

When God Asks What You Cannot Do John 4:13-19

13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, 14 "but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." 15 The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." 16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." 17 The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' 18 "for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly." 19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. NKJV

Jesus has used the Gospel to get the woman's attention. The good news that she could have eternal life for the asking, if she can only believe. But the woman is still hesitant. She considers this stranger just full of hot air. He probably has no water, He certainly has nothing to draw water from the well with. But the real problem is that she does not see the need. She doesn't need anything that this man has to offer. So Jesus must move to the law. You see the law is designed to show off our faults, our sins.

Now this woman as well as us try to justify our transgressions. We try to minimize them and cover them. After all we are not any worse than the other guy, whoever that may be. As long as we can keep our sin under the radar we will be all right. But God has a way of revealing our sin through His word. That is one reason why most people do not spend much time in the book for it is light and as Jesus told Nicodemus, people love darkness rather than light and stay away from it.

Now this woman was no doubt familiar with the law of Moses. She knew her sins but she was counting on this stranger not knowing her sins. But nothing is hidden from God. He knows everything we have done and He still wants us to accept His free gift.

So Jesus asks her to go and call her husband and to return. Now if you and I had been there we would have just thought that this was a progression of the conversation. After all it was not proper to speak to a woman without her husband being present. We would have thought that Jesus just wanted to bring him into the process and offer him the Gospel as well.

But the question immediately strikes terror in the woman's heart. How will she answer this question? She could go and get the man she was living with and pretend that he was her husband but that would probably generate questions she does not want to answer.

So she simply tells a half truth. I have no husband. Which was true but not totally. But that would surely cover the question and she would not need to explain.

I. Notice how Jesus deals with the woman's sin.

- A. He asks her to come back with her husband.
- B. He knows her situation.

- 1. Hebrews 4:13 (NKJV) 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight,

but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

2. Although Jesus confronts her, He commended her for saying the truth, she had no husband, that was correct.
- C. He is not trying to shame her or even embarrass her.
1. He was stating the facts about her life, the facts she needed to face.
 2. Now she would be forced to think about her life and her sin.
- D. He needs her to face the fact that she is a sinner.
1. Notice how Jesus did not accuse her, which would have raised her defenses
 2. Nor did He excuse her so she could deny the seriousness of it.
 3. Although she deflects the attention from her sin to the theological question, yet the work is done, she knows that He knows her secret sin.
- II. Most people do not do well dealing with their sin.
- A. Some people admit that they are sinners and do nothing about it.
1. Eli
- B. Some people compromise and live with sin.
1. Lot
- C. Some people try to cover their sin.
1. David
 2. Proverbs 28:13 (NKJV) He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.
- III. Unless we see our sin, we will never seek a Savior.
- A. That is where the law comes in.
- B. 1 Tim 1:8 But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully, 9 knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, 10 for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, 11 according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust.
- C. 1 Cor. 6: 9 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, 10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor

revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

- D. The sad thing is that the church, the only purveyor of truth has stopped preaching about sin. How then do we hope people will repent. If we stop reading the Word of God how then can the Spirit use it to convict of sin.

You see the problem is that Jesus has asked of her something that she could not do. She could not call her husband because she technically didn't have one. The question strikes at the heart of her sin. Not all her sin, but the sin that now she is trying to cover. God always knows our sins better than we do our selves.

Look at a couple of examples: Luke 10:28

In this passage Jesus is question by a lawyer as to which commandments were the greatest. Jesus, as He usually does turns the question back on the lawyer. To which the lawyer answers that to love God with all were are and have is the first and the second is to love our neighbor as our self. But then the lawyer asks who his is neighbor. Jesus tells the story of the good Samaritan and then ask who was the injured man's neighbor. This was the question that the lawyer could not answer. It betrayed his hatred and prejudice toward the Samaritans. The man who when he came to Jesus thought he would come out pretty good on the test had to walk away with conviction of his sin at his own voice had uttered it.

The second is found in Luke 18:22. Here a rich man comes to Jesus to find out what he must do to get to heaven. Jesus repeats a few of the commandments to which the young man exclaims that he has kept all these since he was a boy. So Jesus says well then you only need to do one more thing. Sell all that you have and give it away to the poor and come and follow me and be my disciple. But the man turned away sadly for he could not or at least would not do what Jesus said although he had already confessed that type of devotion to God.

If you are lost, what is it that keeps you away from Jesus. The woman will not allow her immoral lifestyle keep her from the Messiah. But the lawyer allowed his hatred and prejudice to keep him from accepting Jesus claims on his life. The rich man allowed riches that he would only have a few short years keep him form eternal life.