

## WEEK 4

**MY TESTIMONY: PART 2** (JOHN 4)

The Christian life begins when we're saved by Christ. Then we serve Christ by using our gifts and talents. And we share Christ by using our testimony. Last week we learned that our "testimony" is nothing more than telling someone the good news about Jesus and how He has changed your life! We do this by sharing three simple steps.



*What were they?*

- 1) Who I was *before* I received Christ.
- 2) How I met and received Christ.
- 3) How my life has been changed *after* receiving Christ.

And last week, we ended by allowing everyone to *verbalize* your testimony in your small groups. So tonight, I want to show you a living example of this from a familiar passage – the woman at the well.

**1. Her life before she received Jesus.**

**She was a despised woman.** (vs.7; 9)

Verse 7 says she was "a woman from Samaria." That's important because Jewish people (Jesus was a Jew) didn't typically associate with Samaritans. We know this because of what she says to Jesus when He asks her for a drink of water in verse 9...

***John 4:9 "The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)"***

You see, hatred between Jews and Samaritans was fierce. It dated back to the fall of the northern kingdom of Israel. The Assyrians deported 20,000 Israelites and replaced them with people from Babylon, Syria, and several other nations. They did this so the foreigners would intermarry with the remaining Israelites to weaken them as a nation so they would never

again be a threat. This created an ethnically mixed population who were called half-breeds.

So, by the time of Jesus's day, the hostility between Jews and Samaritans was so severe that this Samaritan woman was amazed that Jesus would even speak with her. But Jesus didn't let her ethnic background become a barrier in reaching her with the truth.

**She was an immoral woman.** (vs.16-18)

***John 4:16–18 “Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come here.”<sup>17</sup> The woman answered him, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband’;<sup>18</sup> for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true.”***

Women usually came in groups to collect water and they would come earlier or later in the day to avoid the sun's heat. But she was alone because her bad reputation had caused other women to avoid her. She was dealing with the consequences of her past.

**She was a dismissed woman.** (vs.27)

Dismissed for what? For simply being a woman!

***John 4:27 “Just then his disciples came back. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, “What do you seek?” or, “Why are you talking with her?”***

But Jesus reminded the entire world that God values everyone: Jews, Gentiles, slaves, children, men and women. *Every* person is created by God in His image.

See earlier series called “10 Questions that every teenager should ask and answer about God.” I did a whole sermon on how Jesus and Christianity elevated women in a world where they are often dismissed.

Last week, when you were sharing your testimony in small groups, I gave you some questions to help you verbalize who you were before you met Christ...



***What sin(s) did you struggle with before Christ? What did you trust in to find your sense of worth?***

And you can see the answers to these questions in this woman's life. Before she met Jesus, she tried to find her worth in the arms of men. She bounced from one relationship (and marriage) to another – desperately trying to fulfill a longing within her own heart.

But another human being cannot satisfy the thirst for God that is hardwired into you. Why? Because *God* is the only One who can satisfy the deepest longings of your heart.

So, now we see who she was before she was saved – a despised, immoral, and dismissed person.

## **2. When and where she received Jesus.**

***John 4:3–8 “[Jesus] left Judea and departed again for Galilee. <sup>4</sup> And he had to pass through Samaria. <sup>5</sup> So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. <sup>6</sup> Jacob’s well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour. <sup>7</sup> A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” <sup>8</sup> (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.)”***

She doesn't know it yet, but Jesus has intentionally planned this encounter with her. And He shows us how to be intentional in sharing our faith as well.

**Jesus was intentional to cross paths with her. (vs.4)**

Verse 4 says, “He had to pass through Samaria.” You see, the shortest route from Judea to Galilee was through Samaria. The journey took three days. So, Jesus needed to go *through* Samaria if He wanted to travel the shortest route. HOWEVER, Jews often avoided Samaria by going around it along the Jordan River.<sup>1</sup> Because of their bitter hatred for each other, the Jews didn't even want the dust of Samaria on their shoes!

**Illustration:** It would be like an Alabama fan wanting to get to the Atlanta Airport but refusing to drive through Auburn: “I'll drive to Troy, go through the panhandle of Florida, catch a bus back up the east coast, rent

<sup>1</sup>Radmacher, Earl D.; Allen, Ronald Barclay; House, H. Wayne: *Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Commentary*. Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 1999, S. Jn 4:4

a car at Tallahassee (NOT Tallassee – that’s too close to Auburn!), then drive on to the airport. But I AM NOT stepping foot into Auburn!

But Jesus had a “divine appointment” with this woman. He wasn’t caught up in their foolish and silly hatred for each other. Jesus was *intentional* to cross paths with her.

### **He was intentional even though it was inconvenient.** (6a)

Verse 6 says, “Jesus, wearied from His journey was sitting beside the well.” The word “**wearied**” means *exhausted*.<sup>2</sup> Think about it: Our days are filled with busyness but nothing like His. Jesus was continually teaching, healing and feeding thousands.

Critics were always critiquing every word – trying to trap Him. The Pharisees were continuously plotting to kill Him. The reality of the Cross was constantly on His mind. Even with all this, He noticed one lonely woman who needed to know Him because every single person matters to God – “not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9).

### **He was intentional about the timing of their conversation.** (vs.8)

Verse 8 tells us that “His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.” You see, Jesus could have talked with her in front of His disciples but He didn’t. He waited until they left, which would allow the least amount of distractions *and* the least amount of embarrassment for this woman. Because of her past and reputation, Jesus wanted to approach her with “gentleness and respect” (1 Peter 3:15).

### **He was intentional about turning the conversation toward spiritual things.** (vs.10-14)

***John 4:10–14 “Jesus answered her, ‘If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.’”<sup>11</sup> The woman said to him, “Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?...<sup>13</sup> Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water [from the well] will be thirsty again,<sup>14</sup> but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I***

<sup>2</sup>Strong, James: *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Showing Every Word of the Text of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order*. electronic ed. Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1996, S. G2872

***will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."***

Jesus was using a *physical* need to remind her of her *spiritual* need.

**Illustration:** Brazill & Nicaragua mission trips. We would provide reading glasses to people who would never be able to afford them. Crowds of people with poor eyesight would show up every day. And our team members would share with each person how we were thrilled to give them the gift of *physical* sight, but we first wanted to tell them about Jesus who could give them *spiritual* sight.

\*BK Edwards in Brazil: Old lady put on glasses and read God's Word on the card. With tears in her eyes she said, "Thank you Jesus! You opened the eyes of my heart *and* the eyes on my face! Thank you for sending these missionaries!"

We followed Jesus's model – using a physical need to remind them of their spiritual need. ~~You see, when Jesus told the Samaritan woman about "living water," He was referring to an Old Testament passage where God said...~~

***Jeremiah 2:13 "For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water."***

Jesus was using physical water to tell her, "You've been trying to satisfy a deep soul thirst in the arms of men, but you're never going to find it there.

The question you answered last week in small groups was: "*When did you receive Jesus as your Lord and Savior?*" This woman would say, "*I was standing by Jacob's well at the sixth hour when I received Jesus.*"

### **3. Her life after receiving Jesus.**

Again, last week, you were asked in your small groups...



***How has your life been different after receiving Jesus?  
Does your walk with Christ point others to Jesus?***

Notice the difference in this woman's life after she met Jesus...

***John 4:28–30; 39-42 "So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people,<sup>29</sup> "Come, see a man who told me all***

***that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?"<sup>30</sup> They went out of the town and were coming to him...<sup>39</sup> Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me all that I ever did."<sup>40</sup> So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days.<sup>41</sup> And many more believed because of his word.<sup>42</sup> They said to the woman, "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."***

Notice how God used her testimony...

- 1) She was **SAVED** at the well and immediately **SENT** to tell the people in her city.
- 2) She told them:
  - **This is who I was before Jesus** (vs.29) "He knows everything I did in my past and so do ya'll."
  - **How I met Jesus** (vs.30) "I met Him at the well. Come and see for yourselves." And they followed her out to meet Him!
  - **How my life has been changed** (vs.39) Because there was something *clearly* different about her, they believed her testimony!

Normally, she was the person that women avoided, and men took advantage of. She was usually isolated and untrusted. But, because of her changed life, God used her testimony to shake an entire city! And they begged Jesus to stay with them for two days. They were saying, "If Jesus can change *this* woman, He can change anybody!"

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### Small Groups