

(4:19). Rather than pursue the issue though, she abruptly changes the subject and brings up the grand-daddy of all of the theological issues with Jesus regarding the location of worship (Mt. Gerizim -- 4:20).

- D) Once again, Jesus will not be deterred. He shoots straight with her that salvation is from the Jews (the Messiah would be Jewish -- 4:21-22), and then emphasizes that true worshipers will worship in spirit and truth, not tied to a location, but worshipping God as God seeks to be worshiped (4:23-24).

4) Affectionate Revelation

- A) The Samaritan woman is captivated -- there is no ignoring this Jew. She states, with almost an intense urgency, her belief in the coming Messiah, promised back in Deuteronomy 18:15-18. Her comment/question is the moment for which Jesus has been living (4:25).
- B) Jesus reveals that He is the Messiah she has been looking for (4:26). His word usage is clearly a statement of Deity (hearkening back to Exodus 6:2-3).
- C) The Samaritan woman's response is clear. She drops everything and tells her world about Jesus (4:28-29). The townspeople, who she had been trying to avoid before, are so moved by what she has to say, they come to see about her report themselves (4:30).

5) Stunning Availability

- A) The Samaritans come to see for themselves about Jesus (4:40). As though the scene wasn't already absurd enough,

Who's The Man?

Long Beach Alliance Church • September 12th, 2004 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**COME, SEE A MAN WHO
TOLD ME ALL THE THINGS
THAT I HAVE DONE; THIS
IS NOT THE CHRIST, IS IT?
~ JOHN 4:29 (NASB)**

1) Significant Samaritan Setting

- A) Jesus and His disciples were enjoying great success in reaching the Jewish people (John 4:1-2). The success brought the scrutiny of the Pharisees though, so Jesus and His disciples depart (4:3) from the Judean region (South) for the Galilean region (North).
- B) Jesus "had to pass through Samaria" (4:4). Christ's intentionality is notable because the Jews had adopted a different route between Galilee and Judea which took them around Samaria. The Jews hated the Samaritans so much, they didn't even want the dust of Samaria on their sandals!
- C) Sychar (4:5), which was located about a mile from the ancient town of Shechem, was (and is) the undisputed location of Jacob's Well. The 100-foot deep well (cf. 4:11) still produces clear, cool water provided to tourists by the cup to this day.

- D) The location of the well, which Jacob had given to Joseph in Genesis 48:22 (please note fn. in NASB & ESV), was significant to the Samaritans[†] because it was near the first location where Abraham stopped in the Promised Land, and Abraham had built an altar there (Genesis 12:6-7).

2) Intentional Acceptance

- A) Jesus asks the Samaritan woman, who has come in the middle of the day (John 4:6), for a drink of water (4:7). The absence of the disciples is noted (4:8) to emphasize the 'scandal' of the encounter.
- B) The total absurdity of the moment is not lost on the nameless Samaritan woman (4:9)! She immediately asks Jesus a pointed and loaded question which brought their political and social separations to the forefront (Samaritan/Jew, Water/Uncleanliness, Woman/Man -- 4:9).
- C) Jesus largely ignores her question and somewhat cryptically begins to speak to her about "living water" (lit. water flowing and bubbling from a stream or fountain).

- D) The woman gets stuck on the physical, while Jesus is attempting to draw her into the spiritual (4:11-15). She even challenges Jesus with another reference back to Jacob and the clear tensions between the Jews and Samaritans. But Jesus will have none of it. She came for a drink, Jesus came for her soul (John 4:13-14).

3) Authentic Confrontation

- A) The woman continues to seek where she can find water, even commenting that maybe it could help her, since she wouldn't have to come out to the well anymore (4:16). Jesus decides to turn the tables and get real honest (4:17).
- B) Jesus hones in on her greatest need. She is not in need of water for her body, she is in need of love for her soul. She has been feeding that need with husbands -- and the one she is currently with isn't her husband (4:17-18). Like a spiritual surgeon, Jesus goes right to the heart of the matter.
- C) The woman is unnerved by all of this, and makes what is perhaps the largest understatement in all of Scripture

[†]The name "Samaritan" simply means "one from the region of Samaria." The Samaritans came into being when the Assyrians took Samaria captive and deported large numbers of Israelites (27,290 according to the annals of Sargon II in 722 B.C.). The Assyrians subsequently settled the region of Samaria and intermarried with the remaining Israelites (2nd Kings 17:23-34). The children of these unions were known as 'Samaritans.' They were considered "half-breeds" by the exiled Jews. The Assyrian settlers brought their gods and their practices with them when they invaded and settled Samaria (2nd Kings 17:29-31), which were strangely melded with a worship of the One True God, Yahweh (2nd Kings 17:25, 28, 32-33, 41). In time, the Samaritans rejected polytheism and worshiped Yahweh alone, with significant peculiarities. This included their strict commitment to the Pentateuch, although it was a distinctively Samaritan version of the first five books of the Bible. They completely rejected the writings of the Prophets (1st-2nd Samuel, 1st-2nd Kings, 1st-2nd Chronicles) and the wisdom literature (Psalms, Proverbs) because these writings emphasized the Davidic line and the centrality of Jerusalem as the location of the temple and the center of worship. After the Babylonian exile, when Zerubbabel led the rebuilding of the temple, Samaritan help was adamantly refused (Ezra 4:2-3). This fueled even more hatred and conflict into the relationship. On top of all of this was the Samaritan commitment to Mount Gerizim as the center of Samaritan worship, complete with their own temple which towered above Shechem. The Samaritan temple was destroyed by the Jews when they attacked Samaria in 128 B.C. by John Hyrcanus, and the ruins would have been clearly visible from nearby Sychar, the location of Jacob's Well and the setting for John 4. Jesus "had to come" to the center of an ancient controversy for a significant moment with a Samaritan who would have filled every true Jew with contempt and hatred. She would have confirmed every suspicion of their prejudice and bitter separatist convictions. While open hostilities were more settled during Jesus' time on earth, deep prejudice was still commonplace. Eventually, long after Jesus' death, the Samaritans enjoyed more political favor with Rome, and even were responsible for unseating Pontius Pilate in the region. This political power was a threat to the Jews, who simply poured out their hatred through literature and special Jewish laws which, up to this point in history, had not been codified. Most interesting for our conversation was a codified law from Mishnah *Middah 4:1* which reflected the longstanding prejudice against both women and Samaritans which stated "the daughters of the Samaritans are menstruants from their cradle" and thus, were perpetually ceremonially unclean. The Samaritans survived in the region through its tumultuous history, and there are about 400 living Samaritans in the region near Tel Aviv today. The Jews and Samaritans in the region still hate each other, typified by the local ordinance against any Samaritan being buried in the Jewish cemetery in Tel Aviv. (Collected from various sources)

the Samaritans ask Jesus to remain with them for a longer period of time (John 4:40). Jesus shows His love for people by staying and revealing Himself to the Samaritan people. Many people believed because of his availability (4:41).

- B) In some of the greatest verses in the Bible, the testimony of the lone Samaritan woman (4:39), has a radical and eternal impact on her community. The story ends with a powerful testimony of the people back to the Samaritan woman in John 4:42 that Jesus "is indeed the Savior of the world."

"All my fresh springs shall be in Thee."

-Psalm 87:7 (PBV)

Our Lord never patches up our natural virtues, He re-makes the whole man on the inside. "Put on the new man," i.e., see that your natural human life puts on the garb that is in keeping with the new life. The life God plants in us develops its own virtues, not the virtues of Adam, but of Jesus Christ. Watch how God will wither up your confidence in natural virtues after sanctification, and in any power you have, until you learn to draw your life from the reservoir of the resurrection life of Jesus. Thank God if you are going through a drying-up experience! The sign that God is at work in us is that He corrupts confidence in the natural virtues, because they are not promises of what we are going to be but remnants of what God created man to be. We will cling to the natural virtues, while all the time God is trying to get us into contact with the life of Jesus Christ which can never be described in terms of the natural virtues. It is the saddest thing to see people in the service of God depending on that which the grace of God never gave them, depending on what they have by the accident of heredity. God does not build up our natural virtues and transfigure them, because our natural virtues can never come anywhere near what Jesus Christ wants. No natural love, no natural patience, no natural purity can ever come up to His demands. But as we bring every bit of our bodily life into harmony with the new life which God has put in us, He will exhibit in us the virtues that were characteristic of the Lord Jesus.

**"And every virtue we possess
Is His alone."**

My Utmost For His Highest, Oswald Chambers, December 30th Entry

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Small Group Bible Study Questions

- A) John 3 and John 4 are put right next to each other in the John's Gospel to present us with a contrast. Re-read the story of Nicodemus (John 3:1-21) and then the story of the Samaritan woman (John 4:4-45). Discuss in your group all of the contrasts and comparisons you can discover between the two stories.
- B) Jesus showed the Samaritan woman a great deal of dignity and respect by accepting her, even though the social and political environment around them was hostile and steeped in racial prejudice. Can you think of situations in your own life where you struggle to accept others based on similar issues?
- C) Clearly, there were some things in the life of the Samaritan woman which were keeping her from the Messiah. Jesus brought those things to the surface (He does that, doesn't He?) -- and she was faced with the worst of who she was. What about you? Are there things which block your relationship with Jesus Christ? What are they, and how can you turn the corner on trusting the Messiah?
- D) There is something symbolic about the Samaritan woman leaving her waterpot behind (John 4:28). She dropped what she came to do, in order to do what God called her to do. Do you have moments like these, when you know God is calling you to do something for Him? Share with the group about your experiences and what you did (or didn't do) for Jesus.
- E) Jesus stayed with the Samaritans for two days to share with them about who He was. He was available, even though it was out of His way. Do you find it difficult to drop what you are doing in order to attend to spiritual things in your life? God has made Himself available for you, have you made yourself available for Him? Respond in prayer with your group and seek accountability for these areas together.

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