

The Treasure of Living Water

John 4:5-26

Introduction

On this, the Third Sunday in Lent, we turn our attention to another famous interview Jesus had in the *Gospel of John*, the story of the Samaritan woman at the well in *John chapter 4*. The story of Jesus and Nicodemus (*chapter 3*) and the story of Jesus and the unnamed woman at the well (*chapter 4*) are alike in two respects. They are both private interviews Jesus has with someone outside His circle. And in both stories, Jesus uses things in nature to explain spiritual truths. But they are different in many ways. Nicodemus was a learned, respected, teacher of Israel while the woman at the well was a common, immoral woman of Samaria. Nicodemus came seeking truth from Jesus in the middle of the night. The Samaritan woman came to the well in the middle of the day looking for water and “ran into” Jesus there, who began the conversation. We aren’t told what Nicodemus did with what he learned from Jesus that night, though we do learn later in John that he was a believer. The woman goes to her town and brings others to hear Jesus, and many believe because of her witness. With Nicodemus, Jesus talked about salvation in terms of new birth and the Holy Spirit as wind. With the woman at the well, He talked about salvation and the Holy Spirit in terms of living water. Let’s examine the **TREASURE OF LIVING WATER**.

Why Water?

Jesus begins the conversation by asking for a drink of water. Now, there’s a lesson for us. Many times, we say that we don’t know what to say when witnessing about Jesus. We don’t know how to begin. Just ask a question. It doesn’t have to be, “Do you know where you’re going when you die?” Now, it would seem natural to us to ask for a drink of water at a well at noon. And while Jesus *was* probably thirsty, His reason for asking was that it was a way to approach the real issue, the woman’s deep spiritual thirst. It was bound to spark a conversation, because no Jewish man would be caught dead talking to a Samaritan woman, let alone ask to drink from her cup.

Living Water

When the woman points this out, Jesus says, *“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” (John 4:10)*. She points out Jesus has nothing to draw water with and asks if He thinks He is greater than Jacob, who dug the well centuries ago. Jesus replies, *(read John 4:13-14)*. When the woman wants to learn more about this water, Jesus changes the subject and starts talking about her lifestyle and worship before identifying Himself as the Messiah. Leaving us with the question, “What is this living water?”

What Is This Water?

One other time in John Jesus mentions living water (Read *John 7:37-39*). On the *last day of the feast [of booths] (v. 37)*, the priests would walk around the city, calling for the people to praise God while they poured water out onto the street, symbolizing the water from the rock in the wilderness. In contrast to this physical water, which was a miracle, Jesus calls the people to come and receive spiritual water from Him. John says this living water is the Holy Spirit. Sometimes the Holy Spirit is referred to as wind and sometimes as water.

Benefits of Living Water

This Living Water is a treasure; what are its benefits?

Life in the Spirit

The first benefit is *life*. Just as water gives life to the body in the desert, living water gives life to the soul in this wilderness. The difference is physical water satisfies temporarily. Then we need another drink. This living water becomes *a spring of water welling up to eternal life (v. 14)*.

True Doctrine

In **Jeremiah 2** we read this about living water (Read **Jeremiah 2:12-13**). The broken cisterns that could hold no water were the false teachings that the Israelites were following. They had been going their way instead of God's way. The Holy Spirit gives us the *true doctrine*, as Jesus said that He will be our teacher (read **John 14:25-26**).

Evangelism

We read this in **Zechariah 14** (read **Zechariah 14:5b-9**). The Jerusalem here is the New Jerusalem, the church. And the *living water will flow out from her (v. 8)*. The Holy Spirit is too great for us to contain. When He is active in our lives, giving us life, it spills over into others. We become "contagious" Christians.

Water, Bread, and Wine

The benefits are not just for a life in the hereafter either. There is life here and now in the living water. That life is nourished on the body and blood of Jesus every time we receive Holy Communion. He forgives our sins and strengthens our faith for this life here and now. This is the **TREASURE OF LIVING WATER**.

*And the peace of God,
Which surpasses all understanding,
Will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*
