

# The Woman at the Well - John 4:1-26

Recap - John 3

Nicodemus was a Jewish man, a Pharisee, and a member of the ruling council. He held a high place in society, was likely wealthy, and was very knowledgeable.

## John 3:9-11 (NIV)

“How can this be?” Nicodemus asked.

“You are Israel’s teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things? Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony.”

Nicodemus repeatedly asked Jesus, "How can this be?" yet never fully arrived at an understanding of the gospel truth.

Today, in John 4, we see a contrast between two conversations.

Jesus has a conversation with an unnamed woman. Women already held a lower status in society, but on top of that, she was a Samaritan. Samaritans had their own ways of worship, their own traditions, and different beliefs, so they did not associate with the Jewish people. She did not fit the social customs that the Pharisees required.

But as we'll see, Jesus didn't care about those things. Jesus was sent not to save some, but to save the world because He loves us so deeply. No matter where we are, He is always pursuing us and revealing Himself to us.

## John 4:1-5 (NIV)

“1 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.”

- Judea was in the south, Galilee was in the north, and Samaria sat in between. The easiest route was through Samaria, but most Jews avoided this area.

- The animosity between Jews and Samaritans had a long and painful history. Beyond differences in worship, there were issues involving colonization, intermarriage, and centuries of conflict dating back long before the time of Christ.

- “Now he had to go through Samaria.” This may have been convenient geographically. But there was a theological reason as well. A divine appointment with a Samaritan woman was waiting

### **John 4:6 (NIV)**

“Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

- Notice that Jesus was tired. This doesn't minimize His deity; it reminds us of His humanity. We see His physical needs and emotions. Jesus is our High Priest who is able to sympathize with our weaknesses

### **John 4:7-9 (NIV)**

“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.)”

- Again, Jews and Samaritans did not associate. Even drinking from the same pitcher of water would have been considered defiling
- Jesus set those social customs aside because a soul’s eternal salvation was at stake

### **John 4:10-12 (NIV)**

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?”

- Jesus doesn't directly answer her question. Instead, He points her to something greater. If she truly knew who He was, she would be asking Him for living water rather than drawing water from Jacob's well.
- Like Nicodemus, she takes His words literally. She sees no rope, no bucket, and no way for Him to draw water.
- The Samaritans traced their lineage back to Jacob, so she begins wondering if Jesus is greater than their ancestor. You can see her slowly starting to unravel who she is talking to

### **John 4:13-14 (NIV)**

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.”

- Greek word “pege”: a spring or fountain

- Throughout the OT, God is repeatedly described as a fountain or spring of living water
- Places like Leviticus, running water was used in certain “purification” rituals that God commanded.

### **Jeremiah 17:13 (NIV)**

“Lord, you are the hope of Israel; all who forsake you will be put to shame. Those who turn away from you will be written in the dust because they have forsaken the Lord, the spring of living water.”

- “Living water” is fresh, flowing, alive, and active. Think of springs, streams, and rivers. It refreshes, renews, and restores the person who drinks from it
- Jesus is saying He is God by offering this living water

### **John 4:15 (NIV)**

“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.”

- She still doesn't fully understand. She's thinking about physical water, while Jesus is talking about spiritual life. Then Jesus shifts the conversation.

### **John 4:16-18 (NIV)**

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.”

- the woman becomes quiet. How could Jesus have this knowledge?
- Jesus was fully man, but He was also fully God. This gave Him a divine insight and knowledge into the the human heart
- It's also worth noting that divorce carried significant shame in that culture. This may help explain why she came to the well at noon rather than during the cooler parts of the day when other women would gather.

### **John 4:19-20 (NIV)**

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.”

- Now she believes Jesus may be a prophet and asks Him about a long-standing debate between Jews and Samaritans concerning the proper place of worship

### **John 4:21-22 (NIV)**

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.”

- Their theology was incomplete because they had rejected much of God's revealed truth

### **John 4:23-24 (NIV)**

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.”

- Jesus is bringing the future into the present. True worship is no longer confined to a location but centered on a relationship with God.

- **In Spirit:** Worshiping God with sincerity, passion, and the entirety of your being. It is relying on the Holy Spirit to ignite and transform your worship.

- **In Truth:** Worship that aligns with God's revealed truth in Scripture. It is grounded in who God truly is, not merely in feelings or personal opinions.

**Worshiping in spirit and truth means wholehearted devotion to God, empowered by the Holy Spirit and anchored in the truth revealed through Jesus Christ.**

### **John 4:25-26 (NIV)**

“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.”

- Jesus chose to reveal Himself openly as Messiah. Not to a king, a Pharisee, but to a women society overlooked.

Why?

Because that is who Jesus is.  
Jesus is full of grace and full of love.

He pursues thirsty people

So I ask the question today:

**What wells are you drawing from trying to satisfy your soul?**

Are you more like Nicodemus? Or more like the Samaritan woman?

(success, relationships, comfort, approval, job etc)

Jesus says this in **Revelation 21:6-7 (NIV)**

“He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children.”

**Psalm 42:1-2 (NIV)**

“As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?”

**Today, lets stop running to empty wells.  
Run to the only One who can satisfy our souls**

Salvation Call

Dear Heavenly Father,  
I am a sinner in need of a Savior.  
I believe that Jesus Christ is the living water for my soul.  
I believe He died on the cross and rose again  
Today, I surrender my heart to You.  
Come into my life, renew my mind, and change me from the inside out.  
Forgive me of my sins and help me follow You all the days of my life.  
In Jesus' name, amen