

“A Reject to An Evangelist”

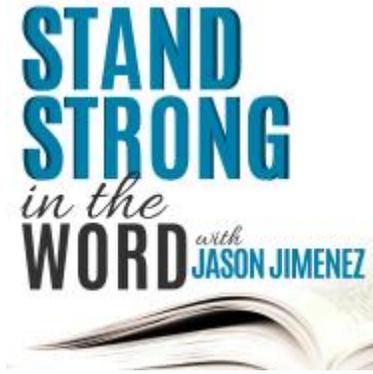
John 4:1-42

This encounter with the Samaritan woman took place early in Jesus’ Judean ministry (app. 27-29 AD). But why record such a story? Who cares that Jesus met with a Samaritan woman?

Look for the contrast between Nicodemus meeting with Jesus (Jn. 3) at night, and this Samaritan woman encountering Jesus in the afternoon. Nicodemus was searching, and a well-educated and respected leader. The Samaritan woman was indifferent, and an outcast who lived a sinful life. However, both Nicodemus and the Samaritan were lost without Jesus. John 3 and John 4 give you a taste of the kind of people Jesus interacted with and loved.

1. Jesus Travels Through Samaria (4:1-4)

- A. *Jesus was making more disciples (v. 1)***—Previously in John 3:26, John the Baptist’s disciples came to him stating that more people were coming to Jesus to be baptized. Of course, John played a huge role to transition the people to Jesus.
- B. *Departed again to Galilee (v. 3)***—In Jn. 3:22 we are told Jesus went into the Judean countryside, and there his disciples were baptizing (note: not all twelve were selected yet; Jn. 3:22-36). Jesus knew the religious leaders were out to get him. John the Baptist was arrested, and he knew His time was short.



C. *He had to pass through Samaria (v. 4)*—This was the shortest route to Galilee. Jesus could have gone through Perea, but He chose Samaria to reach the “despised” people that the Jews hated.

1) ***Samaritans***—Considered half Jew and Gentile. They came out of the Assyrian captivity of the 10 Northern tribes in 722 BC (2 Kings 17). With the invasion came other tribes and their syncretistic religions. The Jews rejected the Samaritans for not having a pure lineage, and so they established their own worship at Mount Gerizim, by altering the Pentateuch.

2. Jesus Comes to a Well (4:5-6)

A. The encounter of the Savior of Sychar and the sinner of Sychar.

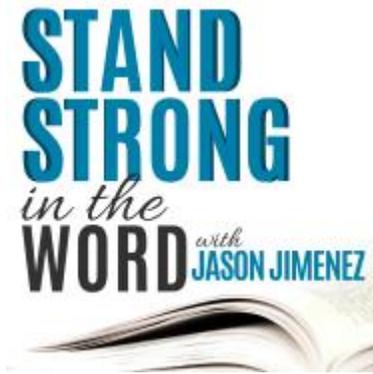
1) ***Sychar (v. 5)***—This was the “Shechem” of the OT which was about 35-40 miles from Jerusalem. It is now known as Nablous. Abram came to this place first when he arrived into Canaan from Babylonia (Gen. 12:6).

2) ***Jacob’s Well (v. 6)***—a deep well or fountain. More than 100 feet deep.

3) ***Sixth hour***—This is noon day. A time when flocks rested.

3. A Samaritan Woman Comes to the Well (4:7-9)

A. *Woman from Samaria came to draw water (v. 7)*—This was an unusual hour for a woman to come draw water. Perhaps it was a way for her to avoid being around the other women in the city who judged her because of her sinful lifestyle.



B. *Give me a drink (v. 7)*—No doubt Jesus was tired and very hot from his journey. However, he knew this Samaritan woman would be at the well, and therefore, used a customary gesture to extend—not just conversation, but a way to offer her new life.

C. *How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a Samaritan woman (v. 9)*—

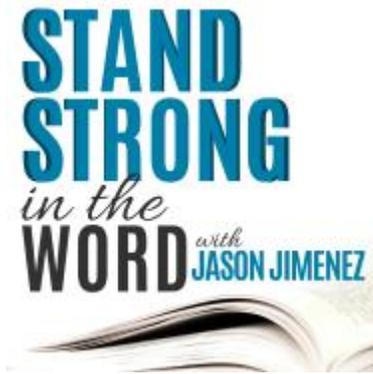
- 1) “The strict Rabbis forbade a Rabbi to greet a woman in public. A Rabbi might not even speak to his own wife or daughter or sister in public. There were even Pharisees who were called ‘the bruised and bleeding Pharisees’ because they shut their eyes when they saw a woman on the street and so walked into walls and houses!” (Barclay)
- 2) Moreover, in Rabbinic law, it was taught that Samaritan women were forever unclean, and therefore, to drink from a Samaritan’s vessel would make you unclean.
- 3) Thus, for Jesus, a Jewish Rabbi, to speak to a Samaritan woman was way out of line (according to tradition).

4. Jesus Explains He is the Living Water (4:10-15)

A. *Are you greater than our father Jacob? (v. 12)*—To the Jews, Abraham is the greatest. To the Samaritans, Jacob is the greatest.

B. *The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life. (v. 14)*

- 1) “With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.”
Isa.12:3 (see Ezek. 36:25-27)



2) *"What does a thirsty man do to get rid of his thirst? He drinks. Perhaps there is no better representation of faith in all the Word of God than that. To drink is to receive-to take in the refreshing draught-and that is all. A man's face may be unwashed, but yet he can drink; he may be a very unworthy character, but yet a draught of water will remove his thirst. Drinking is such a remarkably easy thing, it is even more simple than eating."* (Spurgeon, *Good News for Thirsty Souls*)

C. Give me this water so that I don't have to come here and draw water (v. 15)—The woman has a hard time grasping what Jesus is saying. She is so focused on the material aspect, that she overlooks the spiritual.

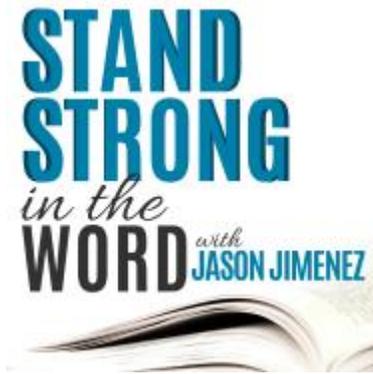
5. Jesus Exposes Her Sin (4:16-19)

A. For you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband (v. 18)

1) Jesus says this to show her that He knew everything about her, and his request pointed to her sin, and her need for living water.

B. The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. ²⁰ Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship." (vs. 19-20)

1) Although she recognizes that Jesus is more than a mere man; she responds by getting "religious", and offering up



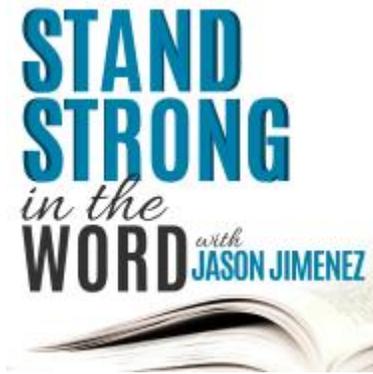
an ancient dispute between the Jews and the Samaritans. Perhaps her way of deflecting the conversation about her sin.

6. Jesus and the Samaritan Woman Discuss Worship (4:20-26)

A. ²¹ Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. ²² You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³ But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. ²⁴ God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." ²⁵ The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things." ²⁶ Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."

1) **V. 22** - "They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. ⁵ To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen." **Rom. 9:4-5**

2) **V. 23** - The Samaritan woman had half-truths. She knew a little about worship, her people's connection with Jacob, and about the coming of the Messiah. However, as Jesus pointed out, she didn't know what she truly worshipped.



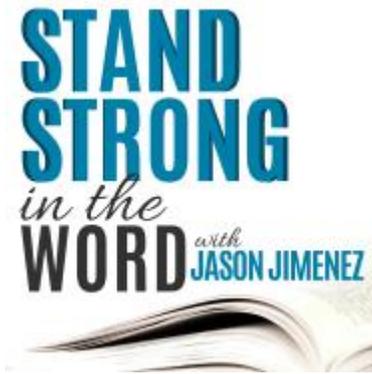
True worship is not through rituals, or based on a particular place or space. It's about being transformed in the presence of God's holiness.

- 3) **V. 24 - *God is Spirit.*** That is, God is not made up of parts. He doesn't change. He is infinitely perfect in His eternal Being. He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and is worthy of our praise. Jesus takes the focus off of religion, and places it on the nature of who God is.
- 4) **V. 26 - *I who speak to you am He.*** Jesus tells the woman that He is the Messiah. Once again, the Jewish leaders felt it better to burn the law than to deliver it to women. And yet, here is Jesus; loving this woman, not condemning her. Something probably no Jew, especially religious leader, had ever done for her.

7. The Samaritan Woman Tells Her People About Jesus (4:27-30, 39-42)

A. *So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, ²⁹ "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?" ³⁰ They went out of the town and were coming to him. (vs. 29-30)*

- 1) The symbolism of the woman leaving her water jar points to the fact that she came to believe in Jesus as the Savior of the world. At the start, all she cared about was the actual well, and finding a more convenient way to draw from it. But after her interaction with Jesus, she leaves her



water jar behind because she finally found the true and living water, and couldn't help but go and tell her people.

- 2) Notice the impact that this woman had on her town. She went from a reject, to an evangelist! Religion can't manufacture this kind of witness. Only Jesus can.

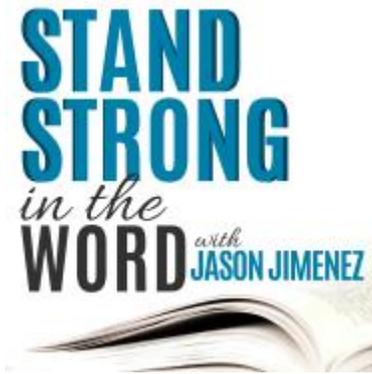
B. *"It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world."* (v. 42)

- 1) The people came out upon hearing and seeing a mighty change in this sinful woman. But once they heard from Jesus, they believed for themselves. This is the power of testimony. When Christ transforms your life, you can't but help shouting it from the roof tops.

8. Jesus Teaches the Disciples His True Source of Strength (4:31-38)

A. ³⁴ *Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work. ³⁵ Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, then comes the harvest'?' Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest.*

³⁶ *Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. ³⁷ For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.'* ³⁸ *I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."*



- 1) Jesus taught the woman about living water, and now (with His disciples), He teaches them that His food is to do the will of the Father. What just happened with the woman, and what was about to happen with the town is what brings true nourishment to Jesus.
- 2) "I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart." Psalm 40:8

Closing Challenge: Be extra careful not to look past certain people that God has placed in your life. They may be different, or difficult, but certainly nothing God can't handle through you. And lastly, what are you doing to sow and reap into God's heavenly kingdom?