

## Thirsty for Living Water

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<sup>5</sup> So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. <sup>6</sup> Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

<sup>7</sup> A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." <sup>8</sup> (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) <sup>9</sup> 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.)

<sup>10</sup> 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." <sup>11</sup> The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?" <sup>12</sup> Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" <sup>13</sup> Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, <sup>14</sup> 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." <sup>15</sup> 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." <sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." <sup>17</sup> The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband,' <sup>18</sup> for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!" <sup>19</sup> The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. <sup>20</sup> Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem." <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. <sup>22</sup> You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. <sup>23</sup> 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. <sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." <sup>25</sup> 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." <sup>26</sup> Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you" (John 4:5-26).

### 1. My Visitors

Last Sunday, an old church couple visited from Atlanta, Georgia. When Christine and I planted a church in Fairfax, Virginia, they attended our church. When they moved to Richmond, they continued to drive 2

hours to worship with us on Sunday. Although it was far, they said they were happy to come to church, even after a 2-hour drive. You can imagine how happy we were to see each other after so many years.

## 2. A Samaritan Woman and Jesus

In John 4, we read a more moving story about the Samaritan woman. Jesus and the disciples were traveling from Judea to Galilee. Samaria is located on the way. Jews avoided going through Samaria to get to Galilee. They often bypassed Samaria by traveling east of the Jordan River.

When Jesus and the disciples arrive at Sychar in Samaria, Jesus sits down beside the well. When the disciples went into town to buy some food, at noon a Samaritan woman came to draw water from the well.

Why did the Samaritan woman come to the well to draw water at noon? It was because she wanted to avoid the other women in town. Other women did not draw water at noon, the hottest time of the day. They would often gather in the morning or at sunset.

Since Jesus is thirsty, he asks the woman, ***“would you give me a drink of water?”*** the Samaritan woman replies, ***“You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink of water when Jews and Samaritans won’t have anything to do with each other?”***

When Jesus asks her for a drink, she is shocked because Jews often avoided contact with Samaritans. Why did the Jews and Samaritans have a bad relationship? It was because when Assyria defeated Samaria, Samaritan Jews intermarried with the non-Jewish people. This would have compromised the Jewish ethnic identity and that’s why Jews despised Samaritans.

## 3. Living Water

In verse 10, Jesus tells the woman, ***“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.”***

What is the gift of God? John 3:16 says, ***“God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son and whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*** According to John 3, Jesus is the gift of God.

In Acts 2:38, Peter says to the people, ***“Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”*** According to Peter, the Holy Spirit is the gift of God. Jesus and the Holy Spirit are the gifts of God.

What is living water? Living water literally means fresh spring water. But John 7:38-39 says, “**Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him. By this he meant the Spirit.**” Jesus identifies this “living water” as the Holy Spirit.

The Samaritan woman did not understand how Jesus was going to give her living water. She says, “**Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?**” The Samaritan woman thinks that the water is from a well. Jacob’s well, where they were, was so deep, it would be impossible for Jesus to draw water without a bucket.

Jesus says to her, “**Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, <sup>14</sup>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.**” <sup>15</sup>**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.”**

Jesus reminds the Samaritan woman that humans have both physical and spiritual needs. The woman doesn’t think of her spiritual needs. She thinks of only her physical needs. Jesus explains that the living water Jesus gives provides continual spiritual satisfaction.

When the Samaritan woman doesn’t seem to understand what Jesus says about living water, Jesus tells the woman to bring her husband. Jesus’ suggestion here shows that he knows everything about her private life. Jesus knew that the woman had had five husbands in the past. She also was living with a man who was not her husband.

After the Samaritan woman sees this, she tries to change the subject. The woman brings up a theological question about a place to worship. Jews worshiped in Jerusalem and Samaritans worshiped at Mount Gerizim. She wanted to know who was right.

Jesus says “**the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.... God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in Spirit and truth.**”

What does it mean to worship in Spirit and truth? In John 14:6, Jesus says, “**I am the way, the truth, and the life.**” “**No one can come to the Father except through me.**”

Jesus is the truth. The Holy Spirit helps us to come to the Father through Christ to worship and listen to his words.

#### **4. Wi-fi Connection**

Last year when we were in Cambridge, UK, one evening I was walking along the street. I got lost and did not know how to return to the hotel. Although I had a cellphone, it was not connected to the internet. I had

to ask people for directions to the hotel. Worshiping the Lord is like connecting to the internet. If we want to connect to the Lord, we should use the network. The name of the network is the Holy Spirit, and the password is Jesus.

How long do we want to be connected to the Lord? Do we want to connect to God on Sunday morning for one hour? Or do we want to connect to the Lord as often as we can?

Romans 12:1 says, ***“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.”*** Paul urges the followers of Jesus to worship the Lord with the totality of our life. We can connect to the Lord at any time to worship through the Holy Spirit and Jesus by our prayers, scripture reading, meditation, and praising.

## **5. Conclusion**

Our physical body requires water to survive. In the same way, each of us has a spiritual need to survive. How can our spiritual needs be met? Our spiritual needs can be met by Jesus and through the Holy Spirit. When we are connected to God and God’s people, we find the same sense of purpose and excitement we see in the Samaritan woman. Our lives cannot live without living water from the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit helps us to connect to the Lord to worship and reminds us that we are loved by God.

## **6. Application**

When the Samaritan woman met Jesus, her life was completely changed. If we read the whole chapter 4, we see how the Samaritan woman responds when she learns that Jesus is the Messiah. She returns to the village and invites all the people to see Jesus. She has experienced true love from Jesus and doesn’t try to avoid people anymore. Her spiritual need is filled with living water.

We are excited to host Teen and Adult Challenge next Sunday. For those who don’t know, Teen and Adult Challenge is a drug and alcohol recovery center. Those who are there search for living water. After they experience Jesus’ genuine love and transformation, they become excited for the Lord and do not mind sharing even the difficult parts of their lives. I pray that we and many more people in our community come and hear the music and testimonies of those who have been changed by Christ. May everyone be filled with living water and God’s true happiness. Amen.