

The Samaritan Woman

Part IV

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We have seen that Jesus revealed himself to the woman of Samaria as the Messiah. She had said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming. When He comes, He will explain everything to us." Then Jesus had replied, "I who speak to you am He."

Just then Christ's disciples returned. They had done some shopping while their Master rested at the well and now they came back with some groceries to fix a meal. When they saw Jesus talking to this woman they were very surprised. First, because He was talking to a woman. This was simply not done in Jewish society. You never talked to a woman in public, not even if she was your own wife. The other reason for their surprise was that it was a Samaritan woman their Master was speaking with. How could He demean Himself so? It was bad enough that He had compelled them to pass through this cursed territory, but did He have to socialize with these people too? They couldn't understand it.

I do not know whether they noticed anything about this woman that betrayed her immoral character. It is possible that something about her dress or face pointed in that direction. If so, they must have been amazed even more. That Jesus would talk to such a woman! They were embarrassed by it all. Something in their eyes must have told the Samaritan woman that her presence was not appreciated by these twelve companions of Christ. She sensed that the conversation had come to an end. No doubt she would have liked to stay and hear more of the precious truths that flowed from Jesus' lips. But in God's providence it was not to be. She had to leave. There was something else for her to do. She had been privileged to sit and gaze upon the face of her dear Lord, but now she may do the next best thing: serve Him!

It says the woman left her waterpot, and went into the city. Her waterpot — that heavy stone jug that she had brought to the well a few hours earlier to draw water — she forgot all about that jug now.

She has more on her mind now than her daily chores. These of course, will come back. We are not to think that she never came back to pick up her container again. Our daily work and duties are important and a Christian is not to be so spiritual that he should not

concern himself with such mundane things as drawing water. For the moment the Samaritan woman has other, more important things to do. She runs into town and in great excitement she exclaims to her neighbours, "Come, see a man who told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"

This is the work she feels called to do first: she must preach Christ! But may women preach? Not in an official way through ordination and laying on of hands, but in the sense of witnessing and evangelizing, most certainly. When it comes to such lay preaching the New Testament shows that women have been at least as active as men in this work.

"Come and see," she says. Not *go* and see. This is often the approach of those who preach to others what they have not experienced themselves. The Samaritan woman has met Christ and she wants others to meet Him too. Therefore, come along people, and I'll lead you to Him!

This is true evangelism. It can only be done by those who have experienced the saving power of Christ in their own lives. This woman could say that something had happened to her. Come, see a man who told me all things that ever I did! Is not this the Christ? She seeks to prove to her neighbours that the Stranger she met at the well was the Christ. How did she do this? What arguments did she present? She might have said, He taught me the proper way to worship God, but this would not have brought these people to Christ. They would have replied, who does he think He is!

She could have pointed to His great prophetic gifts. This rabbi told me strange things about a new age when God will be worshipped in spirit and in truth. They probably would have said, woman, what do you know about such things? They knew her as the woman of loose morals. Therefore she had no credibility with them. No one took her seriously. How then was she ever going to persuade these skeptical men that she had really met the Messiah?

There was only one way. She had to tell them that the Man at the well knew all about her sinful past. So she said in effect: You men know very well what kind of person I have been. It's no use for me to try hiding it. I went to draw water this morning and there sat this Stranger at Jacob's well, this Jew, and He told me all about myself. Things that I remember very well, but also things I had forgotten. He told me everything I had done. Now isn't this the Christ? Don't you think He must be the Messiah we have been waiting for?

Notice how she put it. She doesn't say, this is the Christ. She doesn't want to give the impression that they should believe it on her authority. She wants them to make that judgment for themselves. How very tactful she is!

And this approach worked. The men were interested. They were startled at what the woman told them. For her to talk so openly about her sins and with apparent remorse too — this was really something. If that Stranger at the well had brought this about He

must be someone very special indeed. Therefore they accepted her invitation. They followed her back to the well to meet Christ. The result was that many of them came to know the Saviour that day.

Here we see what a simple, personal testimony can accomplish with God's blessing. Do you have such a testimony? Can you tell others what the Lord has done for your soul? Can you say what this woman said: "Come, see a Man who told me all that I ever did!"

No, that does not mean that Christ told her literally everything she had done wrong in her life. That would have been physically impossible, given the brief time Jesus spent talking to her. What the woman meant, therefore, was this: He has told me enough about myself to convince me that I am a sinner. By showing me my terrible breach of the seventh commandment I have seen that my whole life is full of sin.

Did you ever see a thunderstorm at night? Everything around you is dark. You can't see a thing anywhere. But then the lightning starts. By one flash of lightning everything is lit up. Maybe it struck only in one place — some tree in the field. Though only one object was touched, all around you was light and the whole landscape was clearly revealed for a brief moment. So it was with the Samaritan woman. When Christ revealed to her that one particular sin, she suddenly saw her whole life in the light of God's holiness.

It was that way with David too. When Nathan the prophet convicted him of the double crime of adultery and murder he immediately repented. Notice that he did not limit his confession to those particular sins. He realized that his whole life was sinful, yes, that he was shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin (Psalm 51). In other words, when the Lord saves us He usually begins by convicting us of one or more particular sins. With further light these particular sins are traced right to their source and fountain: our wicked and corrupt heart! Then we are led from our own actual sins to the original sin we inherited from Adam and we begin to grieve over our whole sinful existence. Not that every awakened sinner sees this clearly right away. But enough is shown him that he realizes, I am lost; I need a Saviour.

This is the work of Christ by His Spirit. There is no better evidence that Christ has begun His good work in us than that we are convicted of our sins. Salvation always includes these two things: a knowledge of our sins and a knowledge of Christ, the Saviour from our sins.

This woman came to see herself as a sinner in God's sight and therefore her eyes were also opened for Christ the only Saviour. As a poor, lost sinner she looked into the eyes of that compassionate Saviour, and immediately she trusted in Him. She believed He was able and willing to save her, even though she was a Samaritan.

Have you met this Saviour in your life? Have you come to Him believing that He is the Messiah sent by God to suffer and die for your sins? Then you are really blessed like the Samaritan woman. Then you should follow her example. Come, see, she said to her people. She was confident that if they would only come, Jesus would receive them as

He had received her. She had experienced His love herself, therefore she could commend Him to other sinners.

“Come and see. When I came to the well He did not give me an angry look. Even when I refused to give Him a drink, He did not rebuke me. He was so kind. Though He told me all about my sins, He did it in such a way that I felt drawn to Him right away. Come sinners, and I’ll introduce you to Him and I’m sure He will receive you too.”

If we would witness like that, putting ourselves on the same level with other sinners, I’m sure we would see similar results. Come and see. If I can be saved, she means, anybody can be saved. Paul said the same thing. I was a blasphemer and a persecutor, but I obtained mercy, therefore it is possible for you too.

Maybe there were some men there whom she had tempted to sin in the past. Now she tries to entice them in a different way. She now wants them to come to Christ. What a change has taken place in her!

Grace makes its recipients generous. Then you want everybody to have what you have. Then you would like to see the whole world come to the Saviour. May we all come to know Christ as this woman did and then witness as she did, saying to whoever wants to listen:

He told me all that e’er I did
And told me all was pardon’d too;
And now, like her, as He has bid,
I live to point Him out to you.

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