

Life in His Name – Part 8
Encountering Christ – John 4:1-26
Crosspoint – Dave Spooner – March 26th, 2023

Intro:

- The passage of the “woman at the well” has been preached in many different ways from many different angles. It has been used as a method of evangelism. It has been used as an example of Jesus breaking gender and racial barriers. These things are true about this passage, but that is not the main point. The main point is to reveal who Jesus is so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing, you may have life in His name.

John 20:31 ESV

These are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

- We are going to look at this passage through the lens of John 20:31 to see what this passage reveals about Jesus, so that we will believe in Him, worship Him, follow Him, know Him, love Him, and in so doing have life in His name.

John 4:1-6 ESV

Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John 2 (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples), 3 he left Judea and departed again for Galilee. 4 And he had to pass through Samaria. 5 So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. 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.

Jesus is the purposeful Lord

- We know from a couple of verses previous that “all things have been given into his hands” (3:35). We know He was not being controlled by circumstances but was in charge of circumstances. Therefore, He was not merely responding. He was acting purposefully. Verse four says, “he had to pass through Samaria” this was not a “had to” because He had no other choice (He could have gone around this area as many Jews of that day did). This is a “had to” because He chose to because He had something to do there.
- The one who is above all things and to whom all things were given, the sovereign Lord, does all that He desires. No one tells Him what to do, and no one can force Him to do anything. He does the will of the Father, and He does what He wills, including laying His life down and including pursuing you.
- Jesus divinely arranged this meeting, arriving at just the right time, with just the right circumstances, with just the right person, for just the right encounter. By the way, Jesus still does this. The Holy Spirit still guides us to choose roads others avoid to talk to people we’d never imagine talking to.

John 4:7-9 ESV

A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” 8 (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) 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*.)

- *Here is the backstory: After the Assyrians captured Samaria [the capital of the Northern kingdom of Israel] in 722–21 BC, they deported all the Israelites of substance and settled the land with foreigners, who intermarried with the surviving Israelites and adhered to some form of their ancient religion (2 Kings 17–18). After the exile [of the Southern kingdom in Babylon], Jews, returning to their homeland . . . viewed the Samaritans not only as the children of political rebels, but as racial half-breeds whose religion was tainted by various unacceptable elements. . . . About 400 BC the Samaritans erected a rival temple on Mount Gerizim. (D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 216). *They were ceremonially unclean. They were racially impure. They were religiously heretical. And therefore, they were avoided* (John Piper, <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/you-will-never-be-thirsty-again>)

John 4:10-15 ESV

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.” 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? 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.” 13 Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, 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.” 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.”

Jesus is the source of living water

- The gift of God is “living water,” and the person who gives this gift is Jesus, the Lord. There are three other places in the OT that refer to “living water.” One is in the Song of Solomon (4:15), referring to waters that give life, and the other two are in the book of Jeremiah, saying the Lord is the fountain of “living water” which they have forsaken and dug their own wells (Jer. 2:13; 17:13).
- When Jesus said He was the one who gave the living water, it is a veiled way of saying He is the Lord. He is indeed the one who gives the living water (which is forgiveness, remember John 3), and life comes by forgiveness and a new heart (by the Spirit) which leads to eternal life, which is only obtained by internal change, not external effort.
- Now Jesus shows her the truth about her as the prophet who sees, which reveals her heart and her need for Him.

John 4:16-19 ESV

Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come here.” 17 The woman answered him, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband’; 18 for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true.” 19 The woman said to him, “Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet.

Jesus is the seeing prophet

- This woman did not want to come to that well because of her public and private life, which is why she was there at noon, in the heat of the day. The other women shunned her, so she chose to come when no one would be there. Jesus knew this about her, so to get to her heart, He asked her to get her husband and come here.
- She answered Him by saying, “I have no husband.” She deceptively used what was true to hide the truth. What she said was true, but it was not the whole story. We don’t know what happened in her life. Perhaps she was abused, perhaps she was unloved, perhaps she was at fault, but we do know that she went from man to man, from “well to well,” to find what she was looking for. It seems that she may have given up on the whole marriage thing altogether and was living with her boyfriend or was a mistress.
- Jesus is the seeing prophet; He knows everything about our past and our present, and He also pursues us and offers us “living water.” We just have to turn from pursuing and digging our own wells to the one who sees us and pursues us.
- This woman was now exposed by the one who knows all, and instead of turning to Him, she turns the spotlight off of herself to a theological dispute. This is what people do when it comes to God. They are likely to change to subject, to be uneasy with what He knows about them, or what they fear He may confront.

John 4:20-24 ESV

“Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.” 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. 22 You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 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. 24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”

Jesus is the authoritative teacher

- In response to this long-standing dispute between the Samaritans and the Jews, Jesus explains with authority what is true. True worship is not tied to sacred sites (sorry, Catholics, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, etc.).
- John Piper says this, “Jesus’s point here and elsewhere in this Gospel is that there is no true worship apart from receiving the Savior that comes from the Jews. Not only did Jesus say in John 8:19, ‘If you knew me, you would know my Father also,’ but he also said to the Jews in John 5:23, ‘Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.’ And in John 5:42–43 he said to them, ‘I know that you do not have the love of God within you. I have come in my Father’s name, and you do not receive me.’ In other words, whoever does not know who I really am, and honor me for who I really am, and love me for who I really am, does not know or honor or love God. And therefore whatever they do on their mountains or in their temples or shrines or mosques or synagogues, they do not worship God. That’s the point of Luke 10:16: ‘The one who rejects me rejects him who sent me.’ It makes no sense to say they worship when they reject. And Matthew 10:40: ‘Whoever receives me receives him who sent me.’ It makes no sense to say they

worship the one they do not receive.” (<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/not-in-this-or-that-mount-but-in-spirit-and-truth>)

- The Father is seeking worshipers who will worship Him with their spirit and in the truth about who God is. Jesus is God seeking the worship of God. It is not where we worship or when we worship that matters. What matters in worship is who we worship and that we worship with our heart in what is true about Him.
- At this point, this woman had not fully received what Jesus was saying because she did not fully know who He was, so:

John 4:25-26 ESV

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.” 26 Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am he.”

Jesus is the Messiah Christ

- After telling her so much about who he was in veiled terms, after supernaturally telling her the truth about her past and present, after telling her the truth of who the Father was seeking and who are the true worshipers, He tells her and us, and the rest of the world, who He is. I who speak to you am the Messiah who is Christ.

Conclusion

- The woman at the well is like many people in our society. They are “spiritual” in one form or another. They believe some things but really don’t know Scripture, perhaps just some “inspirational” sayings and a very general understanding of Christianity or a mixed-up incomplete version. What about your neighbor? What about those in your family? What can we do? We must ask for the heart of Christ for the lost so that we “must go” their way. Then ask God for sensitivity to the Holy Spirit for His promptings of the time, place, and approach. Point them to the person of Jesus, who He is, what he has done, our condition, and what He offers them.
- All of this points to the identity of Jesus. He is the one who is the purposeful Lord. He is the one who is the source of living water. He is the one who is the seeing prophet. He is the one who is the authoritative teacher. He is the one who is the Messiah Christ. Will you believe in Him and receive life in His name?
- And if you have done so already, worship Him in spirit and in truth. Seek to know Him more and more. The more you know Him, the more you love Him, and the more you love Him, the more you worship Him in spirit and in truth.
- Next week we will hear the “rest of the story” as Lee teaches part two.
- Prayer people and pray