



John 4:5-42

Jesus came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there. Jesus, tired from his journey, sat down there at the well. It was about noon. A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, "How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman for a drink?" — For Jews use nothing in common with Samaritans.— Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God and who is saying to you 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you do not even have a bucket and the cistern is deep; where, then, can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us this cistern and drank from it himself with his children and his flocks?" Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again; but whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water." Jesus said to her, "Go call your husband and come back." The woman answered and said to him, "I do not have a husband." Jesus answered her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband.' For you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true." The woman said to him, "Sir, I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place to worship is in Jerusalem." Jesus said to her, "Believe me woman; the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You people worship what you do not understand; we worship what we understand, because salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; and indeed the Father seeks such people to worship him. God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and truth." The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah is coming, the one called the Christ; when he comes, he will tell us everything." Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one speaking with you." At that moment his disciples returned, and were amazed that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, "What are you looking for?" or "Why are you talking with

her?" The woman left her water jar and went into the town and said to the people, "Come see a man who told me everything I have done. Could he possibly be the Christ?" They went out of the town and came to him. Meanwhile, the disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat." But he said to them, "I have food to eat which you do not know." So the disciples said to one another, "Could someone have brought him something to eat?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to finish his work. Do you not say, 'In four months the harvest will be here'? I tell you, look up and see the fields ripe for the harvest. The reaper is already receiving payment and gathering crops for eternal life, so that the sower and reaper can rejoice together. For here the saying is verified that 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap what you have not worked for; others have done the work and you are sharing the fruits of their work." Many of the Samaritans of that town began to believe in him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He has told me everything I have done." When the Samaritans came to him, they invited him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. Many more began to believe in him because of his word, and they said to the woman, "We no longer believe because of your word; for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the savior of the world."

Introductory Prayer: Lord, I believe that you are present in my life. I believe that you are my creator and that you hold me in existence at every moment. I hope in you because I know that you created me and want what's best for me. I know that you want to give me the living water you promised to the Samaritan woman. I am the one who places obstacles in your way. My lack of faith, attachments to worldly things, egoism and vanity all get in the way of receiving your gift. I come to you in prayer today with a humble and contrite heart. You know my misery and how much I need your grace. Accept my prayer today as a token of my desire to remove the obstacles that come between us.

Petition: Lord help me to turn to you, the Wellspring of Eternal Life, to satisfy my thirst.

1. Making Trips to the Well: The Samaritan woman comes to the well to draw water as she has so many times before. When her water runs out and she is thirsty, she must go back to the well again. The water she draws from the well has the power to satisfy for only a short time. We can go through life just like this woman, searching for the little things in life that satisfy our thirst - perhaps pleasure, the latest news, an interesting job or a friendship. All these things satisfy, but their satisfaction is limited and we must return to them again and again. To what do you turn to satisfy your thirst for happiness and fulfillment? Reflect on how that satisfaction is limited and how you must go back time and time again to quench your thirst.

2. The Living Water: The Samaritan woman comes to draw water, but this time there is a Jewish man at the well and he asks her for a drink. She is taken aback by his request because Jews do not associate with Samaritans. A Jew would not ask a

Samaritan for a drink because, according to Jewish law, the buckets that the Samaritans used were unclean. In spite of her initial shock, she is willing to converse with him and is startled when he offers her living water. It is soon clear that he is speaking about something much greater than well water. He is speaking about the life of grace – the life-giving water he has come to give all mankind. He shares this life of grace with us in abundance – so much so that when we accept his offer of life-giving grace, we no longer have need for inferior satisfactions.

3. We Must Ask for This Water: Christ tells the woman, “If you knew the gift of God and who is saying to you ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.” The woman does not know she is speaking to the very source of life and grace. If she only knew she was talking to the Christ, she would beg for the living water that Christ has to offer. No doubt many times we are close to Christ in our prayer or the Eucharist without recognizing him. We are like this Samaritan woman – unaware that we speaking with Christ. Only when we are truly aware of how close Christ and the great treasure he is offering us are to us when we converse with him in prayer, are we able to beg him for the living water of his grace.

Conversation with Christ: Lord Jesus, I want to see beyond the ordinary and grasp the reality of what you are offering me. You died on the cross so that I might partake in the living water that flowed from your side. Grant me your grace of living water, and teach me to thirst for it alone.

Resolution: I will ask Christ, by short invocations throughout the day, to give me the living water of his grace.