

From the Well to the Witness

21 JANUARY 2026

BIBLE VERSE

JOHN 4:1–30, 39–42 (NIV)

THEME:

JESUS MEETS US IN OUR BROKEN PLACES AND TURNS
OUR PAST INTO PURPOSE

INTRODUCTION

THE STORY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN IS ONE OF THE MOST TENDER AND POWERFUL MOMENTS IN THE GOSPELS.

A WOMAN DEFINED BY SHAME BECOMES A WOMAN DEFINED BY TESTIMONY. JESUS DOESN'T JUST OFFER HER WATER. HE OFFERS IDENTITY, HEALING, AND PURPOSE.

THIS LESSON REMINDS US:

- NOTHING IN OUR PAST DISQUALIFIES US
- JESUS RUNS TOWARD THE BROKEN, NOT AWAY
- ENCOUNTERS AT ORDINARY PLACES CAN LEAD TO EXTRAORDINARY CALLINGS

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1. THE SETTING: A WOMAN AT THE WRONG PLACE & TIME

SCRIPTURE:

"WHEN A SAMARITAN WOMAN CAME TO DRAW WATER, JESUS SAID TO HER,
'WILL YOU GIVE ME A DRINK?'"
— JOHN 4:7 (NIV)

MOST WOMEN DREW WATER IN THE MORNING OR EVENING OR COOL HOURS AND COMMUNAL TIMES.

COMING AT NOON SIGNALS AVOIDANCE, SHAME, OR SOCIAL ISOLATION.

JESUS INTENTIONALLY TRAVELS THROUGH SAMARIA, A REGION JEWS AVOIDED BECAUSE OF DEEP RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC TENSIONS.

CULTURAL NOTE:

JEWS VIEWED SAMARITANS AS "IMPURE" DUE TO MIXED ANCESTRY AND DIFFERENT WORSHIP TRADITIONS.

THIS WOMAN LIVED WITH DOUBLE EXCLUSION: ETHNIC + SOCIAL.

IMPORTANT!:

JESUS GOES OUT OF HIS WAY TO MEET US IN THE PLACES WE HIDE.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- WHAT PLACES IN YOUR LIFE FEEL LIKE "NOON WELLS", WHERE YOU GO TO AVOID OTHERS?
- HOW HAS JESUS MET YOU IN PRIVATE PLACES RATHER THAN PUBLIC ONES?

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2. THE BARRIERS: WHY THIS CONVERSATION SHOULDN'T HAPPEN

THREE BARRIERS SHOULD HAVE PREVENTED THIS ENCOUNTER:

RACE/ETHNICITY: JEWS VS SAMARITANS

GENDER: MEN DIDN'T PUBLICLY SPEAK TO WOMEN IN THIS CONTEXT

REPUTATION: HER PAST SHAPED HOW OTHERS TREATED HER

YET JESUS BEGINS GENTLY:

"WILL YOU GIVE ME A DRINK?" – JOHN 4:7

HE LEADS WITH CONNECTION, NOT CONDEMNATION.

IMPORTANT!!:

JESUS BREAKS BARRIERS PEOPLE USE TO KEEP OTHERS OUT.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- WHAT BARRIERS HAS JESUS CROSSED TO REACH YOU?
- WHAT BARRIERS DO WE STILL PUT AROUND OURSELVES OR OTHERS?

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3. THE DEEPER THIRST. MORE THAN WATER

AS THEY SPEAK, JESUS SHIFTS THE CONVERSATION:

"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."

— JOHN 4:14 (NIV)

SHE KEEPS RETURNING TO:

- THE WELL (ROUTINE)
- RELATIONSHIPS (COMFORT)
- TEMPORARY SOLUTIONS (SURVIVAL)

IMPORTANT!!:

WE OFTEN TRY TO SATISFY SPIRITUAL THIRST WITH TEMPORARY FIXES.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- WHAT “WELLS” DO YOU KEEP RETURNING TO FOR SATISFACTION?
- WHAT ARE THE THINGS THAT TEMPORARILY RELIEVE BUT NEVER HEAL?

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4. THE EXPOSURE . TRUTH WITHOUT SHAME

JESUS SPEAKS TO HER REALITY WITH GENTLENESS:

"YOU HAVE HAD FIVE HUSBANDS, AND THE MAN YOU NOW HAVE IS NOT YOUR HUSBAND."

– JOHN 4:18 (NIV)

HE KNOWS:

- HER PAST
- HER PAIN
- HER PATTERNS

YET HE DOESN'T WALK AWAY.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT:

MULTIPLE MARRIAGES DIDN'T NECESSARILY MEAN PROMISCUITY. WOMEN IN THAT ERA COULDN'T INITIATE DIVORCE; THEY COULD BE WIDOWED, REJECTED, OR TRADED. HER STORY LIKELY CARRIES GRIEF + ABANDONMENT.

IMPORTANT!!:

JESUS ALREADY KNOWS YOUR STORY, AND HE STILL OFFERS GRACE

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- HOW DOES JESUS SPEAK TRUTH TO YOU?
- WHERE DO YOU STILL FEAR EXPOSURE OR REJECTION?

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5. THE REVELATION. MEETING THE MESSIAH

JESUS REVEALS HIMSELF CLEARLY:

"I, THE ONE SPEAKING TO YOU. I AM HE."

— JOHN 4:26 (NIV)

THIS IS ONE OF THE FIRST DIRECT DECLARATIONS OF JESUS AS MESSIAH, AND IT WAS GIVEN TO:

- A WOMAN
- A SAMARITAN
- A SOCIAL OUTCAST

IMPORTANT:

JESUS REVEALS HIMSELF TO THE OPEN, NOT THE PERFECT.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- WHY DO YOU THINK JESUS CHOSE HER FOR THIS REVELATION?
- WHAT DOES IT SAY ABOUT WHO HE VALUES?

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6. THE TRANSFORMATION. FROM ASHAMED TO BOLD

HER RESPONSE IS INSTANT:

"THEN, LEAVING HER WATER JAR, THE WOMAN WENT BACK TO THE TOWN AND SAID TO THE PEOPLE..."

– JOHN 4:28 (NIV)

THE WATER JAR REPRESENTS:

- OLD HABITS
- OLD IDENTITY
- OLD SURVIVAL

SHE LEAVES WHAT ONCE SUSTAINED HER TO PURSUE WHAT NOW CALLED HER.

IMPORTANT!!:

AN ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS TURNS SHAME INTO TESTIMONY.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- WHAT WOULD IT LOOK LIKE FOR YOU TO "LEAVE YOUR WATER JAR BEHIND"?
- WHAT CHANGED IN HER AFTER MEETING JESUS?

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7. THE IMPACT. HER TESTIMONY CHANGED A CITY

"MANY OF THE SAMARITANS FROM THAT TOWN BELIEVED IN HIM BECAUSE OF THE WOMAN'S TESTIMONY..."

— JOHN 4:39 (NIV)

IMPORTANT:

YOUR STORY, HEALED BY JESUS, CAN BRING OTHERS TO HIM.
HER PAST DIDN'T DISQUALIFY HER . **IT QUALIFIED HER.**

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- WHOSE FAITH COULD BE UNLOCKED BY YOUR TESTIMONY?
- WHAT STORY OF YOURS MIGHT GOD BE TRYING TO USE?

CLOSING TAKEAWAY

JESUS DOESN'T WAIT FOR PERFECTION TO CALL US. HE MEETS US AT THE WELL, EXPOSES OUR TRUTH WITHOUT SHAME, HEALS OUR IDENTITY, AND TURNS OUR PAIN INTO PURPOSE.

SHE CAME THIRSTY.
SHE LEFT FULL.
SHE RETURNED A WITNESS.