

Gospel of John Study Notes

John 4a – Jesus Talks With a Samaritan Woman

Before jumping into the story of Jesus and the Samaritan Woman, John connects the previous passage about John the Baptist with this story. We're told Jesus "had to go through Samaria", but we aren't told why¹. Instead, we are invited to consider what Jesus did without his disciples, his explanation to them, then the results of the woman's beliefs.



- John 4:1-26, Jesus Talks With a Samaritan Woman
- John 4:27-42, The Disciples Return & The Results

Jesus Talks With a Samaritan Woman

John creates a one-act play for us to consider an incredible truth that refers to one of his opening comments in the prologue:

*He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.
John 1:11*

- I capitalized the word "With" in the heading to emphasize its significance.
 - Jesus went through Samaria on purpose
 - He spoke with a woman of ill-repute for a reason
 - I'm sure the Pharisees heard all about this story!
- The location is of important historical significance: Jacob's well at Shechem (see Genesis 12:6-7, 33:18-19, and 48:22)
- The time of day was unusual: drawing water was normally an early morning task to avoid the heat. This isolation of the woman is noteworthy.

The Dialogue

- Water vs Living Water
- The Gift of God
- The Giver, The Messiah
- True Worship

¹ <http://www.wordofgodtoday.com/john-4/>. For him to go through Samaria he had to do a difficult climb about midway in the Jordan River Valley up to the heights of Samaria, which was approximately 2000 feet (609 m.) in elevation. The normal route from the valley was to cross to the east side of the river thus avoiding Samaria and then re-cross the river to enter Lower Galilee. Of course, when traveling from the high country of Jerusalem the easiest route to Samaria was to follow the mountain ridge. It was a journey of about three days.

John 4:1-26

New International Version

Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

⁴ Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John— ² although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. ³ So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee. ⁴ Now he had to go through Samaria. ⁵ So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

⁷ When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" ⁸ (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

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.)

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."

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

¹³ Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ 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."

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."

¹⁶ He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back."

¹⁷ "I have no husband," she replied.

Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. 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."

¹⁹ “Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet. ²⁰ Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.”

²¹ “Woman,” Jesus replied, “believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²² You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³ Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”

²⁵ The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”

²⁶ Then Jesus declared, “I, the one speaking to you—I am he.”

John 4:1-26, rearranged as a script, from the NIV

Narrator: *Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John— although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee. Now he had to go through Samaria. So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.*

When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her:

Jesus *Will you give me a drink?*

Narrator: *His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.*

Woman: You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?

Narrator: *For Jews do not associate with Samaritans*

Jesus: *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.*

Woman: Sir, you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. 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 livestock?

Jesus: *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.*

Woman: Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.

Jesus: *Go, call your husband and come back.*

Woman: I have no husband.

Jesus: *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.*

Woman: Sir, I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.

Jesus: Woman, believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.

Woman: I know that Messiah...

Narrator called Christ

Woman: ...is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.

Jesus: I, the one speaking to you—I am he.