

Message No. 5 – John Chapter 4: v. 1-54 “The Healing of the Soul and the Body”

¹ Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John ² (though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples), ³ He left Judea and departed again to Galilee. 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.”

¹¹ The woman said to Him, “Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? ¹² Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?”

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. ²⁰ Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you *Jews* say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.”

²¹ Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. ²² You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.

²³ But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. ²⁴ God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

²⁵ The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When He comes, He will tell us all things.” ²⁶ Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am *He*.”

²⁷ And at this *point* His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, “What do You seek?” or, “Why are You talking with her?”

²⁸ The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, ²⁹ “Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?” ³⁰ Then they went out of the city and came to Him.

³¹ In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.” ³² But He said to them, “I have food to eat of which you do not know.” ³³ Therefore the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought Him *anything* to eat?”

³⁴ Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. ³⁵ Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and *then* comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!

³⁶ And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. ³⁷ For in this the saying is true: ‘One sows and another reaps.’

³⁸ I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors.” ³⁹ And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, “He told me all that I *ever* did.”

⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. ⁴¹ And many more believed because of His own word.

⁴² Then they said to the woman, “Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard *Him* and we know that this is indeed the Christ,^[a] the Savior of the world.”

⁴³ Now after the two days He departed from there and went to Galilee. ⁴⁴ For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country.

⁴⁵ So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they also had gone to the feast.

⁴⁶ So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum.

⁴⁷ When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. ⁴⁸ Then Jesus said to him, “Unless you *people* see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe.”

⁴⁹ The nobleman said to Him, “Sir, come down before my child dies!” ⁵⁰ Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your son lives.” So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way.

⁵¹ And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told *him*, saying, “Your son lives!” ⁵² Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, “Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.”

⁵³ So the father knew that *it was* at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, “Your son lives.” And he himself believed, and his whole household. ⁵⁴ This again *is* the second sign Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.

Introduction

We have learnt many things in John’s Gospel so far.

1. We have learnt that the purpose of the gospel is that we might believe in Jesus and have new life in His name.
2. We have been introduced to Jesus by John the Baptist. John told us that the main purpose of Jesus coming into this world was to save us from the consequences of our sin. He is the “Lamb of God” who has come to take away the sins of the world.
3. We have learnt that Jesus examines the motives of our hearts. He knows everything about us.
4. We learnt from Chapter two that Jesus brings Joy but He also brings judgment.
5. We discovered in chapter 3 that religion is not enough, we need to be “Born Again”.

We now read the account of Jesus moving through a Samaritan area to reach the heart of a sinful woman. We also read of a subsequent visit to Galilee, where Jesus healed a Nobleman’s son who was sick.

Before we enter the story it will be helpful to understand something about the background between the Jews and the Samaritans.

History of Samaria

In Jesus’s day Samaria had no separate political system. It was united with Judea. However for the Jews and Samaritans, their own area of habitation was defined by history and religion.

In 1 Kings 16: v. 24 it tells us that King Omri named the new capital of the northern kingdom Samaria.

This name was then transferred to the district and sometimes to the whole of the entire northern kingdom. After the Assyrian army captured Samaria in 722 B.C. they deported all the educated Jews and higher class Jews to Babylon. The Jews who were left behind were the poor and uneducated. The Assyrian army put lots of foreigners into the land to re-populate it. The Jews then inter-married with the foreigners who were put into the land.

They started to follow the foreigner’s gods. (2 Kings 17-18)

After the exile the returning Jews viewed the people living in their land as political rebels and half-breed Jews. Not fully Jews. Their religion was half Jewish too.

About 400B.C. the Samaritans erected a rival temple on Mount Gerizim. They believed in the first 5 books of the Bible but did not accept the Prophets and the writings, which was the rest of the Old Testament.

They focused their worship on Mount Gerizim and not Jerusalem. They were also in conflict with the pure bred Jews.

So you see that when Jesus said in v. 4 that He needed to go through Samaria, it wasn’t a popular decision.

John now gives us a contrast between a very educated pure bred Jew, that was Nicodemus last week, and a half –bred uneducated Samaritan woman. There is a great contrast between the two people, but Jesus was interested in both of them.

Let us be encouraged today that whatever our situation, or education or background, Jesus is interested in us.

We may be very educated and very rich. However we may have a low paid job. We may even have no job at present. Whatever our situation, we need Jesus and Jesus is interested in our life. You may not think so but the passage tells us otherwise.

In Chapter 4 we discover two miracles.

1. The miracle of a healed soul, healed from the disease of sin, through faith in Jesus as the Son of God.
2. The miracle of the healing of a physical body through faith in Jesus.

Both of the miracles required faith in Jesus as the Son of God, but we are going to concentrate mainly on the miracle of a changed life. (v. 1-42)

Firstly we discover the exact place where Jesus went in Samaria. We are told in v. 5 that Jesus went to Sychar, in Samaria, to an exact place. It was called Jacobs well and it is still there today. There is a well there which is fed by an underground spring.

Jesus arrived at the hottest time of the day, it was 12 noon mid-day. Jesus was tired and weary after a long journey. The Bible clearly teaches that Jesus was truly divine, He was God in human form, however Jesus was also truly human. He experienced tiredness and all the human emotions that we experience, especially pain.

It was unusual for women to come to a well alone and also to come at Mid-day. The woman came alone probably because she was an outcast in her community. However Jesus knew that she would be there. We already learnt in chapter one that Jesus knows where we are and where we are going to be at any given time.

The first thing that Jesus did at the well was to ask the woman for a drink. It was a purely practical question. Jesus didn't carry around a large water pot with Him in order to get water from wells.

In v. 9 we are told that the Samaritan woman was very surprised by the fact that Jesus even spoke to her, never mind asked her a favour.

The reply Jesus gave to the woman was a spiritual one. It was similar to the conversation Jesus had with Nicodemus. When Jesus said to the woman, "if you knew the gift of God" He was referring to the scriptures. The gift of God probably refers to the "Torah" which is the first 5 books of the Bible.

In other words if the woman knew her "Torah" then her response might be quite different. The Gift of God also means the gift of Salvation, but to the woman at the time, the focus would have been the Torah, therefore, she should have understood.

Jesus was talking on a spiritual level and the woman was thinking on a human level.

Jesus said to the woman, if you had recognized me as the Messiah from the Torah, then you would have asked me and I would have given you "Living Water".

This idea of "Living Water" was an Old Testament metaphor. There are lots of passages in the Old Testament that refer to this "Living Water".

We only have time to look at one. Jeremiah 2: v. 13

“For My people have committed two evils:
They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters,
And hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water.

The people that Jeremiah was referring to were the back sliding Jewish nation who had rejected the fresh running supply of God’s faithful goodness and chosen the stagnant waters of their own choosing that didn’t satisfy their souls.

The woman at the well found it much easier to focus on the human situation, rather than be challenged about her spiritual condition.

Jesus didn’t avoid her question, he used her question to point to a spiritual truth. When we drink human water, we will become thirsty again and need more water. This will be on going each day.

In v. 14 Jesus offered this woman water so that she would never need to drink again.

In v. 15 the woman, still thinking on a human level, thought WOW, this water sounds like a wonderful thing. She said I must have it.

In v. 16 Jesus starts to set out the conditions of getting this supernatural water that we only drink once and we don’t need to drink again. Of course we know that it is not physical water, it is spiritual water or real life from the Holy Spirit.

The first thing that Jesus does is to identify the woman’s sinful life. He tells her that she has 5 husbands and that she is living with a man who she is not married to. You can imagine all the things that this woman had gone through with 5 husbands. All the emotional hurt and disappointment and rejection.

In v. 19, the Samaritan woman suddenly perceives that Jesus has hit a sensitive spot in her emotional and spiritual life. The woman immediately comes to her defense and tries to divert the conversation around to a religious argument.

The Samaritan woman identifies the two religions by stating the places where they worship.

The Jewish faith worshiped in the Temple in Jerusalem and the Samaritan faith worshipped at Mount Gerizim.

The woman’s crisis now wasn’t, Is she a sinner?, but who has the answer for forgiveness of her sin.? Was it her religion or was it the Jewish Messiah?

Jesus very clearly tells the woman that “Salvation is of the Jews” (v. 22) This statement is designed to challenge her religion as a “Samaritan “who was influenced by false gods.

Jesus also made it very clear to the woman that worship was not about a PLACE it was about a PERSON. We need to remember that too.

Jesus also made it clear that worship was about TRUTH. The woman didn’t have the TRUTH, but Jesus did. Jesus also said that God is “Seeking” people who will worship Him in “Spirit and Truth”

In v. 25 the woman admits to some knowledge about the Jewish Messiah. She says that the Messiah would be “Omniscient “(All Knowing) This attribute has already been identified to the woman. Jesus then identifies Himself as the Messiah.

At this point the disciples of Jesus return and are surprised that He is talking with a Samaritan woman.

In v. 28 we are told that the woman left her water pot, the reason she came to the well, and returned to the city.

The woman then witnessed to her community about Jesus. She identified the fact that the person she met had told her everything she ever did. (v. 29) It appears that the woman was convinced that Jesus was the Messiah.

It is clear from the passage that Jesus loved the woman, Jesus wanted to save her from her sins, Jesus wanted to satisfy her and finally that Jesus wanted to use her as a witness.

Jesus wanted people to know that no matter how many sins a person commits, they can still come to Jesus for "FORGIVENESS" Nobody is too bad to become a Christian.

We need to acknowledge our sin before God and trust Jesus for forgiveness. Our forgiveness is based upon the work of Jesus on the cross, taking the punishment for our sins.

We also need to repent, that is not just being sorry for our sins, but to turn around and go in the opposite direction. We then follow Jesus and His will and not our own desires.

As a result of the woman's testimony about Jesus in v. 39 and because of the words of Jesus directly to the community, many Samaritans believed in Jesus. The purpose of John's Gospel is fulfilled in the lives of the people of that day.

How about us, do we believe in Jesus? Are we willing to acknowledge our sin and repent, asking God for forgiveness of our sins?

Every testimony to the healing of a soul from sin is wonderful. The Bible tells us that there is joy in heaven when one person repents. (Luke 15: v. 7)

However when people become Christians from a very sinful life or difficult life, it appears that they appreciate their forgiveness more and are more willing to share that joy with others.

It doesn't matter whether we were like Nicodemus, very educated and religious, or like the Samaritan woman, very sinful and uneducated, we still need the forgiveness of Jesus. We also need to share the joy of our forgiveness with others.

If we are not joyful about our forgiveness, then nobody else is going to be attracted to Jesus.

We don't need to jump up and down and shout Hallelujah all the time, but we do need to appreciate our forgiveness each day. When we appreciate our own forgiveness, we are usually more forgiving to other people. We are also more willing to share the gospel message with others. Spring time is a great time to share your faith. Crowds will gather soon under the cherry blossom trees, who is willing to share the love of Jesus with them.

Don't let the false cults have all the opportunity this spring. Talk to me after the service if you want to share the love of Jesus this Spring.

In v. 46 we read another account of Jesus visiting Galilee. It was a separate visit.

This time it was for a PHYSICAL HEALING. John describes this incident as the 2nd sign. (v. 54)

The text tells us that a Royal Official had a son who was sick, at the point of death.

The Greek word that describes his position makes it clear that he was attached to the service of a King. It was probably Herod Antipas.

The Royal official begs Jesus to come to his home and heal his son.

In v. 48 Jesus gives a mild rebuke not just to the official but to the people of Galilee.

Jesus says "unless YOU people"

Jesus is critical of the Galileans because they had too greater focus on miracles. It is very clear that miracles cannot in themselves move us to faith in Jesus as the Son of God.

However the apologetic value of miracles is not to be overlooked. Jesus knew that there was some value in miracles in order to point people to His deity.

In v. 50 Jesus tells the Royal Official that his son has been healed. Although he believed the words of Jesus, it is very un-likely that he had personal faith in Jesus as the Son of God at that point in time.

However later on when the Royal Official checked out the exact time of his son's healing he became convinced that Jesus was God's Son and he believed in Him.

He witnessed to his household and they believed too.

This is a wonderful story about a child who was dying and Jesus healed the boy instantly from a distance without seeing him. Jesus can do anything, He is God, and He proved His deity in this miracle.

However although Jesus is still alive today and he can still heal people. This does not always happen. God is sovereign in His dealing with every individual person. It is difficult to trust Jesus when people are not healed. God has a much higher plan in all His dealings with individual lives. God's ways are not our ways.

It says in 2 Samuel 22: v. 31 "As for God, His way is perfect..."

In Habakkuk 3: v. 6 " His ways are everlasting..."

In Isaiah 55: v. 8-9 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways, My ways, says the Lord. For as the Heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

When our thinking is not in line with God's word, we need to change our thinking.

Quite often the devil will put thoughts in our mind that are very negative and make us doubt God and His love for us. This is why Paul says in 2 Corinthians chapter 10 and verse 5 that we must bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

Spiritual warfare in Japan is very real and we must be careful that our minds are influenced by God and His word and not by the thoughts that satan may put into our minds.

We have digressed a little but I think it is useful to know that satan will attack our minds and we must win the victory in our thought patterns.

Application for OIC attenders today

What can we learn for ourselves today from these two incidents?

To the people at that time, Jesus is revealed as the Messiah who was promised in the Old Testament. He reveals Himself as the one true Messiah, calling Jews and Samaritans to worship Him in Spirit and Truth.

This had implications to the disciples at that time and to us today.

The Samaritan woman believed in Jesus because of His word. The Galileans were rebuked because they wanted to see signs and wonders before they would believe.

Are we like the Samaritan Woman or are we like the Galileans and the Royal Official?

Are we happy to trust in God's word the Bible, or do we need a miracle to happen before we will believe in Jesus as the Son of God?

The greatest miracle is not to have your body healed for a temporary time, but to have your soul healed for eternity.

The main question is “Have we put our faith and trust in Jesus?”

If we have are we “GROWING disciples?”

If we are displaying the “Fruit of the Spirit” we are growing. If not then we need attention from the Holy Spirit. It is His fruit through us, not ours.

Do we have any prejudices against people? Are there any despised people in Japan who we find it difficult to love, with the love of Jesus?

Human love is not enough to love despised people. We must have the love of Jesus in our hearts, if we are going to love like Jesus. We must also be willing to let that love be released by sharing our faith, not just with nice people but with despised people also.

So the challenge this week is to love, not just nice religious people, but people who are not so nice. We may not like to go on holiday with difficult people, but we can share the love of Jesus with them.