Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

John 4:1-45

**Thesis:** To show how this woman changed as a result of meeting Jesus.

1. As Jesus ministry grew, He would travel throughout Palestine preaching and teaching as He went.

2. On one such occasion Jesus on His way to Galilee, passed through Sychar a city of Samaria. As He sat by a well tired and thirsty from His trip, He encountered a Samaritan woman.

3. Beginning with a very casual, innocent request, “Give me a drink”, a conversation was started that would soon take her from uninterested, flippant woman, to zealous soul winner.

4. But what was it that caused such a dramatic change in this woman? It was all because she met Jesus face to face.

**I. The Savior at Sychar**

A. Jesus leaves Judea.
   1. His work continued to draw a lot of attention.
   2. The Pharisees saw themselves as the protectors of the people and obviously were concerned about the work of Jesus.
      a. They previously questioned John (Jn 1:19,24).
      b. They were the religious leaders and were envious of any possibility of losing some power and influence.
   3. There was already some dispute among the Jews about the work of John and Jesus (3:25).
      a. There also could have been the start of some hard feelings between John’s disciples and Jesus’ (Jn 3:26).
      b. The Pharisees would have tried to exploit this.
   4. So, Jesus leaves to travel north to Galilee.

B. Jesus comes to Sychar.
   1. Samaria lay between Judea to the South and Galilee to the North. If one wanted to travel to either place they would likely go through Samaria (vs.4).
   2. Samaria had an unpleasant past defined by history and religion.
      a. King Omri named the new capitol of the Northern Kingdom Samaria (I Kings 16:24).
b. The Assyrians captured and destroyed it in 722 B.C. leaving behind only the poor and then moved in non-Jews from throughout their empire (II Kings 17-18).
c. They intermarried and were now viewed as half-breeds.
d. 400 B.C. the Samaritans built a rival temple on nearby Mt. Gerizim.

3. Despite all of this Jesus travels to Sychar (vs.5). Note the significant things associated with it.
   a. Jacob’s well is not mentioned elsewhere in the Bible. Its exact location is known today.
   b. This would appear to be a reasonably important town.

4. He is weary and tired. Jesus humanity is stressed (Jn 1:14).
5. The sixth hour. Noon Jewish time or 6 p.m. Roman time.
6. While resting alone (vs.8), He encounters a woman (vs.7).

II. The Sinner at Sychar
   A. Jesus meets a Samaritan woman.
      1. She approaches the well for an intended purpose (to draw water). She is not seeking Jesus, she has no care or concern with Him or who He is. He is a total stranger to her.
      2. Jesus then asks her for a drink. Why not? It is hot, He is tired and thirsty, she is gathering water already.
      3. Her reaction is one of surprise (vs.9).

   B. The reasons for her reactions.
      1. In light of all the problems mentioned above, there were many more between the Jews and Samaritans.
      2. Religiously:
         a. The Jews accepted all of the O.T. and worshiped God properly.
         b. The Samaritans only accepted the Pentateuch and blended parts of pagan worship into their worship.
      4. Gender: She is a woman. No good Jewish man would ever have a conversation with her. Later it became religious law all Samaritan women were perpetually unclean.
      5. To have Jesus a Jewish man ask her for a drink, she undoubtedly would be shocked. Vs.9 lit: Jew’s do not drink from the same cups as Samaritans.
6. Despite all of the racial tensions and continued hatred and animosity, Jesus deals kindly with her?
   a. He never makes a deal about her being a woman or a Samaritan.
   b. The Savior is teaching us truly (Rom 2:11; Acts 17:26).

C. Jesus continues the conversation.
   1. Jesus does not let the conversation be about what divides them. He starts to make a contrast between liquid and living water (vs.10).
   2. She dismisses what He has to say. This is sarcasm (vs.11-12).
      a. How can you possibly give me water without a rope or bucket?
      b. How can you be greater than Jacob?
   3. Water can only satisfy temporarily (vs.13).
   4. But Jesus offers something far greater and sustaining. Just as liquid water sustains our physical life, those who drink deeply from the fountain which flows from Jesus, will receive eternal life (vs.14).
   5. Now she is really interested but still does not understand He is talking about spiritual matters (vs.15).

D. Jesus reveals He knows about her.
   1. Notice Jesus continues to guide the conversation, getting closer to meeting her needs (vs.16).
      a. She needed to be convinced of her true need for this living water.
      b. Everyone else needs to be convinced of their sins before they will repent of them.
   2. She had previously had five husbands and was currently living in a sinful relationship (shacking up) with someone she likely had no right to be married to (vs.17-18).
   3. Now she perceives this complete stranger had to be someone special, a prophet (vs.19). Now Jesus is getting somewhere with her.

E. The woman now asks sincere questions.
   1. Two fold question.
      a. To change the subject.
      b. We worship here (Mt. Gerizim) Jews in Jerusalem. Who is right?
   2. He does not brow beat her.
      a. They worship from tradition, the Jews worship from truth (vs.22).
      b. This will all soon change (vs.23).
      c. What God really desires from worship (Vs.24).
3. She confesses her faith the Messiah will come and clear up all these religious problems (vs.25).
   a. Religiously little understanding of the coming Messiah.
   b. Personally even less understanding of what she is saying.
4. Jesus discloses Himself to her because of her sincere interest (vs.26).

III. The Soul Winner at Sychar.
   A. The faithfulness of the woman.
      1. The disciples return and never question what He is doing.
         a. Remember He is breaking several social and religious customs.
      2. This woman is so moved by what she has experienced, she forgets why she even came to the well (28).
      3. The first thing she does is tell others about Jesus (vs.29-30).
         a. Now the one who came seeking water, has the spring of living water overflowing inside of her.
      4. Many believe her enough to come see for themselves.

   B. The faithfulness of Jesus to His Father’s will.
      1. Jesus has just won this woman’s soul. She in turn has now gone away to win others to Him.
      2. They have no knowledge of what has just happened and turn the focus to dinner (vs.31-33).
      3. They misunderstand His stated purpose (vs.34). Similar to the woman (vs.15).
      4. Jesus reminds them of the fact Man does not live by bread alone (Deut 8:3).
         a. Having heard the Father’s voice and obeying His will, He receives more encouragement and satisfaction from this than any meal.
         b. Part of this will was sharing salvation with this woman.
      6. He reminds them the fields are white. There harvest is always ready.

   C. The fruitfulness of the woman.
      1. While Jesus is discussing soul winning with His disciples, the woman is doing the work (vs.39).
      2. While Jesus is still speaking, a great harvest is coming to Him for reaping.
      3. By taking the opportunity and time to hear Jesus for themselves, many people come to true saving faith in Christ (vs.42).
      4. Meeting Jesus face to face changed this woman and these people.
**Conclusion:**

1. In an unlikely place, with an unlikely person and a happenstance meeting, Jesus the Master Soul Winner took the time to share the good news of salvation with a woman who later brought many more souls to Him.

2. Although she was very low class, poor and immoral, Jesus still had time for her. We should never pick and choose who we want to share the gospel with or invite to church. Regardless of their past, people can still change.

3. Sometimes the most unlikely person can become the most effective soul winner. It all started with a simple request, give me a drink. Meeting Jesus face to face changes people.