

STEP 4 – FACING THE TRUTH

JOHN 4:4–26 – SUMMARY*

Jesus travels through Samaria and stops at Jacob’s well around noon. He is tired from the journey. A Samaritan woman comes to draw water, and Jesus initiates a conversation—crossing social, ethnic, and religious boundaries. He meets her where she is and invites her into an honest exchange.

Jesus speaks of living water—a gift from God that truly satisfies and leads to eternal life. While the woman first thinks in practical terms, Jesus gently draws the conversation deeper, revealing that the water she has been drawing from has never fully satisfied.

When Jesus asks her to call her husband, He brings into the open the truth of her life. He does not shame her or turn away; instead, He shows that He already knows her story. In His presence, hidden things are named, and honesty becomes the doorway to healing.

As the woman acknowledges Jesus as a prophet, she raises questions about worship. Jesus explains that true worship is not about location or performance but about coming to the Father in Spirit and in truth. This is the kind of honest, open-hearted worship God desires.

When the woman speaks of the coming Messiah, Jesus responds personally and clearly: “I am He.” The One who knows her fully is also the One who offers her life.

*Read John 4:4–26 for the full encounter and conversation.

ENTERING THE STORY

Jesus intentionally changes travel plans in order to meet this woman. She goes to the well at an unusual time—midday. Is it to avoid others, to hide her shame? When she arrives, Jesus is there. He is tired. He is thirsty. He is ready to change her life.

Jesus initiates the conversation and asks her for a drink. It’s a surprising request for reasons related to cultural and religious boundaries. This does not stop Jesus. He wants her to know and experience true life and love.

As Jesus speaks of living water, the woman begins to realize that the places she has been drawing from have never fully satisfied. Jesus does not accuse or shame her. Instead, He gently guides the conversation toward the truth of her life.

He gently pulls back the curtain and allows light to shine in her darkness. He knows her story—one full of failed and broken relationships, shame, and secrecy. He knows her and still stays. His abiding presence disturbs her.

It seems she changes the subject by asking questions about worship and her relationship with God. Jesus reframes worship as something rooted not in location or performance, but in coming to the Father in Spirit and in truth. This kind of worship flows from a heart willing to be fully known.

As the conversation reaches its peak, Jesus reveals himself as the Messiah. The One who invites her into truth is also the One who offers her life.

THINKING IT THROUGH

Step 4 of **RE:GENERATION** is Inventory: *We make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.*

This is the step where we stop skimming the surface and begin looking honestly at our lives—our choices, habits, hurts, hangups, wounds, and sinful patterns. It is not easy. In fact, most of us instinctively avoid this kind of truth-telling because it feels risky. But Step 4 reminds us that freedom comes from honesty. We cannot heal what we will not acknowledge.

What's crucial to remember is this: Inventory is not about informing Jesus of anything. He already knows the details we dread speaking out loud. Step 4 is about bringing ourselves into liberating truth before the One who has already seen us, already loved us, and has no intention of leaving. He knows us. He loves us.

Timothy Keller captures our greatest fear and deepest longing when he writes:

To be loved but not known is comforting but superficial. To be known and not loved is our greatest fear. But to be fully known and truly loved is... a lot like being loved by God. It is what we need more than anything. It liberates us from pretense, humbles us out of our self-righteousness, and fortifies us for any difficulty life can throw at us.

This is exactly what the Samaritan woman experiences at the well. She is fully known—nothing hidden, nothing glossed over—and yet she is not pushed away. She is met with grace, love, and an invitation to live differently. Her encounter with Jesus reminds us that honesty does not destroy us; it frees us.

Step 4 asks us to walk that same path of courage:

- To tell the truth about our lives
- To let Jesus shine light into places we have kept dark
- To trust that His knowing is never separated from His loving

Inventory is not an exercise in shame. It is an encounter with Jesus that leads to life.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

What “well” do you keep returning to that has never fully satisfied you, e.g., approval, control, addiction, distraction, relationships, and what does that reveal about what you are really longing for? Be specific. Think patterns, not just behaviors.

When Jesus says, “Go, call your husband,” what truth in your own story comes to the surface—what have you been avoiding, minimizing, or hiding? Where does your conversation with Jesus feel tender, uncomfortable, or exposed?

If you truly believed Jesus already knows you completely and will not leave, what truth do you sense Him inviting you to finally bring into the light today?

CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus, You already know my story—every chapter I'm proud of and every page I've tried to hide. Today, I choose honesty over hiding, surrender over secrecy. I bring You the truth about my life: my hurts, hangups habits, my patterns, my failures, and fears. Shine Your light into the places I've kept dark. Give me courage to face what is real and trust that Your knowing is never separated from Your loving. Help me believe that truth leads to freedom, not rejection. Amen.

RE:GENERATION

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