

# The Journey of Faith

## The Thirst Quencher!

### John 4:1-42

#### Introduction

A. John writes about Jesus through stories of personal encounters with others

- John the Baptist, Andrew, Peter, John. 1:35-42
- Philip's eagerness & Nathanael's narrow-mindedness 1:43
- Nicodemus- a man of flesh/ man of the Spirit

**John 4:4-15** (water again)

B. This time the encounter with Jesus isn't at night, but "about noon." -- Conversation beside a well

- "Living water" - water that gushes up to eternal life and is the thirst quencher forever! (**Gatorade**)

#### I. The encounter with the woman of Samaria

A. Here's the setting: (1-3)

1. Jesus moves from the southernmost part of the territory to the northernmost region

2. Jesus "had to go through Samaria"-- really? (4)

- Jews would not have gone through Samaria
- Samaria was unclean--people guilty of religious heresy and ethnic desecration

B. 8 centuries earlier- Assyrians in 721 B.C. (Israel was rebellious- King Jeroboam 1 Ki. 12)

1. The people of the Northern Kingdom in captivity were punished-- (2 Kings 17).

2. The Israelites still in the land intermarried with the new Gentile population and mixed

3. When Judah returned from their exile to rebuild the temple under Zerubbabel, assistance for that project was offered by the Samaritans but it was rejected (Ezra 4:2-3).

4. The Samaritans edited the OT and took only the Torah and created their own worship center on Mount Gerizim-- rejected the prophetic and wisdom literature

- Jews hated Samaritans

C. Why was it necessary to travel through Samaria?

- Not only the Jews were saved • It was not a geographical necessity/but a theological one

1. Most unlikely conversation to take place!

2. Something important is at stake in this unlikely encounter

#### II. The Conversation

A. A woman comes bearing a dry empty pot-- a sign of her parched, barren heart.

1. Jesus asked for a drink v. 7

2. The woman defensively responded V. 9

3. This is the backdrop for the story

a. "If you knew the gift of God... v. 10--( Confusion-- "again" or "from above.")

b. The woman thinks "cold water" / Jesus means "spiritual refreshment, God's gift

B. The woman knew that this was something wonderful to possess

1. "Sir, give me this water...v. 15

2. She didn't understand the gift

3. There was no recognition of the identity of its giver

C. Jesus is willing to tell her more-- call your husband, and come back" (4:16).

1. Jesus "needed no one to testify about anyone" (2:25)

2. Jesus was motivated by her spiritual need/ not her social propriety

a. "I have no husband."

b. "You have had five husbands

c. "You are a prophet"

3. (4:19-26)-- She got terribly uncomfortable

a. Of course, she did! Her life was a mess.

4. So why did he put her on the spot about her life?

a. When I've sinned and I'm in a mess, I react in two ways

- Deny, cover up, want more time to fix things, and usually dig deeper

- Or, confess, come clean, honest about how helpless I am (Zachaeus)

b. The woman's reaction is rather typical of most people

- She avoids the issue of her real need and brings up the old Jerusalem-Gerizim debate

- She acted as if the most important thing in her life was the old religious fight

- The problem-- This was irrelevant to her spiritual need.
  - She was avoiding the painful truth about herself, but Jesus let her know that God was searching for people who would worship in spirit and truth.
5. True worship- is a humble, seeking spirit, not a special location. vv. 21-24
    - a. The discussion of living water-- Jesus is going back to it...
    - b. True worship is not a mountain, human structure, or ritual
      - True worship is the empowering presence of "the Spirit of truth" (14:15-17) He renews worship & the worshiper

4:25-26

### III. The reaction--

- A. At the worst time, lunch arrives!--It's awkward for everyone-- except Jesus (4:27)
- B. The woman's reaction is to go back to her town (4:28)
  1. Soiled reputation/no credibility
  2. She used the come-and-see approach to sharing (4:29)
- C. Meanwhile the disciples minds are on food (31-33)
  1. Jesus teaches them a lesson about another kind of food... (34-38)
- D. The people of Samaria went to see for themselves-- (39-42)

### Conclusion

- A. John chose to include this story to affirm the Samaritans and Gentiles as brethren
  1. He is sending a message to them
  2. He is sending a message to the Jews
  3. And He is sending a message to the world
- B.. This is a powerful narrative to declare the value of people we tend to marginalize... It:
  1. Challenges racism
  2. Rebukes attachments to tradition over truth
  3. Help us see our tendency for playing church and splitting hairs over worship
  4. Can remind us of the simple come-and-see approach for evangelizing/testimony (v. 42)
- C. Perhaps you have been hit with a 2x4 by all or a part of this story
  1. The point-- We need to be honest before Christ.
  2. Don't retreat to some safe place of dark concealment.
    - Christian if you need to repent, repent!
    - If you have come-to-see, then see (Eph 2:8-10)
    - Come, be born of the living water, the Spirit and surrender your life in the waters of baptism
    - The Lord's response to your faith will give you a new life, a Spirit filled, Spirit led life!

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