

God With Us

A Study of John's Gospel: "The Woman at the Well"

John 4:1-15

"Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

(John 4:13-14)

I. No Chance Encounter

- a. Competitiveness is not to be tolerated in the service of God. (vv.1-3)
- b. Again, in this section we find Jesus in conversation, but not with a Nicodemus, who was a Pharisee, and was seen as outwardly pure. His new conversation partner is a Samaritan woman, who is outwardly unclean and with a lifestyle in contradiction to the law. Yet, both needed Jesus.
- c. Notice Jesus' ability, in these two dialogues, to be "at home" with each and to present the Good News of salvation in a meaningful and attractive way to them. He met them where they were.
- d. Jews despised Samaritans (mixed blood, false worshippers, Pentateuch only, *Taleb* vs. Messiah).
- e. The law at the time was this: "One should not talk with a woman on the street, not even with his own wife, and certainly not with somebody else's wife, because of the gossip of men," and "It is forbidden to give a woman any greeting." (Rabbinic law)
- f. Is there anybody out there you would not be "caught" talking to Jesus about?

II. Lessons on Sharing Living Water: What Can We Learn From the "Master Evangelist?"

- a. Be relevant – The whole conversation was couched in terms which the woman could understand. Jesus does not talk "over her head" but gives her information she could grasp.
- b. Be real, natural, yourself – She is speaking to God, but at no time did He seem *odd* or *too holy*. The conversation appeared to flow easily, despite the social issues and spiritual divide between them. Jesus is clearly *at ease* with her, which frees her to confront her deepest needs.
- c. Be knowledgeable – Jesus was aware of the woman's lifestyle and the issues between the Jews and the Samaritans. Jesus knew He was in Samaria. He used those personal realities to reach her.
- d. Be morally personable – What Jesus offers her is no *easy way* or *compromise*. He addressed her current condition without condemning her. Our witness may not be perfect, but it should be *clean* and *uncompromised*. Tell on yourself if you must (past tense). A little transparency goes along way.
- e. Be a positive witness – The woman's immoral living was confronted, and Jesus issued the call to repentance. His presentation was positive despite the sin before Him. Jesus plainly tells the woman what He has to offer (eternal life) and made sure she understood the terms of it. We have a helpful message to present to a negative world. Make it plain and positive.
- f. Be focused – Jesus was not side-tracked by the Jew/Samaritan divide. He did not dismiss it, but neither did He allow it to distract Him. Jesus' goal was clear, He wanted the woman to put her faith in Him. We can begin a conversation in many ways, but our objective should be focused.
- g. Be compassionate – Through the entire conversation Jesus deals with her as a person in her own space. She emerged with personal dignity, because Jesus treated her with dignity. Jesus loved her and He met her where she was.
- h. ****Our failures in evangelism are often failures in love. Nothing draws others to share our *living water* than an awareness that we genuinely care about them. People want to know that we care before they care about what we know. Share your living water!**