

LESSON 7: JOHN 4:1-30
MARCH 21, 2018

OVERVIEW

- . Introduction to the conversation of Jesus and the Samaritan woman
- . Stages of the conversation

INTRODUCTION TO THE CONVERSATION OF JESUS WITH THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

- . Contrast of this conversation with Nicodemus
 - . Nicodemus is a deeply religious man, who we know by name
 - . A Pharisee, instructed in the Old Testament
 - . A wise older man, of good moral reputation, well respected
 - . After their conversation Nicodemus was awed and in silence
 - . He conversation took place at night, in a very private place
 - . After the conversation, Nicodemus slips away at night, quietly
 - . The Samaritan woman, is half pagan, not deeply religious, who we don't even know by name
 - . She's a Samaritan, despised by the Jewish people of Judea
 - . She's a woman, occupying the lowest position in society
 - . She's a woman, divorced several times, of ill repute, living with a man who isn't her husband
 - . Conversation takes place in broad daylight, in the public square
 - . Despite the stark contrast of these two people, Jesus treats them both with an equal dose of love, authority and energy
 - . He offers both a way to salvation and eternal life
- . Circumstances relevant to the conversation – John 4:1-6
 - . Jesus leaves Judea – John 4:1-3
 - . There is growing, outward antagonism amongst the Pharisees
 - . John the Baptist has been imprisoned
 - . Jesus knows it's not the time to stay and fight, so he heads back to Galilee
 - . Jesus "had to go through Samaria" – John 4:4
 - . Samaria was situated between Judea and Galilee
 - . A centuries old feud alienated the Samaritans from the Jews of Judea
 - . When the old Northern Kingdom of Israel fell to the Assyrians, pagan peoples from beyond the Euphrates River were sent to live in this territory

- . Over time, the Jews still living in this region began to adopt some of the pagan customs and integrate them in to their faith
- . Later, in the days of Ezra, when the Jews of Judea returned from captivity, they refused to allow the Samaritans to partake in the rebuilding of the temple
- . Edicts were issued to Jews of Judea to avoid Samaria and over time, Jews went to great lengths to avoid the region
- . The Jews of the Galilean region, when traveling to Judea would pass over to the east side of the Jordan and travel through Perea
- . The conversation took place at Jacob's well
 - . This well is recorded in Genesis 33:18-19
 - . Jacob buys this well from the Canaanites and later gives it to his son Joseph
 - . After Joseph's death, his body was brought back from Egypt and buried there
- . Just as Jesus and his disciples are coming to the well, the disciples head off to town to buy some food
 - . It's midday, hot and Jesus rests by the well
 - . The woman probably came to the well at midday to avoid the other woman that would gather there earlier in the day
 - . She was so scorned by the other woman that she couldn't bare to be around them at this public gathering place

STAGES OF THE CONVERSATION

- . First stage: Jesus wins the woman's confidence – John 4:7-9
 - . Jesus speaks – John 4:7
 - . No Jewish rabbi would have ever spoken to a Samaritan woman, especially one of ill repute
 - . A Rabbi might not even speak to their wives, daughters or sisters in public
 - . In this situation, Jesus is not trying to be a troublemaker, he is just exercising his authority
 - . He was also looking beyond the surface and in to this person's heart
 - . He knew there was a heart here that hungered for redemption
- . The woman replies – John 4:9
 - . Her surprise reveals her feeling of unworthiness and acceptance of her position in society
 - . Jesus' approach to initiate the conversation and ask for a favor helps to break down all barriers and soften the woman's heart

- . Second stage: Jesus offers living water – John 4:10-12
 - . Jesus speaks – John 4:10
 - . Four points to notice in Jesus' offer
 - . "If you knew the gift of God"
 - . "If you knew . . who I am"
 - . "You would have asked for living water"
 - . "I would have given you the living water"
 - . Up to this point the woman merely sees Jesus as a living man
 - . Jesus' words are now declaring to this woman that He is the Son of God, the Messiah
 - . The woman replies – John 4:11-12
 - . The first part of her response inquires about this "living water" and where one gets it
 - . She is thinking about the physical aspect of drawing water and wonders how he can provide it without anything in which to draw
 - . The second part addresses His authority
 - . "Are you greater than Jacob"
 - . She is sensing she is in the presence of someone special
- . Third stage: Jesus explains the meaning of the offer – John 4:13-15
 - . Jesus speaks – John 4:13-14
 - . Earthly water satisfies for only a moment – John 4:13
 - . To drink ordinary water is to drink continually yet never be satisfied
 - . Earthly, physical satisfactions can temporarily satisfy us but we will ultimately want more, never feeling fully satisfied
 - . Bible describes this thirst as the lust of the eyes
 - . Spiritual water satisfies permanently – John 4:14
 - . To drink the water that Jesus is promising to give is to have one's inmost needs so completely met that it is as though one had an eternal spring to drink from
 - . God's gift of living water produces a profound contentment with God
 - . The woman replies – John 4:15
 - . "Sir, give me the water so I won't be thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw from the well"
 - . Although she doesn't yet fully understand what Jesus is offering, her instincts tell her that He is talking about a depth of joy and satisfaction that she has never experienced and that He is able to deliver it
- . Fourth stage: Conviction and confession of sin – John 4:16-18
 - . Jesus speaks – John 4:16

- . Jesus tells her to go call her husband even though he knows her circumstance and that fact she is living with a man who is not her husband
- . He knows he is hitting at the heart of her pain and opening her deepest wound
- . He is giving her the opportunity to repent and confess her sins, even though she doesn't know that's what he's doing
- . The woman replies – John 4:17
 - . “I have no husband” – this took courage for her to confess this to someone who she is recognizing is pretty important
 - . Her honest answer proves her sincerity
 - . Jesus then gently brings this confession in to true light
 - . He used strong words to bring this in to true light, but he did not condemn her
 - . Not only did Jesus' words prove that He knew her, but it also approved that He was who He said He was
 - . He offered her this “living water” already knowing her condition
 - . This woman, having just met Jesus, was ready to give her heart over to Him
- . Fifth stage: Instruction concerning Worship pleasing to God – John 4:19-24
 - . The woman asks two questions – John 4:19-20
 - . “Sir, I can see you are a prophet” – John 4:19
 - . She offers no self-defense, no excuse
 - . He has awakened within her a hunger for God
 - . Her second question pertains to the place of worship
 - . This question was not an effort to divert the attention away from her, rather a sincere desire to gain a better understanding
 - . At the root of the Samaritan fallout with Judea was its decision many centuries ago to worship at Mt. Gerizim, in Samaria, instead of at the temple in Jerusalem
 - . Regarded Mt. Gerizim as the most sacred place on earth
 - . Jesus replies – John 4:21-24
 - . He speaks of a prophecy concerning the future – John 4:21
 - . “A time will come when there will be no set place”
 - . Jesus was speaking of the dawning of the “new covenant”, when all believers will be empowered through the indwelling of the Spirit
 - . An affirmation of God's revelation in the Old Testament
 - . Samaritans worshipped what they didn't know because of their pagan ways
 - . The “Jews” in Jerusalem worshipped what they did know because of God's choice to enlighten them
 - . God's desire to worship in spirit and truth – John 4:23
 - . He is not only looking for sincerity of heart but also a

knowledge of and obedience to God's revealed truth through Jesus Christ

- . Jesus is clearly demonstrating to her that God is seeking her despite her sinful condition

. Sixth stage: the final revelation – John 4:25-26

- . The woman questions Jesus about the Messiah – John 4:25

- . The woman openly confesses her ignorance as well as her deep longing

- . She is seeking his full confirmation

- . Jesus ends his conversation – John 4:26

- . Jesus reveals Himself plainly to her as He does to few others at this point in time

- . He recognized her true thirst for the truth

NEXT LESSON: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4, 2018 - JOHN 4:31-54