

5So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. 6Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon. 7A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." 8(His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) 9The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) 10Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." 11The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? 12Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" 13Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, 14but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." 15The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water." 16Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." 17The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; 18for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!" 19The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. 20Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem." 21Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 22You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. 24God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." 25The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us." 26Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you."

27Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you want?" or, "Why are you speaking with her?" 28Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, 29"Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?" 30They left the city and were on their way to him. 31Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, "Rabbi, eat something." 32But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." 33So the disciples said to one another, "Surely no one has brought him something to eat?" 34Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. 35Do you not say, 'Four months more, then comes the harvest'? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. 36The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. 37For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' 38I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor." 39Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I have ever done." 40So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. 41And many more believed because of his word. 42They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world."

It all began with a thirsty Jesus. He asked the woman for a drink of water. Since she had a bucket and he had none - water was something she could give.

But his asking was crossing some boundaries. “How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?” the woman asked. Jews did not have much to do with Samaritans. A man – a woman – that can always be complicated.

Jesus replied, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.”

Before long they are not talking about water at all but about the one who gives eternal life – Jesus. To drink the Spirit he gives it to have life that is eternal. And when the woman asks for the living water Jesus changes the subject completely.

“Go call your husband and come back.”

In a world where women were the property of men – owned by fathers and passed on to husbands this might not seem such a strange interruption.

The woman replied, “I have no husband.”

Jesus said, “You are right for you have had five husbands and the one you have now is not your husband.”

Jesus knows this woman – she calls him a prophet. They keep on talking until Jesus tells her he is the Messiah. Then she goes into the village.

She told the people there, “Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done. He cannot be the Messiah can he?”

And the people came out to see – spent two days with Jesus and ended up confessing to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world.”

This woman is the one who brought the people of her village to Jesus. Jesus’ disciples did not. They were in the village getting food – they might have told the people there all about Jesus but no villagers return with them. This

woman on the other hand had just met Jesus spoke about his knowing all about her and asked the question of whether he could be the Messiah. And the villagers responded.

On your street, and in your classroom and in the store or the floor where you work there are people who are thirsty. You know them. They show their thirst in many different ways. They want to be known –not just on the surface but to be really known. They do not want to be judged but to be received. They try to satisfy their thirst in so many ways that are not life giving. You know that faith in Jesus would make all the difference for them.

But you are afraid that you do not have the right words to convince them. So you say nothing.

If ever anyone did not have the right words it was this woman. “I met a man who told me everything I ever did.” she said. We all know that is not true – Jesus told her a few things – not everything. And then she said, “He cannot be the Messiah, can he?” Her question implies that the answer will be no. She could not have asked the question in any worse way. Yet the villagers came to see Jesus and believed.

Could God use your words to bring some of the thirsty people of your life to drink from the living water, Christ? Yes.

How would you begin? Maybe the way Jesus began with the woman – with questions and a desire to really know and understand this person. Telling another about Christ begins with asking questions and listening. As you listen invite. Invite them to come here to hear about Jesus and to receive Jesus as he offers himself.

The woman did not have all the answers but through her witness people came and they found they spent time in Jesus presence and their thirst was quenched.

Last week a man named Nicodemus came to Jesus. He came declaring that Jesus was from God. Nicodemus was a Pharisee – a very moral and respected man. Yet he did not come to believe in Jesus.

The woman was opposite Nicodemus in so many ways – he has a name – she is just call a woman; he is honored for his moral living – she is living with a man to whom she is not married; he was a Jew – she a Samaritan; he a man – she a woman; Yet she was the one God used to tell of Jesus.

Think of all the reasons you would not be the one to witness to Jesus. The more you can come up with the more likely it is that you are the one God will use. Do not ask me why – that is just the way God does things.

Invite the people you know to come and see Jesus.