



lêtheia

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP




 **lêtheia**
CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

the gospel of
JOHN

ΕΝΑΡΧΗ Η ΝΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΑΙ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΗΝ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ
 ΘΗΝ ΚΑΙ ΘΕ ΤΗ ΝΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΣΤΙ ΤΟΣ Η ΝΕΝΑΡΧΗ ΤΙΡΟΣ
 ΤΟΝ ΘΗ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΔΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕ ΤΟ ΚΑΧΟΤΙΣ

Last week we incorporated a couple of things together with our study in John. In doing so I read the entire story of Jesus and the Samaritans and gave an overview. Today, my plan is to reread most of the passage, catch us up quickly on the parts we talked about and then give a little more detail on the rest.



John 4:5-42, 5 Eventually he came to the Samaritan village of Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. 6 Jacob's well was there; and Jesus, tired from the long walk, sat wearily beside the well about noontime. 7 Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Please give me a drink."

8 He was alone at the time because his disciples had gone into the village to buy some food.

9 The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans. She said to Jesus, “You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?”

10 Jesus replied, “If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water.”

11 “But sir, you don’t have a rope or a bucket,” she said, “and this well is very deep. Where would you get this living water? 12 And besides, do you think you’re greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us this well? How can you offer better water than he and his sons and his animals enjoyed?”

13 Jesus replied, “Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. 14 But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life.”

15 “Please, sir,” the woman said, “give me this water! Then I’ll never be thirsty again, and I won’t have to come here to get water.”

16 “Go and get your husband,” Jesus told her.

17 “I don’t have a husband,” the woman replied.

Jesus said, “You’re right! You don’t have a husband—
18 for you have had five husbands, and you aren’t
even married to the man you’re living with now. You
certainly spoke the truth!”

19 “Sir,” the woman said, “you must be a prophet.

20 So tell me, why is it that you Jews insist that
Jerusalem is the only place of worship, while we
Samaritans claim it is here at Mount Gerizim, where
our ancestors worshiped?”

21 Jesus replied, “Believe me, dear woman, the time is
coming when it will no longer matter whether you
worship the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem.

22 You Samaritans know very little about the one you
worship, while we Jews know all about him, for
salvation comes through the Jews. 23 But the time is
coming—indeed it’s here now—when true worshipers
will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father
is looking for those who will worship him that way.

24 For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must
worship in spirit and in truth.”

25 The woman said, “I know the Messiah is coming—
the one who is called Christ. When he comes, he will
explain everything to us.”

26 Then Jesus told her, “I Am the Messiah!”

27 Just then his disciples came back. They were shocked to find him talking to a woman, but none of them had the nerve to ask, “What do you want with her?” or “Why are you talking to her?” 28 The woman left her water jar beside the well and ran back to the village, telling everyone, 29 “Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah?” 30 So the people came streaming from the village to see him.



The city of Sychar today is the much bigger city of Nablus sitting between Mount Gerizim in the foreground and Mount Ebal in the top left. Jacob’s Well is highlighted on the right side.

I mentioned that there were three major reasons that Jesus should have avoided eye contact, let alone interacted with, the “Samaritan woman.” There’s two of the reasons right there. She was a Samaritan woman.



Samaritans were the ethnic enemies of the Jews.

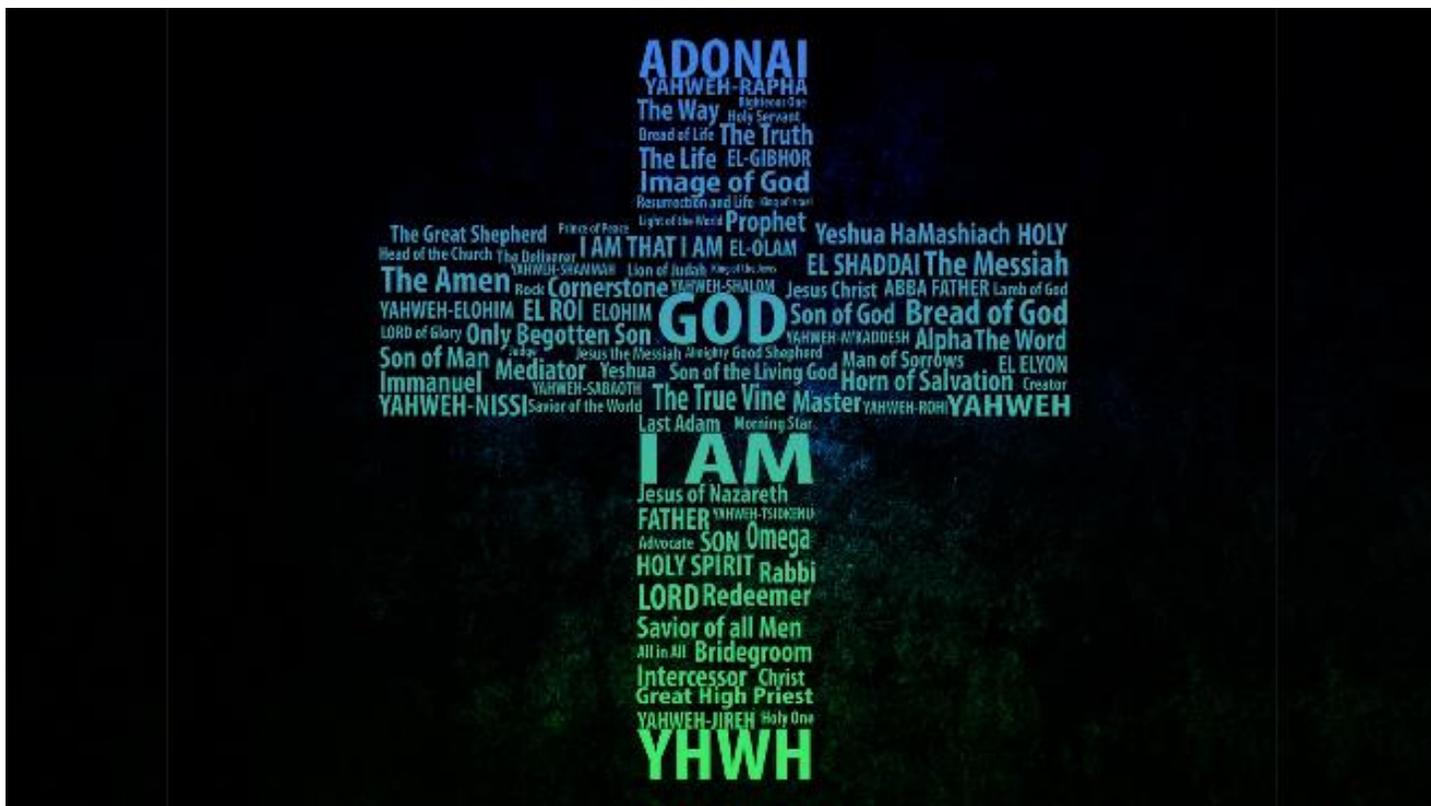


And, while I'm not a biologist, I'm pretty sure that she was a woman. A lone woman at a well. That was the bigger issue for the Disciples when they returned. They were shocked, or amazed that Jesus was talking to a woman. The word is θαυμάζω (thau-mä-dzō). It is to be filled with wonder, to marvel, or to be astonished. It was astonishing that Jesus would be alone with a woman and actively engaging her in conversation.



The third reason was type of person Jesus appeared to be versus the type of person the woman appeared to be. She called Him a Jew. In the New Testament it is a term used of the religiously legalistic practitioners of Judaism, not simply as a description of a person's race. She took one look at Jesus and assumed that He was another uptight, condescending, holier-than-thou, Jewish man, who would dismiss her with utter disdain.

She was, by all external appearances, a disgraced woman surviving by living a shameful and degrading existence. The two appeared to have nothing in common.



In reality they had far less in common than anyone could have imagined, but for none of those obvious reasons.

Scandalous is the only way to see Jesus' behavior in initiating the conversation with her. Jesus was never interested in what other people thought when following the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus never sinned, not once in his thirty-plus years did Jesus ever sin. That's a vital theological reality and an essential doctrinal position. If Jesus had ever sinned, then He was no different than you and me – in

that, He would have needed a Savior just as much as we do.



PERFECTION

What constitutes perfect sinlessness? I mean when I say that Jesus never sinned, do you start thinking about things that He never did, like sex outside of marriage, or drunkenness, or gossiping, or lying, or stealing? Do you start thinking about things that He never failed to do, like worshipping, or praying, or attending services, or tithing, or helping a neighbor in need?



Do you remember the definition of the Kingdom of Heaven? God's Kingdom, Heaven itself, is not a temporal or spatial construct – it's not a location in time and space. It exists where God's Will is entirely unopposed.

In the Lord's Prayer we ask that the Father's Name be hallowed, that the Father's Kingdom come, and that the Father's Will be done. We could talk about those three concepts for the rest of the day, but in a very general sense all three are one thing. It's all just one thing.

When God's Will, is entirely unopposed, it is obviously done with complete agreement, with tremendous joy, and with entire trust. That simultaneously means that His Kingdom is established, and it means that the King is hallowed – He is set apart as Holy – He is loved, respected, and obeyed. That means He is feared. Do you see that? When God is real enough to actually be feared, He is taken seriously enough to actually be obeyed. The Bible declares that “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Psalm 111:10).



The perfect sinlessness of Jesus means that throughout His entire life He never once opposed the Father's perfect Will. That's Heaven on earth. I bring

this up because the reason that Jesus didn't care what people thought wasn't because He didn't care about them, it was because He cared far more about what the Father wanted.

Jesus would not have engaged the woman at the well if it had not been the Father's Will. Since it was the Father's Will, nothing on earth could have stopped Jesus from talking to her. What His Disciples thought was irrelevant compared to His duty in accomplishing the Father's Will. The result was 39 Many Samaritans from the village believed in Jesus... They said, 42bNow we know that he is indeed the Savior of the world." That's what His conversation with the Disciples, using the farming example, was all about. We'll look at it a bit more when we get to those verses.

As I have repeatedly said, Jesus was far more interested in winning her soul than He was in winning the argument. Why though? Jesus was interested in doing the Father's Will and the Father's Will was that all who could be saved, would be saved.

In other words, my friends, God's concern is winning souls. If that's the case, what should our concern be? If

we are His children, following in the footsteps of Jesus, engaged in the family business through the power of the Holy Spirit... What should our greatest concern be?

It's a whole lot easier to watch the news, listen to talk radio, troll the conspiracy theory websites, gobble up the insanity on social media, build bunkers, wave the flag, spew divisive opinions than it is to love people with whom you have nothing in common and to engage them in conversation with the goal of winning their soul.

For a Jewish man back then, no person could have been more offensive than that person. She would have been as odious to Him as Nancy Pelosi would be to a gun-toting, maga-hat wearing, Trump worshipper today. Yet, Jesus pursued her and won her. Not by disparaging her, not by berating her, not by arguing with her, but simply by staying focused on the task at hand in spite of her rude reaction.

I love you because the Heavenly Father loves you. I love you enough to tell you the Truth in such a way that you can accept it and be transformed by the One Who is the Truth. Imagine an America, where we Christians did as Jesus did. Where we tried to make America

great by glorifying God through actual obedience to His command to love. Imagine if we feared God enough to actually put our hurt feelings and trampled opinions aside and loved people in spite of their reaction to us and our efforts on their behalf.

Imagine the Abortion issue, if we had shared the Love of Jesus with people, instead of fighting against them politically. The Jews proved that you can create as many laws as you want and never change the human heart. Conversely, Jesus proved that if you change the human heart, you don't need any laws.

In accordance with what was obvious, Jesus should have been repulsed by the person in front of Him and yet, He, our Lord, our ideal exemplar, and model example, initiated polite contact with her, solely for the purpose of reaching her heart.

It cannot be done by holier-than-thou, better-than-you, condescending Bible thumpers. It cannot be done by, "I would die if you thought I was weird – so let's take fifty years to get to know each other before I reveal to you that I'm a Christian" people either. It must be done by people who humble themselves enough to take the Will

of God seriously. It is God's stated Will that "None should perish" (II Peter 3:9).



We Christians are easily distracted. We get sidetracked by all kinds of ancillary issues. We become consumed with our own agendas, fears, worries, hopes and dreams. We think the path to control – to orderliness – to stability, safety, and security – to Godliness, is making others conform to our sense of right and wrong. We do that by becoming entrenched in our own dogma. We do it by drawing lines of demarcation, division, separation, from those we mistrust. We then argue and fight, through social media, through political

action, through protests, through arguments, through villainization, through warfare.

Satan so easily gets us riled up against other people and the Kingdom effect, is the Kingdom is not built.

I know, you'd like some concrete examples. Some to better understand what I'm driving at and unfortunately others to determine if I'm someone to shun. I'm not saying lawless licentiousness is okay – it's definitely not. What I am saying is that God did not require you to stop being a busybody gossip before He accepted you as His child. Why then do we think that a person must stop being a homosexual before God will accept them?

Let's do our job and politely engage those so vastly different than us for the purposes of sharing Life with them, regardless of the personal cost and let's let the Holy Spirit figure out how to bring that new brother or sister into conformity to Christ.

It's about being humble and intelligent and introspective enough to realize that you are honestly no better than them.



Look you might be the most wonderful ant in the ant farm – but you're still an ant! Please get that. No matter how much better you think you are than the other ants – you're still just a fellow ant. See that best ant? The one right beside those two other really nice ants.

The airline I worked for had a pilot strike a few years before I joined them. Many pilots crossed the picket line. Living here and commuting 2,000 miles one way to work I had to fly, and my airline didn't serve Kalispell in those days. I was able to ride for free in the cockpit of rival airlines with the pilot's permission. More than once a Delta pilot – it was always the Delta guys – they

are the Pharisees of the industry. Anyway a few said something like, “I don’t know how you do it – I could never fly with a scab.”



My reply was always, “If I only flew with perfect people, I couldn’t fly with anyone, not even with myself.” What I can tell you with certainty is that every pilot who ever thought that they were better than a scab, was no better in some other area of life. That I promise you. I’ve seen alcoholic, abusively arrogant, misogynistic, blow hard pilots working on their third divorce and an ongoing lawsuit, who were simply fortunate in their career choice, despising a scab as beneath them – ridiculous!



We do that same basic thing as Christians – thinking that we’re better than people who without the aid of the Holy Spirit mind you are simply messed up in a different way than we are. We have the Holy Spirit to guide us, and we still fail constantly, but we feel like we’re better than non-Christians? That’s why I often say that I’m a worse sinner now than I was before I was a Christian. Even though I’m dramatically improved, it’s only because of God’s work in me. The real difference is that now, by the Grace of God, and not the greatness of Scott, I am forgiven.

And so, because of that Grace of God bestowed upon me, I'm going to act in an unforgiving way towards others? Insanity! My friends, let's take a page out of Jesus' playbook and reach out to our fellow man, or woman, with humble love and gracious forgiveness. If we do that, then we'll be more like Jesus.



You might think, “What if the other person is mean to me?” Well, it was no picnic for Jesus with that Woman. She initially responded to Him with a chastisement, “Who do you think you are invoking the law of hospitality when I know you despise all that I am?”

Jesus could have gotten defensive, could have chastised her right back, but His answer to her was anything but confrontational or escalatory. He reversed the hospitality roles and essentially offered her a drink.



Her reply to that was a two-fold rebuke that started with, “But sir.” In this case, it was an address that was dripping with insincerity. There’s a point here that I hinted at last week, which we will see play out a few times in this chapter. She was disingenuous or deceptive in her choice of words because she was a woman.

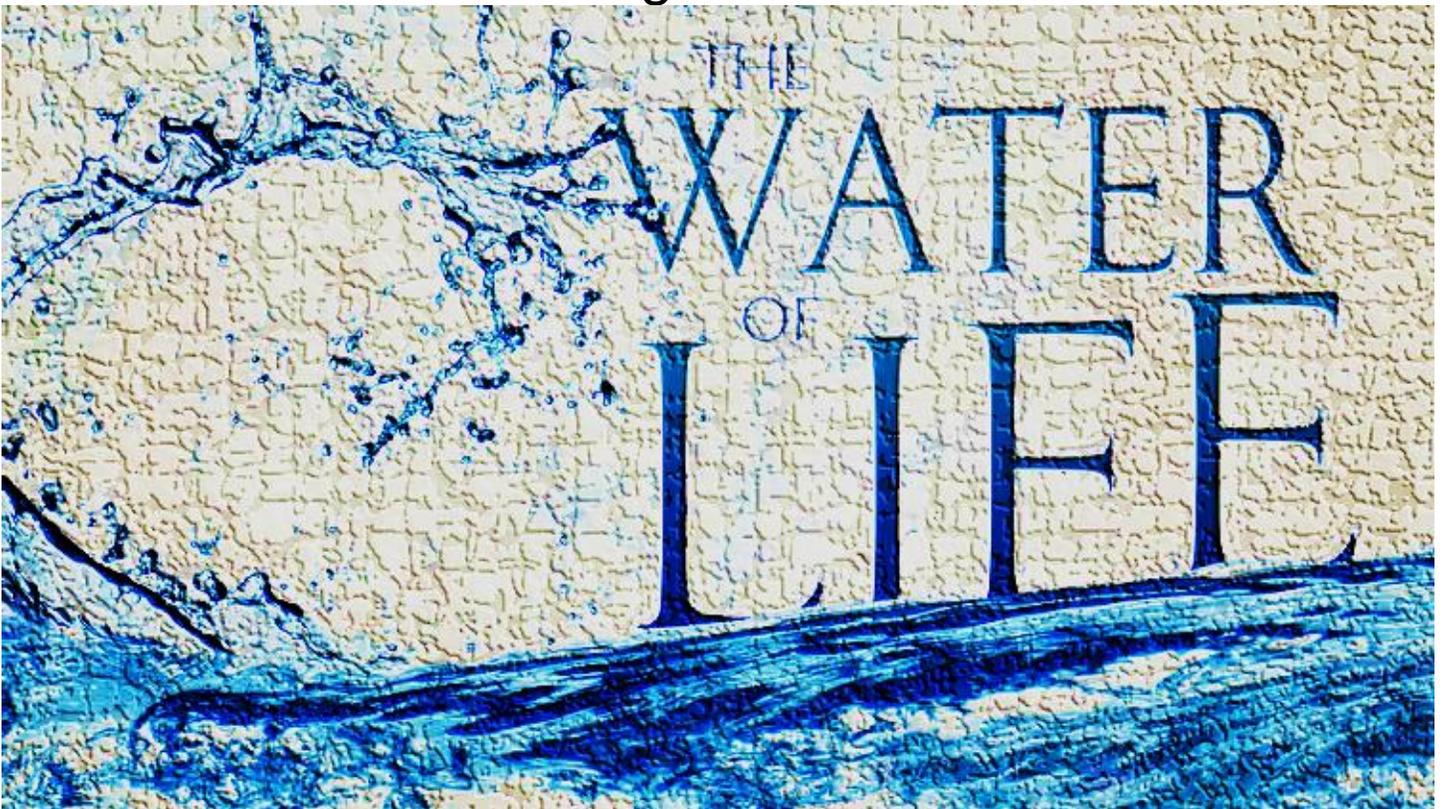
Women will get what I'm saying at a deeper and more intuitive level, even though we now have a far more egalitarian society. Equality for females in America today, may not be anywhere near perfect – too far in some areas, not far enough in others – but, good grief, it is lightyears ahead of Samaria in the year 27.

She had spent a lifetime sparing with males in a subtly shrewd way using innuendo, euphemisms, and intentional misunderstanding, to protect herself. For a woman to challenge a man overtly and explicitly would have brought on far more heat than one could stand. So, she, like her fellow females of that time and far beyond, was an expert at putting men in their place without the men realizing what happened.

Her double rebuke in verses 11&12, is cloaked in pretend misunderstanding with seemingly meek questions. First, “Oh, however will you draw water from this very deep well without the necessary tools, good sir?” Meaning... “You’re an idiot! You can’t even get yourself a drink, let alone give water to anyone else.”

Second, “Living water” means water that flows as opposed to water that is still. Water drawn from a well

is not technically “Living water.” So, she asked, “Hmmm, living water you say, are you someone greater than the great Patriarch of both our people? He and his 12 children and all their household and all their animals had to draw water out of this well just like I’m about to do and you say you can make the water flow from it somehow without drawing it at all? What a moron!”



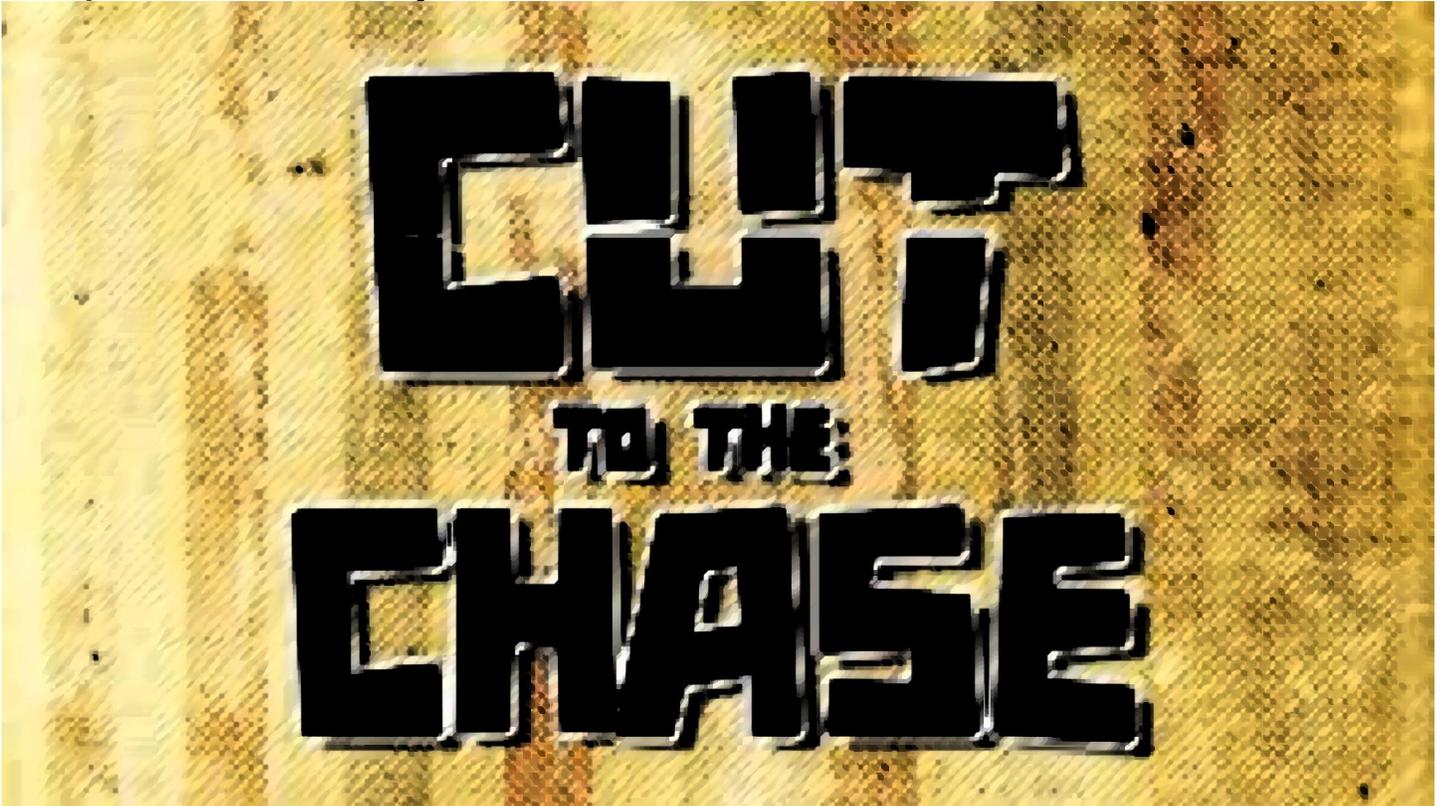
Jesus does not rise to the bait, He does not become offended and get defensive, He simply states a fact everyone is forced to agree on. “Drink from this well and you will need to drink again. What I’m offering to you is a kind of “Living water” within you granting eternal life.”

She understood what He was saying, at least in the broad strokes. She was no fool and she had been exposed to these concepts, if not stated in this precise way. It must have frightened her because her response is sarcastic and biting. “Oh, please, sir, give me this water! Then I’ll never be thirsty again, and I won’t have to trudge out here in the heat of the day to get water anymore.”

I know very few Christians who would continue to keep their cool and stay focused on the goal of truly helping someone, seemingly so opposed to help, by this point in the encounter. Notice what the Master did. He pursued as long as she was engaged without allowing it to escalate to a mutual confrontation, argument, or fight.

What would happen if we pursued people for Christ in the same way? Constantly brushing aside their unkindness towards us while staying focused on breaking through the defensive barriers they have established. That’s all it is you know – just self-defensive walls built with bricks of past rejection and

mortar of future fear. We all have them – so why be surprised when you encounter them in others?



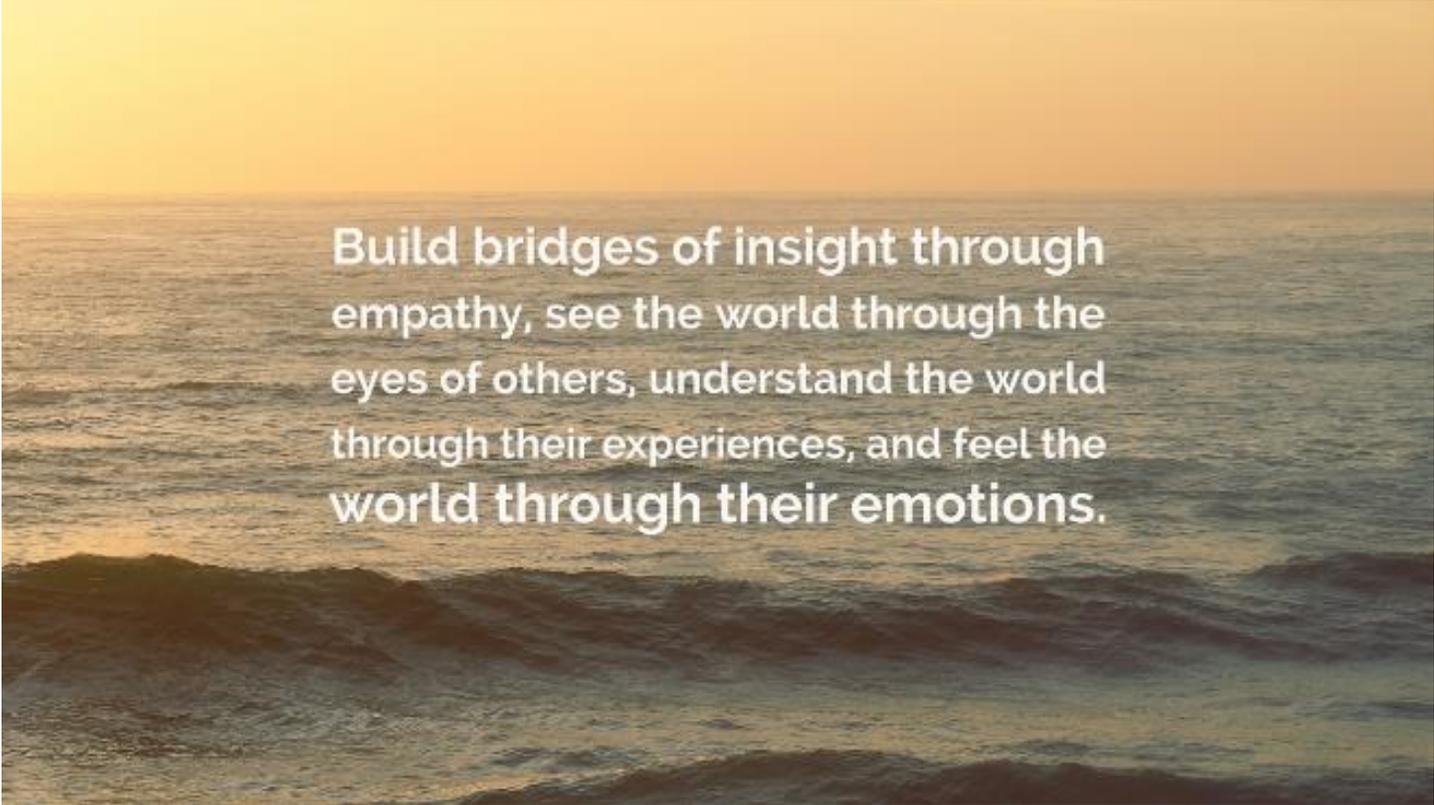
Jesus cut to the chase in a brilliant fashion. It's basically, "Cool, Go and get your husband, I have enough "Living water" for you both." It's not just the insight into her life we know is coming; it is the perfect timing to make it more specifically about her personal need. Why did He wait until this point? He had maneuvered her into asking Him for the water that He offered even though she didn't think that He could actually produce it. How many times do we keep offering what people don't want? It doesn't work. You

need to get the person to ask for help. She did, even if it was unwittingly.

Since she asked, Jesus politely extended His invitation to the woman's husband. It was a perfectly natural and reasonable thing to do – she couldn't cry foul. On the surface it was essentially expected – now, of course, we know that Jesus had a bigger reason for bringing up her man, but she didn't – not yet.

Her response is curt and cryptic. It isn't, "Well, my husband is out of town on a business trip", or "He passed away in a goat milking accident", it was just three words in Greek, Οὐκ ἔχω ἄνδρα (ük ěx-ō än-dră), rendered, "I don't have a husband."

Jesus knew and as I've encouraged us to see ourselves acting like Jesus in our dealings with non-Christians, this seems unfair. How did Jesus know is the question we should ask? It was either an astute observation, or a supernatural revelation, or a combination of both.

A photograph of a sunset over the ocean. The sky is a gradient of orange and yellow, transitioning into a darker blue over the water. The waves are visible in the foreground, creating a textured surface. The text is centered in the upper half of the image.

Build bridges of insight through empathy, see the world through the eyes of others, understand the world through their experiences, and feel the world through their emotions.

It's far too specific to be only observation, but I would ask you, if Jesus was truly interested in her as an individual person and was genuinely listening to her and was carefully watching her with what we call empathetic discernment, how much extra Holy Spirit insight would be needed?

My point is that this encounter is, among other things, an example for Jesus' Disciples to follow. Take a Christian who is being led by, and in tune with, the Holy Spirit – a Christian serving God's Will by generously sharing Jesus – a Christian paying close attention to the obvious cues, as well as to the subtle signals. Is it

surprising that such a Christian would be granted extraordinary and accurate insight into that other person for the purposes of God getting through to them?

Jesus demonstrated natural empathetic discernment coupled with supernatural insight. He wrapped that up in a palatable fashion. Notice, Jesus did not blast her with her sin. He first complimented her on her honesty. She could have lied. She didn't. Jesus noticed.

I just said that I believe the same type of knowledge is available to the Christian rightly submitted to the Holy Spirit and rightly obedient to the Father's Will and rightly sharing Jesus from a standpoint of love. Proof that a Christian has the right heart in the matter is that you would never dream of diminishing the other person with the knowledge.

Jesus wasn't trying to shame her; He was trying to save her. Verse 19 is a response of fear. She was uncomfortable and desperately needed to deflect. She acknowledges His insight into her by declaring that He must be a prophet to know so much and so settle the

biggest controversy between the Jews and the Samaritans. Where does God want His Temple?



She was trying to trap Him in an endless debate about religious matters. It is still the most common tactic employed today once you get past the first few layers. The form of the deflection I've seen most is either some form of the existence of evil argument, or the lack of opportunity argument. The first is if God is Good and He's all powerful, how can evil exist? Why does God let babies die? The second is if faith in Jesus during this life is the only means of Salvation, what about all the people who die without ever hearing about Jesus? There are others to be sure, but what they all

have in common is they are just deflecting tactics. They are not really questions at all they are... Objections.

Again, Jesus didn't take the bait. He calmly explained enough to answer her, but the key was what He said first and what He closed with. The time is now when place is irrelevant, what will matter is spirit. That's a little different than saying sincerity. Sincerity comes from spirit and spirit comes from the Holy Spirit.

Only a person "Begotten from above," and indwelt with God's Breath can worship in Spirit and in Truth and that's the type of worship that matters because God is Spirit and, it goes without saying, Truth.

There's no way she can keep up with that, so she tries another delaying tactic... Delay itself. Again, this is still the move people make today. Get a person to this place and they will say something like. "Well, that's a lot to think about. I need some time to digest that." No, you don't. There is not a single person in this room right now who doesn't already know more than enough to surrender to the Holy Spirit, accept Jesus fully and become a child of the Heavenly Father, if you haven't already done so – not one of you. At least not one of

you old enough to understand my words. It's just another delaying tactic.

She said, I know that God will send His Anointed and He will make everything clear.

Jesus said, ἐγώ εἰμι (ě-gō ā-mē), I AM. The NLT renders it well with, "I Am the Messiah!" He is you know. Jesus is the long promised, long awaited, Anointed One of God – the Messiah, the Christ, the Word of Almighty God made flesh. The One and Only means God provided by which human beings can be Saved.