

# Life Changing Encounter with Christ

John 4:1-26

Pastor Guy Gray

## **An Unexpected Portrait of Glory**

Hot, hungry, thirsty and tired, Jesus sat on the edge of the well in the scorching midday sun. This is an unexpected picture of Jesus. In John 2, Jesus turned water into wine and displayed His glory. Then Jesus cleansed the temple, turning over tables and speaking of His coming resurrection victory. The Gospel of John is filled with big miracles and huge claims by Jesus. But on this day, Jesus sits exhausted and vulnerable on a well... and this is as much a portrait of His glory as anything else in the Gospel of John. As we are learning, the Glory of God in Christ isn't just about His deity or His power; it's also about His incarnation into human flesh. In fact, the very "hour" of His glory according to the Gospel of John is the "hour" in which He will go to the Cross and physically suffer and die. It is for that hour that Jesus came into the world (John 12:23-27). So look carefully at Jesus as He sits there, fully human. He walked a long way to that well; hot and tired, in a physical body, for the express purpose of speaking to one sinful and hurting woman. This is the Glory of God, the heart of God for each of us, revealed in Christ our Savior.

## **Naming the Emptiness Inside**

Jesus gently lead the Samaritan woman to a deeper level of self awareness. Physical thirst is only the starting place. There is a thirst much deeper still. There is an emptiness within that cannot be filled by any physical thing in this created world. Jesus brings this longing to the surface for her. Then He brings her face to face with her own sin, shame and hurt. Jesus confronts her with her past. Jesus shines His light on the emptiness in her life... emptiness she has tried but failed to fill. The deepest sins and hurts; the deepest emptiness of her life has to do with sinful and failed relationships. Jesus has helped her name the emptiness and the thirst in her soul. This is a wonderful act of God's grace in her life. Only as we truly feel and name the emptiness and sin in our lives will we begin to open our hearts to the Grace of God in Jesus Christ.

## **True Worship and Living Water**

"The Father is seeking worshipers" (John 4:23). This is why Jesus has come. This is why Jesus walked into Samaria, sat on the well, and struck up a conversation with this sinful hurting woman. At first, she seems like an unlikely candidate: tough, bitter, sinful, messed up. But here is Jesus seeking her out. Jesus tells her that the Father is seeking genuine worshippers and evidently, by the grace of God, she is about to become one! She needs to learn three crucial lessons for this to happen: 1) Genuine worship is not about a physical location or religious observance, 2) Genuine worship is always worship that is "in spirit and truth"...that only happens when the human heart is deeply touched by the Biblical truth of God in Christ, 3) All of this is freely offered as a gift to our lives by Jesus Christ.

Buy why is worship the theme? How did we get from emptiness, sin, water and wells to worship? The answer is important: the deepest need of our lives is a living relationship with God. Genuine worship is the humble, adoring, intimate, living expression of this relationship through Christ.

This is what the woman at the well was given that afternoon.

## **Overwhelmed by Grace**

The Samaritan woman was completely overwhelmed by the Grace of God in Christ. Filled up from the inside out, she dropped her water jar and took off running to tell others of her amazing experience with Christ. This is the power of grace. The people listened and soon they were streaming out from the town to meet Jesus for themselves. What a model for us. Do we know this grace? Have we tasted this living water? Do we worship in spirit and in truth? Do our lives create a thirst in others for Jesus? Please Lord, by your grace make it so!

## **For Further Reflection...**

This week spend time in John chapter 4. As you pray and journal, reflect on the following questions.

How does the human nature of Jesus reveal the glory of God? Read Hebrews 4:14-16. The Bible says Jesus was tempted in all ways like us, yet apart from sin. How does that impact your view of Jesus? How does this impact Jesus' ministry as your high priest?

In what different ways have you attempted to “fill the emptiness” inside you, apart from Christ? How did you turn from those things to Jesus?

God is seeking genuine worshipers. Christ died and rose again so that we might become those who worship in spirit and truth. Do you see yourself as a true worshiper? Do you fully engage your heart with the truth of God in Christ and express that back to God in gratitude, praise and adoration? What could you do this week to grow in this area?

Does your life make others thirst for the Grace of God in Christ? Why or why not?