

moved by the discussion with Jesus she rushes into the town and gets people to come and evaluate Jesus for themselves: *“Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?”* (John 4:29)

- Who do you believe Jesus is? We can come to one of three conclusions about Jesus. We can believe He is mad or we can believe He is bad or we can believe he is who He says He is? This Samaritan woman of ill repute clearly believed: *“Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I ever did.” So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers. They said to the woman, “We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Saviour of the world.”* (John 4:39-42)

2.5 Conclusion

- How effective is our witness? Are we putting ourselves into situations by GOING in order to have ‘life giving’ conversations. Do we ask God where we need to GO? Once there, are we comfortable to ENGAGE with those who God has called us to speak to. We will probably find, as this story amply illustrates, that we may well end up having cross cultural ENGAGEMENT. Finally we will at some point be prepared to lead the conversation round to the killer question about the identity of Jesus.

3. Questions to consider at home

3.1 Who would the Samaritans be in our society today? Do you think you and your church are good at ministering to such people?

3.2 *‘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.’* (John 4:14) What does Jesus mean by this statement?

3.3 How would you describe prophecy to an interested friend? Why does Paul encourage us to seek this spiritual gift?

3.4 *“I who speak to you am he.”* (John 4:26) Why is this such an explosive statement?

Matthew Street 21st October 2018



The Parish of Peasedown St John

John 4:1-26 - ‘Life giving water’

Passage, Talk Notes and Questions

Please feel free to take these talk notes home with you and you may wish to find some time during this week to consider the questions below.

1. Talk Passage – John 4:1-26

[4:1] The Pharisees heard that Jesus was gaining and baptising more disciples than John, [2] although in fact it was not Jesus who baptised, 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.”

2. Talk Notes

2.1 Introduction

- If we are called to be God’s witnesses how do we go about doing that effectively? Jesus models for us in this passage a universal three stage pattern for witness
 - Stage 1 involves GOING *“So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar”* (John 4:5)
 - If we are going to witness effectively we will need to GO
 - Stage 2 involves ENGAGING - *“Will you give me a drink?”* (John 4:7)
 - Stage 3 involves speaking about JESUS - *“I who speak to you am he.”* (John 4:26)

2.2 GOING - John 4:1-6

- Jesus recognises that his season of ministry in Judea is coming to end and he resolves to return to Galilee: *When the Lord learned of this, he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.* (John 4:3) Clearly the ministry of Jesus and his disciples was successful *'Jesus was gaining and baptising more disciples than John'* (John 4:1)
- The quickest way back to Galilee was to go through Samaria. Unfortunately Jews and Samaritans despised each other as Samaritans were of mixed race (Jew and Gentile) having come about as the result of the Assyrian invasion of the Northern Kingdom in 722bc. Most Jews travelling north to Galilee from Jerusalem or Judea would have gone via Jericho and the Jordan Valley in order to circumnavigate Samaria.
- Jesus deliberately chooses to GO to an area out of the Jewish comfort zone and by doing so initiates cross cultural witness.
- Where are the Samarias in our world. Where are our no go cultural areas? It may be that Jesus is indeed calling us to GO into such areas to be His witnesses.

2.3 ENGAGING - John 4:7-18

- Tired from his journey Jesus stops for a rest in the middle of the day at the well in the village of Sychar *'So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. 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.'* (John 4:5-6)
- As he does so a woman arrives to draw water: *'When a Samaritan woman came to draw water'* (John 4:7)
- Jesus then ENGAGES her in conversation about 'life giving water' by asking her for a drink: *"Will you give me a drink?"* (John 4:7)
- Everything about this 'life giving water' conversation crosses cultural boundaries:
 - Jesus firstly is having a conversation with a Samaritan, he has deliberately decided to go through Samaria whilst travelling north to Galilee rather than avoiding Samaria and travelling east via the Jordan. Hence the Samaritan woman's answer to Jesus' request for water (verse 9): *"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.)



• Jesus secondly is having a conversation with a woman alone and thirdly with a woman of ill repute. Just like today Jesus and for that matter the Samaritan woman were both putting themselves at risk of potential gossip.

• Will we like Jesus put ourselves at risk for the gospel? It is potentially easy to draw alongside people like ourselves and at the right moment to share our faith. It is altogether harder to do that with people we feel society has excluded. That requires us to

operate outside our comfort zones and yet this conversation with this Samaritan woman of ill repute challenges us to do so.

- God is always going to be drawn towards those who need Him - towards those who society has forgotten or who society ignores like this Samaritan woman of ill repute. Why is she drawing water in the heat of day? The other women of Sychar would have drawn water together in the early or the latter part of the cool of the day. She is drawing water alone because she has been excluded from Sychar society. She is an outcast from the polite society of Sychar because of her behaviour. Will we, at the Lord's direction,

likewise be drawn towards those who need God most?

- Jesus gets to the crux of the matter when He tells her that water from Jacob's well will never fully satisfy: *"Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, 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."* (John 4:13-4)
- Jesus knows that we have all been built for relationship with His Father and that many of us including this Samaritan woman of ill repute have tried lots of different things over the years from money, career, family or even sex to fill that God shaped void in our hearts.
- The only thing that can fill that void is God himself. The Samaritan woman misunderstands Jesus, thinking He can miraculously provide water that she no longer needs to come to the well: *"Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."* (John 4:15)
- Jesus ups the anti by revealing that He knows everything about her: *"You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband."* (John 4:17-18). She is clearly stunned by this revelation but not surprised and responds: *"I can see that you are a prophet"* (John 4:19).



• Jesus models here something that all of us can and should be doing that is listening to God and sharing with others what He might be sharing. The Biblical word for this is *Prophecy*. Paul encouraged the Corinthian church to grow in the gift of prophecy: *'Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy.'* (1 Corinthians 14:1)

• Like prayer, prophecy is something that develops with practice. Do we seek this gift and if we do, do we wish to develop and grow it personally and corporately?

• Her reaction to this revelation is equally

unsurprising, classically she changes the subject: *Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.* (John 4:20). They then have a nebulous religious debate about whether Mount Gerizim or Mount Zion is God's holy mountain, a bit like having a debate about whether Baptists, Anglicans, Catholics or Methodists are more holy than the other. Jesus has cut straight to the heart of her problems and put his finger on the sore spot!

- Notice that this has been done in a loving, gracious kind way. Jesus has not condemned her, he has merely revealed the truth. After all, God loves her, he wants the best for her and knows that an ongoing relationship with Him will prove to be far more life giving than the five broken relationships she has experienced to date.

2.4 JESUS - John 4:19-26

- The only person who can answer this debate about whether Mount Gerizim or Mount Zion is God's holy mountain is God himself she declares, no doubt thinking this would put an end to this discussion. *"I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."* (John 4:25)
- Jesus' answer is stunning: *"I who speak to you am he."* (John 4:26). Jesus is claiming to be God's son, he is claiming to be God with human flesh on.
- This Samaritan woman, just like Jesus' Disciples, and every person who has lived since, has to make a decision about this stunning claim. Is Jesus telling the truth? Clearly