

## **Living Water in Samaria**

**John 4:1-42**

### **Sermon Outline**

**Introduction:** Jesus is a leader like no other leader you will ever know. He is the cross-over King, whose power serves the outsider and who creates a cross-over nation whose behavior no sociologist can explain. Notice three things: (i) Jesus crosses boundaries; (ii) Jesus crosses boundaries to give abundant life; (iii) Jesus crossed over at great cost to himself.

#### **I) Jesus crosses boundaries**

##### **A) He pushed past his exhaustion to engage a Samaritan woman**

*Vs 27—His disciples marveled*

Shocking at multiple levels

1) For historical reasons

- Jews versus Samaritans

2) For cultural reasons

##### **B) Why did he do this?**

1) Because he understood the times

*Vs. 35b ...Lift up your eyes and see the fields are white for harvest.*

2) Because it was his joy to do it

*Vs. 32, 34: I have food to eat you do not know about...My food is to do the will of him who sent me...*

##### **C) The challenge to us: Are we like this?**

1) Church life

2) Life outside the church

##### **D) So much is at stake at how hard we push against cultural and socio-economic isolation**

Our great opportunity as New Yorkers

#### **II) Jesus crosses boundaries to give abundant life**

**A) vs. 10, 13-14** *The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life*<sup>28</sup>

##### **B) What makes “cross-over” people of us?**

1) Crossing over can be hard

- It was hard for Jesus: “Give me something to drink” was not an evangelistic gimmick

- It can be hard for us

2) Where does the power to change come from?

The Father seeks and makes new worshippers of us.

*Vs. 23 The hours is coming and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth...*

### **C) How does new worship make “cross-over” people of us?**

### **III) Crossing over cost Jesus**

#### **A) This is not the only time Jesus was thirsty**

The thirst in John 4 was great, but it pales before the thirst from the cross

- Dying of thirst
- Thirst for the Father
- Bearing the sin of the Samaritan woman—and of us

#### **B) We are loved—far more than we deserve or can imagine**

We can cross over, we can love, even if no one loves us back. We can act like a gracious insider even if we feel like rejected outsiders.

### **Questions for Reflection this Week**

- 1) List the reasons why Jesus' conversation with the woman at the well was shocking. Try to imagine a comparable situation in our day.
- 2) N.T. Wright comments: “For Jesus, the turn the conversation has taken, and the woman's reaction, have shown him that here, outside the boundaries of the chosen people, away from Jerusalem itself, there is a spiritual hunger which, in however muddled a fashion, is ready to hear what he has to say.” (*John for Everyone*, SPCK). Have you ever been surprised and delighted by a genuine hunger for God popping up in an unexpected place? What happened, and how did you respond? Why your response?
- 3) Do an honest inventory of your “crossing over”. Do you tend to hang out with people who are like you? Why/Why not? Do you have any serious friendships among unbelievers? Why/Why not? What needs changing and what might you do to initiate change?
- 4) Reflect upon or discuss the following statement: “Much is at stake in how hard and diligently we push against cultural and socio-economic isolation. What is at stake is the picture of God that we give to people. Do they see a “circle-the-wagons”, self-protective kind of God? Or do they see Jesus, the Word made flesh, who went without lunch to talk earnestly and honestly with a person who was at least three steps removed from him socially.”
- 5) What makes it hard for you to engage people who are different from you? What is it about them? What is it about you? How significant a role does fear play in erecting barriers between us and other people? Why?
- 6) Learning genuinely to worship God as Father through the power of Christ's Spirit frees us dramatically from the fear that tends to isolate us. Why is this true? Illustrate from your experience.
- 7) Read Psalm 42 and then imagine Jesus reflecting upon it as he was dying. Reflect yourself upon the fact that Jesus' thirst was not quenched, either physically or spiritually, as he died. Thank him for enduring the isolation from God (an isolation he dreaded and loathed) so that you could be forgiven for the countless times you have pushed God and others away—preferring to pursue your selfish agenda.