



Walking With the Savior

Through An Eyewitness Account of John

John, one of the sons of Zebedee, stood as an eyewitness to the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. He began his journey as a fisherman, leaving behind his nets and the future he had planned for himself to follow a teacher, a prophet, and a miracle worker. At the outset, John did not fully understand who Jesus was or what lay ahead. In faith, he aligned himself with Jesus, drawn by His words and deeds.

As John walked alongside Jesus, witnessing His teachings and miracles, he gradually realized that Jesus was far more than a prophet or a remarkable teacher. John came to understand that Jesus was God in the flesh. This revelation was not just a turning point for John personally, but a moment of eternal significance. By choosing to follow Jesus, John's future was forever changed, and his decision would go on to impact the world—not only in his own time but throughout every generation to come.

Joining John on the Journey with Jesus

Background Matters

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". **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. 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.¹

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 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**?

¹ Edwin A. Blum, "John," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 284–285.



“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 mysterious 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’s “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.¹

This week in "Walking With the Savior,"

Our journey continues into John 4, where Jesus encounters a mixed-race woman who comes to draw water. Surprised and curious, she could not understand why He would ask her for a drink, given that Jews typically did not associate with Samaritans. The Jews believed that they should not use dishes that had been used by Samaritans. As a result, a Jew who drank from a Samaritan woman’s vessel would become ceremonially unclean.

¹ Edwin A. Blum, “John.” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 285–286.



This encounter opens our discussion on mixed races at a time when many people are relocating from one region to another, which can ignite conflict and controversy within communities. Jesus moves beyond trivial human distractions to a divine appointment.

We are living in a time when, from God's perspective, the unclean are calling one another unclean, without realizing that all are unclean apart from the cleansing work of Calvary's cross. Man's greatest problem is not mixed races, but rather the urgency to race to the cross for forgiveness from the Master and the author of deliverance.

Mixed Races and Jesus

Jesus Talks With a Samaritan Woman

John 4:1–26

Study Guide 10 *This study guide presents daily assignments that are specifically crafted to enhance your growth in the Word. Embrace each moment to meditate and reflect, and watch as your spiritual maturity flourishes through your dedicated efforts.*

Open It, Mondays. Open your heart and mind to the truth of the Word.

1. Why are the messages in TV commercials so appealing and persuasive?

Explore It, Tuesdays, keep the rhythm of personal study moving.

2. What had the Pharisees heard about Jesus? (4:1)

3. What did Jesus do when he heard what the Pharisees were saying about Him? (4:3)



4. Through what place did Jesus have to travel? (4:4–5)

5. *Why did Jesus sit down by Jacob’s well? (4:6)

6. What did Jesus say to the Samaritan woman? (4:7)

7. Where were Jesus’ disciples? (4:8)

8. Why was the Samaritan woman surprised that Jesus spoke to her? (4:9)

Push on Wednesday, keep the rhythm of personal study moving.

9. How did Jesus answer the Samaritan woman’s question? (4:10)

10. What did the Samaritan woman think Jesus was talking about? (4:11–12,15)

11. *What did Jesus say would be the result of drinking the water He offered? (4:13–14)

12. Whom did Jesus tell the Samaritan woman to go and get? (4:15)



13. How did Jesus respond to the Samaritan woman's answer to His request? (4:17–18)

14. How did the Samaritan woman respond to Jesus' statements about her situation? (4:19–20)

15. *How did Jesus say people would worship God? (4:21–23)

16. What kind of worshipers does God seek? (4:23)

Get It Thursdays, keep the rhythm of personal study moving.

17. What did Jesus say about God? (4:24)

18. Who did Jesus say He was? (4:25–26)

19. How might a person feel put off by another's background, nationality, or race?

20. How can prejudice affect a Christian's witness?

21. *How have you responded to Jesus' invitation to receive His living water?



22. How is Jesus' gift of salvation different from what the world offers?

23. *How is the world's need for salvation and eternal life like thirst?

Drive it Home, Fridays, keep the rhythm of personal study moving.

24. *How can you encourage others to quench their spiritual thirst this week?

25. What are some prejudices you will ask God to help you overcome?

A Journey Through The Gospel of John **2026**

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