Exploring the Bible—Gospel of John (4)

The Need of the Immoral

**Scripture Reading:**

5 So He came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the piece of land that Jacob gave to Joseph his son; 6 And Jacob’s well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from the journey, sat thus by the well; it was about the sixth hour. 7 There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, Give Me something to drink. 8 For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. 9 The Samaritan woman then said to Him, How is it that You, being a Jew, ask for a drink from me, who am a Samaritan woman? (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) 10 Jesus answered and said to her, If you knew the gift of God and who it is who says to you, Give Me a drink, you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water. 11 The woman said to Him, Sir, You have no bucket, and the well is deep; where then do You get this living water? 12 Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank of it himself, as well as his sons and his cattle? 13 Jesus answered and said to her, Everyone who drinks of this water shall thirst again, 14 But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall by no means thirst forever; but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into eternal life. 15 The woman said to Him, Sir, give me this water so that I will not thirst nor come here to draw. 16 He said to her, Go, call your husband and come here. 17 The woman answered and said, I do not have a husband. Jesus said to her, You have well said, I do not have a husband, 18 For you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly. 19 The woman said to Him, Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet… 21 Jesus said to her, Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father… 24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness. 25 The woman said to Him, I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when He comes, He will declare all things to us. 26 Jesus said to her, I, who speak to you, am He... 28 Then the woman left her waterpot and went away into the city, and said to the people, 29 Come, see a man who told me all that I have done. Is this not the Christ? 30 They went out of the city and came to Him. 31 In the meantime, the disciples urged Him, saying, Rabbi, eat. 32 But He said to them, I have food to eat that you do not know about. (John 4:5-32)

**Ministry Reading:**

THE GIFT OF GOD AND CHRIST

The gift of God is the gift that God freely gives to man. This gift is God Himself, that is, His life. Man needs God Himself; that is, man needs God’s life. In the universe only the life of God can quench man’s thirst and satisfy man. God has given Himself, His life, as a gift to man. Man can obtain this free gift without exerting any effort or paying any price. If someone knows his need and knows the free gift of God, he will seek God in order to receive God’s life. The Samaritan woman, however, did not know her need, nor did she know the free gift of God. Hence, the Lord Jesus led her to know her own need and the gift of God so that she might seek and gain this gift.

LIVING WATER

God’s life is the living water that man needs. This living water of life is in Christ and is what God wants to give man to drink. God’s life is living and powerful. Therefore, in man the living water flows ceaselessly and is full of life and vitality. This life makes man strong to live. God as the living water of life can quench man’s thirst and satisfy man. Man is also refreshed, strengthened, joyful, and full of light. Those who have God as the living water no longer have a sense of emptiness; instead, they are satisfied. Their pain becomes joy, their weakness becomes strength, and their darkness becomes light. Formerly, they sought amusement and entertainment, committed sins, and did evil things in order to quench their thirst. Now that the living water has quenched their thirst, they no longer need amusement and entertainment, they no longer willingly commit sins, and they no longer do evil things.

The Lord Jesus did not tell the Samaritan woman to be delivered from her sinful life. He knew that she lived a life of sin because she was thirsty; that is, she sinned because she did not have the living water of life to satisfy her. If she had the living water to quench her thirst and to satisfy her empty feeling, she would no longer need to live a life of sin; she would not need to drink “poison” in order to quench her thirst. She would no longer need to satisfy her heart with the pleasures of sin. Therefore, the Lord Jesus led her to know the gift of God and to know Himself so that she could gain Him as the living water.

The Samaritan woman heard the Lord speak of living water, but she did not know that the living water was God’s life. She thought that it could be drawn from the well, because she knew the well of her forefathers and her waterpot. The Samaritan woman highly regarded the well of her forefathers. She knew that both she and her forefathers lived by the well and drew water from the well to drink. She did not expect that any source could be higher than her well or that anyone could be greater than her forefathers.

THIS WATER

The Samaritan woman highly regarded the origin of the well, but the Lord Jesus turned her to the effectiveness of the well. He said, “Everyone who drinks of this water shall thirst again” (John 4:13). The well had a long history, but the water from the well did not have an eternal effect. Everyone who drank of this water thirsted again. People exerted much effort in order to drink this water, but the effect of this water was neither great nor long lasting. This water could quench man’s thirst temporarily; it could not quench man’s thirst permanently.

This water was from the well given by her forefathers; it was not the gift of God. This water came from the ground, not a heavenly fountain. Man obtained this water with a bucket, not through believing in Christ. This water required human labor; it was not given freely. This water was of the present age; it was not eternal. This water is anything that is handed down, anything that is out of the ground, and anything obtained through methods and human labor. Hence, it cannot quench man’s thirst. In other words, this water is anything that is not given to man by the gift of God, anything that is not out of heaven, anything that is not in Christ or through Christ, anything that is not obtained freely from God, and anything that is not eternal.

The Samaritan woman previously had five husbands, and the one she was with was not her husband. Her thirst was not quenched with her first husband. She was still thirsty with her second husband and third husband, so she had a fourth, fifth, and sixth husband. She was thirsty even though she had many husbands, and her thirst only increased her desire for more. However, the more husbands she had, the thirstier she became. The words the Lord Jesus spoke were true: “Everyone who drinks of this water shall thirst again”.

THE WATER THAT CHRIST GIVES

The water that Christ gives is His life, which is God’s life. God has given His own life as living water to man. Man needs the living water. God wants man to receive the living water, and Jesus Christ came in order for man to receive this living water. Christ gave Himself on the cross in order to release this living water, and the Spirit enters into man so that man may receive this living water. The living water is the center of God’s salvation and the goal of man’s salvation. Man’s being saved is his receiving this living water. When this living water enters into man, it quenches his thirst and becomes in man a fountain springing up into eternal life. Only the living water that Christ gives can satisfy the human life and quench man’s thirst forever.

Are you not thirsty deep within? Are you satisfied with your human life? Without the Lord you have no satisfaction, and without you the Lord has no satisfaction. The Lord is waiting for you to receive Him so that you may be satisfied and so that He too may be satisfied. Do not disappoint Him and do not remain thirsty forever!

Reference: *Changing Death into Life*, Ch. 3.

Question for Discussion: Why did the Lord say “Everyone who drinks of this water shall thirst again”? Share your experience.