

## AN UNLIKELY CONVERSION: THE WOMAN AT THE WELL

**John 4:1-42**

**August 11, 2019**

John was assigned an apostle to the Jews in the same manner that Paul was assigned an apostle to the Gentiles (Galatians 2:9). Thus, John wrote to a Jewish readership, expounding to them that Jesus was not just one of their teachers, but was the true Word, which was with God in the beginning, Who was God (1:1-2), and that He is now the “Word . . . made flesh” (1:14). He wrote to proclaim Jesus as the Son of God.

The Jews, in general, believed Christ would come for Israel; that He would be a Messiah for Israel exclusively. John therefore included many reports that show Christ coming not only for Israel, but for “the world.” He reports events where the Jewish leadership of the age rejected Christ. John’s purpose explains why he included many accounts that were not reported by Matthew, Mark and Luke.

John 4 is one of these reports. Jesus sought out a Samaritan, whom the Jews considered to be an inferior ethnic group, and excluded by God. And this Samaritan was corrupt morally—an adulterous woman. The report follows immediately upon chapter 3, which tells of Nicodemus, an esteemed “ruler of the Jews,” who was spiritually dead, and ignorant of fundamental truths regarding the soul, the Spirit of God, and salvation. This presents a great contrast between the highly-reputed Jewish man whom Christ befuddled and exposed, and the adulterous Samaritan woman whom He went out of his way to confront and to save. John hereby demonstrates that Jesus Christ is the Savior for people of all types.

Notice John’s description of the lengths Jesus went to in order to meet this woman. First, he “must needs go through Samaria” (4) a region Jews avoided because Samaritans were deemed unworthy. Indeed, the woman He met there was surprised to see Jesus, a Jew, in that location (9). Jesus was weary (6); it was not a time when one would feel like entering into prolonged discussion/debate. Yet, He spoke to the Samaritan woman (7).

Speaking to the Samaritan was something “upstanding” Jews did not do (9). Indeed, He further violated the social norms between Jews and Samaritans by asking her for a drink of water. And when she responded in character, with what may have been a rude response, He engaged her in what could only become a prolonged conversation, despite His fatigue. Contrast this with His response to Nicodemus, who approached Him with honorable title and an acknowledgement that God was with Him. Jesus responded very differently: “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (3:3).

From Christ's example in evangelization of lost souls, let us observe these facts:

1. Christ went to a most unpromising place to evangelize.
2. Christ reached to the most unlikely people to present the gospel.
3. Christ transgressed the established social norms to preach the gospel to lost souls.
4. Christ's presentation of the gospel was confrontational.

What qualities of Christ's evangelizing are found in your thinking and praying regarding lost souls? What qualities are present in your own personal evangelizing?