception or insight. In the NT a sign

speaks of a token which has behind it a particular message to be conveyed. In other words, in John's Gospel (where semeion is most concentrated) the apostle recorded certain miracles not for the wonder (cf "wonders") they produced, but because of the message they taught (Jn 20:31). A sign directs attention away from its unusual nature to the meaning and the significance it points to. It speaks of outward compelling proof of divine authority. In John a sign is generally a "miraculous sign" that points to some deeper spiritual significance in connection with the event (Jn 2:11, 18). Semeion describes a miracle whose purpose is that of attesting the claims of the one performing the miracle to be true.

**Wonders** (5059) (**teras**) are similar to signs but appeal to the senses, being recognized as a phenomenon that needs to be explained. Something strange, exceptional, causing the beholder to marvel. **BDAG** on **teras** - something that astounds because of transcendent association -- prodigy, portent, omen, wonder in our literature only plural and combined with semeion. **Friberg** on **teras** - wonder, marvel, portent, something so unusual it arouses close observation. **Teras** is derived from the verb **tereo** which means to keep, watch and thus conveys the idea of something which due to its extraordinary character is apt to be observed and kept in the memory. It is a miracle regarded as startling, imposing or amazing. **Teras** refers to "something strange", a phenomena which compels one's attention and causes one to "look again" or causes the beholder to marvel. **Teras** is always in the plural and always translated "**wonders**."

**Signs and wonders** - Matt. 24:24; Mk. 13:22; Jn. 4:48; Acts 4:30; Acts 5:12; Acts 14:3; Acts 15:12; Rom. 15:19; 2 Co. 12:12; Heb. 2:4

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### **Spurgeon - A word with those who wait for signs and wonders Luke 11:29**

Some of you who are not believing are seeking signs which others have never had. I will give you an instance or two. There stood the prodigal son feeding the swine, so hungry that 'he would fain have filled his belly with the husks'; the thought crossed his mind, 'I will arise and go to my father'. What sign had he? He sets off to seek his father's face. What sign had he, I say? There does not appear to have been even an invitation sent, but he sought his father and he found forgiveness. Take another case. Christ has likened seeking souls to the widow who sought help of the unjust judge. She cried to him; she continued to cry to him, until she gained her suit; but what sign had she? If any sign, it was all negative, all from the opposite quarter, yet on she went. Look at the Canaanitish woman. She desired that her daughter might be healed. What sign had she? Christ said, 'It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs'. Instead of a sign to help her it was a hard word to discourage her, but yet she won her suit. And why not you, my hearers, why not you? The poor woman who touched the hem of Christ's garment in the crowd, what sign had she of his willingness to help her? It was her own earnest, intense desire, and her faith in Jesus that made her touch the hem out of which the virtue came. Wait not then for signs to be given to you when they have not been given to others, but do as others have done, and obtain the like blessing.

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**Larry Richards** - The Dilemma of Faith (John 4:43–54) Nobody ever said having faith was easy. Certainly the Apostle John didn't say so. In fact, this story shows just how difficult it is. Just glance through the story and you see first of all a frantic father hurrying to find Jesus. His son was close to death, and the only one who could possibly save him was Jesus! When he finally did find Jesus, Christ didn't seem very sympathetic. "Unless you people see miraculous signs and wonders," He said, "you will never believe." The saying wasn't a rebuke. Jesus didn't question the frantic father's motives. In fact, the saying is intended to stimulate faith! For when the father begged Him again to come, Jesus simply said, "You may go. Your son will live" (v. 50). This is the dilemma of faith. God, in response to our desperate appeals, speaks to us and says, "You may go." In other words, "It's done. Go home and you'll find the sick healed." And what is there for us to do? If we keep begging Jesus to come with us, we display unbelief. But to go means to head home with no evidence at all that the promised healing has taken place! How terrifying a choice. Do we keep asking after Jesus has said, "You may go"? Or do we leave, trembling, believing despite the lack of proof? The royal official made the choice of faith. On the way excited messengers met him. His son was recovering. The fever had broken—at the exact hour Jesus had told him, "You may go." Faith is still very much the same. We come to God desperate for salvation. And all He says is, "You may go." The work is done, your healing accomplished. And, though we lack evidence then, if we are wise we turn, in faith, and walk away as Jesus said. But later we discover to our joy just how completely Jesus has performed His miracle within. Personal Application Believe. And go. Quotable "It is the heart that senses God, and not the reason. That is what faith is. God perceptible to the heart and not to reason."—Blaise Pascal (Borrow [The 365 day devotional commentary](#) page 768)

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### **James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - SEEING AND BELIEVING**

"Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe" (John 4:48).

This does seem a strange way of treating a wealthy man who had travelled twenty-five miles to seek healing for his son! Fancy, hastening all that distance in an effort to secure the aid of the Healer, and then to meet with such a rebuff!

It was a nobleman that was in distress—the rich have afflictions as well as the poor; it was a boy who was sick unto death—illness is no respecter of persons, coming to young and old alike; it was a father in dead earnest about bringing the Saviour and his son into touch with one another. Oh, that all parents were as anxious and determined to do the same.

Yes, we must admit that there does seem a certain amount of severity in our Lord's reply. But there was a needs-be for such conduct. What was wrong with the nobleman? Some think the gentle Saviour was severe because He came to the Lord not for the Lord's sake, but for his son's sake, driven there by the strong constraint of an outward need, rather than drawn by the desire of the soul. No doubt there is a little truth in this explanation, yet it does not fully meet the difficulty. The satisfying answer is our Lord's anxiety to purify and strengthen faith. The rich man possessed faith in the Lord Jesus, but only a faith in His presence, and not in His Word; it was a faith which rested only on the miraculous. The Lord was seeking to show His pupil that His word was as effectual as His presence, and to lead him into the deep meaning of the Old Testament utterance, "He sent His Word and healed them." Thus our Lord's conduct was designed, not to extinguish that little spark of faith, but to blow it into a fierce flame; and the method adopted had the desired result.

"If God wants me to believe, why does He not put a sign in the sky?" That is how some speak and think. Our Lord's treatment of this nobleman is the answer. True faith is a matter of the heart, and not merely of the head; and real faith is called into being not by any miraculous sign but by the Word of the Lord. Besides, as a very eminent writer so forcibly points out: "If belief was to depend upon a visible sign in the sky, a standing miracle would have to be worked in each generation to give that generation a fair chance with the others—a supposition which is contrary to all of God's ways of working. It is, further, extremely doubtful whether such a sign would accomplish its object. 'If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.' We can imagine without much effort, the brilliant article in the next magazine, which would prove that it was a comet; and even if the explanation did not satisfy the intellect, such a mere 'nine days' wonder' would have no effect upon the heart."

How precious then is faith in the estimation of the Lord, and what pains He takes to produce, purify, and strengthen it. That may be one explanation of many of His strange dealings with the sons of men. His great longing is to lead us deeper into the life of faith.

"But what is faith?" Strange that, though folk exercise faith every day of their lives, yet they are frequently making this inquiry. The first occurrence of the word "Believe" is in Genesis 15:6. Abraham "Believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness." According to a competent authority, the word "believed" literally means "to steady oneself by leaning on something or someone." This gives a vivid illustration of what faith really is—"as a man lays his trembling hand on a staff, so we lay our weak and changeable selves on God's strength."

Pray notice (1) that true faith has God for its origin and object. "Abraham believed God." In John 6 the Lord calls it a "work of God," hinting at a deep thought that it is God who gives the true inclination of mind to trust. Then (2) notice that faith is an act and not a mere sentiment. It is not something that comes to a man apart from himself, and outside of himself, without reference to him. There is a very close connection between faith and the will. In the strictest sense of the word faith is the exercise of our most inmost nature—it is an effort of the will.

Three stages may be discerned in faith, for faith is a progressive act or series of acts. The first stage is a belief in Him, a mere acceptance of His revelation. But there is no saving element in it. It is possible for a person to have this kind of faith and yet be lost. True faith is something more than this. It is imperative that the next stage be reached, viz., a belief on Him. This is where the saving element comes in. If I am weary and tired and believe that the chair is able to bear my weight, merely believing that will not rest me, I must believe on it, let it take my weight. And what then? There is a third stage, believing into the Lord. I may believe on a chair or staff, and be rested, but the chair and staff and I remain separated and distinct. Not so with Christ and the soul. Believing on Him will lead to believing into Him, becoming one with Him, united to him by ties of life and love. What a blessed union is this! Words cannot describe it fully. Let us pray:

"My faith looks up to Thee,  
Thou Lamb of Calvary,  
Saviour Divine."

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### **Robert Neighbor - The Sign of the Healing of the Nobleman's Son**

"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" (John 4:50).

[Cana of Galilee](#) was the location of the first sign; it was there that Christ turned the water into wine.

The second sign recorded by John was given also while Christ was at Cana.

1. The sickness of the nobleman's son. The nobleman lived in Capernaum; his son was sick. When Christ had come into Galilee, the nobleman besought Him that He would come down and heal his son, for he was nigh unto death.

"Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe" (vs. 48).

The nobleman, however, continued to plead: "Sir, come down ere my child die" (vs. 49).

2. The son restored. Jesus did not answer the nobleman's request by going down with him to Capernaum, He simply said: "Go thy way; thy son liveth" (vs. 50).

The nobleman's faith remained unshaken. Evidently it had not occurred to him that Christ could heal his son unless He went down to Capernaum, where his son was sick.

In answer to Christ's command, however, he obeyed, and as he went his way, his servants met him, and said: "Thy son liveth" (vs. 51).

As a result of his healing, the nobleman himself believed, and also his whole house.

3. The sign set forth. This miracle, following as it does the miracle of the turning of the water into wine, is the more significant.

The empty waterpots, as we have before seen, set forth the hollowness, the lifelessness of the Jew's religion.

As a result, we read in John 4, of how Christ turned to Samaria, and of how the city of Sychar heard His Word.

Christ testified unto the Jews saying: "A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country" (Matt. 13:57; see John 4:44).

The Jews had refused Him; the Gentiles had received Him, Israel was sick; the nobleman's son was healed.

The type may be used to typify the wonderful power of Christ to save the Gentiles.

(1) Christ turned from Israel. He was refused, rejected, and despised of His own people.

(2) Christ turned to the Gentiles. During this age, the time of Israel's temporary setting aside, God is reaching out His hand to the lost of every nation.

The healing of the nobleman's son must have stirred the hearts of the Jews to jealousy.

So also must the fact that Christ has turned to the Gentiles, provoke the Jews to jealousy.

The sign proclaims the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God; it demonstrates that they who believe in Him receive life through His name.

The signs to follow, clearly show Christ turning again to Israel and her final redemption.

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### **Spurgeon - Characteristics of faith John 4:48**

Trust in the Lord; wait patiently for him; cast all thy confidence where he put all thy sins, namely, upon Christ Jesus alone, and thou shalt be saved, with or without any of these signs and wonders. I am afraid some Christians in London have fallen into the same error of wanting to see signs and wonders. They have been meeting together in special prayer-meetings to seek for a revival; and because people have not dropped down in a fainting fit, and have not screamed and made a noise, perhaps they have thought the revival has not come. Oh that we had eyes to see God's gifts in the way God chooses to give them! Where the Spirit works in the soul, we are always glad to see true conversion, and if he chooses to work in the church in London, we shall be glad to see it. If men's hearts are renewed, what matter it though they do not scream out. If their consciences are quickened, what matters it though they do not fall into a fit; if they do but find Christ, who is to regret that they do not lie for five or six weeks motionless and senseless. Take it without the signs and wonders. For my part I have no craving for them. Let me see God's work done in God's own way—a true and thorough revival, but the signs and wonders we can readily dispense with, for they are certainly not demanded by the faithful, and they will only be the laughing-stock of the faithless.

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**Spurgeon - Evening** - A craving for miracles was a symptom of the sickly condition of men's minds in our Lord's day; they refused solid nourishment and longed for mere wonders. The Gospel that they so greatly needed they would not have; the miracles that Jesus did not always choose to give they eagerly demanded. Even today there are many who must see signs and wonders or they will not believe. Some have said in their heart, "I must feel deep horror of soul or I never will believe in Jesus." But what if you never should feel it, as probably you never will? Will you go to hell out of spite against God because He did not treat you like someone else? One has said to himself, "If I had a dream, or if I could feel a sudden jolt of something, then I would believe." You undeserving

mortals dream that my Lord is to be dictated to by you! You are beggars at His gate, asking for mercy, and you are drawing up rules and regulations as to how He will give that mercy. Do you think that He will submit to this? My Master has a generous spirit, but He also has a royal heart. He rejects all orders and maintains His sovereignty of action. Why, dear reader, if this is your case, do you crave signs and wonders? Isn't the Gospel its own sign and wonder? Isn't this the miracle of miracles, that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish"? Surely that precious word, "Let the one who desires take the water of life without price" and that solemn promise, "Whoever comes to me I will never cast out" are better than signs and wonders! A truthful Savior ought to be believed. He is truth itself. Why will you ask the One who cannot lie for proof? The devils themselves declared Him to be the Son of God; will you mistrust Him?

**John 4:49 The royal official \*said to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies."**

BGT John 4:49 λ γει πρ ς α τ ν βασιλικ ς κ ριε, κατ βηθι πρ ν ποθανε ν τ παιδ ον μου.

NET John 4:49 "Sir," the official said to him, "come down before my child dies."

NLT John 4:49 The official pleaded, "Lord, please come now before my little boy dies."

ESV John 4:49 The official said to him, "Sir, come down before my child dies."

NIV John 4:49 The royal official said, "Sir, come down before my child dies."

GNT John 4:49 λ γει πρ ς α τ ν βασιλικ ς, Κ ριε, κατ βηθι πρ ν ποθανε ν τ παιδ ον μου.

KJV John 4:49 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.

YLT John 4:49 The courtier saith unto him, 'Sir, come down before my child die;'

ASV John 4:49 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.

CSB John 4:49 "Sir," the official said to Him, "come down before my boy dies!"

NKJ John 4:49 The nobleman said to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies!"

NRS John 4:49 The official said to him, "Sir, come down before my little boy dies."

NAB John 4:49 The royal official said to him, "Sir, come down before my child dies."

NJB John 4:49 'Sir,' answered the official, 'come down before my child dies.'

GWN John 4:49 The official said to him, "Sir, come with me before my little boy dies."

- **come:** Ps 40:17 88:10-12 Mk 5:23,35,36
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE OFFICIAL'S PERSISTENT APPEAL

**The royal official \*said to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies** - **Child** is paidion a diminutive meaning literally "my little one" which adds a touch of tenderness. **Sir** is [kurios](#) a respectful greeting which is found 4 times in John 4 (Jn 4:11, 15, 19, 49).

**Merrill Tenney** - The use of the aorist tense of "die" (apothanein) to describe the impending crisis is in contrast with the present tense in Jn 4:47 (apothnēskein), which describes the progress of the illness. This indicates that the case was desperate. (EBC)

**Grant Osborne** comments that "the official demonstrated only a desperate hope that a miracle might save his son—not true faith in Jesus. Unlike the centurion in Matthew 8:8, he thought Jesus could only heal if he came to the boy; there was no faith in Jesus' healing word. As in Jn 2:23–25, Jesus denounced those who only believe when they "see miraculous signs and wonders." Wonderment centered on the sensational will never suffice for genuine faith in the "Savior of the world" (Jn 4:42). This was also a call to the official to find true faith. (See [The Gospel of John](#))

**Rod Mattoon** - This father urges Jesus to accompany him to his home, lest his son should die. He has a confident faith in Christ. The father makes two mistakes in his thinking. (1) He felt Jesus had to go to Capernaum to save his son. (2) If the boy was already dead, he felt it would be too late. We would have made the same assumptions too. This nobleman demonstrated more faith than many today. Many Christians show little confidence in the Lord they claim as their God. This nobleman is confident that the Lord can heal his son. Do you have a confident faith? Do you have the kind of faith which says, "The Lord can do it! He can take care of it!"

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## W E Vine - The Second Sign

After the two days He goes to Galilee, where the people received Him because they had seen the things He did in Jerusalem. It did not mean that they honored Him. He knew they would not (v. 44), but He did not go there to get that, He went to bear witness. And He bore witness by another sign.

The "second sign" which Christ did in Galilee, the healing of the "nobleman's" son, has at least this significance, that it marks a striking difference between the ground upon which faith was now exercised and that which created faith in the heart of the Samaritan woman and her fellow townfolk. This nobleman (or rather, king's officer, R.V., margin, an official under Herod Antipas, a tetrarch who held his father's title of king) urged Him to come and heal his dying son. His faith rested upon the signs and wonders wrought by Christ, news of which had reached him from Judaea (v. 47). That this was so is clear from the Lord's remonstrance, "Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe." A faith based on miracles was not of such value as that manifested by the woman, which was the result, not of news of His wonder workings in Judaea, but of His own testimony and teaching. She and the other Samaritans believed because of the truth He spoke; the officer rested his hopes upon Christ's miraculous acts. The Lord would not reject his faith, but He found less pleasure in that which rested on His power to deliver from calamity than in that which rested in His own person, and was established by His character and teaching.

Christ did not go to the sickbed to accomplish the healing and receive acknowledgment as acting in the capacity of a healer. He simply said, "Go thy way, thy son liveth," and the man departed believing.

The different words used to describe the sick lad are characteristic: the father speaks of him as his paidion (v. 49), a term of endearment; the servants use the word pais, a boy, a term of ordinary familiarity (v. 51); the Lord and the writer John call him huiois, "son," a term of dignity.

**John 4:50 Jesus \*said to him, "Go; your son lives." The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started off.**

BGT John 4:50 λ γει α τ ησο ς πορε ου, υ ς σου ζ. π στευσεν νθρωπος τ λ γ ν ε πεν α τ ησο ς κα πορε ετο.

NET John 4:50 Jesus told him, "Go home; your son will live." The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and set off for home.

NLT John 4:50 Then Jesus told him, "Go back home. Your son will live!" And the man believed what Jesus said and started home.

ESV John 4:50 Jesus said to him, "Go; your son will live." The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way.

NIV John 4:50 Jesus replied, "You may go. Your son will live." The man took Jesus at his word and departed.

GNT John 4:50 λ γει α τ ησο ς, Πορε ου, υ ς σου ζ. π στευσεν νθρωπος τ λ γ ν ε πεν α τ ησο ς κα πορε ετο.

KJV John 4:50 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.

YLT John 4:50 Jesus saith to him, 'Be going on; thy son doth live.' And the man believed the word that Jesus said to him, and was going on,

ASV John 4:50 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. The man believed the word that Jesus spake unto him, and he went his way.

CSB John 4:50 "Go," Jesus told him, "your son will live." The man believed what Jesus said to him and departed.

NKJ John 4:50 Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your son lives." So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way.

NRS John 4:50 Jesus said to him, "Go; your son will live." The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started on his way.

NAB John 4:50 Jesus said to him, "You may go; your son will live." The man believed what Jesus said to him

and left.

NJB John 4:50 'Go home,' said Jesus, 'your son will live.' The man believed what Jesus had said and went on his way home;

GWN John 4:50 Jesus told him, "Go home. Your son will live." The man believed what Jesus told him and left.

- Go (KJV): Joh 11:40 1Ki 17:13-15 Mt 8:13 Mk 7:29,30 9:23,24 Lu 17:14 Ac 14:9,10 Ro 4:20,21 Heb 11:19
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Jesus said to him, “Go (present imperative) your son lives.”** - Jesus did not agree to return to Capernaum with the official, but would do an even more powerful miracle. “Thy son is living,” and will not now die, Jesus means. Words too good and gracious to be true. His son is healed without Jesus even going to Capernaum, “absent treatment” so to speak, but without the cure being absent.” (Robertson [John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**MacArthur** - By healing his son physically, the Great Physician moved to heal the father spiritually. (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**Tenney** - By dismissing the official with the statement that his son was alive, Jesus created a dilemma of faith. If the father refused to return to Capernaum without taking Jesus with him, he would show that he did not believe Jesus' word and would consequently receive no benefit because of his distrust. On the other hand, if he followed Jesus' order, he would be returning to the dying boy with no outward assurance that the lad would recover. He was forced to make the difficult choice between insisting on evidence and thus showing disbelief and of exercising faith without any tangible proof to encourage him. The official chose the second **horn of the dilemma**; he “took Jesus at his word” (ASV “believed the word”) and set out on his return journey. He learned faith by the **compulsion of necessity**. (EBC) (Bold added)

**The man believed (pisteuo) the word that Jesus spoke to him and started off**- The official manifests an instantaneous faith based on the word of Jesus. There is no argument from the official. He simply believes and obeys (Trust and obey for there is no other way to be happy in Jesus than to trust and obey!) Faith without works is dead faith. Faith alone saves, but the faith that saves is not alone as this man's response demonstrated. And watch his faith grow into full bloom as he is met by his servants on the way back to Capernaum.

**John MacArthur** has an interesting note on this man's faith writing that "The Lord's words to him had moved him from the third level of unbelief (which needs miracles) to the second (which believes Christ's word). Without any tangible proof that his son was healed, he took Jesus at His word and started off for home. (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**Grant Osborne** - The man's focus finally shifted to Jesus, and “the man believed what Jesus said.” His faith became properly centered on the power of Jesus' words, and he started home. This is the key to a burgeoning faith, one that combines belief with response. The royal official proved the reality of his belief by beginning the journey back to Capernaum. (See [The Gospel of John](#))

**A T Robertson on started off** - Inchoative imperfect middle, “started on his way,” acted on his faith. ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**Blum** - On the way back the official must have pondered Jesus' promise every step of his journey. (SEE [Bible Knowledge Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**Mattoon** - We are to respond the same way toward God's Word. We are to trust and love God's Word and let it impact our lives. Psalm 119:105—Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. Psalm 119:97—O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Psalm 119:140—Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.

**Spurgeon** - It is a rare sight to see the great ones of the earth coming to Jesus; but they must come as well as the poorest, if they would be blest.

#### **Related Resource:**

- [Are faith healers for real?](#)
- [What did Jesus mean when He told people, “Your faith has made you well”?](#)

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#### **Stephen Olford - “The man believed the word.” – John 4:50**

Here is certainly a good example of expectant faith. The Lord simply said to him, “Your son lives” (v. 51) and he believed the Word.

The result was that his son was healed. (ED: DO NOT MISUNDERSTAND, HIS SON WAS HEALED BY THE POWER OF JESUS, NOT BY THE MAN'S FAITH.)

This is the source of real spiritual blessing – namely, believing and claiming the promises of God. There must be expectant faith, however. James says, “Let not that man [who wavers in the prayer of faith] suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord” (James 1:7). Expectant faith is the key to the verse which says, “Ask, and you will receive” (John 16:24).

O Lord help me, I pray, to believe Your Word even as this man did. Amen.

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### **Vance Havner - "Go Thy Way" John 4:43-54**

THE healing of the nobleman's son (John 4:43-54) brings to us certain precious truths that apply along the entire range of experience. Our Lord was a prophet without honor in His own country (a statement declared in each of the Gospels), so we may take heart if we fare similarly.

So He comes into Galilee, and a nobleman besought Him for the healing of his son. Our Lord tests him by saying: "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." It is a mark of most of us today that we are "from Missouri" and still demand visible evidences before we believe. How much more blessed, our Lord told Thomas, are they who have not seen, yet believe (John 20:29). The man continues to plead for help, and Jesus tells him, "Go thy way; thy son liveth." That probably was not the way the man expected it to be done, but he believed and went his way—and the miracle took place at that moment. There are times when we do not see our prayer answered as we expected, visibly, right before our eyes. We are merely told to go our way and trust God for the rest, like the lepers who, as they went, were cleansed (Luke 17:14). We wanted things to happen at once, but our orders are to go trusting and leave the rest with God. Can you so trust Him, going on when to all appearances nothing has changed, "yet believing"?

The nobleman reaches home and finds the wonder wrought—and wrought at the same moment that the Lord said, "Go thy way." Observe that we read twice that the nobleman believed—once in verse 50, when our Lord sent him on his way, and again in verse 53, when he reached home and found the boy healed. He believed first because of Christ's word, as we are plainly told, and the second time because of Christ's work. There is a faith that takes God at His word before we see any wonder wrought; then there is a deeper faith, a surety, that comes when we behold His work. The first faith depends upon promise; the second grows out of performance. If we have enough faith to do His will, we shall know of the doctrine. We shall be as the Samaritans who first believed the word of the woman, then believed upon their own experience (John 4:42).

I have thought of that nobleman on his way home. What doubts may have assailed him! How he might have said: "Suppose I am mistaken? How do I know this will take place: I certainly do not feel any different!" It seems hard that our Lord did not go along with this troubled man, but He was teaching him to know that to believe is to see.

Many times we wish the Lord would "go along" with us when we are in trouble—in some visible sign of His love and care—but, as with Martha and Mary, He tarries in the same place where He is. Ah, it is only that we might know that His word is enough to go our way upon... and that when He gives us His word, He surely will follow it with His work. Do you believe Him enough to "go your way" though no sign is given, trusting the evidence to await you at the end of the venture of faith rather than at the beginning? Mind you, the miracle was performed when the man believed, and so it ever is, but the visible evidence often lies further on. Believe God's Word, and you will believe again in the certainty of His work.

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### **Streams in the Desert - (John 4:50.)**

“When ye pray, believe.” (Mark 11:24.)

WHEN there is a matter that requires definite prayer, pray till you believe God, until with unfeigned lips you can thank Him for the answer. If the answer still tarries outwardly, do not pray for it in such a way that it is evident that you are not definitely believing for it. Such a prayer in place of being a help will be a hindrance; and when you are finished praying, you will find that your faith has weakened or has entirely gone. The urgency that you felt to offer this kind of prayer is clearly from self and Satan. It may not be wrong to mention the matter in question to the Lord again, if He is keeping you waiting, but be sure you do so in such a way that it implies faith. Do not pray yourself out of faith. You may tell Him that you are waiting and that you are still believing Him and therefore praise Him for the answer. There is nothing that so fully clinches faith as to be so sure of the answer that you can thank God for it. Prayers that pray us out of faith deny both God's promise in His Word and also His whisper “Yes,” that He gave us in our hearts. Such prayers are but the expression of the unrest of one's heart, and unrest implies unbelief in reference to the answer to prayer. “For we which have believed do enter into rest” (Heb. 4:3). This prayer that prays ourselves out of faith frequently arises from centering our thoughts on the difficulty rather than on God's promise. Abraham “considered not his own body,” “he staggered not at the promise of God” (Rom. 4:19, Rom. 4:20). May we watch and pray that we enter not into temptation of praying ourselves out of

faith.—C. H. P.

Faith is not a sense, nor sight, nor reason, but a taking God at His Word.—Evans.

The beginning of anxiety is the end of faith, and the beginning of true faith is the end of anxiety.—George Mueller.

You will never learn faith in comfortable surroundings. God gives us the promises in a quiet hour; God seals our covenants with great and gracious words, then He steps back and waits to see how much we believe; then He lets the tempter come, and the test seems to contradict all that He has spoken. It is then that faith wins its crown. That is the time to look up through the storm, and among the trembling, frightened seamen cry, "I believe God that it shall be even as it was told me."

"Believe and trust; through stars and suns,  
Through life and death, through soul and sense,  
His wise, paternal purpose runs;  
The darkness of His Providence  
Is starlit with Divine intents."

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## GOD'S MEDICINE JOHN 4:50

WHAT BENEFITS AFFLICTION CAN CONFER on the soul! We read that anxiety about a son led the nobleman to Christ, in order to obtain help in time of need. Once brought into Christ's company, he learned a lesson of priceless value. In the end, "He believed, and his whole house." All this, be it remembered, hinged upon the son's sickness. If the nobleman's son had never been ill, his father might have lived and died in his sins.

Affliction is one of God's medicines. By it He often teaches lessons which would be learned in no other way. By it He often draws souls away from sin and the world, which would otherwise have perished everlastingly.

Let us beware of murmuring in the time of trouble. Let us settle it firmly in our minds that there is a meaning, a needs-be and a message from God in every sorrow that falls upon us. There are no lessons so useful as those learned in the school of affliction.

Christ's word is as good as Christ's presence. We read that Jesus did not come down to Capernaum to see the sick young man, but only spoke the word: "Thy son liveth." Almighty power went with that little sentence. That very hour the patient began to amend. Christ only spoke and the cure was done. Christ only commanded and the deadly disease stood fast.

The fact before us is singularly full of comfort. It gives enormous value to every promise of mercy, grace and peace which ever fell from Christ's lips. He that by faith has laid hold on some word of Christ has got his feet upon a rock. What Christ has said, he is able to do, and what he has undertaken, he will never fail to make good. The sinner who has really reposed his soul on the word of the Lord Jesus Christ is safe to all eternity. He could not be safer, if he saw the book of life and his own name written in it. J. C. RYLE

### John 4:51 As he was now going down, his slaves met him, saying that his son was living.

BGT John 4:51 δὴ δὲ αὐτὸ καταβὰνοντος οὐδοῖα τοῦ πνεύσαντος ἄλλοι πῶς αὐτὸ ζῶν.

NET John 4:51 While he was on his way down, his slaves met him and told him that his son was going to live.

NLT John 4:51 While the man was on his way, some of his servants met him with the news that his son was alive and well.

ESV John 4:51 As he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was recovering.

NIV John 4:51 While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living.

GNT John 4:51 δὴ δὲ αὐτὸ καταβὰνοντος οὐδοῖα τοῦ πνεύσαντος ἄλλοι πῶς αὐτὸ ζῶν.

KJV John 4:51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth.

YLT John 4:51 and he now going down, his servants met him, and told, saying -- 'Thy child doth live;'

ASV John 4:51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, saying, that his son lived.

CSB John 4:51 While he was still going down, his slaves met him saying that his boy was alive.

NKJ John 4:51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told him, saying, "Your son lives!"

NRS John 4:51 As he was going down, his slaves met him and told him that his child was alive.

NAB John 4:51 While he was on his way back, his slaves met him and told him that his boy would live.

NJB John 4:51 and while he was still on the way his servants met him with the news that his boy was alive.

GWN John 4:51 While the official was on his way to Capernaum, his servants met him and told him that his boy was alive.

- Thy (KJV): Joh 4:50,53 1Ki 17:23
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE BLESSING OF OBEDIENCE

**As he was now going down** - "Going to Capernaum from Cana, one must go east across the Galilean hills and then descend to the Sea of Galilee. The twenty-mile journey could not be made in a single day. The use of the description "he was now going down" shows the author was familiar with Palestinian geography." (Mattoon)

**His slaves ([doulos](#)) met him, saying that his son was living** - His slaves (more than one) indicates he was a rich man. Despite his riches and his position, he had sought Jesus, humbled himself, believed Jesus and obeyed Jesus and he was rewarded for his faith.

**John 4:52 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."**

BGT John 4:52 π θετο ο ν τ ν ρ αν πα ρ α τ ν ν κο μ ψ τε ρον σ χ εν· ε παν ο ν α τ τι χ θ ς ρ αν β δ μ η ν φ κ εν α τ ν πυ ρ ε τ ς.

NET John 4:52 So he asked them the time when his condition began to improve, and they told him, "Yesterday at one o'clock in the afternoon the fever left him."

NLT John 4:52 He asked them when the boy had begun to get better, and they replied, "Yesterday afternoon at one o'clock his fever suddenly disappeared!"

ESV John 4:52 So he asked them the hour when he began to get better, and they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him."

NIV John 4:52 When he inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, "The fever left him yesterday at the seventh hour."

GNT John 4:52 π θετο ο ν τ ν ρ αν πα ρ α τ ν ν κο μ ψ τε ρον σ χ εν· ε παν ο ν α τ τι χ θ ς ρ αν β δ μ η ν φ κ εν α τ ν πυ ρ ε τ ς.

KJV John 4:52 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.

YLT John 4:52 he inquired then of them the hour in which he became better, and they said to him -- 'Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him;'

ASV John 4:52 So he inquired of them the hour when he began to amend. They said therefore unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.

CSB John 4:52 He asked them at what time he got better. "Yesterday at seven in the morning the fever left him," they answered.

NKJ John 4:52 Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him."

NRS John 4:52 So he asked them the hour when he began to recover, and they said to him, "Yesterday at one in the afternoon the fever left him."

NAB John 4:52 He asked them when he began to recover. They told him, "The fever left him yesterday, about one in the afternoon."

NJB John 4:52 He asked them when the boy had begun to recover. They replied, 'The fever left him yesterday at the seventh hour.'

GWN John 4:52 The official asked them at what time his son got better. His servants told him, "The fever left him yesterday evening at seven o'clock."

- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE TIMING OF THE MIRACLE

**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."** - **Fever left him** is literally "sent him away." If Roman time **seventh hour** would have been 7 PM but 1 PM if by Jewish time. Clearly this was no accident but a miracle wrought by the words of Jesus some 20 miles away!

**MacArthur** - The **seventh hour** would have been early afternoon, sometime between 1 and 3 P.M. in the broadest reckoning. By the time he left Cana and arrived in the vicinity of Capernaum, it was after midnight (yesterday) (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**Vincent on fever** - From pur, fire. So the Latin febris, which is for ferbris, from ferveo, to glow with heat. ([John 4 Commentary](#))

**Mattoon** - The time of healing was at the same moment Jesus spoke the words of assurance. The nobleman now has a confirmed faith. God did what He said He would do. He does the same for us all throughout our lives. He keeps the promises we claim. At the wedding of Cana, Jesus revealed His power over time. Instantaneously He changed the water to wine. Here, with the nobleman's son, the Lord shows His power over space. This nobleman now gets a contagious faith, as he shares with others what the Lord has done. Beloved, the Lord wants us to have a contagious faith too. How is this achieved? We must understand the power of the Lord, His Word, and the power of faith. God's Word is powerful and will ignite our confidence in Him and our faith in Him.

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**Left (863)(aphiemi)** means literally to send away, dismiss. It is used of forgiving offences (Matt. 6:34; Jas. 5:15); of yielding up (Matt. 27:50); of letting alone (Matt. 19:14); of allowing or permitting (Luke 6:12). This is the same verb used for the Samaritan woman when she left her waterpot (Jn 4:28). It is also used of the disciples when they "immediately left their nets and followed" Jesus (Mt 4:20).

**Aphiemi in John** - Jn. 4:3; Jn. 4:28; Jn. 4:52; Jn. 8:29; Jn. 10:12; Jn. 11:44; Jn. 11:48; Jn. 12:7; Jn. 14:18; Jn. 14:27; Jn. 16:28; Jn. 16:32; Jn. 18:8; Jn. 20:23

**John 4:53 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.**

BGT John 4:53 γνω ο ν πατ ρ τι [ ν ] κε ν τ ρ ν ε πεν α τ η σο ς· υ ς σου ζ, κα π στευσεν α τ ς κα ο κ α α το λη.

NET John 4:53 Then the father realized that it was the very time Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live," and he himself believed along with his entire household.

NLT John 4:53 Then the father realized that that was the very time Jesus had told him, "Your son will live." And he and his entire household believed in Jesus.

ESV John 4:53 The father knew that was the hour when Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." And he himself believed, and all his household.

NIV John 4:53 Then the father realized that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." So he and all his household believed.

GNT John 4:53 γνω ο ν πατ ρ τι [ ν ] κε ν τ ρ ν ε πεν α τ η σο ς, υ ς σου ζ, κα π στευσεν α τ ς κα ο κ α α το λη.

KJV John 4:53 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.

YLT John 4:53 then the father knew that it was in that hour in which Jesus said to him -- 'Thy son doth live,'

and he himself believed, and his whole house;

ASV John 4:53 So the father knew that it was at that hour in which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.

CSB John 4:53 The father realized this was the very hour at which Jesus had told him, "Your son will live." Then he himself believed, along with his whole household.

NKJ John 4:53 So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives." And he himself believed, and his whole household.

NRS John 4:53 The father realized that this was the hour when Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." So he himself believed, along with his whole household.

NAB John 4:53 The father realized that just at that time Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live," and he and his whole household came to believe.

NJB John 4:53 The father realised that this was exactly the time when Jesus had said, 'Your son will live'; and he and all his household believed.

GWN John 4:53 Then the boy's father realized that it was the same time that Jesus had told him, "Your son will live." So the official and his entire family became believers.

- at the: Ps 33:9 107:20 Mt 8:8,9,13
- and himself: Lu 19:9 Ac 2:39 Acts 16:15,34 Acts 18:8
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Acts 16:34+ And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, having believed in God with his whole household.

### CONVINCED BY DIVINE COINCIDENCE

**So the father knew** ([ginosko](#)) **that it was at that hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives"** - The official's faith grew and like the Samaritan woman he was compelled to pass it on! "It was the time of his son's recovery that verified to the father that a miracle had taken place." (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**And he himself believed** (see [pisteuo](#)) **and his whole household** - Jesus' word brought this man to faith along with his entire household.

*People are amazed by coincidences,  
but generally they do not attribute them to the direct activity of God.*  
-- Tenney

**Robertson** on **believed** - Not just the **word** of Jesus (Jn 4:50), but complete faith in Jesus himself as the Messiah, absolute use of [pisteuo](#) as in Jn 1:7+ **All his family**, the first example of a whole family believing in Jesus like the later case of Crispus (Acts 18:8+, cf Acts 11:14+, Acts 16:31+, 1 Cor 1:16, 16:15). ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**Tenney** - When the father considered the details of his meeting with Jesus and the good news concerning his son's recovery, he was convinced that it was more than coincidence at work. The timing was miraculous, and the boy's recovery was more than even circumstances could have brought about. "So he and his household believed."

**Blum** - The lesson of this incident is that Jesus' power is able to save from death even at a great distance. His Word has power to work; people are simply to believe His Word. (SEE [Bible Knowledge Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**Grant Osborne** - Note the progression of faith: he had an inadequate faith based only on miraculous signs (Jn 4:48); then a preliminary faith in Jesus' words (Jn 4:50); and finally a full-fledged faith that included his whole family, probably his slaves as well (in the ancient world, a family generally followed the patriarch's faith). Jesus had shown himself to have power over life (cf. Jn 5:21; 11:25), and this led to full-fledged faith. Note also the different types of faith to this point: The disciples believed when they saw Jesus' glory (Jn 2:11), but many others believed only on the basis of signs (Jn 2:23); the Samaritans believed on the basis of his words (Jn 4:39-42), but many Galileans believed only on the basis of signs and wonders (Jn 4:48). Finally, the official and his house

came to faith on the basis of Jesus' works and his words. John concludes by pointing out that "this was the second miraculous sign Jesus did in Galilee." There were other signs (Jn 2:23), but this is the second in Galilee. (See [The Gospel of John](#), scroll up and down for more text)

### John 4:54 This is again a second sign that Jesus performed when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.

BGT John 4:54 Το το [δ] π λιν δε τερον σημε ον πο ησεν ησο ς λθ ν κ τ ς ουδα ας ε ς τ ν Γαλιλα αν.

NET John 4:54 Jesus did this as his second miraculous sign when he returned from Judea to Galilee.

NLT John 4:54 This was the second miraculous sign Jesus did in Galilee after coming from Judea.

ESV John 4:54 This was now the second sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea to Galilee.

NIV John 4:54 This was the second miraculous sign that Jesus performed, having come from Judea to Galilee.

GNT John 4:54 Το το [δ] π λιν δε τερον σημε ον πο ησεν ησο ς λθ ν κ τ ς ουδα ας ε ς τ ν Γαλιλα αν.

KJV John 4:54 This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee.

YLT John 4:54 this again a second sign did Jesus, having come out of Judea to Galilee.

ASV John 4:54 This is again the second sign that Jesus did, having come out of Judaea into Galilee.

CSB John 4:54 This, therefore, was the second sign Jesus performed after He came from Judea to Galilee.

NKJ John 4:54 This again is the second sign Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.

NRS John 4:54 Now this was the second sign that Jesus did after coming from Judea to Galilee.

NAB John 4:54 (Now) this was the second sign Jesus did when he came to Galilee from Judea.

NJB John 4:54 This new sign, the second, Jesus performed on his return from Judaea to Galilee.

GWN John 4:54 This was the second miracle that Jesus performed after he had come back from Judea to Galilee.

- Joh 2:1-11
- John 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

John 2:11+ This beginning of His signs (SIGN NUMBER ONE) Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

## SIGN NUMBER TWO IN JOHN'S GOSPEL

**This is again a second sign that Jesus performed when He had come out of Judea into Galilee** Literally "this did Jesus again as a second sign." "This act of healing was the second of the eight major signs that John records as proof that Jesus was the Messiah." (SEE [The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**Blum** - Both signs in Galilee (changing the water into wine [Jn 2:1–11] and healing the official's son) demonstrate that Jesus is the Promised One. Yet both signs had a certain hidden aspect to them. Only the disciples and some servants saw His miracle at the wedding, and this healing was not in public view. (SEE [Bible Knowledge Commentary](#) - scroll up and down for more text)

**Robertson** - The first one was also in Cana (2:1ff.), but many were wrought in Jerusalem also (Jn 2:23). ([John 4 Word Pictures in the NT](#))

**Vincent** - Other miracles had indeed been wrought between these two; but John emphasizes these two as marking Jesus' coming from Judæa to Galilee. The healing of the nobleman's child was the second miracle, only in respect of its taking place upon Jesus' withdrawal from Judæa into Galilee. Hence the again. He wrought a miracle again, when He again came into Galilee, and this miracle was the second, marking His second coming. ([John 4 Commentary](#))

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## Robert Neighbor - The Eight Signs in John

1. The Sign of the Water Turned to Wine (John 2:1-11).
2. The Sign of the Healing of the Nobleman's Son (John 4:46-54).
3. The Sign of Bethesda's Pool (John 5:1-13).
4. The Sign of the Loaves and the Fishes (John 6:1-15).
5. The Sign of the Walking on the Sea (John 6:16-24).
6. The Sign of the Man Born Blind (John 9:1-17).
7. The Sign of the Resurrection of Lazarus (John 11:33-47).
8. The Sign of the Draught of Fishes (John 21:1-14).

In the Book of Hebrews, we read the following:

"God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will" (Heb. 2:4).

Three things stand before us — miracles, wonders, and signs.

These, in the Greek, are designated by three different words: "dunamis," power, significant of mighty works; "teras," wonder, significant of causing the people to marvel; "semeion," a sign, significant of a foreshadowing of Christ.

These words are used in the Gospel as follows:

Dunamis occurs 38 times — 13 times in Matthew, 10 times in Mark, and 15 times in Luke.

"Teras" occurs 3 times — once in Matthew, once in Mark, once in John.

"Semeion" occurs 48 times in the Gospels — 13 in Matthew, 7 in Mark, 11 in Luke, 17 in John.

"Semeion" is translated in John 13 times by the word "miracle," and four times by the word "signs."

The above notations show that there are three purposes in a miracle: first, it portrays the power of a Living Christ; second, it causes the people to wonder, and thirdly, it produces a sign, concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Gospel of John was distinctively written that "ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name" (John 20:31).

With one single exception, the Holy Spirit, in the Gospel of John, refers to the miracles of Christ under the word "semeion," a "sign." The purpose of the Holy Spirit was to set forth distinctive marks of the Deity of Christ, that men might believe in Him and have life.

We have sought in this study of the signs in John to set forth that particular phase of the sign, which manifests Christ, as the Son of God, the life of His people, Israel.

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## J R Miller - The Second Miracle at Cana John 4:43-54

"Once more he visited Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. And there was a certain royal official whose son lay sick at Capernaum." After leaving Sychar, Jesus seems to have gone at once to Cana. He never rested. When His work was done in one place He hastened to another. He was never in a hurry, never flustered, never feverish in His haste—but He never loitered nor lost a moment's time. If we keep our heart at peace, and live according to God's laws, there is little danger of our injuring our health by too much work. Then, even if duty demands serious toil and self-denying labor—it is Christlike not to withhold ourselves from it. "For whoever will save his life—shall lose it." Taking too good care of oneself—is the way to make the least of one's life.

Jesus was no exception to the well-known rule that "A prophet has no honor in his own country." It is a common saying that no man is a hero to his own servant. Those who live in familiar relations with the great or the good, are the least likely to recognize the elements of greatness or goodness in them. Many of the men whose names shine in the galaxy of fame, and whose work lives in the world with undying influence—had little honor from those among whom they walked, and perhaps would have little honor today if they were to return and live in the old relationships. We often fail to recognize the true excellence of our best friends, while they stay with us. It is not until she is gone out of a home—that a mother's real value is appreciated. The same is true of each member of the household and of each friend upon whom we lean much, and whose life is a great deal to us. Jesus walked among the people in Judea, taught, produced His miracles, and lived out His sweet, beautiful life of love in their midst—but they failed to recognize the Messiah in Him. "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him—and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own—and His own received Him not" (1:10, 11). We are in danger in these very days of failing to appreciate the blessings of Christianity, because they are so familiar to us.

Sickness and suffering are everywhere. No one is exempt from them. Even the mansions of the noble are not sheltered from the invasions of disease. There is no charm in wealth or rank or power—to keep fever away. Into the home of this nobleman suffering came. It was only a child, too, who was sick. Even to the youngest, illness comes—as well as to the old.

Trouble often sends to Christ, those who would not have gone—if the trouble had not touched them. It was the sickness of the nobleman's child, that sent him to Jesus. He had heard of the great Healer—but probably had never sought Him, nor even thought of seeking Him. But when his child was stricken down and seemed about to die—he remembered what he had heard about Jesus that He was able to heal the sick and even bring back to life those who were near death. So this great man hastened away all the long distance to Cana—to find this Healer. We all owe far more than we know to our troubles. We do not recognize our need of divine help—until we are in some sore distress when human help can do nothing for us. Then we turn to God. If we never had a sense of sinfulness, we would never seek Christ as our Savior. If we never realized our powerlessness in the midst of temptation, we would never turn to Christ as our helper. Indeed, the Bible becomes a new book to us—in times of trouble. Many of the best things in it we never would have found—had it not been for some great need which made their meaning real to us. We do not turn with our heart's cravings to God—until we realize the insufficiency of this world's friendships and blessings.

The child seemed about to die. The record says "he was at the point of death." The point of death is a point to which all of us must come sometime in our life. We must pass through this world along many different ways—but every one of us comes at last to the point of death. All earthly roads pass that way. No matter how bright the path is on which our feet are now walking, somewhere on it, perhaps far away yet, perhaps closer than we think—awaits this point of death. We should learn to live so that if at any sudden hour we find ourselves facing death—we would not be troubled nor disturbed.

In this nobleman's earnest pleading we have a revelation of a father's heart. He pleaded, "Come down before my child dies!" We do not realize the value of father-love as an impulse in this world. The secret which sends thousands of men every day to their tasks, their struggles, their heroisms—is back in the homes from which they come, where children stay. We idealize mother-love, not overmuch—but perhaps sometimes to the exclusion or at least to the forgetting of father-love, which has scarcely a less powerful motive in the inspiring of the noble things of human life. The sickness of a child sent this nobleman miles away to plead with Christ.

There was a great faith also in the father's heart—he believed that Jesus could save his child's life. He seems not to have thought, however, that even the Master, with all His power, could do anything without journeying all the way to his home. He thought the Healer's presence necessary to the putting forth of His power. So he insisted on having Jesus go with him to his home, where his child lay dying.

Jesus recognized the father's faith and assured him at once that his child would recover. "You may go. Your son will live." More than twenty miles off the sick boy lay—but the power of Jesus healed him there just as easily as if He had been at the bedside. The word of power flew through the air all that long distance like an electric flash, and on his couch of pain, the suffering child suddenly felt a thrill of health. A moment later, and the fever was entirely gone and the child was altogether well. This miracle should have much comfort for us. We cannot now bring Christ in bodily presence to the room where our loved one is lying—but we can pray to Him, and He can heal our friend just as easily from His heavenly home—as if He were present where he lies. We can also ask God to bless our friend twenty miles away from us, or a thousand miles away—and He can do it just as easily as if the friend were close by our side when we pray.

The father hastened home, and on the way learned that his request had been granted. "While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living." Ever after that day, when he looked upon this child, the father would remember that his boy's spared life, was an answer to a prayer. The child would always know, too, that he was living in the world—because his father had thought about him one day when he was very sick, and had gone all the way to Cana to speak to Jesus on his behalf. Children do not know how many blessings they are enjoying, because their parents, teachers, pastors, and other friends have gone on errands to Christ for them, in the days of their need.

The manner of the answer to this nobleman's prayer made a deep impression on the father. He compared the time and learned that the beginning of the child's recovery, was at the very moment when Jesus had said that the boy would live. He believed before—now his faith was confirmed. He found it just as the Master had said it would be. There were many other cases in which the words of Jesus were put to the test at once—and proved to be exactly true. He told the woman of Samaria all about her past life. He told Peter that the coin would be in the fish's mouth with which to pay the temple tax. He told the disciples they would find a colt tied, and rehearsed the conversation that would take place with the owner—and it all came out just as He said it would. He told the disciples, again, that they would meet a man bearing a pitcher of water, who would conduct them to the guest room; and the words came true.

From these illustrations in common life, we learn that every word of Christ will be found to be true. He promised salvation and eternal life to those who will believe on Him, and everyone who believes and commits his life to Him—will find this promise fulfilled. He said that in His Father's house are many mansions, and that He will come again, to receive to Himself each believer; we shall find this

word true. When we pass into the valley of the shadows, we shall find ourselves in the personal care of Christ, and shall be led by Him home, to enter the mansion which He has been preparing for us.