

Sunday, March 12, 2023

Lent 2, Year A

John 4:5-42

Jesus defies convention to engage a Samaritan woman in conversation. Her testimony, in turn, leads many others to faith.

⁵Jesus came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.⁶Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

⁷A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."

⁸(His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) ⁹The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) ¹⁰Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." ¹¹The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? ¹²Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?"

¹³Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." ¹⁵The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

¹⁶Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." ¹⁷The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; ¹⁸for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!" ¹⁹The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. ²⁰Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem." ²¹Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²²You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. ²⁴God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." ²⁵The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us." ²⁶Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you."

²⁷Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you want?" or, "Why are you speaking with her?"

²⁸Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people,

²⁹"Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?" ³⁰They left the city and were on their way to him.

³¹Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, "Rabbi, eat something." ³²But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." ³³So the disciples said to one another, "Surely no one has brought him something to eat?" ³⁴Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. ³⁵Do you not say, 'Four months more, then comes the harvest'? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. ³⁶The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. ³⁷For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' ³⁸I sent you to reap that for which

you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”

³⁹Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I have ever done.” ⁴⁰So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. ⁴¹And many more believed because of his word. ⁴²They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world.”

OPEN

- Where is one place you’d never want to live? Why?
- When were you most thankful for a drink of water? Why?

DIG

- In the bible dictionary, look up Samaritans. What is the general impression you get of the relationship between Jew and Samaritan? How does this impression support verse 9?
- How do you think the disciples would have reacted to Jesus talking to a Samaritan Woman? If he had not sent them into town, how much do you think Jesus would have accomplished at the well? What was accomplished by sending them into town?
- What does Jesus mean by “living water”? Why do you think he chose water as his metaphor? What does this tell you about Jesus skill as a teacher?
- What do you think is Jesus’ purpose in letting the woman know that he knows her life history? How does this bring him closer to his objective?
- What is the dispute between Mt. Gerazim and Jerusalem? In what way is the introduction of this subject a challenge to Jesus? How does he overcome this difficulty
- By not arguing over the proper place for worship, what does Jesus accomplish with the woman? What does this tell us about Jesus’ priorities?

REFLECT

- Who are the Samaritans in your life - groups of people you have traditionally stayed apart from for one reason or another (people from another denomination, race, job, socio-economic level)? How has God been nudging you toward them? What lesson from this story could you use as you approach such people?
- When have you been totally tired, and yet God used you to touch someone’s life? What did you learn from that experience?
- Whom did God specifically place in your path this week? How aware are you of those accidental encounters that God places in your life?
- How is your style of sharing the Messiah with others like Jesus’ approach to this woman? How is it different? How will your sharing style change because of what you’ve learned in the story?