

The Book of John - 22

Introduction - In the fourth chapter of John, we once again turn our attention to the chosen witnesses of the Word. We began with John's marvelous testimony, the **Revelation of the Word**. As I consider this gospel record, the testimony of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ culminates in the book of Revelation. You and I live in the in-between time--- **this mystery age**, where the Lord Jesus Christ is building His church. Paul highlights this subject when he speaks about the church in **Ephesians chapter 3 and chapter 5**. In **Romans chapter 11**, Paul also gives light to the mystery of Israel's blindness in relation to the spreading of the Gospel to the Gentiles. Then in **I Corinthians 15**, Paul explains the end of the mystery age, which will be when the church is caught away, forever to be with the Lord.

He states, **I Corinthians 15:51**, *"51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,"*

Notice once again our outline:

I. Prologue – The Revelation of the Word 1:1-14

II. The Chosen Witnesses of the Word 1:19-4:54

III. The Coming Rejection of the Word 5-6:71

IV. The Conflict with the Word 6:60-12:50

V. The Comfort from the Word 13-17

VI. The Condemning of the Word 18-20

VII. The Epilogue 21:1-25

II. The Chosen Witnesses of the Word 1:19-4:54

A. John the Baptist **1:19-36**

B. Andrew **1:37-40**

C. Peter **1:41-42**

D. Philip **1:43-44**

E. Nathanael **1:45-51**

F. Nicodemus **3**

G. The Woman of _____ **4:1-42**

Let's read this chapter together.

As we come **to this chapter**, we must remember the previous witness Nicodemus.

As **John Philips stated** in his commentary, “The contrast could hardly be greater between Nicodemus and the woman at the well. One was a man, the other a woman; one was a Jew, the other a Samaritan; the one was a respected ruler, the other a social outcast; the one was seen as a moral man, the other an immoral woman; the one came to Jesus by night; the other came at mid-day; the one had no arguments, only a wondering how the other was full of questions and debate; the one was cautious, the other was bold; the one did not seem to know what he wanted, the other knew only too well; the one fades out of the story unnoticed, the other went back to her crown and brought them all to Jesus; the one we hear of again (**7:50; 19:39**), the other into women’s usual invisibility in patriarchal society.”

Notice with me the introductory verses found in **verses 1-4**.

1. The _____

In verses **1-3**, the Bible shows us **the underlying conflict** that would reemerge down the road with the Pharisees.

The Lord went to Samaria on purpose.

I take great comfort in the fact that God’s plan is perfect. **The goal for us is to walk according to His plan and according to His ways.**

John 4:4 tells us, “*4 And he must needs go through Samaria.*”

Merrill C Tenney stated this, “A strange phrase introduces this episode: “He must needs pass through Samaria.” The word “must” implies logical necessity rather than personal obligation. It is the term one would use in saying, “A triangle *must* have three sides.” Why it should be used here is not immediately clear since there were other roads that Jesus could have taken to Galilee. In the light of the general tenor of the Gospel, the word suggested that His reason was not a geographical necessity nor social pressure, but the underlying compulsion of the Divine Will that sought out the lost Samaritan sheep.”

We should understand that the city we are dealing with is Sychar, whereas Samaria in this text is the geographical area. The area of Samaria is between Galilee and Judea.

Within this tract of land, there were **three major routes** used for travel.



One went along the sea coast and was called **the coastal route**. Another went up through the central area, sometimes called the **'water parting route'** because of the Mediterranean Sea on the west and the Jordan on the east. The last route went east of the Jordan into Perea up to Damascus, called **the King's Highway**.

According to Tenney, Sychar "stood at a fork of the road, one branch of which went toward Capernaum and the other branch to Nazareth. The well of Jacob was located about one-half mile from the village."

That gives us some insight into verses **5-6a**.

Notice what the Bible states, *"Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there."*

Often, as has been mentioned by others, the Jews avoided the lands of Samaria because the Samaritans were considered a defiled people. "While the term "Samaria" was first identified with the city founded by Omri, it soon became associated with the entire region surrounding the city, the tribal territory of Manasseh and Ephraim. Finally, the name "Samaria" became synonymous with the entire Northern Kingdom (**1 Kings 13:32; Jer. 31:5**). After the Assyrian conquest, Samaria began to shrink in size. By NT times, it became identified with the central region of Palestine, with Galilee to the north and Judea to the south."¹

¹ Donald R. Potts, "Samaria, Samaritans," ed. Chad Brand et al., *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 1436.

Matthew Henry stated, "The Samaritans, both in *blood* and *religion*, were *mongrel* [of a mixed breed] Jews, the posterity of those colonies which the king of Assyria planted there after the captivity of the ten tribes, with whom the poor of the land were left behind, and many other Jews afterward, incorporated themselves. They worshipped the God of Israel only, to whom they erected a temple on Mount Gerizim, in competition with that at Jerusalem."

2. The _____

We notice in **verse 3** that the Lord and the disciples departed Judaea into Galilee. By this, we understand He went in a northern direction.

Next, we understand that in **verse 4**, the Bible tells us that He purposed to go through the area of Samaria.

John 4:4 "4 And he must needs go through Samaria."

As the Lord journeyed toward Galilee, it is important to note that the bulk of the remaining ministry of the Lord will take place up north in the region of Galilee until the appointed time when the Lord will enter into final conflicts with the religious rulers.

We also recognize that the Lord's humanity is shown in **verse 6**, as the Bible says the Lord was "wearied" with his journey. The Lord Jesus Christ labored to the point of weariness.

And so, as we think about that, we should understand that sometimes **for the cause of Christ, we will have to rise above our physical weariness**. Additionally, this encounter teaches us what Peter penned in **I Peter 3:15**.

He stated, "15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:"

Notice what the Bible says in **verses 5 and 6**.

John 4:5-6 "5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. 6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: **and it was about the sixth hour.**"

Everything about this encounter is astounding and very unusual. The Lord repeatedly demonstrated that He was not a respecter of persons. We think about the folks that the

Lord dealt with:

Nicodemus - a ruler of the Jews, a religious man.

Matthew - tax collector

Woman of Sychar - who was a Samaritan, a woman, and also a woman of questionable character.

The lepers.

The blind.

The lame.

Those possessed with demons.

Galileans.

Notice what now takes place in **verse number 7**.

John 4:7 *“7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.”*

This woman arriving in the heat of the day, perhaps to avoid the crowds that would gossip about her, is prepared to fetch water from that well over 100 feet deep.

And the Lord tells her, **Give me to drink**.

The Bible tells us in **verse 8**, *“8 (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)”*

They had gone into the city to take care of these temporal matters.

Verse 9 shows us the terrible result of our sin.

Notice what the Bible tells us, **John 4:9** *“9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.”*

The hatred between these sons of Adam was so much that the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans.

Matthew Henry included in His commentary an excerpt from a Jewish Rabbi that stated, “The Jews were extremely malicious against the Samaritans, “looked upon them as having no part in the resurrection, excommunicated and cursed them by the sacred name of God, by the glorious writing of the tables, and by the curse of the upper and lower house of judgment, with this law, That no Israelite eat of anything that is a Samaritan's, for it is as if he should eat swine's flesh.”

This woman was surprised as the Lord Jesus Christ, a Jewish man, spoke. I want you to think about the reply the Lord gives in verse 10.

John 4:10 *“10 Jesus answered and said unto her **If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.**”*

This phrase, “the gift of God,” directly references God’s gift of Salvation.

James 1:17 *“17 Every **good gift** and **every perfect gift** is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”*

Romans 6:23 tells us, *“23 For the wages of sin is death; but **the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**”*

As we think about the gift of God’s Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, we are reminded of **John 3:16** *“16 For God so loved the world, that **he gave his only begotten Son**, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”*

In **verse 10**, we see that the Lord highlights an essential truth for us: this woman could not ask for what she knew nothing about.

Charles Spurgeon, had this to say, “See the deadly mischief of ignorance concerning spiritual things? If she had known, she would have asked, and Christ would have given. But the first link was missing, and, therefore, the rest of the chain was not drawn on. Sometimes all people need is a little wise instruction, and they will then trust the Savior. God grant that we may always be ready to give it. Some need much more than that, but Christ could truly say to this Samaritan woman, “If you had known, you would have asked, and I would have given.”²

² Spurgeon, The Spurgeon Study Bible: Notes (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017), 1426.