

John 4:1-30
May 25, 2025

Open with Prayer

HOOK:

Q: What kind of water are you drinking these days? What brand do you buy and why? Dasani? Fuji? Smart Water? [Let people engage]

Transition: Our grocery shelves are filled with all kinds of brands! Bottled water is a thing!! When I was growing up, I never wanted to sit around inside the house. I wanted to go out and play! My parents would say, “If you get thirsty, just turn on the outside water faucet and drink out of the hose.” As a kid, I was never concerned about how clean the water was. I just assumed it was. But that’s how all of us kids rolled.

But now we watch the news and discover that we can’t assume that the water we get is clean. Talk to a citizen in Flint, Michigan, where their water had been contaminated with high levels of lead. Apparently, in 2014, Flint switched their water source from Detroit to getting it from the Flint River. Unfortunately, over 9,000 children drank this leaded water for 18 months and were getting sick.

We also see companies who are going after minerals. They are using a technique called fracking, which can be very problematic. Fracking invites the real possibility of introducing toxins and pollutants into our water tables below the earth. Keeping water clean and potable is a problem!

We take clean water for granted, and we know that water is essential for nearly every function in your body, making up about 50-70% of your total body weight and playing a critical role in maintaining health and well-being. We need it for regulating the temperature of our body; for cellular functions like transporting nutrients to our body and waste removal; and joint lubrication – just to name a few.

In today’s text, Jesus encounters a Samaritan woman on his way back to Galilee. It’s a very familiar story. Jesus is getting ready to introduce a water that we all need, and He calls it “living water.” Let’s read the text and find out what “living water” offers us. Let’s begin.

BOOK:

Jesus Talks With a Samaritan Woman

4 The Pharisees heard that Jesus was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John,

² although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples.

³ When the Lord learned of this, he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.

⁴ Now he had to go through Samaria.

⁵ So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph.

⁶ Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

- ⁷ When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, “Will you give me a drink?”
- ⁸ (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)
- ⁹ The Samaritan woman said to him, “You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)
- ¹⁰ Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.”
- ¹¹ “Sir,” the woman said, “you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water?”
- ¹² Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?”
- ¹³ Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again,
- ¹⁴ but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”
- ¹⁵ The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.”
- ¹⁶ He told her, “Go, call your husband and come back.”
- ¹⁷ “I have no husband,” she replied. Jesus said to her, “You are right when you say you have no husband.
- ¹⁸ The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.”
- ¹⁹ “Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet.
- ²⁰ Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.”
- ²¹ Jesus declared, “Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.
- ²² You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.
- ²³ Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.
- ²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”
- ²⁵ The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”
- ²⁶ Then Jesus declared, “I who speak to you am he.”

The Disciples Rejoin Jesus

- ²⁷ Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, “What do you want?” or “Why are you talking with her?”
- ²⁸ Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people,
- ²⁹ “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?”
- ³⁰ They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

Process Observations/Questions:

Q: What stood out to you? What questions do you have? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you learn about man? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you learn about God or Jesus or the Holy Spirit? [Let people engage]

Q: What is your takeaway? [Let people engage]

LOOK:

The only faith that God will accept is that which came through the Jews. The Bible is of Jewish origin, and our Savior was a Jew. The first Christians were Jews. Jesus said, “Salvation is of the Jews.” Only those who have the indwelling Holy Spirit, and who obey the truth, can worship God in spirit and in truth.

Close in Prayer

Commentaries for Today's Lesson:

Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible Exposition Commentary (Vol. 1, pp. 299-301). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.*

The Samaritan Woman (John 4:1–30)

Because the Pharisees were trying to incite competition between Jesus and John the Baptist (John 3:25–30), Jesus left Judea and started north for Galilee. He could have taken one of three possible routes: along the coast, across the Jordan and up through Perea, or straight through Samaria. Orthodox Jews avoided Samaria because there was a long-standing, deep-seated hatred between them and the Samaritans.

The Samaritans were a mixed race, part Jew and part Gentile, that grew out of the Assyrian captivity of the ten northern tribes in 727 b.c. Rejected by the Jews because they could not prove their genealogy, the Samaritans established their own temple and religious services on Mt. Gerizim. This only fanned the fires of prejudice. So intense was their dislike of the Samaritans that some of the Pharisees prayed that no Samaritan would be raised in the resurrection! When His enemies wanted to call Jesus an insulting name, they called Him a Samaritan (John 8:48). Because He was on a divinely appointed schedule, it was necessary that Jesus go through Samaria. Why? Because He would meet a woman there and lead her into saving faith, the kind of true faith that would affect an entire village. Our Lord was no respecter of persons. Earlier, He counseled a moral Jewish man (John 3), and now He would witness to an immoral Samaritan woman!

He arrived at Jacob's well at six o'clock in the evening, the usual time for women to come for water. The disciples went to the nearby town for food while Jesus deliberately waited at the well. He was weary, hungry, and thirsty. John not only presents Jesus as the Son of God but also as true man. Our Lord entered into all the normal experiences of our lives and is able to identify with us in each of them.

As you read our Lord's interview with this woman, notice how her knowledge of Jesus increases until she acknowledges that He is the Christ. There were four stages in this experience.

***He is "a Jew"* (vv. 7–10).** In that day, it was not considered proper for any man, especially a rabbi, to speak in public to a strange woman (John 4:27). But our Lord set social customs aside because a soul's eternal salvation was at stake. It certainly surprised her when He asked for a drink of water. She surmised that He was a Jewish rabbi, and perhaps she tried to "read between the lines" to find another meaning to His request. What was He *really* seeking?

The information in John's parenthesis at the end of John 4:9 was for the benefit of his Gentile readers. Since the disciples had gone into the city to purchase food, it is obvious that the Jews did have *some* "dealings" with the Samaritans; so John was not trying to exaggerate. The phrase can be translated "ask no favors from the Samaritans" or "use no vessels in common with the Samaritans." Why would Jesus, a Jew, want to use her "polluted" vessel to get a drink of water? Of course, our Lord's request was simply a way to open the conversation and share with her the truth about "living water." Whenever He witnessed to people, Jesus did not use a "sales talk" that

He adapted to meet every situation. To Nicodemus, He spoke about new birth; but to this woman, He spoke about living water.

Jesus pointed out to her that she was ignorant of three important facts: Who He was, what He had to offer, and how she could receive it. Here was eternal God speaking to her, offering her eternal life! The Samaritans were as blind as the Jews (John 1:26). But our Lord's words had aroused her interest, so she pursued the conversation.

“Greater than Jacob” (vv. 11–15). Jesus was speaking about spiritual water, but she interpreted His words to mean literal water. Again, we see how easily people confuse the material and the spiritual. Furthermore, this woman was concerned about *how* He would obtain this water, instead of simply asking Him to give her a drink of it.

Of course, Jesus *is* greater than Jacob—and greater than the well itself! To paraphrase His reply: “Whosoever *continues to drink* of this material water (or anything the world has to offer) will thirst again. But whosoever *takes one drink* of the water I give will never thirst again!” (see John 4:13–14) How true it is that the things of this world never completely satisfy. In hell today, people are crying, “I thirst!”

We have noted before that *life* is one of John's key concepts. He uses the word at least thirty-six times. Campbell Morgan has pointed out that mankind needs air, water, and food in order to have life. (We might also add that he needs light.) All of these are provided in Jesus Christ. He provides the “breath” (Spirit) of God (John 3:8; 20:22). He is the Bread of Life (John 6:48) and the Light of Life (John 1:4–5), and He gives us the water of life.

The woman's immediate response was to ask for this gift, but she did not know what she was saying. The seed of the Word fell on shallow soil, and the shoots that sprang up had no root (Matt. 13:20–21). She had made progress, but she still had a long way to go; so Jesus patiently dealt with her.

“A prophet” (vv. 16–24). The only way to prepare the soil of the heart for the seed is to plow it up with conviction. That was why Jesus told her to go get her husband: He forced her to admit her sin. There can be no conversion without conviction. There must first be conviction and repentance, and then there can be saving faith. Jesus had aroused her mind and stirred her emotions, but He also had to touch her conscience, and that meant dealing with her sin.

“I have no husband” was the shortest statement she made during the entire conversation! Why? Because now she was under conviction and her “mouth was stopped” (Rom. 3:19). But this was the best thing that could have happened to her! However, instead of listening to Jesus, she tried to get Him on a “detour” by discussing the differences between the Jewish and the Samaritan religions. It is much more comfortable to discuss religion than to face one's sins! However, Jesus once again revealed her spiritual ignorance: she did not know who to worship, where to worship, or how to worship! He made it clear that all religions are not equally acceptable before God, that some worshipers act in ignorance and unbelief.

The only faith that God will accept is that which came through the Jews. The Bible is of Jewish origin, and our Savior was a Jew. The first Christians were Jews. A religious worker in an airport told me that the world's deliverer came from Korea, but Jesus said, "Salvation is of the Jews." Only those who have the indwelling Holy Spirit, and who obey the truth, can worship God acceptably.

It was a devastating statement to say that worship would no longer be limited to the Jewish temple. This ties in with John 2:19–21 and also Stephen's statement in Acts 7:48–50. John's Gospel clearly reveals that there is a new sacrifice (John 1:29), a new temple (John 2:19–21; 4:20–24), a new birth (John 3:1–7), and a new water (John 4:11). Jews reading this Gospel should realize that God has established in Jesus Christ a whole new economy. The Old Covenant Law has been fulfilled and set aside.

"The Christ" (vv. 25–30). In spite of her ignorance, there was one truth this woman did know: the Messiah was coming and would reveal the secrets of hearts. Where did she learn this truth? We do not know, but that seed had lain buried in her heart until that very hour, and now it was going to bear fruit. Our Lord's response to her statement was, literally: "I that speak to thee, I am!" He dared to utter the holy name of God!

At this point, the woman put her faith in Jesus Christ and was converted. Immediately she wanted to share her faith with others, so she went into the village and told the men she had met the Christ. When you consider how little spiritual truth this woman knew, her zeal and witness put us to shame. But God used her simple testimony, and many of the people came out to the well to meet Jesus. The rabbis said, "It is better that the words of the Law be burned than be delivered to a woman!" But Jesus did not agree with that narrow prejudice.

Why did she leave her waterpot when she hurried into the city? For one thing, she had the living water within and was now satisfied. Also, she intended to come back; and perhaps in the interim, the disciples and Jesus could use the vessel to satisfy their thirst. Gone were the racial barriers and battles that had existed before! They were all one in faith and love!

This woman did not come to faith in Christ immediately. Jesus was patient with her, and in this, He sets a good example for us in our own personal work. Certainly, she was the least likely prospect for salvation, yet God used her to win almost an entire village!

Blum, E. A. (1985). *John*. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 284-287) Wheaton, IL: Victor Books

4:1–3. In Greek these verses are one long sentence, introducing the reader to a second long interview by Jesus. The words, **When the Lord learned of this** (v. 1), are actually the first phrase in Greek in verse 1. The sudden prominence of **Jesus**, evidenced by the growth of His followers, caused **the Pharisees** to take special notice of Him. Since Jesus was working on God's schedule, He knew how His ministry would end. Until that appointed time, He must live carefully, so He withdrew from the conflict until His "hour" (7:6, 8, 30; 8:20; cf. 12:23; 13:1; 17:1). **He left Judea** (cf. 3:22) **and went back ... to Galilee.**

This second interview is another illustration of the fact that “He knew what was in a man” (2:25). The Samaritan woman contrasts sharply with Nicodemus. He was seeking; she was indifferent. He was a respected ruler; she was an outcast. He was serious; she was flippant. He was a Jew; she was a despised Samaritan. He was (presumably) moral; she was immoral. He was orthodox; she was heterodox. He was learned in religious matters; she was ignorant. Yet in spite of all the differences between this “churchman” and this woman of the world, they both needed to be born again. Both had needs only Christ could meet.

4:4. **He had to go through Samaria.** This was the shortest route from Judea to Galilee but not the only way. The other route was through Perea, east of the Jordan River. (See the two routes on the map.) In Jesus’ day the Jews, because of their hatred for the Samaritans, normally took the eastern route in order to avoid Samaria. But Jesus chose the route through Samaria in order to reach the despised people of that region. As the Savior of the world, He seeks out and saves the despised and outcasts (cf. Luke 19:10).

“Samaria” in New Testament times was a region in the middle of Palestine, with Judea to the south and Galilee to the north. Samaria was without separate political existence under the Roman governor. The people were racially mixed, and their religion resulted from syncretism and schism from Judaism. Its center of worship was Mount Gerizim. Even today in Israel, a small group of Samaritans maintain their traditions.

4:5–6. The village of **Sychar** was **near** Shechem. Most identify the site with modern Akar, but others point to Tell-Balatah. Sychar was between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. A well near Sychar today may be the same as **Jacob’s well**. **The plot of ground** which **Jacob** gave to **Joseph** is mentioned in Genesis 48:21–22. Jacob had purchased it years earlier (Gen. 33:18–20). **Jesus, tired** from walking, **sat down by the well**. **It was about the sixth hour**, which according to Roman time reckoning would have been 6 p.m. (See comments on John 1:39; 19:14.) Jesus being truly human, experienced thirst, weariness, pain, and hunger. Of course, He also possesses all the attributes of Deity (omniscience, omnipotence, etc.).

4:7–8. With His **disciples** in the city buying **food**, Jesus did a surprising thing: He spoke to a **Samaritan woman**, whom He had never met. She was of the region of Samaria, not the town of Samaria. The woman was shocked to hear a Jewish man ask for a **drink** from her. The normal prejudices of the day prohibited public conversation between men and women, between Jews and Samaritans, and especially between strangers. A Jewish Rabbi would rather go thirsty than violate these proprieties.

4:9. Surprised and curious, the **woman** could not understand **how** He would dare **ask** her **for a drink**, since **Jews** did **not associate with Samaritans**. The NIV gives an alternate translation to the Greek sentence with the word *synchrōntai* (“associate” or “use together”): the Jews “do not use dishes Samaritans have used.” This rendering may well be correct. A Rabbinic law of a.d. 66 stated that Samaritan women were considered as continually menstruating and thus unclean. Therefore, a Jew who drank from a Samaritan woman’s vessel would become ceremonially unclean.

4:10. Having captured her attention and stimulated her curiosity, **Jesus** then spoke an enigmatic saying to cause her to think. It was as if He had said, “Your shock would be infinitely greater if you really knew who I am. *You*—not I—would be asking!” Three things would have provoked her thinking: (1) **Who** is He? (2) What is **the gift of God**? (3) What is **living water**? “Living water” in one sense is running water, but in another sense, it is the Holy Spirit (Jer. 2:13; Zech. 14:8; John 7:38–39).

4:11–12. She misunderstood the “living water” and thought only of water from **the well**. Since Jacob’s **well** was so **deep** how could Jesus **get this living water**? Today this well is identified by archeologists as one of the deepest in Palestine. **Are You greater than our father Jacob?** she asked. In Greek this question expects a negative answer. She could not conceive of Him as greater than Jacob. Her claim “our father Jacob” is interesting in light of the fact that the Jews claim him as the founder of *their* nation. That well had great tradition behind it but, she wondered, *What does this Stranger have?*

4:13–14. **Jesus** began to unveil the truth in an enigmatic statement. **This water** from Jacob’s well would satisfy only bodily thirst for a time. But **the water** Jesus gives provides continual satisfaction of needs and desires. In addition, one who **drinks** His living water **will** have within **him a spring of life-giving water** (cf. 7:38–39). This inner spring contrasts with the water from the well, which required hard work to acquire. Jesus was speaking of the Holy Spirit who brings salvation to a person who believes and through Him offers salvation to others.

4:15. **The woman** could not grasp this dark saying because of her sin and materialism. All she could understand was that if she had a spring, she would not **get thirsty and** would not have to work so hard.

4:16–18. Since she was not able to receive His truth (1 Cor. 2:14), Jesus dealt with her most basic problem. (Apparently, she never served Him a drink. He forgot His own physical need in order to meet her spiritual need.) Jesus suggested she get her **husband and** bring him **back** with her. This suggestion was designed to show her that He knew everything about her (cf. John 2:24–25). Her marital history was known to this Stranger, including the fact that she was living in sin. Thus, in a few words **Jesus** had revealed her life of sin and her need for salvation.

4:19–20. Her response was most interesting! Jesus was not just a passing Jewish Rabbi. Since He had supernatural knowledge, He must be **a prophet** of God. But instead of confessing her sin and repenting, she threw out an intellectual “red herring.” Could He solve an ancient dispute? Samaritan religion held that the one place of divinely ordered **worship** was **on** top of nearby Mount Gerizim, whereas the **Jews** said it was on the temple mount **in Jerusalem**. Who was right in this controversy?

4:21. **A time is coming** (cf. v. 23) referred to the coming death of **Jesus** which would inaugurate a new phase of worship in God’s economy. **In the Church Age, because of the work of the Spirit, worship is no longer centered in temples like those on Mount Gerizim and Mount Zion.**

4:22. Jesus was firm in His declaration of the issues involved. The Samaritan religion was confused and in error: **You Samaritans worship what you do not know**. They were not the

vehicle for the salvation of mankind. Israel was the nation chosen by God to have great privileges (Rom. 9:4–5). When Jesus said, **Salvation is from the Jews**, He did not mean that all Jews were saved or were especially pious. “Salvation is from the Jews” in the sense that it is available through Jesus, who was born of the seed of Abraham.

4:23. With the advent of the Messiah the **time** came for a new order of **worship**. **True worshipers** are those who realize that Jesus is the Truth of God (3:21; 14:6) and the one and only Way to the Father (Acts 4:12). To worship **in truth** is to worship God through Jesus. To worship **in Spirit** is to worship in the new realm which God has revealed to people. **The Father** is seeking true **worshipers** because He wants people to live in reality, not in falsehood. Everybody is a worshiper (Rom. 1:25) but because of sin many are blind and constantly put their trust in worthless objects.

4:24. **God is Spirit** is a better translation than the KJV “God is a Spirit.” God is not one Spirit among many. This is a declaration of His invisible nature. He is not confined to one location. **Worship** of God can be done only through the One (Jesus) who expresses God’s invisible nature (1:18) and by virtue of the Holy **Spirit** who opens to a believer the new realm of the kingdom (cf. 3:3, 5; 7:38–39).

4:25. The Samaritans expected a coming messianic leader. But they did not expect Him to be an anointed king of the Davidic line, since they rejected all the Old Testament except the Pentateuch. Based on Deuteronomy 18:15–18, they expected a Moses-like figure who would solve all their problems. The Samaritan **woman** now understood a part of what Jesus said. She wistfully longed for the messianic days when the **Messiah** would **explain everything**.

4:26. This self-declaration by Jesus Himself—I ... **am He** (the Messiah)—is unusual. Normally in His ministry in Galilee and Judea (cf. 6:15) because of political implications, He veiled His office and used the title “Son of Man.” But with this Samaritan the dangers of revolt by national zealots were not a problem.

b. Jesus’ Instruction of His disciples (4:27–38).

4:27–30. **The woman**, excited by Jesus’ statement about Himself and because of the arrival of the **disciples**, left and **went** to the village. In her joy of discovery, she forgot **her water jar**. It was more important to her now to share her new faith. Her words **A Man who told me everything I ever did**, were bound to stir interest. Perhaps in that village some who heard her had been partners in her past life. Perhaps they wondered, *Could this One also know about us? Could this be the Christ?* she asked them. More literally, her question was, “This couldn’t be the Messiah, could it?” The question expected a tentative negative answer. She framed the question this way, in all probability, because she knew the people would not respond favorably to a dogmatic assertion from a woman, especially one of her reputation. Just as Jesus had captured her attention by curiosity, so she raised the people’s curiosity. They decided to investigate this matter.

White, J. E. (1998). *John*. In D. S. Dockery (Ed.), *Holman Concise Bible Commentary* (pp. 470–472). Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Source of Life (4:1–26)

Not wanting to be seen in competition with John's ministry, Jesus returned to Galilee. In that journey "he had to go through Samaria." It should be noted that Samaria was not a geographic necessity for Jesus' trip but a necessity for His mission. The division between Jews and Samaritans was legendary, a division Jesus did not and would not recognize. Samaritans were rejected because of their mixed Gentile blood and their differing style of worship, which found its center on Mount Gerizim. On this mountain Samaritans had built a temple that rivaled the Jewish temple in Jerusalem.

Jesus' excursion into Samaria resulted in one of the most fascinating dialogues recorded in Scripture. Resting by a well, Jesus encountered a Samaritan woman who had been living a life of habitual immorality. Their conversation proceeded upon two levels, the spiritual and the temporal, with the woman constantly finding excuses for Jesus' probing of her inner world. Her first shock was that Jesus would even speak to her, an act unheard of for that day between a Jewish man and a Samaritan woman. Jesus continually responded not to her questions but to her needs, offering her the opportunity of receiving "living water."

Here we see much regarding the intent of Jesus' ministry, to bring persons to a realization of the state of their life in order to lead them to repentance and a new life in Him. This new life is a life that honors and worships God in spirit and truth in daily life. The location of worship is not important, but the Object is! The English word "worship" is from the Anglo-Saxon *weorthscipe*, literally reading "worthship." Worship is attributing worth and honor to the living God.

Christ's Mission (4:27–30)

When the disciples rejoined Jesus, they did not dare ask Him about His conversation with the Samaritan woman but rather inquired about His physical well-being. Perhaps they thought hunger had deprived Him of the sense necessary to know better than to talk with such a woman. Jesus then continued the education of the disciples, instructing them that His "food" was to "do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work."

Allen, J. P. (1972). John. In H. F. Paschall & H. H. Hobbs (Eds.), The Teacher's Bible Commentary (p. 670). Broadman and Holman Publishers.

The Second Sign (John 4:1–54)

The passage—This section contains two episodes both of which lead to belief. It is as though John illustrates the widening scope of believers. They come from all walks of life and all areas of the country. Nicodemus was from Jerusalem. What a contrast when John next introduces us to a woman from Samaria. There follows then a nobleman from Galilee, attached to the service of the king. Like the ripples on a pond, the good news radiates outward from center. There is no shore where it does not touch.

Special points—Many details of the humanity and character of Jesus are seen if the imagination is used. He sat on the well curb while his disciples went into town to buy food. Thus, some of their travel habits are revealed.

He was tired, although young and strong from carpenter's labors. He had no rope to draw with (v. 11). There might very well have been a bucket made of animal skin there. But long ropes were valuable things not easily made. He looked up and saw the woman approaching, her drawing rope coiled about her waist. Almost certainly he remained quiet while she lowered the vessel, the splashing water increasing his thirst. As she poured the water into her carrying jar for the return trip, he spoke, "Give me a drink" (v. 7, RSV).

The conversation which followed begins on a clever, breezy note because the woman chose that direction. Either his clothes or his speech indicated he was a Jew. She could not resist making an issue of it, and that she was a woman (v. 9). Her voice had a sharp edge of sarcasm. No matter how often Jesus tried to direct the subject upward from cold water to the water of life, she cleverly changed directions (vv. 11, 15).

She was about to leave when Jesus touched the exposed nerve of her moral life. She still tried to divert him (vv. 19, 25), but Jesus pressed his advantage. She was sensitive enough to her sin to respond to his apparent authority. The woman returned to her village in such haste that she forgot the jar (v. 28). The record of her witness and the belief by so many is in harmony with John's purpose in writing.

The Holy Bible: New International Version. (1984). John 4:1-30. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.