



## ***The Dynamic Gospel Study Guide – Book of John***

### **Chapter 4**

1 Jesus got wind of a spreading rumor concerning His ministry. Like all rumors there was a drop of truth and a bucket of falsehood. The exaggeration was that the size of the crowds following Jesus, and the number of baptisms, far surpassed John himself. The authorities took it seriously, setting Jesus up for false accusations and trouble with the law.

2 In truth, the crowds **were** growing, but Jesus didn't conduct a single baptism. His students had that job.

3 It wasn't time, yet, for a legal showdown, so Jesus left Judea, returning to the region around the Sea of Galilee.

4 He took the most direct route, which brought Him straight through the region of Samaria (not a common practice for observant Jews.)

5 Along the way, Jesus paused at a place famous to the Jews in a city named Sychar. It was a parcel of land given by Jacob himself thousands of years ago to his son, Joseph.

6 There was a spring on the property known to all as "Jacob's Well." Jesus made a deliberate point to rest Himself there. This was just about midday, when everything was hot and still.

7 A woman came out in the heat of the day to draw some water, (an unusual time for the chore.) Jesus surprised her, saying "Would you give Me a drink?"

8 His disciples were gone into town at the time, looking for lunch.

9 The woman was shocked. "Aren't You a Jew? Don't You look down on women and anyone who isn't a Jew? You usually want nothing to do with us, and now You want me to serve **You**?"

10 "Hardly that," Jesus replied. "If you had been taught how generous God is you'd know a gift when you see it. Then you'd be asking **Me** for a drink. You'd satisfy your thirst, and the tap would never run dry."

11 The woman sized up Jesus with a shrewd eye. "Teacher, I see You've got no pail or rope to lower it with." She looked down into the shadow of the well. "It's a long way down there, so where are You going to miraculously draw this 'water that lasts forever?'"

12 "What? Are You going to tell me that You've got a better well than this? Jacob and his sons built this lifeline and it's been here for centuries, keeping this community alive."

13 Jesus was gently speaking of spiritual truths again and drew the woman in with a curious reply. "No matter how good the water from this well may be, sooner or later you'll be thirsty again.

14 "But anyone who takes a swallow of the water I pour out doesn't just get an hour of refreshment. You can't drain **this** well. In fact, the receiver becomes a giver - a regular spring for other thirsty souls, gushing with life itself."

15 The woman was tired of endless drudgery and meaningless toil. She thought of her calloused hands and aching back. "Well then, by all means give me some of that kind of water! Then I can say goodbye to this endless chore."

16 Jesus said, "Bring back your husband and we'll talk about it."

17 The woman thought about it and answered carefully. "I have no husband to bring You." Jesus smiled. "That's a good way of putting it, for you certainly have no husband at present. But it's not the whole truth.

18 "In fact, you've already had five of them and now you've taken up with another man altogether. That's the rest of the story, isn't it?"

19 The woman was stunned but kept her composure. "Sir, it's obvious You're a prophet.

20 "But why do You prophecy here? Our forefathers worshipped on this mountain, but you Jews say that Jerusalem is the only place to do God business."

21 "Woman," Jesus replied. "It won't be long till you can worship anywhere you like. His Temple will be right at hand.

22 "You Samaritans really have no idea what or why you're worshipping. The Jews have a better grasp on it, since the Word makes clear that salvation for all men comes from their nation.

23 "But the time has come to put away forms and experience the **substance**. True believers will worship God Himself in the first-person, full of the passion God's Spirit brings, with utter clarity. No confusion or deception! That's the kind of worship God deserves and enjoys. And He makes it possible to those who want it.

24 "God isn't found in stones. He's a Spirit - THE Spirit. He communicates with us way deeper than mere thought. It's an experience. That's where real, honest worship takes place. Experience God and you'll be worshipping – you won't be able to do otherwise."

25 The woman replied, "I'm aware that the Liberator is coming, and when He eventually does, He'll explain what all those old prophecies meant and what we're supposed to do."

26 Jesus looked her straight in the eye. "Then hear it from My own voice - I'm **'the One.'**"

27 The students of Jesus returned from their shopping trip about this time, and were shocked to find Jesus deep in conversation with this Samaritan woman. It just wasn't done. But no one dared take Him to task about it.

28 The woman dropped her pot and ran. Straight to the city elders she went and urgently said to them,

29 "Come, right now! A man has showed up out of nowhere, and he told me the absolute truth about me - secrets and all. Is this not what the Liberator would do? It's Him! Come and see for yourselves."

30 So they did, leaving the city and making the trek out to the famous well.

31 In the meantime, Jesus was pestered by his students to eat something and get refreshed.

32 Jesus, however, seemed to refuse, saying "I'm full, thanks. I've been feeding on a real meal you aren't even aware of."

33 The students looked around, saying "did someone else bring Him lunch?"

34 Jesus said "I'm most full and happy when I'm doing what My Father wants. To finish His work? Now that's satisfying.

35 "You think the harvest is still four months off? No. Pay attention here. If you look around you'll see the fields are already bending under the weight of the fruit. It's time to gather it all in.

36 "The one hired to do the reaping will get generous pay, for he's harvesting something that will last forever. When he brings it all in, the One who did the original planting will join in for the harvest celebration.

37 "It's always been true: One has the talent to plant the crop; another has the talent to bring it in. Both are needed.

38 "I'm sending you out to do the harvesting. Others before you did the hard work of planting and tending the crops. You're just joining in to finish the job."

39 Now, word kept getting around about Jesus, since the woman could not stop talking about Him. The locals began to believe that the Liberator had really come to town.

40 So they all went out to plead with Jesus to stay for a while. He rested there for two days.

41 As He shared with them during that time, many more were convinced.

42 And they told the woman "Well, you were right. We believe Him, and not just because of your word. We've heard Him ourselves now, and His words shake us to the core. He is, indeed, the Liberator, and He will save the world."

43 Finally after two days of ministering, Jesus left for Galilee.

44 Jesus prepared his students for what was to come. "Don't expect such a warm welcome when we get back. A prophet is never respected so much in his hometown."

45 Jesus' reputation preceded Him, though, and the Galileans didn't turn Him away. They had heard what He did in Jerusalem during the Passover. Many from the area had been in Jerusalem to witness it for themselves.

46 Jesus' journey took Him back through Cana, where the miracles began with turning water into wine. While He was there, a government official sought Him out. The son of this official was in the town of Capernaum and very sick.

47 When this man got word that the miracle-worker of Judea had arrived in the area, he personally went and begged Jesus to come down and heal his son, for it was urgent. It was apparent that the boy was about to die. What he wanted Jesus to do for his child consumed him.

48 Upon hearing the plea, Jesus said to him "So, the miracles are more important than the message? Where's the faith?"

49 The man just continued to beg Jesus. He was desperate and grasping at straws. Perhaps his son would live if Jesus could just be persuaded to come with him.

50 Jesus was not headed that way. But as the man was persistent, Jesus said "Go home. Your son will survive." On hearing it from the Healer's mouth, he took Jesus at His word and began the two day's journey home, hopeful.

51 Half-way home, the official met his servants rushing to find him. They brought him the news he so longed to hear - his son had revived!

52 He asked his servants specifically when his son began to rally. They said "Yesterday, at one in the afternoon his fever broke."

53 It's exactly what the father expected to hear. Just as he'd heard the words from the lips of Jesus, "your son will survive," his boy had been healed. The man burst forth with deep emotion, believing without a shadow of doubt that Jesus was, in fact, the Liberator. He brought this message home to his family and servants. They all believed his story and marveled at it.

54 This was the second miracle of Jesus recorded in the region of Galilee, happening soon after his return from Judea.

## ***Explain the Context:***

From your reading provide a short answer to the following:

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| <b>What</b> is the theme of this chapter?    | <b>What</b> is the BIG Idea?                   |
| <b>What</b> is something that surprised you? | <b>What</b> is this chapter <i>not</i> saying? |

Take a moment to consider these questions:

- 1) How does the boldness of the Woman at the Well encourage you to be bold with your prayer life?
- 2) What does Jesus intentional trip THRU Samaria tell us about His love for people considered to be unclean (read Acts 1:8)?
- 3) Read verses 35-37 again. How can these verses encourage you to be more confident in your giftings?
- 4) This woman brought her village to Jesus by telling her story. How can God use our story to bring others to Him?
- 5) Verses 46-54 tell of a man who sought Jesus for a miracle and took Him at His word. What does it mean for us to take Jesus at His word?

## ***Apply the Scripture***

Write the verse that stood out to you while reading [in this translation or your favorite].

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How does this verse challenge you? Does it reveal an attribute of God's character?

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### **For further study:**

- Psalm 36:7-9
- Isaiah 49:10
- Isaiah 55:1
- Zechariah 14:8
- 1 Corinthians 12