

## **FBC Zoom Service Sunday, June 13 2021 John 4:23-30 A Life Changing Interview**

**Sometimes, very unexpectedly, life can take a turn.** One phone call, an unexpected text, or even a chance meeting and suddenly you find yourself travelling down a new road.

A man and a woman met at a well on a hot afternoon in Samaria. We don't know the woman's name. The man was Jesus. Their brief conversation changed her life forever.

It was a hot day, and the sun beat down on the man's head. The sweat poured off his brow as he walked along the dusty road. It was probably mid to late July when the temperature can top out at over 100 degrees.

To make matters worse, he had been travelling with his friends since sunrise. Now the sun was directly overhead. They were hurrying to make their way through this part of the country as quickly as possible.

As He sat down on the lip of the well, the thought came: "If only I could have a drink of water." At precisely that moment, a woman came along. It wasn't the normal time, and it was unusual for a woman to come to a well alone. But this woman was different.

**Four invisible walls stand between them.** There was a religious wall, a gender wall, a racial wall, and a moral wall. Yet our Lord found a way through all of them. He found her, and then she found him!

We pick up the story in verse 4 where we're told Jesus "**had to go through Samaria.**"

The easiest and quickest way to get to Galilee from Judea was to go due north right through Samaria. But many Jews would go east, cross the Jordan River, then go north, re-cross the Jordan River, and they would be in Galilee. This was out of the way, but it meant they wouldn't have to go through Samaritan territory.

Many Jews took this longer route because they looked down on the Samaritans as religious and racial half-breed heretics. Why did Jesus "**have to**" go through Samaria when many Jews either didn't go there at all or passed through as quickly as possible? The answer is simple and profound:

**Jesus went because he intended to meet this woman.** He knew she would be coming to the well at precisely the moment he was sitting there weary from his journey. Nothing happens by chance in this story. The woman isn't looking for Jesus. All she wants is water. **But Jesus is looking for her.** He doesn't avoid Samaria, and he doesn't hurry through it. Though she doesn't know it, this woman has a "divine appointment" with the Son of God.

The disciples were away in the city buying food, and when they returned and saw our Lord speaking to this woman they wanted to ask Him, "Why are you talking with her?" They were amazed that He should be talking with her, yet not one of them actually asked Him the question.

**Why did they marvel that He should be talking with her?** For at least three reasons:

**First**, according to Jewish Law, no rabbi or teacher, must ever hold conversation with a woman alone;

**Second**, the Lord Jesus was a man, and for a man to engage in serious conversation with a woman, and a strange woman at that, and to do this in the open, was a very improper thing 2000 years ago;

**Third**, the Lord Jesus was a Jew.

But the Lord really did speak to this woman.

What He said He said with authority because of Whom He is.

What He said to the woman resulted in the complete transformation of her life.

Now these three facts are true in relation to ourselves. The Lord is waiting now to speak to us through His Word. What He says He says with authority, because of Whom He is. What He says to us may result in the complete transformation of our life.

For Jesus to go beyond asking for a drink, which was shocking enough, and direct the conversation into spiritual things with this Samaritan woman, was off the charts.

It wasn't that this woman said, "Sir, you look like a Jewish rabbi. I'm hungry to know your God. Can you tell me how to do that?" She was just going about her daily chores, minding her own business, when this stranger asked her for a drink and then steered the conversation into spiritual matters. She wasn't seeking to know God.

Her guilt over her current live-in boyfriend and her five marriages, which had probably ended because of her multiple adulteries, caused her to keep her distance from God. The only explanation for this story is that Jesus was seeking someone who wasn't seeking Him.

We see the main character in this passage, other than Jesus Himself, is a woman with low morals and a bad reputation. This is seen in the fact that she came to Jacob's well to get water at noon, during the hottest part of the day. The other women would have come early in the morning or late in the evening to get water.

History tells us that those gatherings were often opportunities for the women to catch up on the local news, but this woman didn't come with the others. In fact, she was probably the subject of their gossip on many occasions.

This woman hears the Gospel and believes. What a red letter day this must have been for her.

What sits out for me is that;

### **She Had Simple Faith**

Here is a Samaritan woman, a race hated by the Jews. She hears the word of God and she believes. There are no miracles! No water is turned to wine. No demons are cast out. No multitudes are fed

with a little bread and a few fish. No one walks on water. No one is raised from the dead. Jesus simply tells her the truth and she believes it and is saved! **Hers is a simple faith!**

This is the kind of faith that saves! **Saving faith is a simple faith!** God worked in her heart and shows her her sinful condition.

**She Had Sincere Faith:** After she meets Jesus and believes in her heart that He is the Messiah. She forgets everything but Him! She drops her water pot and heads back into the city to tell the others that He is here! This man Who moments before had meant absolutely nothing to her, was now the focus of her thoughts and her actions. What an amazing transformation!

**This is how it works for everyone who meets Jesus** One moment He is the Lord Jesus Christ, some holy, distant man Who died on a cross. But, when faith is exercised in Him, He instantly becomes a personal Friend and the absolute focus and centre of your being. It brings about an instantaneous unmistakable change. 2 Cor. 5:17 Quote.

**Think about all the things that changed for you when you received Jesus as your Saviour!** This woman left town that day a despised person. The women hated her because she was an easy mark for the men. The men used her body, but didn't care a thing about her. She left town a nobody, but returned a somebody! Everything had changed in an instant! When simple faith is exercised in Jesus, sincere faith quickly develops in the heart of the believer!

**She Had Sharing Faith: After her life changing encounter with Jesus, the first thing this woman wants to do is go and tell somebody else.** She ran back to town to the crowd who knew her best and told them about Jesus and invited them to come and meet Him for themselves. She said, "He's still out there and what He did for me He'll do for you if you will come to Him!"

Her testimony obviously touched many lives, because several of those men believed because of her witness and others came to know Jesus because of her invitation. Imagine this shunned woman, now responsible for a town turning to God, v. 39-42.

She had the kind of testimony we like to parade across the platform and show off. She had one of those spectacular testimonies of a life saved from the bottom. In this case, the Lord took one of the vilest citizens of that town and used her to bring many souls to Jesus.

However, you don't have to go to rock bottom to have a great testimony! You don't have to wallow in the pig pen to know how good it feels to be clean! If you know Jesus as your Saviour, you have a testimony, and can say, "He changed my life and He can do the same for you.

**She Had Shining Faith:** Something about this woman was different when she came running back into town. I guarantee you they had never heard her talk about "religion" before. Now, here she is talking to them about the Lord and inviting them out to meet Him. The change in her life was plain to see!

Genuine faith does that to a person. When Jesus is in your heart it's hard to keep Him a secret. **Outline what Jesus told the blind man who was healed.**

You've met these kind of people haven't you? You know the ones. They're always praising the Lord in public. They pray over their food in a restaurant. Sometimes they will have a New Testament or tracts in their pocket. **Man, I pray the Lord would do that to every one of us!** Let's ask the Lord to give us a shining faith that glorifies Him before a watching world!

Best of all, this woman **Had Saving Faith**. She went to the well that day to get enough water to last the day, and returned with enough spiritual water to last an eternity! She got more than she bargained for, as Romans 10:9 says. **(Quote)**

**The best thing we will ever get out of life is saving faith!**

**What can we learn from how Jesus treated the woman at the well?**

He broke custom to talk to her.

He spent time with her.

He knew her past but didn't hold it against her.

He gently led her to a brand-new life.

Here's an amazing fact to consider. She's the first one to whom Jesus revealed himself as Messiah. He told her something his disciples didn't yet understand.

**Think about this:**

**Her neighbours shunned her.**

**Her husbands rejected her.**

**The Jews hated her.**

**But God wants her!**

**She is rejected on earth but accepted in heaven.**

**John 4 teaches us Jesus does his best work with outcasts.** He specializes in forgotten people because they are willing to listen to him. He populates heaven with earthly rejects.

This means there's hope for people who today think they have fallen so far that Jesus will not accept them. But there's no pit so deep that the love of God is not deeper still.

**Let me summarize some of the things we learn from this wonderful story:**

Don't ever give up on anyone!

Don't ever stop praying for non-believers.

Don't ever stop sharing the good news.

No one is too sinful to be saved

No one is so lost that the Lord cannot find them.

No one who meets Jesus will ever be the same again.

One of the amazing things about the good news that Jesus brings is that it meets the basic need that all people have. You can go to the highest halls of learning and talk to a man with multiple Ph.D.'s. Although he is highly educated, the message he needs to hear is that Christ died for his sins and was raised from the dead, and that he can trust in Christ and receive eternal life as a free gift.

Take the message to the most primitive, illiterate tribesman in some remote jungle, and he needs to hear the same good news. Since all people are sinners who need to be reconciled to God, the same gospel applies to all: **Jesus saves all those who trust in Him.**

For 49 years Priscilla Jane Owens taught in the Baltimore public schools. She was actively involved at the Union Square Methodist Church in Baltimore. One day she was asked to write a new hymn for a Sunday School missionary service.

She told her friends most missionary songs were ponderous and heavy and hard to sing. She wanted to write an uplifting message. So she sat down and penned these words:

We have heard the joyful sound:

Jesus saves! Jesus saves!

Spread the tidings all around:

Jesus saves! Jesus saves!

Bear the news to every land

Climb the steeps and cross the waves

Onward 'tis our Lord's command

Jesus saves! Jesus saves!

May the Lord imprint these words on our minds.

Technology has allowed us to use many different methods and media to present the Gospel, but its message is still the same. We preach Christ Crucified and Risen! **This is the message to “tell to sinners far and wide.”**

**Jesus saves! Jesus saves!**

Indeed he does. He saved the woman at the well. That morning when she woke up she never had an inkling of the life changing meeting with Jesus that lay ahead for her, for by the evening she was sharing the good news of Christ with everyone she knew. That's what Jesus can do for us.

**What a story! What a Saviour! What amazing grace!**