

The Mind of Christ - Lesson 36

December 4, 2019

It's good to see everybody back here. It seems like it has been forever since I've been here. {Rod was on a Mission trip to the Dominican Republic}. I was here one night and nobody showed up. {On November 13, An excavator being hauled on a trailer traveling south on Interstate 75 struck the overpass at Proctor Road, closing the span and I-75 lanes. ... Emergency personnel found that the crane had struck the overpass at mile marker 206 south of Bee Ridge and caused damage.} We couldn't get to the building...closed roads etc. Two weeks were taught by Brian Smith and we didn't meet Thanksgiving Evening.

Okay, we're in **John Chapter 4**, beginning in **verse 5**. This is a pretty familiar story. It's a long story so we are not going to complete it tonight, but it's about 'the woman at the well'. Let's read part of it tonight.

⁵ So He came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph; ⁶ and Jacob's well was there. So Jesus, being wearied from His journey, was sitting 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 a drink."

⁸ For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. ⁹ Therefore the Samaritan woman said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I 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 She said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water? ¹² You are not greater than our father Jacob, are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself and his sons and his cattle?" ¹³ Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life." ¹⁵ The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw." We'll stop right here since that gives us that first context.

So, the appointments take Jesus to Jacob's well at Sychar (also known as Askar) on the slope of Mount Ebal, between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, the mountains of blessings and cursings. The well would have been to the east a little way on a plain. Another City, Shechem was, at that time, in ruins nearby. We know, with assurance, where Jacob's well is so it's not in dispute. It was dug some 2,000 years earlier before Jesus so that's an old well.

We had wells on what used to be our property in Georgia and I remember there was one particular well that had caved in, and as little boys, we were always warned, "Don't play in that area." I always wondered why they didn't do something, take a bulldozer or something and fill in that hole sufficiently so it wouldn't be such a danger, but the way they did things then was, "If there's danger, just tell everybody it's there, and tell them to stay away from it." I had these visions as a little boy of falling down this well. It may have been that you would only fall three feet and that was it, but ... I didn't want to take the chance.

Then, there was this other well on the other side of the house that replaced that well and eventually *that* well caved in so we had to be careful not to play in those areas on both sides of the house. That was at my granddaddy's house. So, that's a couple of 'well' stories. And by the way, there was an Artesian spring on that slope of Gerazim as well.

John notes that this was near a parcel given to Jacob by Joseph for his descendants. In **Genesis 33:18-20** speaks of Jacob's purchase of land near Shechem. ¹⁸ After Jacob came from Paddan Aram, he arrived safely at the city of Shechem in Canaan and camped within sight of the city. ¹⁹ For a hundred pieces of silver, he bought from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, the plot of ground where he pitched his tent. ²⁰ There he set up an altar and called it El Elohe Israel.

In **Chapter 34** a significant event occurred there was when Jacob's daughter, Dinah, was raped by the prince of that area, the Prince of Shechem. Instead of going to war immediately with them, Shechem pursued a deal with Jacob for them to be able to marry in exchange for their daughters in trade. (They would be able to intermarry with Jacob's people.) So, Jacob's sons had the bright idea to make a deal with them. They said that in order to intermarry with us, you will have to circumcise all your men first. They agreed to the deal, and while all the men were circumcised and in severe pain, they attacked them and killed all the men. Jacob was not happy with what his sons did, but this is one of the things that had happened and it caused some problems in this particular area of Palestine.

So, with Ebal and Gerizim, there is much history and geography that factors into this story. **Deuteronomy 27** and **28** describe the cursings that were read from Mount Ebal and the blessing that were read from Mount Gerizim. The people stood between the two peaks and they would hear the blessings and the cursings read. If you keep the law of God, these are the blessings you will receive. If you fail to keep the law, here are the cursings that you can expect. This was read, supposedly on a yearly basis but we don't hear of it being done too much in the rest of the history of the Bible.

The Samaritans are descendants of the poor who were left in the land after the invasion of the Assyrians that happened about 722 B. C. They left some poor people behind to take care of the land, keep the crops growing, and make sure all the wild animals couldn't invade all the city. Then they brought in some foreigners, some Gentiles from outside that area, who intermarried with the poor Israelites who were left there. The race of people who came from them were called Samaritans; because I guess you might say, half and half.

In 300 B. C. they built a Temple there. I looked that up before tonight to get in my mind a picture of what it looked like. It definitely had no comparison to the Temple that Solomon built. It was a stone Temple and very rough cut. And it is still a place of sacrifice today. There are Samaritan people who live in that area and who maintain their traditions. I don't know if they outlawed animal sacrifices but they offer some type of sacrifice still in that place. It is 'somewhat' in ruins and not well maintained, but there is a structure there that you can go into. It's fairly small.

Brian and Ruth: (Brian) had a Bible with pictures in it of Samaritan sacrifices. (Ruth) There was an article in the National Geographic that we saw about 30 or more years ago with pictures of the sacrifices and they still had priests with robes.

Rod: I saw a special recently, I think on “60 Minutes” last Sunday night (12/1/19). They did a special on a temple that was built in Ethiopia. This was after the destruction of the Temple, I think by Antiochus Epiphanes, in 167 B. C. Some people fled to Ethiopia and one of the kings commissioned a temple to be built. It was a series of about 30-something buildings cut down through sheer rock! It was about 4 stories high. The main temple is about 4 stories high and it is has been cut totally into the rock (not built one piece on top of another piece). They cut into the rock to make the Temple area inside. It was amazing to me. Christian people flocked there from all over the world to celebrate Christ in that Temple. It’s now a Christian Temple in it still has services there. No brick. No mortar.

It’s interesting because of this particular situation to see how the Samaritans felt the need to build some kind of place of worship that maintained some association with the Law. They believed that the rest of the Old Testament, other than the Law, was not authoritative having been written by man, rather than God. Only the Torah or The Pentateuch was God’s Word, or authoritative to them so they tried to maintain a lot of the practices of the Torah.

So, Jesus was weary from His journey at 12:00 noon and he sat by the well (verse 6) with nothing with which to draw water. The humanness of Jesus is evident. He got tired. And it may seem like a little minor detail but just to know that Jesus **was** human, and this is just one of the normal elements of humanity; you get tired. You get thirsty. So, He was a man just like us, as it says elsewhere in the New Testament. He needed food, water, rest, and we’ll see later what provided the most energy for Him was the work that He did for God...and we’ll talk about that later.

Did Jesus know ... (and I have a lot of questions because I try to put myself in the scene.) So there are a lot of things I wonder about, not just trying to be speculative but because it happened somehow and I’m just curious as to how it actually happened. Did Jesus know what was going to happen when His disciples went to buy food in the town? Did He know that He was where His Father wanted Him to be? Did He know the woman was coming and what He would say, or did it all play out in the moment? **I** may not know, but Jesus was ready and He seized the opportunity.

In **John 4:7** what strikes me is how “ordinary” it all sounds. Jesus is tired. He sits at the ancient ancestor’s well. He has nothing to draw water with. His disciples have gone to get food. All that is pretty normal. This woman comes in the middle of the day. That seems a little bit odd to come in the heat of the day. I would guess she’s older, perhaps older than Jesus, I would ‘think’ since she has been married 5 times and is now has a boyfriend. We don’t really know how she went through her husbands, but probably older. I guess, at least at marriage, she’s a chronic failure. She seems to be bright from the questions that she asked; the interchange she has with Jesus. She’s interested in questions that are deeper than her next sexual encounter, and about water she wants to know about things we’ll talk about later. But it all begins with Jesus simply asking her, a Samaritan woman, for a drink.

Jesus just had an ordinary encounter with her. But, how did he “say” it? I want to know even what the inflection in His voice was. Was it like, “Give me a drink” in a demanding tone? Or was it hoping, like, “Would you give me a drink? I’m a little thirsty.” **But** He began with **His need**. That’s His approach. If you analyze this, even as a ‘soul winner’ to save souls, He began with **His need**, not with her need. He needed a drink ... a simple need.

I have found many times when you ask somebody else to do something for you, and knowing that it *is* more blessed to give than receive, many times that will open a door for you to be able to have more discourse in their life. So there was this need for one of the most basic ingredients... at this point, water. He needed water. Did He ever get it? It never says in the story whether or not she actually drew out any water out and gave it to Him. But later on you see that He says, 'I have food that you don't know anything about', so maybe He revived; He got energized, he was no longer tired because now he was doing God's work. I don't know.

Did He wait until her bucket was full in order to ask for a drink of water? Did she think, "Men ... they're always wanting me to do something for them. What will He want next?" Did she think He was hitting on her? I don't know. But she *did* recognize that Jesus was a Jew and He was talking to a Samaritan woman. This seemed strange to her. Was she totally alone with Him since the disciples had gone to get food? ***And remember, this is not the twelve apostles.*** They haven't all been selected yet. This is probably four or five at the most who are travelling with Him at this point since we're not yet very far into His ministry.

Did she pass the disciples when she was coming to the well? Did she see them going into town when she was coming out? Was it wise or safe for Jesus to be alone with her? It *was* a public place. Did she wear a veil? Could He see her face? Was she pretty? Was she fit or overweight? Did she have an attitude? Was she humble and submissive? I'm just asking to try to get a picture of who this woman was that He's talking to. Some of these things don't matter much, but you just kind of get this idea in your head ... who *is* this person?

Carole: She knew enough of Jewish Law to realize that to His way of thinking, He shouldn't be talking to her because she was considered lower than the Jews.

Rod: But she could have had an attitude about that ... what are you doing talking to me? You think I'm ...

Carole: Not in "my" story. Not in "my" head.

Rod: And *that's* one of my points here. We each have a picture of what is going on in our heads. We envision it some way.

Well, she did reply and asked why, He, a Jew, would talk with her, a Samaritan. This got her attention. Was this His 'strategy', or was He simply 'thirsty'? Is He thirsty and I'm the first person who came along with the ability to give you a drink? The cultural norm was, or had been, violated. The boundary has been crossed. There's no looking back. Once He started talking to her, what should she do now? There they were; two people from very different worlds, talking about water. Could a conversation ever be any more ordinary?

The series I'm in now, it's a series called H₂O. Ron Cutsinger has a copy of it. It's an excellent series ***about water and water and how it is used in the Bible with its spiritual messages.*** It's 10 videos and we've seen it here. How powerful a message about our need for a simple substance; yet it is so essential. Jesus did not need to look very far to find a fitting illustration of His purpose and His message. Just as the Jews of John chapter two did not understand His metaphor of temple / body; or Nicodemus did not understand His metaphor about the new birth, this lady is going to struggle with the metaphor of water.

Jesus is trying to make spiritual connections within ordinary life. But sometimes when you try to make those spiritual connections, people don't immediately see what you are trying to say. When you say, "This" is like "this" they have to understand something about '**This**' in order to understand what 'this' is over here. They have to be able to make that connection in their heads.

We have, again, at least three stories in chapter 2 where Jesus talks about his body being the temple; they didn't understand that. Nicodemus didn't understand the 'new birth' metaphor. And this woman didn't immediately understand the water metaphor. She didn't get it. But Jesus used it. Why did Jesus *use* something that people would struggle to understand? Why would He use that method of teaching, because He did this pretty consistently?

Carole: To get them to ask questions; to open a conversation?

Macy: To go from straight to spiritual. It may not have a connotation of spiritual but there can still be dialogue.

Rod: Right. I did this today. I was teaching a couple who know hardly anything about the Bible. The Samaritan woman went home and brought people back from her town. This man today wants to study and brought his wife along with him. Now they're studying the Bible with me. I love blank slates. They don't argue as much because they don't have anything to argue about. So today I started out with the fundamentals. Who was that famous coach at Notre Dame who said on the first day of practice, "This is a football?"

Brian: Vince Lombardi.

Rod: That would be the first lesson: "This is a football". In other words, let's get the fundamentals down.

This man was a firefighter. So I said it would be like the first day of "fire school" where the instructor comes in and says, "This is a fire hose". {Giggles} That's starting with the basics. "This is a stethoscope". You start out with something that is very fundamental and you begin to build on that. And again, you're right. People begin to say, "Yes. I know something about fire hoses, and stethoscopes and water." And you go from there.

What is this man trying to tell me? It gets the wheels turning. It gets the questions coming. It "primes the pump" and that's the metaphor I used with him saying, "What I am trying to do with you two is prime the pump. I want to give you enough information that will spur you to want to know more and more and more to whet your appetite for studying God's word."

When I did this with them, I taught them an overview of the Bible in very simplistic form. The wife looked at me and at the end of it (after I sat there for a few moments quietly) and she looked at me and said "Wow! Thank you so much for doing that." It was like 'I never understood the basic story of the Bible.' And within 15 minutes I had given her an overview; a simplistic overview, of the Bible. She got it like the snap of your fingers. It was like, "Now, I have context to study this in."

I told her that what I was doing here was trying to show you what would look to you like a 10,000 piece puzzle and you're thinking, 'how in the world am I going to put this puzzle together?' And I said to her there are still 10,000 pieces here to learn in this Bible, but I told her that what I did today was to give her a glimpse of the box. I said that I gave you a picture of the box, so that you could see, at least, what this puzzle is supposed to look like when you get it all put together. And, **they got it!!!** They got it. Hopefully, they're hooked. I gave them some things to read together and they are going to come back next week and we will get back into that. So, this is what Jesus is doing.

What is Jesus thinking when He is talking to this Samaritan woman? Certainly He knew that there was something more important than cultural norms or what others would say and think. Jesus was counter-cultural. John tells us that Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. And the word is interesting. Note: the Jews have "no dealings" with Samaritans.

The word he uses here is for "no dealings" is (γαρ συγχρῶνται) meaning association with. It means literally, "to pour together; to mingle by pouring together, implying **no** dealings". If you **had** "dealings" you would be mingling something together, pouring something together. **No** dealings means to confound, to perplex, to confuse, or to amaze. It's full of uproar. When you try to separate something out, it's the opposite of pouring it together.

Jews and Samaritans have **no dealings** with one another. The word means separating out; or causing disruption. It's almost like when in a Chemistry class you are going to separate out compounds from a sample you have. You will have to cause some disruption in order to separate out those things that are bonded so closely.

What John is saying is that there is a disruption here. Here are two people in the midst of this cultural disruption; there is no dealing that they have with each other. The **mixing of the races** causes confusion. The argument used in the South for whites and blacks not intermarrying a long time ago, was because of the confusion that their children were going to experience. That was one of the main arguments that I heard growing up; the reasons why a white person and a black person should not marry, was because they feared that their children were going to be confused. It was feared that they wouldn't fit into either culture.

However, Jesus came to mix people together. **Ephesians Chapters 2:11-18**

Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (which is done in the body by human hands)—¹² remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵ by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. ¹⁷ He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

Ephesians 3:2-6 says, “Surely you have heard about the administration of God’s grace that was given to me for you, ³ that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. ⁴ In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God’s holy apostles and prophets. ⁶ This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.”

Jesus came to fit them together into one family, one body, and one bride. Jesus was not a racist but it’s curious why He chose, at the *beginning* of His ministry to offer the gospel to Samaria. This is the very beginning of his ministry. Why is he stopping here and why is he offering the gospel in Samaria? Later in **Matthew 10:6**, He tells his apostles to go only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. In **Matthew 15:21-28** he tells the Syrophenician woman whose daughter is demon possessed, that He is sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; but He healed her daughter anyway. He also gave in to His mother in **John 2** when He did the miracle at the marriage feast.

There are different times when Jesus seemed to be on a certain track, but then He would kind of divert from the track. He would kind of give in to teach these people or to heal this person. Jesus was maintaining the idea that if you’re not a pure Jew ... It’s the whole idea that was carried into the gospels, “To the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.”

So, what does this mean? Did Jesus deviate from His plan, from His mission as spelled out by the Father both in timing and in audience? Could He just not resist the needs and the pleas of this woman? Were the Samaritans within His mission since they were half-Jews? What did Jesus think about all these matters?

Of course, His actions show us not to judge “value” *culturally*. Women were important and even Samaritan women who had been married **5** times and had a boyfriend; they were important too. Jesus is communicating a lot just by having this encounter. He is telling us a whole lot about the way God thinks just by this encounter ... this social intercourse even if we never know what they talked about specifically. But even if we didn’t have any of the rest of the story, just by Him having this encounter tells us a lot about Jesus.

Ruth: It just struck me that the Pharisees were at Him already. And He went to Samaria on His way to Galilee which is not the way Jews generally went to Galilee from Jerusalem. So, maybe He was there to keep the Pharisees from following Him, to stop them from disrupting their discussion, and in the process of that, He had personally, as God, did not see the Samaritans as less.

So, this woman had a need for redemption beyond the average need because of the life she had lived. She had been searching, because her questions show that she is a spiritual person. So, God, who had heard her before this, thought, “We’ll take care of this while we’re here. It wasn’t in my plan, but we’ll take care of it while we’re here, because my plan is that I am going to have this time for the Jews to know; and it’s from the Jews that it will go forward.” But every person is special to God. There isn’t a person who is not. And the **Jews** did not see that, and they needed to; and *we* need to.

Rod: It was **always** God’s plan for all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. That was always His plan. Even in the Old Testament, He wanted the Jews to be such a light for the Gentiles so they would be streaming into Jerusalem wanting to hear about God. It didn’t work out that way most of the time.

Carole: He even said to Abraham, “All nations will be blessed through you.”

Rod: Exactly

Carole: So we know that it was to go to all nations. And somewhere in the New Testament, probably in the King James from the way I am going to say it, Jesus said “I **need** to go through Samaria”. So He **must** have known that He was being sent there for a purpose because he said, **He had to go** through Samaria” {**John 4:4**}.

Macy: That brought up a question in my mind. Maybe the Samaritans, this woman and the town’s people ... maybe this meeting would mean more to them. They were so open and more willing, so maybe it would spread faster {in Samaria}, flying through there, and the Jews were a little more hard-hearted. It just makes me wonder.

Rod: It’s a little bit of a mixed message as we go through the rest of the story of Jesus, but certainly, they were very receptive at this point and we’ll see that later.

Jesus was color-blind. He was sex-blind. He was race-blind. He was status-blind. Jesus saw people, thirsty people, and He simply offered them a drink.

In His answer to her, she would ask Jesus for a drink of living water ... **if** she knew **the gift of God** and **if** she knew the One who was speaking to her. ‘Asking’ is preceded by knowing **two things**: **1.** our deepest **need**, and **2.** knowing the only One who could **meet that need**. Primarily speaking, if we’re going to talk about applying this way of reaching people through evangelism, is that the person who is the most receptive evangelistically is one who already knows they have a need, and they know, in general at least, that need can be met. They may not know “how” to do it. They may not know exactly how to get that done, but if they know what their need **is**, and they know **who** can meet that need, that’s half the battle.

This is what Jesus is saying 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.**” He is saying, ‘If you knew who I was... if you knew Me; and if you knew what I could do for you, you would be asking **Me** for a drink. It wouldn’t be Me asking **you** for water.’ The word for gift here is (δωρεαν).

Jesus defines this as a free **gift** ... a free **gift** of God. It’s a benefit. It is used in **Acts 2:38** with regard to the **gift** (δωρεαν) of the Holy Spirit. Simon the sorcerer was **condemned** for trying to **buy** this free **gift** (δωρεαν) with money in **Acts 8:20**. In **Acts 10:45** the Jewish believers were amazed that the **gift** (δωρεα) of the Holy Spirit was poured out on Gentiles. In **Acts 11:17** it says, “**So if God gave them the same gift (δωρεαν) he gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could stand in God’s way?**”

In **Romans 5:15** it says, “But the **gift** is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God’s grace and **the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ**, overflow to the many!” The word **gift ‘here’** is a different Greek word, charisma (χαρισμα), but it is by the grace of Jesus Christ. It is called the gift (δωρεαν) of righteousness in **Romans 5:17**. **Jesus is** the indescribable gift (δωρεα) in **2 Cor. 9:15**. So it is used in many different ways whether it is the word dorea (δωρεα) or the word charisma (χαρισμα). Both of those are Greek words that stand for “gift”.

In the **John 4** context, the gift (δωρεαν) of God is living water. The corollary to this, or the reference to his later on is **John 7:37-39**, “On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. ³⁸ Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.” ³⁹ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.” Here He describes that this living water is really the Holy Spirit. Remember that **John the Baptist** said that **Jesus** is the One who will baptize with / in the Holy Spirit.

And that’s why he said, “If you knew who I was”, you would know that **I** have the ability to give you the **Holy Spirit**. In essence, that is what He’s saying to her. He doesn’t flesh that out in this exchange with her but it’s essentially what He is saying to her.

Brian: It looks like to me to be a kind of “play on words.” In Japan when they talk about “living water” they are talking about “running water.” You can’t make tea with **dead water**. You can’t make tea unless you use “**living water**”. And in the temples, they had to be located by “living water.” They had to be built by streams to have “living water.”

What I’ve seen and from what Ruth is working on regarding the Jewish ritual cleansings is that they had to use “living water.” It had to be fresh, clean, **running** water. So Jesus comes up and is talking about “living water” ... fresh, clean running water. She may be thinking, “I could use that”. But He’s using a double entendre (ambiguity, a double meaning) here... spiritual compared to flowing water.

Rod: That’s interesting. I had never thought about this but I mentioned this a few minutes ago. **We have this well. A well, typically, is stagnant water.** It’s water sitting there. But not far from there was an artesian spring. An artesian spring is living water. I mean, it’s just gushing. I got to see the most amazing artesian spring in Haiti one time, and the most beautiful valley. But it’s really amazing how the water keeps gushing, gushing and gushing. It seems to never run out. I don’t know how it does that, but I wonder if maybe **she** is thinking, “Oh, are we going over to the artesian spring over at the base of Mount Gerizim and we will get some living water there instead of this well water? It is interesting what might have flashed through her head knowing the geography of the area.

How would this woman know anything about the “**gift**” of God? And I’m not sure that Jesus expected her to know. But there must be a need **inside** of her. She may not know how to articulate any of this, or what He’s talking about on the surface, but there must be, inside of her, something that corresponds to what He is offering to her - the gift He’s offering her.

I mean, it would be like me, offering you a drink of water and you have no idea what that is or what that's supposed to do. Of course that's a common thing for us, but ...

So, it's a thirst that corresponds to the gift. She certainly **could** know the emptiness. She lived with it. She has tried to fill it with other things, so she knows she has a need. And now she is beginning to hear that what she needs is "living water" but she doesn't have a clue what He's talking about yet.

What would a thirsty man know about water even though he has not had any? On a scientific level, probably not know much; but on an experiential level; quite a bit. It will satisfy my craving and cause me to be 'okay, to be refreshed' and it will stop the pain and anxiety that goes with it. It will give hope of survival, of continued life. It will nourish and awaken life within. Water, to a parched man, and land, brings beauty, life, hope, energy and encouragement, positive feelings, faith, coping, life, freedom, wellness and hydration. Of these most basic needs; water, food; these things must be understood experientially even if we cannot describe them scientifically. We just know the effects they have on us.

So, the desire is intake; there is no need to cultivate it. You do not have to cultivate the desire for water. You are born with a desire for water, for nourishment. It is natural and it is constant. If the woman had known who it was who says to you, "give me a drink" ... Jesus was, to her, just another Jewish man.

Isaiah 53:2 NASB says that He was *just an ordinary man*. "For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him."

The **NIV** says, "He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him." *She was in the presence of deity and she didn't know it ... yet!*

Simple recognition of Jesus and his true identity is the beginning of faith. Denial of this truth is the **fatal** error of faith. When people do not recognize who Jesus is, ***THAT*** is the fatal error of faith. Faith cannot grow unless you ***acknowledge who Jesus is***. That is why I believe that the cardinal sin, why people will be lost, is "**not**" to believe in Jesus. The cardinal sin is not all the sinful thing they do in their lives. Those are just symptomatic of people not believing in Jesus. The cardinal sin is "**not believing**" in Him.

Knowing leads to asking, and asking leads to getting. Acknowledging Jesus as the source of life means ***I am not the source, I cannot provide what I need, nor can "things" provide that, nor can others provide for that need.*** Identity is everything. It all hinges on "**Who Jesus is**". **He** knew who He was, and **He** knew what He had to offer. It was the same as with Nicodemus, and the Jews in **John 2**.

Jesus got to the point quickly. He redirects the conversation toward the spiritual. His focus is on what is truly important, helpful and fulfilling. Just like Nicodemus and the Jews in **John 2**, with the cleansing of the temple, the woman's thoughts remained Earthly centered. She, too, remained in earthly centered mode.

Nicodemus asked, in response to Jesus' teaching about being born again, how can one be born when he's old? This lady does the same thing. How can you draw water out of a deep well when you have nothing to draw with? Her mind has not switched over to the spiritual yet. She's locked into the circumstances. So neither of them could understand practically how 'what Jesus was saying was possible'. That was the problem for both of them coming to faith. That's the problem of '**man**' coming to faith ... of **how can this be possible?**

In her mind, what you're offering me is not possible because you don't have anything to draw water with. I cannot see that you have any possibility of helping me with anything. In fact, **you're** the one asking **me** for a drink of water.

It's only until we entertain the idea that Jesus can do what seems impossible, that we will have faith. How can I believe in something that, to me, makes no sense? **The flaw in this thinking is twofold.**

First, it does not take into account ***Who is speaking to us*** ... the **true** identity of Jesus. What is possible is wrapped up in ***who said it.***

Secondly, it does not take into account **the Spiritual nature of the statement.** If Jesus had wanted to stick Nicodemus back into his mother's womb to experience birth again, I guess He could have done it – probably to the objection of his mother.

If Jesus had wanted to get water from Jacob's well, He could have brought it up. He didn't need a bucket and a rope to get water out of that well. He could have just commanded the water and it could have come right out of the well. That would have been mere child's play compared with what He was actually offering to do for her! To give new birth and living water required profound supernatural wisdom and strength. And that's what I want to know ... where did Jesus get that living water?

Zao (ζαω) is water; **living** water (2198). It was the water of a running stream. It was flowing water as opposed to a stagnant pool. It is a fountain; it is not a marsh. How do you turn a swamp into an artesian spring? I am reminded of the artesian spring in Kazal, Haiti. There, they built a concrete trench to capture the water as it rolled down into the valley so they could use it for irrigation and for drinking water.

In **John 7:38**, it says that the person who believes in Jesus, ***from his innermost being*** shall flow rivers of living water. **Verse 39** says that He spoke of the Spirit who would soon be given after He was glorified. Literally, what He is saying here is this being is the belly colias (κοιλιασ) from which we get the word colon. It is a cavity. The word colon means cavity. And out of that cavity, or that womb or that belly, something can come forth from that place. It's interesting that he talks about belly here in regard to the living water and He talked about birth; being birthed out of the cavity of the mother's womb is something that comes from deep inside us; something can come forth from that place. The living water must be taken into us. We drink it. This is our decision to believe. All resistance must be broken down. We must swallow it, all of it.

Why does a child resist food or taking a pill? This living water is to be a river, He says.

The same work is used in **Revelation 22:1-2** “Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, **flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb** ² down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.” The fountainhead of the river is the throne of God and the Lamb! **It is as clear as crystal.** This river supports the true life that provides healing for the nations. *Somehow this river must be put inside of me.* And the **common denominator** is the Holy Spirit.

This woman certainly had no clue at all (to what I am saying here), but she knew that fresh-flowing water sounded good to her. If it were flowing, then she would not, through her human effort, she not have to keep coming daily and drawing it out fist over fist. To even have stagnant water from the bottom of a well, we have to a means to draw it – a bucket, a rope. Jesus had neither.

What is my bucket and rope? (That’s “preacher thinking.) Do I think I am going to get what I need out of the bottom of a stagnant well ...? What is my bucket and rope that I keep using over and over again *trying* to get that out? Ponder that.

In **verse 12**, the woman is still thinking of the source of living water, but all she can see is Jacob’s well. We can become nostalgic about or for the things we know. David commented once to his “mighty men” that he would love to have a drink from the well in Bethlehem. Sure enough, they fought their way through the front lines to get it for him, *and then*, David ended up pouring the water out on the ground **because** “*it cost too much for him to drink.*” (And I often wondered how those mighty men felt after they had just risked their lives to get their king this water from a well in Bethlehem. We could have been *killed* on this journey. **We** get it to you, and **you** say that it cost too much and you pour it out on the ground! I don’t know).

That’s a hard one, but there’s a lesson in that. And it’s found in **2 Samuel 23:13-17**. During harvest time, three of the thirty chief warriors came down to David at the cave of Adullam, while a band of Philistines was encamped in the Valley of Rephaim. ¹⁴ At that time David was in the stronghold, and the Philistine garrison was at Bethlehem. ¹⁵ David longed for water and said, “Oh, that someone would get me a drink of water from the well near the gate of Bethlehem!” ¹⁶ So the three mighty warriors broke through the Philistine lines, drew water from the well near the gate of Bethlehem and carried it back to David. But he refused to drink it; instead, he poured it out before the Lord. ¹⁷ “Far be it from me, Lord, to do this!” he said. “Is it not the blood of men who went at the risk of their lives?” And David would not drink it.

So living water (versus well water or contaminated water) makes the best food, or tastes the best. We are saying that these make us “feel good” and the feeling grows stronger because of time. It could be who the food or drink is associated with. In other words, what I’m getting at is that there is something *special* about *this being Jacob’s well*. This is the water that Jacob drank from. This is where the patriarch’s came to get their water and I’m drinking the same water. This has to be the best water in the land.

That's probably why David felt that the water in Bethlehem had to be the best water because that is the water he drank as a child. It could be like me having that tannic acid water in some of the places in South Georgia that made your sweet tea as 'black as a midnight swamp' as one of the poets said. {The Tannins may give a tangy or tart aftertaste to water. It may also cause water to have a musty or earthy odor.} Some people might say that they would just love to have that again. It was *nasty* water. If you grew up with it you might think it's the best water in the world because of "feelings".

We want to recreate experiences. We do this with sports teams. Once we've had a positive experience, we want to repeat it; but many things only 'taste good' in our minds, or in our memories. That's one problem with 'lust'. We imagine how wonderful it would be, *but the actual experience may not live up to the expectation.* It may have such a hook in it that it leaves a sour taste and it wears off after time.

We'll stop here. I'll just simply say that there are probably a lot of things that are going on in this particular story that don't quite meet the eye. You probably had to be there to get it all. And that's really the introduction. We haven't yet gotten to all the meat of it yet. He has a lot of conversations to come.