

Taking Jesus to Everyone

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John 4:1-11

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So the God of the Bible is the creator of all things, and as the creator of all things, he not only owns everything, but he cares for everything. He is our creator and our sustainer. So when Adam and Eve fell into sin, being that they are the entire race at the time, the whole race falls into sin. When they fell, humanity fell. And you see that today each one of us is born in sin, self-centered, self-focused instead of God centered and God focused. If you have kids, you know this, right? You don't have to teach them to do the things that God wants them to do. You have to teach them to do that and teach them not to do the things that they want to do. That is because on our own, we are dead in our sins, separated from God, dominated by self, without any hope at all.

Now, you can think that God's rescue plan for humanity started with Jesus, but it actually started way back in Genesis 12 with a guy named Abraham. Genesis 12, God promised Abraham four things. First, God said he would make his name great. Question, did God fulfill that promise? Answer, yes. Here we are 4,000 years later talking about a guy named Abraham. Second, God will make from his descendants a great nation. Well, did God do that? Yeah, they're called the Jews and they're still strong to this day. Third, God will give Abraham's descendant a land that's now called Israel and a land that those descendants live in today. And his fourth promise is the most important for us today. God told Abraham that he would be a blessing to all of humanity, saying Genesis 12:3, "In you, Abraham, all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

It was always God's plan to bless the world, to save humanity from every tribe and kingdom and language and nation. That's the plan. And the plan was to do that through Abraham and then through his descendants, the Jews. They were supposed to be different. That's what the first five books are all about. They're going to be a different people, dominated by God, showing the world what life looks like when God is at the center of a person's life. The other peoples around them would see that, come to God through the Jewish witness and be saved. This sadly did not happen, though. The blessings that God gave the Jews caused them to forget God. They took God's grace for granted. They became like the rebellious people around them. And instead of being a light to the people, they actually became like the people and they abandoned their God.

God's plan to rescue humanity from our sins was not going to be stopped, though. He knew this would happen, so all along his plan was to send the Messiah, his king. And Isaiah 49 says of this Messiah that he would be God's servant. And he would do two things. He would bring Abraham's descendants. He would bring the Jews back to God, number one, and number two, Isaiah 49:6, "He would be a light to the nations, that God's salvation, his rescue mission, may reach to the end of the earth."

This is what Jesus is beginning to do in John chapters, two, three, and four. He goes from Samaria to Judea. I'm sorry, from Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria, and back into Galilee. He's following this idea that he's not just the savior for the Jewish people, but like the title of this series says, he's a savior for the whole world. And these events in chapters, two, three, and four, now where in chapter four, Jesus is reigniting the rescue plan that Israel failed at, the plan to be a light to the nations, to extend salvation to the ends of the earth.

And this woman that we meet at the well, she is the very first non-Jewish follower of Jesus in the Bible. This is what we're seeing here, Jesus extending to everyone. This has always been the goal of Christianity. We are part of probably the first and definitely the most successful transnational, transcultural, transethnic movement of all time. Our world is good at erecting barriers between people, making those barriers impenetrable and permanent. Jesus does not honor any of those barriers, male, female, rich, poor, different cultures, different ethnicities. Jesus came to save people in all of those groups and unite us all together in the church. And not to eradicate our differences, but to take those differences, which the world says these should keep you apart and at odds. No. Jesus breaks them down and puts them far beneath him, far beneath the good news about him, far beneath salvation and his word, and far beneath this mission, which is to extend to everyone.

This, by the way, is one of the main arguments against the social justice movement. The social justice movement has and will continue to divide and devastate the church because it inserts conflict and hatred into groups of Christian people that Jesus shed his blood to save and unite in the church.

Now, today, as we go through the beginning of John 4, it's going to feel a little different than a normal message that I normally preach because there's points and subpoints. I don't normally do all of that, but I'm doing that today because I really want us to understand this event. I want to take you into this event that is so familiar. My goal is not to make this text come alive. Why? Because the Bible's already alive. It's living, right? My goal is to make you alive to what's going on by bringing you into the world of this very familiar text.

So I've organized our text under three main points. Like I said, each main point has multiple subpoints. The first point, point #1) super creative, *the introduction. The introduction.* Let's start with verses one to three and we'll start with the first subheading, the word attention.

Attention. Jesus now has the attention of the Jewish leaders. Look at verse one. "Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John, although Jesus himself did not baptize, only his disciples, after hearing this," verse three, "he left Judea and departed again for Galilee."

So remember, Jesus cleans out the temple end of chapter two. And at that, the religious leaders, they know about him. But since his popularity could not stay hidden, they are now onto him is what verse one seems to be saying. Now the reason Jesus wants to get away from these Pharisees seems to be his popularity, but we don't know what that was that was causing the attention. Maybe they were using his popularity to discredit John the Baptist. "Hey, your ministry is horrible compared to him. He's the star. Nobody should listen to you." Maybe they're doing that. Or maybe we don't really know what it was about his popularity that the Pharisees we're latching onto. But what we do know is that it was Jesus' popularity that got him murdered, right? The people left these religious leaders to follow him, and they didn't like that. Their influence, their authority decreased while Jesus' was increasing. He knew this would be causing trouble, so he leaves.

And I want you to know, too, this word for left in verse three gives us some insight into what's going on because this word is typically translated "abandoned," which may be another clue that Jesus actually doesn't want anything to do with him, who they are, what they're doing, what they're all about, the false religion going on in Jerusalem and then throughout the the land through these religious leaders. Doesn't want anything to do with that, so he leaves. He abandons, which is not good since he's their Messiah, the one they've been looking for. And

since he's not just their Messiah, he's what? He's their God. By saying here that he he abandons them, he leaves them, that is a rebuke against them and their apostate religion from the time.

Now, verse two says, John is clear. Jesus didn't baptize anybody, only his disciples. Now, John doesn't tell us why Jesus did that, which has not stopped people from speculating. So maybe he did that uh so that no one could boast that they had a better baptism than somebody else. I mean, that's what I would do, right? If you got baptized by Andrew, Bartholomew, and I got baptized by Jesus, I'm letting you know that, right? "Oh, that's nice for you. Peter baptized you. Yeah, Jesus." There's none of that happening. Maybe it's to show that the value of baptism isn't in the one doing the baptism. Maybe it's to show that Jesus is not necessary for baptism, meaning that it'll be something that continues after he's gone. Or maybe it's to avoid the appearance of pride. I mean, think about it. These disciples are baptizing these people in the authority of Jesus. Well, what's he supposed to do? "I baptize you in the name of me." Nobody knows why he didn't do it. Speculation. There you go.

Now let's look at verse four. Let's look at it under a second word, the word appointment. Appointment. Verse four just says that he had to pass through Samaria. Well, there were three roads from Judea in the south to Galilee in the north, three roads, and two of them would take you around Samaria. Only one of them would take you through. So was there construction on these other two roads? I don't know. Probably not. So so it seems geography and all of that didn't mean he had to because there was no other way. So what does it mean, then? He had to pass through Samaria? Well, that word had is translated elsewhere "must" and it's it's usually connected to the indication of Jesus' divine mission, his divinely appointed mission.

In other words, I think what John is saying here is that it's necessary. Jesus is obligated to go through Samaria because he's on a mission from God, and part of that mission was going through Samaria. As we saw in Genesis 12, that's where the mission starts. Saving the world was God's overall goal for humanity. Isaiah 49. This is the goal for the Messiah that he would take salvation to the ends of the earth, and and that's what he is going to do here. He's modeling that for his disciples. We're not just staying with the Jewish people, the religious, all the all the elite of the day. No, we're going to travel into Samaria. I mean, that's what it is. It's not just big picture, though, I don't think. I think it's also I think it's also individual. I think the fact that he had to go through Samaria means that God had a plan, not just for the Samaritans, but for this specific woman that he would meet. This specific person in this specific place at this specific time so that she'd believe in him, receive eternal life, and spark a revival in her village.

This brings us to verse five and a third word, the word antagonism. Antagonism. Verse five just simply says, "So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar." Now, you and I, we read that. We don't know what's the big deal. It's just travel log. But no, this is a big deal. So a couple things first before we get into that. Think of Samaria as the region, maybe the county, like Maricopa, and Sychar is a city, a village within that region. This city Sychar unknown today, but it is known that it's either one of two cities that do exist today. One city called Asghar, which kind of sounds like Sychar, so some people say that, and others say it's the city of Shechem. And so it could be one or the other. Both cities, verse five, are near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. So it could so it could be one of these two.

But where's the antagonism? Well, it's here. For historic, social, religious, theological reasons, the people who lived there in Samaria, the Samaritans and the Jews were bitter enemies. The people of that region were half Jewish and half Gentile. So this group of people decided to interbreed with the Gentiles, and that for the Jews, unacceptable. They developed their own kind

of Judaism that said all the rest of the Old Testament we reject, except for the first five books, that's all. And they rejected worship at the temple. So about 500 years before Jesus, the Samaritans were vehemently opposed to the Jews coming back from Babylon. As King Cyrus would say, "We want you to come back. Go back and repopulate your land," the Samaritans were there. You can see this in the book of Nehemiah. They're like, "No, no. We don't want them here."

400 years before Jesus, they built their own temple. And so they saw themselves as a rival to the Jerusalem temple. They had their own priests, their own rituals, their own sacrificial system. And then about a hundred years before Jesus, a Jewish freedom fighter actually attacked Samaria and destroyed this temple. And he did it because the Samaritans, as a people, united with the pagans who were fighting against Israel and saying, "No, your foreign enemies in Samaria," they came together to destroy the Jews. And so there's no love here between these historic, theological, religious, cultural reasons. These people hate each other. By the time we get to Jesus, the hostility, the prejudice, the hatred was so deep. We have prayers of Jews at the time who prayed that no Samaritan would ever be resurrected. We know from John 8:48 that if you wanted to really insult somebody and you're Jewish, you really hate them, you call them a Samaritan. I was talking with a buddy of mine who's a pastor from Ukraine. This would be the equivalent of a Ukrainian calling someone a Russian. There is bitter hatred. You can kind of see the antagonism in verse nine, where the woman asked Jesus, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink from me, a woman of Samaria? For Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." Now you know why.

Now let's look at verse six with a fourth heading, the word anticipation. Anticipation. Verse six, "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." Well, based on verse four, you know something's going to happen. He's got to go there. So there's something here going on. Jesus had to go this way by divine appointment. It's just only a matter of when something is going to happen and what's going to happen.

So Jacob's well that is mentioned here is a place that you could go visit today. You could make your way into Palestinian territory. You could go to this actual spot. This this is the same exact, there's no question. The well that is there marked Jacob's well is the same exact well that Jesus sat next to around noon. Text says verse six, "He's exhausted and thirsty." He's likely been walking all morning, and uh so four to six hours, and that walk is not an easy one, either. It is not a level path with paved roads and Nikes on with your feet all cushioned and everything's good. No, no this is lots of hills, lots of valleys, dirt roads, no cushioning in his sandals. He's tired and he's thirsty, just like all of us would be because he's a human just like all of us are. He didn't merely appear to be human, like Clark Kent, right? Superman. Clark Kent appears to be human, but he is really not. That's not Jesus. He is truly, factually, actually human. The word, the eternal God became an actual human being just like we are, and we see that humanness here. As a human, he is subject to our weaknesses, including the physical needs that we have in order to live.

So up to this point in the book of John, John has gone out of his way to make sure that we know this Jesus is God in the flesh. He has gone out of his way to make sure we know he is the Messiah fulfilling prophecy. Now in chapter four, John is beginning to show us something he's going to emphasize more throughout his book that this Jesus is truly human as well. The sun has been beating down on the Son of God for hours, and Jesus, who never did a single miracle to

meet any of his needs, sits down, and the Son of God waits for somebody to come along and give him a drink of water.

So from the introduction, let's look at the next point **#2) at the interaction. The interaction.** This point, the interaction, has five headings to keep things organized and keep us moving. In the first heading, starting in verse seven, is the word alone. Alone. Look at verse seven. "A woman from Samaria came to draw water." She's described as a woman. Women typically got water every day for cooking, cleaning, and bathing, and they always did it in groups. It was a social thing. It's a way to stay connected to friends and family who lived around you. This woman came alone.

Also, women would typically do this either early in the morning or later in the afternoon when the sun wasn't so hot. She's doing this at the worst part of the day to do anything outside. The text doesn't say this, but she does seem to be isolated from the rest of her village, and it's probably because of what we learn about her in verse 18, that she's been married and divorced five times and she's currently living with her boyfriend. That's a no-no. This kind of activity would've made her an outcast. She's an immoral woman, a bad influence, with a sullied reputation, definitely not the kind of woman that the people at the time or people in any time would be praying that their daughters become like. An egregious breaker of God's law, member of a hated people group, and an outcast from almost all people. She's the kind of person most people tried to stay away from. Except Jesus, not him. He was there, verse four, for her. He had an appointment and he wasn't going to let her gender, her religion, her ethnicity, or her sin stand in the way of showing her grace, which brings us second to appeal number one. Appeal number one, verse seven. "Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink.'" He says this. Remember why? Because he's thirsty. That's why.

He's not pretending to be thirsty because he has some spiritual reason. No, he's actually thirsty, and he's going to use his thirst to bridge that to the truth. Now, it doesn't read this way in English, but there is a politeness in his words, and the fact that he said anything to her at all shows that he transcends the human barriers of gender, ethnicity, religion, culture, theology, and history in this moment, Jewish men were not even allowed to talk to women in public, even women of their own family, and many at the time believed Samaritan women were unclean from birth. She never had a moment in her existence when a Jewish person would've considered her clean. Even her water bowl would've been considered unclean by the Jews.

So one drink from it, even if he's dying of thirst, and Jesus would've been unclean. So add to that that many Old Testament heroes found their wives at wells, right? Isaac, Jacob, Moses found their wives at wells, which means talking to her could have also been interpreted as flirting with her. And it's like Jesus is oblivious to all of it. It's like he's an alien from another world. He doesn't live in this moment like any of that stuff existed, because he's probably, I think personally, purposefully ignoring the barriers that separated people from each other in those days, purposefully ignoring them. They did not matter to him at all. These are all manmade barriers which are built by sin that Jesus is crossing right before our eyes with the very word coming out of his mouth. She is as lost as a person could possibly be in this culture. What a gracious act. The Messiah is called the Holy One of Israel, and here the Holy One is interacting with and even asking a favor from one who was so hated, so unholy, so unloved, and so unaccepted, but that is this Jesus.

Verse eight. He interacts with her because normally his followers would've gotten him water, but they're not there. Verse eight says they're busy getting lunch. So humanly he's interacting with her because his boys are gone. But in light of verse four, it wouldn't surprise me to find out when

I get to heaven and ask that Jesus actually sent them to go get lunch so that he could talk to her alone. Why do I think that? Because verse 27, when the disciples come back and see him talking to her, it says about them that they marveled. They were shocked that he was talking with a woman, and he did not want their prejudiced eyes there messing up this conversation.

Now verse nine, the woman's words make it obvious what I've been explaining, that there is tension here and there should have been tension here between Jesus and this woman. So we'll we'll say under this third heading, we'll say they're supposed to be adversaries. Adversaries. Verse nine, "The Samaritan woman said to him, 'How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?'" Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. She's surprised. She's probably shocked. She had two strikes against her and he acts like he doesn't even see it. He acts like he doesn't even know it. She's a woman and she's a Samaritan woman, the lowest of the low for a Jewish man. And because of that, he shouldn't have said anything to her at all. This is unexpected that Jesus would talk to her. He should pretend like she's not there. That's what she would expect him to do as a Jewish man.

And this phrase in the parenthesis there um more literally says that Jews and Samaritans do not quote "Use together with" is what the word means. "Used together with." What's that all about? They don't use the same utensils, like a water bowl at a well to get a drink after walking for half the day and being exhausted and tired. A Jewish man, if this if this were to happen to any other Jewish man alive at the moment, he would've waited for a Jew to show up with a bowl and treated her like she didn't exist.

Jesus could not care less about the social and religious ideologies that kept people separated from each other. Even the lie that her water bowl was automatically unclean because it belonged to a Samaritan is garbage. According to the Jews, that that bowl would've made him unclean, but the water he's going to offer her now would've made her clean forever. Let's look at it. Verse ten, fourth heading, appeal number two. Appeal number two. Verse 10. "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've asked him, and he would've given you living water.'" Notice she doesn't know three things: who he is, what he has, or how to get it. But what we know is that God has come to Samaria to give her eternal life.

Like Nicodemus in chapter three, Jesus takes charge of the conversation and he flips it upside down. Think about it. He asked her for water, but if she really knew who he was, she'd be asking him for a different kind of water. It's not that he didn't know that he's a Jewish man and she's a Samaritan woman. No, this text is screaming. No, the fact is that she doesn't know that he is the Son of God. She thought she was helping him, but he's there to save her, and he's doing it completely apart from anything she brings to him and completely apart from any of the barriers that had been erected to keep her from salvation.

Think about it. He abandoned the Pharisees, the priests, the religious leaders, all the great people, quote unquote, in Judea, abandons them, comes to her. No works, nothing impressive about her at all. But notice verse 10 again. If she would just what? Clean herself up? If she would just what? Get that boyfriend out of your house? If she would just what? Reject that heretical Samaritan theology? If she would just what? Ask, just ask. "I'll give you living water."

I think the gift of God, that phrase and the phrase living water, I think they're the same thing. And it refers to the saving work of the Holy Spirit, this phrase, gift of God, this word gift, and this metaphor of water are both used in the Old Testament and the New Testament to describe the work of the Spirit in salvation. John 7, Acts 2, Acts 8, Acts 10, and Acts 11, you can see that

there. And since Jesus is presenting himself as the source of eternal life, notice what Jesus says. It's very critical. Notice he says, "If you knew who it was that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would've asked him and God would've given you living water." Is that what your Bible says? No. It's not, "You ask me and I'll get it from God and give it to you." He's presenting himself as the source, as the fountain of living water. Interesting, because Jeremiah 2:13, God speaking, calls himself, quote, "The fountain of living water." Jesus applies this imagery multiple times in the Old Testament, applies this imagery to himself when he says he gives people living water, and he can only do that because he is God, the source of eternal life.

This appeal from Jesus to her saying, "You should ask for living water," fifth heading, made the woman alert. Alert. Verse 11. It says here, "She said to him, 'Sir, you have nothing to draw water with. Where's your bowl? Where's your rope? And the well is deep.'" Jacob's well is over 100 feet deep. "Where do you get this living water?" So she's curious. She's also confused. She's saying, "Okay, why are you asking me for water if you have a source of water already?" That's what she thinks he's saying. She doesn't understand that he's talking about something spiritual, which reminds us of who? Remember Nicodemus in chapter three? Jesus says, "Nobody enters the kingdom of God unless they are born again," and Nicodemus says, what? "How can a person enter their mom again and be born a second time? I don't get it." Just like Nicodemus, didn't understand the metaphor for eternal life. So he or she is not understanding that he is talking about the work of the Spirit and giving people eternal life.

But put yourself in her shoes. I mean, we read all of that. I could do all the Bible studies and notes at the bottom to see what he's really saying, but she's hearing this going, "What is he talking about? This Jewish man is talking to me. That's not supposed to happen. He asked me to do him a favor. That's not supposed to happen." Maybe she knows he's Jewish because of the way he talked or the way he dressed. I don't know. But she knows that this conversation isn't even supposed to be happening. And now he's talking about living water? Like from a stream instead of a well? What? Is he serious?

How is Jesus going to answer those questions? Come back next week. For now, I want us to think about point #3) *the implications. Implications*. What can you and I take away from this text beyond what we've already seen? To start, let's look at this text from Jesus' perspective, his followers, according to I John 2:6, are supposed to look to him as our example for life. It says that we are to walk as he walked, live as he lived. So we're supposed to live the way that he did. So how did he live here?

Well, first, the first implication is that we should look for divine appointments. Jesus had to go through Samaria. He had an appointment at a well with this woman. So let's you, let's me, let's go into our lives looking for divine appointments where God is specifically putting us around people and in situations to extend Jesus to the people around us. Let's not just go through our lives oblivious to this, but let's go through our lives thinking, "Okay, God, why did you bring me here today? What do you want me to do? Is there something you want me to see, something you want me to say? Help me understand what it is that you want to do through my life in this moment."

Second implication, let no barrier make you silent. Let no barrier make you silent. Think about it. There were gender, ethnic, cultural, religious, theological, social, historical, and moral barriers between Jesus and this woman, and he didn't care any of them at all. He was not going to let anything keep him from taking the truth to this woman and giving her eternal life. So whatever it is that gets in the way of us taking Jesus to the people that we know, none of it is anywhere close to the barriers that Jesus completely ignored with this woman so that she could hear about God's

grace. Obviously used wisdom, but God sent Jesus to take salvation to the ends of the earth, and he does that through Christians who accomplish this mission by not letting anything get in the way of it.

Third, when taking Jesus to people, it's a good rule to start with common ground. Third implication, start with common ground. Jesus started with what? With water. So what things do we have in common with the non-Christians that we know that we could start with, start a conversation with to begin to bring Jesus to them? So when I'm with a non-Christian, I often start with, "What do you do for a living?" Pleasantries, blah, blah, blah. Eventually, "What do you do for a living?" Why do I ask that? Because I know they're going to ask me what? "What do you do for a living?" And then it's on, right? Which allows me to say, "Pastor," and now the door is opened by this common ground. We both have jobs.

So what are some of the common ground things that you have? Maybe it's your job, maybe it's your family, maybe it's your interests, your hobbies. Who knows? I don't know. But what are the common ground things that are true, but with you and the and the non-Christians that you know that you can start a conversation with there? Now, listen, me thinking through that came from years of being frustrated with not knowing how to start a conversation with a non-Christian to get to the gospel. So it's not because I'm some pastor. It's not because, oh, it was a great idea. No, I prayed for this. "God, I'm sick of sitting next to people in planes or sick of going to the doctor's office and not knowing how to take this truth and bring it to them, to the non-Christian that I'm around. Give me some way to think about this." And this is the only one I got right now. So what common things could you pray for? What things could you cry out to God and say, "Give me something that I could use to bridge, just the common ground that I could use to point number four, bridge the common to the spiritual?"

Fourth implication, bridge the common to the spiritual. That's what Jesus did with water. He used the concept of physical water to bridge it to the concept of living water, which is the Spirit's work and giving people eternal life. He focuses on the fact that it's a gift from God, not something anyone could earn, but something freely given to those who simply ask.

So when I give my answer, "Pastor," my follow-up question is, "So so I'm connected to church and all of that, and I mean, do you know what church is all about?" Typically the answer to that question I get is, "No." And I go, "Well, church is really simple. It's a bunch of people getting together every week to say thank you to Jesus. That's why we're here. Say thank you to Jesus because we've sinned against God. We've broken his rules. Jesus is punished for our sins on the cross. He rose from the dead, saves our souls. So we get together every week to say thank you to him. And I help people say thank you to him by teaching them the Bible." Well, I just explained my job, but I did what? I just preached the gospel to them, bridging the common to the spiritual.

So is that something you could do? Is that something that you could pray? "God, give me some way to do that." This is what Jesus does here. He's the model evangelist. He shows us how to extend him, how to take him to the people that we know and love. So let's follow his example. But now it's one thing to look at this text from Jesus' perspective, but that's really not the perspective that matches us best, right? We should look at this text from from the woman's perspective.

So the fifth implication is that you should see yourself as this woman. She had numerous barriers between her and Jesus. There's nothing in her, nothing about her at all, that Jesus should have interacted with. And yet he is the savior of the world. He came to save sinners, and that's what she is, and that's what we are. We need saving. And Jesus shows us that he abandoned Judea

where all the good people are and all the religious people are, and he went to Samaria where all the outcasts are, and he found the very worst of all the outcasts to show that he is here to save us all. How bad you are doesn't begin to approach how bad this woman was. So Jesus saving her should tell you what? That you are not so bad that Jesus wouldn't save you, too.

And second, let's understand what living water means. I guess that'd be like sixth. In everyday language this phrase refers to running water, flowing water, which creates for us a very pregnant metaphor for eternal life. Think about it. Living water is divine life. This life starts with the father. The text verse 10 says it comes through Jesus and it comes through Jesus by the work of the Spirit. Living water is a gracious life. No one can earn this life. Verse 10, again, Jesus calls this a gift from God, a free gift from God. Living water brings life, as the spirit is the cause of all the blessings of eternal life for those who trust in Christ. Living water sustains life, because this life is permanently at home within the Christian and becoming an ever-flowing stream of life that begins when a person believes and lasts into all of eternity. Living water cleanses life, since it washes away all of our sin, all of our shame, all of our uncleanness, wipes it all away. Living water refreshes life as our old life of sin is being replaced by a new life of love and service to Jesus for saving our souls. And living water satisfies life, because this living water meets our ultimate need, which is being right with God forever.

Our passage ends in verse 11 with, "Where do you get this living water?" Ironic, right? Because the answer to her question is standing right in front of her. Listen, the same living water that was offered to her here is being offered to you now through the preaching of the words of Jesus. We will see that this woman drank this living water. She believed in him. The question is will you? Let's pray.

Jesus, very familiar text, but it is a text that shows us the depths of your mercy as the savior of the world. It is hard to find somebody that would be less deserving of eternal life in that culture than this woman. And yet you show us the depths of your mercy, that no one is too sinful, no one is too rebellious, no one is too hardened that would not melt their heart and save them, too. And so please, in the midst of a very familiar passage, a very familiar conversation, would you help each of us to walk away impacted by the depth of your mercy and seeking with our lives to take that mercy to others? Please do that in each of us. Please do that through each of us, I pray, in your beautiful name. Amen.