

John 4:1-26

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Date: 29 October 2023

Preacher: None

[0:00] Please do grab your Bibles again and turn to John chapter 4. John chapter 4, we'll be looking at the first 26 verses, that's on page 888.

John chapter 4, that's on page 888. If you need a church Bible, there are some just outside the front door. When you really know who Jesus is, when you really know who Jesus is, your life will never be the same again.

If you are here today and you don't know who Jesus is, then you're in good company here, because this woman, this Samaritan woman, she didn't know who Jesus was either. So Jesus, when he meets this woman, Jesus step by step leads this woman to show her who he is.

She gradually sees who Jesus is over this passage. And when you come to know who he is, her life is changed forever.

When you really know who Jesus is, your life will never be the same again. But Jesus doesn't just alter your life. He doesn't just add something a little extra to it.

[1:17] No, Jesus changes your life by giving you true life. He changes your life entirely by giving you life itself.

Jesus says today, you think you had a life before? Well, come and know me and you will have true life. Your life will never be the same again.

Jesus has come to change lives, to bring life into this world. And this happens when you know him. By really knowing who he is, and not just reading about him in a textbook, but you need to truly grasp and see in your heart who he is.

So if you don't know who Jesus is today, it's great that you're here. And if you're here today and you do know Jesus, you've known him for many years and he has changed your life forever.

Well, today he wants you to feel even more the gravity of who he is. Our hearts can so easily forget who Jesus is.

[2:24] Our hearts can think he's not enough. Our hearts can think he's not all that you need. Well, Jesus says today, come know him more.

Jesus has the life that everyone in this world needs. Jesus is what the world has been longing for. Which brings us to our first point.

It's this. Jesus satisfies a thirsty world. Jesus satisfies a thirsty world. So let's set the scene of what's been going on here in John chapter 4. In verses 3 and 4, Jesus goes from the south of Israel up to the north.

And he passes through an area called Samaria to get to the north. And Samaria is in the middle. And it used to be a part of the whole land of Israel. But back in the Old Testament, a foreign nation called Assyria came in and destroyed the region.

Took over Samaria. Took some Israelites out of it. Brought other nationalities in and brought other religions in. And so Samaria stopped being an Israelite region.

[3:32] But kind of a mixed region. And from that, a new mixed hodgepodge religion was created. And this religion, in this religion, they held to some of the Old Testament.

But not all of it. They formed a different God. And importantly, they worshipped in a different way. Jews worshipped in Jerusalem in the south at the true temple.

But Samaritans worshipped on another mountain, Mount Gerizim, which is right by where this well is in this chapter. And so tensions are high between Jews and Samaritans.

They didn't talk. They didn't hang out. Which is why this whole meeting by the well is quite surprising. Jesus comes to a drinking well in Samaria. Stops for a drink.

It's the sixth hour, midday. It's hot. It's time for a drink. And then verse 7. A woman from Samaria came to draw water. And Jesus asked her for a drink.

[4:29] And unsurprisingly, she asked in verse 9. How is it that you, a Jew, asks for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria? For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

This woman met Jesus and has no clue who he is. She thinks he's a bloke that she shouldn't even be speaking to. But Jesus doesn't leave it there.

He doesn't let the conversation end there. She needs to know who he is. And Jesus has come to show her.

He's come to change her life. So look what he says in 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 have asked him and he would have given you living water.

Jesus says it, If you really knew who I was, you wouldn't dismiss me. You wouldn't be surprised. You would actually be asking me for something.

[5:37] Living water. And now the woman is a bit confused by this response because living water could mean running water in her language. And so when Jesus says that, she thinks he's offering her just another source of water, another well to drink from, as if Jesus is saying, Well, yeah, you have that well, but I have a tap over there if you want to try some different water.

But no, that's not what he's saying. He's not talking about H2O here. In fact, he's not talking about anything of this world. Look at verse 13.

Jesus said to her, Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again. But everyone who drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again.

The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life. You see what Jesus is offering here.

Jesus is offering something greater than water. Greater than anything in this world can give you. So think about water for a second.

[6:50] We all need water to live, don't we? Apparently, humans can only last about three days without water. So water, it gives us life, doesn't it?

Well, Jesus is saying, You think water gives you life? I can give you something greater than water. If you drink water, you're going to be thirsty again.

It won't fully satisfy you. But Jesus says, I can give you living water. Water of life itself.

Water gives you life for three days. Jesus gives you life forever. Jesus offers to the world something that will satisfy your deepest needs and desires.

Throughout the ages, in every country of the whole world, in every single person, including you here today, there has been a great thirst. The world has been parched and dying.

[7:57] The world has a need and a longing in our hearts that everyone has been trying to satisfy. The world has a thirst for life. A thirst for meaning, for direction, for peace, for security, for hope in life, for hope after death.

There has been a thirst to quench our unsettled hearts. Hearts dealing with guilt and suffering and pain and loss.

The world is thirsty. The world is thirsty. And it's looking for water, for satisfaction, for true life in any way it can. And it's looking in all the wrong places.

And we can see that all around us, can't we? We can see that in our own lives. Kids in the room today, do you know when you really want that toy?

You see that amazing toy on the adverts or in the Argos catalog? If they still print that, I'm not sure. And you see that toy and you think, if I just have that, everything's going to be amazing.

[9:03] I won't need any other toys. My life will be complete. Well, that is the thirst Jesus is talking about. And us adults do it all the time.

We try to settle that thirst with relationships. We think, that boy or that girl, that's going to solve it. We think, if I just get married, that will end the unease in my heart.

Or if I finally have children. Or if my children just start behaving in the right way. Or if I just get into the best uni. Or just get the right job. Or buy the ideal house.

Or if I just make six figures. Then this thirst will go. Then I'll be satisfied, we think. That is the thirst the whole world feels.

And do you know what that thirst is? That is a thirst for true life. That is a thirst for God. And we look to find water out there in the world.

[10:10] We look in all the wrong places. And it only makes us more thirsty, doesn't it? Our hearts are never content. You get the toy and you want another one.

You get the relationship and it disappoints. You get married and it's hard. You have children and it's harder. You get the house, you want an extension. You get six figures, you want seven.

The world is thirsty and nothing in this world satisfies. But look what Jesus says, verse 14. Whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again.

Jesus has come to give a parched, dying world the life that it's been longing for. The longing in your heart that every human being feels.

Jesus has come to answer that. To finally bring the living water that mankind has been dying for. And he's the only thing that will satisfy the deepest longings of your heart.

[11:20] So Jesus, he's not just another option, another well in the world where you can find some sort of life and meaning. Jesus is not just one among many other good options for finding, for living a fulfilling life.

No, Jesus is the source of life. He's the only hope to end this thirst. Jesus has come to save us lost sinners and take us out of the depths of our sin and to give us life.

To forgive your sins, to bring a final end to the misery of this world. To bring you back to the God you were created for. To bring light into the darkness of your life and give you God-given purpose and direction and meaning.

To bring hope into a confused and lost world. He's come to rescue you from death and to give you life forever. Jesus is the only answer to the thirst of this world.

And if you're here today and you don't know Jesus, but you feel that thirst. And your heart just isn't content in this world.

[12:41] And the things you've gone after, they're just not satisfied. Jesus is the one that you've needed your whole life. Come to him.

Believe in him and you will receive living water. Your life will never be the same again. And if you do know Jesus here, please know this.

Jesus is all that you need. Don't go looking out there into the world for more happiness. Thinking that the world, a relationship or a house will solve the longings of your heart.

It will only make you more thirsty. But know this. Know that you have Jesus right now. He's living water for your life.

He's all that you need. And I encourage you. Go speak to an older Christian here at church and ask him this. Is Jesus like a toy that after you get him, you lose satisfaction?

[13:51] You want to move on to something else. If you ask an older Christian here, do you know what they'll say? I guarantee they will say, absolutely not. Jesus becomes more satisfying.

You enjoy him more and more as you walk this Christian life. You will never be thirsty again. And this is what Jesus offers this woman.

And she begins to get who he is, but only slightly. She likes the sound of this water. And so she asks, well, how do I get this? Verse 15.

Sir, give me this water so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water. And we're going to see that if you want this water, you need for Jesus to open up the secrets of your heart and show you just how thirsty you really are.

Which brings me on to my second point. Jesus brings life to those who know that they're thirsty. Jesus brings life to those who know that they're thirsty. So what comes next is a bit of an odd response.

[15:02] But what Jesus is doing here, he's giving this woman living water. He's leading her to living water. And he says to her, okay, bring me your husband. She says, I don't have a husband.

And then Jesus reveals he knows everything about her life. Verse 17. You are right in saying I have no husband. You have had five husbands and the one you now have is not your husband.

What you have said is true. In this moment, Jesus speaks to her the story of her life. He opens up her life and reveals things that no stranger, no bloke at a well could ever know.

And this is how Jesus leads her to living water. He speaks to her and reveals her life, who she truly is, the secrets of our hearts.

If you want living water, you must come to Jesus knowing who you truly are and how desperately you need this water. Because what does he reveal about this woman?

[16:09] He reveals a messy past and a life of sin. This woman has had five husbands, which wasn't common in those days.

She's had a messy, broken past. And she's currently sleeping with a man who's not her husband. She's living in sin, that there's sexual sin in her life.

She's been looking for life, for water in all the wrong places. But why is Jesus bringing this up? Well, this is how he brings true life.

Jesus first opens up our hearts and our lives to show us, to make us see how thirsty we are. How sinful we truly are.

How messed up our lives are. And just how much we need Jesus. He shows that to us and he answers it with living water.

[17:07] You won't come to Jesus for living water if you don't even realize you're thirsty. If we don't know about our sin, we would keep on looking for life out there in the world.

But Jesus convicts us of our sin to bring us to living water. Jesus brings life to those who know that they're thirsty.

And this is what happens when you encounter the Bible. The more you read on what the Bible says about sin, the more you read the Bible, the more you learn about yourself. The Bible, it's the ultimate insight into the human heart.

You will learn more in the Bible about yourself than any psychology textbook could ever teach you. Jesus, the Bible just shows us how thirsty we really are.

But it does that. Jesus exposes our sin like that. Not to throw you into despair. But to bring you free life.

[18:13] When Jesus convicts of sin, we need to realize that is for our good. For us Christians, when we know that there's sin in our lives, and it's just really eating at us, and you don't feel right, that is a good response.

That is Jesus leading you to living water. That is Jesus saying, don't go out there for life. Come to me. Life is not out there.

Life is in me. Which means, Jesus offers true life, not to the good people, but to sinners. For all sorts of sinners, including sinners just like this woman.

Sinners with messy pasts, with broken marriages, with sexual sin ruining their lives. And if that is you, Jesus offers life to you.

If you are coming here today with a messy past, or something in your life that you are ashamed of, don't ever think that you can't come to Jesus.

[19:29] No, you are exactly who Jesus wants. Your sin doesn't disqualify you from living water. No, it means you need him. Jesus knows everything about your life, and he wants you to come with all your messy past, lay it all open, and find life in him.

Jesus brings life to those who know that they're thirsty. But the Samaritan woman still isn't quite there. She's still after who Jesus is.

She's after this living water. And so Jesus says to her, if you want true life, true life comes through worship. Which brings me to my third point today.

Jesus brings life through worship. Jesus brings life through worship. So this woman recognizes that Jesus is at least a prophet from Israel, that he's speaking the words of God.

And so the next big question to ask Jesus is, okay, well then what about worship? Look at verse 20. She says to him, our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.

[20:47] Remember, Samaritans have been engaged in false worship. They're not worshipping at Jerusalem. And so she says, well if you're offering true life, well then tell me how to worship.

Tell me about God. Tell me how to come to him. Which is an excellent question to ask. Something we all should be asking. Because the whole world has been engaged in false worship.

Well you may wonder, well I haven't been engaged in false worship. I don't have a mountain like the Samaritans. I don't go to another temple. Well the truth is, if you're not worshipping the Lord God, you are worshipping something else.

We all worship something. Something always drives us and defines us. That there's always something that we live for. And we don't always know it.

We don't always call it a God. But we do worship it. We've all looked for water, for life from the world and not God. And that is worship.

[21:57] We worship what we drink. So life comes through worship. So do you want living water?

Do you want true life? Then you need to worship the right God in the right way. And so this woman asks, well where do we do that?

Is it in Jerusalem then? And look how Jesus answers in verse 21. Woman, believe me. The hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.

Well how do we worship then? Well verse 23. But the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.

For the Father is seeking such people to worship him. Jesus is saying something huge here. He's saying with his arrival, everything about worship, everything about how we come to God and how we find true life, all of that has now changed.

[23:08] Jesus says from now on, true worshippers won't worship at the temple. They will worship in spirit and truth. Now what does that mean? Spirit and truth.

Worshipping in spirit and truth. Well it doesn't mean, well before worship was in a physical temple but now it's kind of spiritual and ethereal and it's only in our minds.

No, that's not what he's saying. And it doesn't mean that worship used to be false when it was in the temple but now it's going to be true. No, Jesus cared about temple worship. No, to worship in spirit and truth means the reality of all that the temple was pointing to, that the reality it was pointing to is now here.

So the temple, it was kind of like a temporary lesson to show humanity what is needed to truly come before the Lord.

What's needed to truly get life. And the temple, it had a curtain separating sinners from God. It involved sacrifices and priests just to approach God.

[24:16] And all this was showing, was teaching us what we need to approach God. It's showing us that our sins need to be dealt with to get life.

Well Jesus is saying, all that has come to an end with his arrival. We don't worship through sacrifices anymore. They were just pointing to the cross.

No, the hour has come when the final sacrifice has been made. And now we worship through the true Lamb of God. The hour has come where we can come to God through our great high priest who sits in the heavens.

The hour has come when salvation is not just for the Jews, but now it's here for the Samaritans and it's exploding over the world. It's for the whole world. And so we worship now across the planet, even here in Ealing.

Jesus offers living water to the whole world and it comes by worshipping God. And this is what's happening right now.

[25:26] This is what this gathering is all about. We are worshipping in the fullness of the Spirit who brings us salvation. We're worshipping in the truth of Jesus Christ, crucified and raised and reigning.

The reality is here. The curtain is now torn in two. The temple's no more. We can all come to God in worship today and he gives us life through his Son.

Living water is pouring out today. So, do you want true life? Come and worship God.

Jesus is calling the world, ruined sinners from every nation, to come and worship him and receive true life. The Father is seeking such a people to worship him.

This room is really packed, isn't it? We're running out of chairs. Well, that is exactly what God is seeking. This is what God wants.

[26:33] Thirsty sinners are coming to Jesus for living water. And this woman knows all this. All this only comes with one man.

The Messiah, the Christ. And what does Jesus say in verse 26? I who speak to you am he. Jesus is the Messiah.

He is the Christ. He is the source of true life. He's the bringer of salvation to the world. And he calls you today. Believe in him. Come and worship him.

And come and get what you've been longing for your entire life. Amen. Let me pray.