

If You Only Knew John 4:4-10

4 ¶ But He needed to go through Samaria. 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. 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. 7 A woman of 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 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. 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."

In the heat of the noonday sun the disciples leave Jesus beside the well as they go up the hill toward the city. And as they go toward the city they meet a Samaritan woman coming to the well draw water. Do you suppose that they said to one another, "I hope Jesus can reach that Samaritan woman." No I doubt it. As one commentator I read after said at this stage of their spiritual lives they probably caused Samaritan woman off the path as the Galileans passed by.

Maybe they were talking about that great evening in Jerusalem when Nicodemus came by to see Jesus. Maybe John was saying to Peter, if we could only get Nick to join up with us. And Peter might have responded ya, that's the kind of people we need.

Think I am a little off base? Well think how the writer John put this book together. In chapter 3 John records the visit of Nicodemus and now he moves to the record of the Samaritan woman. No two other people could be more opposite of each other. The self-righteous Pharisee, talk about holier than thou! And now John takes up the story of the woman, living in immorality who just can't seem to keep a husband. A man who studied the Word of God with a passion and a woman that had broken every one of God's commandments.

John is demonstrating that even though Nicodemus and the woman were worlds apart in most every way, they both were in the same spiritual condition. But that doesn't seem right does it. How could the very religious Pharisee and this sinful woman both be in the same spiritual condition? Well if you could have an advantage with God because of your good behavior, then Nicodemus would have been far better off, but he wasn't.

Isn't kind of funny who we think would look good in a church pew. Good respectable people right. Maybe someone who has a lot of money, or at least not some needy people. Someone of good moral standing, somebody just like us.

But Jesus followers have always cut across the spectrum of people. They come in every shade and hew of morality, wealth, and general goodness. God is just as likely to rescue the woman who has had five husbands as He is to rescue Nicodemus. But somehow I think that the disciples were

more excited about the prospect of adding Nicodemus than this Samaritan woman. Actually God is more likely to rescue the woman than the Pharisee.

Mt 11:25 At that time Jesus answered and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes.

Let us now look at this passage.

- I. This is a conditional statement.
 - A. We use them all the time.
 1. If you clean your room I will take you for ice cream.
 2. The result is based on a previous action.
 - B. But this is a double conditional statement.
 1. If you really want some ice cream, you would clean this room and I would take you for some ice cream.
 2. So the idea is that if the person really doesn't want ice cream they would not clean the room.
 - C. The trouble is that we think God makes all these conditional statements but doesn't really mean it.
 1. Like the soul that sins will die.
- II. If You Knew the Gift of God.
 - A. Some commentators tell us that this is speaking of Jesus.
 1. They point to John 3:16
 - B. Others believe that this refers to the living water that Jesus would give.
 1. Or as the living water represents the Holy Spirit.
 2. Which Jesus did give even as John the Baptist had foretold.
 - C. But I agree with others that say that this is talking about salvation.
 1. That would include the fact that Jesus came and died for us.
 2. But it would also include everything else connected with our salvation.
 3. It would include repentance.
 - a. Ac 5:31 "Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.
 - b. Ac 11:18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted

repentance unto life.

- c. 2Ti 2:25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

4. It would include faith

- a. Eph 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.
- b. Tit 3:3-5 For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. 4 But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, 5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;
- c. 1 Cor. 1: 26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: 27 But 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 things which are mighty; 28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29 That no flesh should glory in his presence. 30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

III. And Who it Is Who Says to You, 'Give Me a Drink,'

A. To know Him, who He really is is indispensable to salvation

- 1. John 17:1 Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, 2 "as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. 3 "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.
- 2. Joh 8:19 Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.

IV. You Would Have Asked Him, and He Would Have Given You Living Water

Who He really is.

Like the woman at the well many people see Jesus only as someone who wants something from them. A petitioner instead of a benefactor

In chapter 3 Nicodemus never reenters the scene to issue his response (suggesting no faith in Jerusalem?) While the despised Samaritan woman come to faith. She knows and asks.

This Man, exhausted for want of a draught of water, speaks with parched lips a claim most singularly in contrast with the request which He had just made: 'I will give thee the living water.' No wonder that the woman was bewildered,

The condition, the only condition, and the indispensable condition, of possessing that water of life — the summary expression for all the gifts of God in Jesus Christ, which at the last are essentially God Himself — is the desire to possess it turned to Jesus Christ.

There is no other condition but desire turned to Christ, and that is the necessary condition. God cannot give men salvation, as veterinary surgeons drench unwilling horses — forcing the medicine down their throats through clenched teeth. There must be the opened mouth, and wherever there is, there will be the full supply. 'Ask, and ye shall receive'; take, and ye shall possess. ALEXANDER MACLAREN

"Jesus said unto her." How striking is the contrast between what we have here and what is found in the previous chapter! There we are shown Nicodemus coming to Christ "by night," under cover of the darkness, so that he might guard his reputation. Here we behold the Lord Jesus speaking to this harlot in the full light of day — it was midday. Verily, He "made himself of no reputation!" AW Pink

All she needed was to know what she was and who He was, and Jesus is about to reveal all that to her.

"Thou wouldest have asked of him." It is blessedly true that the only thing between the sinner and eternal life is an "ask." But asking proceeds from knowing. "If thou knewest... thou wouldest have asked." But O how reluctant the sinner is to take this place. God has to do much for him and in him before he is ready to really "ask." The sinner has to be brought to a realization of his awful condition and terrible danger: he must see himself as lost, undone, and bound for the lake of fire. He has to be made to see his desperate need of a Savior. Again, God has to show him the utter vanity and worthlessness of everything of this world, so that he experiences an acute "thirst" for the Water of Life. He has to be driven to despair, until he is made to wonder whether God can possibly save such a wretch as he. He has to be stripped of the filthy rags of his own self-righteousness, and be made willing to come to God just as he is, as an empty-handed beggar ready to receive Divine charity. He has to really come into the presence of Christ and have personal dealings with Him. He has to make definite request for himself. This, in part, is what is involved, before the sinner will "ask."

Before we ask, God has to deal with the conscience, enlighten the understanding, subdue the rebellious will, and open the heart, the door of which is fast closed against Himself. All of this is what

Christ did with this woman of our lesson. We are not saved because of our seeking; we have to be sought. “And who it is that saith to thee:” notice, particularly, this “who it is,” not “what it is” — it is not doctrine any more than doing. It is personal dealings with Christ that is needed; with Him who is the Source and Giver of “life.” Pink

“Jesus is as necessary for spiritual life as water is for physical life.” Boice

“Jesus suffered for the Nicodemuses, the women of Samaria, and the others whom this world holds.” Boice

“Perhaps she had even had a taste of their hostility a few minutes before meeting Jesus, for she was coming down the hill at the same time that Peter and the other disciples had gone up, and we can be certain that at this stage of their lives, Peter and the others would never have moved off the path for any women, much less a Samaritan and one with loose morals at that. Perhaps she had been pushed aside or made to wait while the body of Galileans marched by.” Boice

“Jesus comes to us first. If we were left to ourselves, we would leave him sitting on the edge of the well.” Boice

On the difference of a well from a spring, “All you have to do is push some dirt into the hole and the well will be gone forever so far as we are concerned. It is entirely different, however, if the source of the water on your property is a spring. Try to do the same as you did with the well. You push some dirt over a spring, and it seems to be gone. . . . the stream will be there again, having simply pushed it was through the ground. A well can be covered. A spring seeps through anything you may place over it. That is what the Lord Jesus Christ is saying. He is promising to place a spring within the life of anyone who will come to him. This spring will be eternal, free, joyous, and self-dependant. But he is also warning you that you will never be able to bulldoze anything over it!” Boice

But first she caught sight of a thirsty man, then a Jew, then a rabbi, afterwards a prophet, last of all the Messiah. She tried to get the better of a thirsty man, she showed her dislike for the Jew, she heckled the rabbi, she was swept off her feet by the prophet, and she adored the Christ. Findlay, from Leon Morris.

In the case of this woman there was no legalistic and religious pattern to be swept away. Her moral character and religious standing were already gone. But it was far otherwise with Nicodemus. It is very evident that he felt he had something to stand upon and glory in. What he needed to know was that all of this in which he prided himself was worthless before God. Even though a master of Israel, he was utterly unfit to enter God’s kingdom, and nothing could show him this quicker than for the Lord to say unto him “Ye must be born again.” Pink

The Gospel meets men on a common platform. Nicodemus had moral character, social standing, religious reputation; the woman at the well had nothing. Nicodemus was at the top of the social ladder; she was at the bottom. You could hardly get anything higher than a “Master of Israel,” and you could scarcely get anything lower than a Samaritan adulteress; yet so far as standing before God, fitness for His holy presence, title to heaven was concerned, they were both on one common level. But how few understand this! Pink