

The Gospel of John (4:1-26)

A House Church Outline



1. Praise *(Purpose: To worship God)*

- What are you thankful for this week? *(let the group's secretary write these down in an A4 hardcover or some notebook)*
- Song Service
 - Sing a few songs of praise to God

2. Pray *(Purpose: To carry each others' burdens and to seek the Lord)*

- What challenges did you have this week? *(write these down in an A4 hardcover or some notebook)*
- Go into a season of prayer

3. Review *(Purpose: To learn accountability)*

- Tell us how it went with what you promised to do in last week's meeting? *(e.g. Who did your share your faith with this past week? Who did you minister to? How did actioning your I WILL STATEMENT go?)*
- Where people have failed to fulfil what they said they would, do not be harsh with them but gently encourage them to try again in the coming week. Give them more support by phoning or joining them in the week.

4. Give *(Purpose: To be good stewards of our monies)*

- This is the time to return tithes and offerings. If done electronically, kindly ensure that you get the bank account details of your local church from your treasurer. Don't forget to complete an envelope and to send the breakdown to him/her.

5. Discover *(Purpose: To learn to listen to God, and be obedient to His Word)*

• **Notes for the facilitator**

- Read *Desire of Ages (DA)*, p. 183-190
- Vs 3: "The reason for this temporary withdrawal from Judea was to avoid useless conflict with the Pharisees on the one hand, and with John and his disciples on the other. The decision to leave Judea was prompted, not by fear, but by prudence (cf. Matt. 10:23)" – *SDA Bible Commentary*
- "The Jews and the Samaritans were bitter enemies, and as far as possible avoided all dealing with each other. **To trade with the Samaritans in case of necessity was indeed counted lawful by the rabbis; but all social intercourse with them was condemned. A Jew would not borrow from a Samaritan, nor receive a kindness, not even a morsel of bread or a cup of water.** The disciples, in buying food, were acting in harmony with the custom of their nation. But beyond this they did not go. To ask a favor of the Samaritans, or in any way seek to benefit them, did not enter into the thought of even Christ's disciples" (DA 183).
- "A woman of Samaria approached, and seeming unconscious of His presence, filled her pitcher with water. As she turned to go away, Jesus asked her for a drink. Such a favor no Oriental would withhold. In the East, water was called "the gift of God." To offer a drink to the thirsty traveler was held to be a duty so sacred that the Arabs of the desert would go out of their way in order to perform it. The hatred between Jews and Samaritans prevented the woman from offering a kindness to Jesus; but **the Saviour was seeking to find the key to this heart, and with the tact born of divine love, He asked, not offered, a favor. The offer of a kindness might have been rejected; but trust awakens trust**" (DA 183).
- Vs 10: "**You wonder that I should ask of you even so small a favor as a draught of water from the well at our feet. Had you asked of Me, I would have given you to drink**

of the water of everlasting life. The woman had not comprehended the words of Christ, but she felt their solemn import. Her light, bantering manner began to change (DA 184)

- Vs 10: **Living water** – i.e. fresh water, flowing water, or life[-giving] water (cf. Eze. 47:9). Jesus here refers to Himself (see John 7:37; cf. ch. 6:27, 51). The prophet Jeremiah spoke of the Lord as ‘the fountain of living waters’ (chs. 2:13; 17:13; cf. Isa. 12:3; Rev. 22:1) – *SDA Bible Commentary*
- Vs 11: Supposing that Jesus spoke of the well before them, she said, ‘Sir, Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast Thou that living water? Art Thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself?’ She saw before her only a thirsty traveler, wayworn and dusty. In her mind she compared Him with the honored patriarch Jacob. She cherished the feeling, which is so natural, that no other well could be equal to that provided by the fathers. **She was looking backward to the fathers, forward to the Messiah's coming, while the Hope of the fathers, the Messiah Himself, was beside her, and she knew Him not. How many thirsting souls are today close by the living fountain, yet looking far away for the wellsprings of life!**” (DA 184).
- Vs13: **“He who seeks to quench his thirst at the fountains of this world will drink only to thirst again. Everywhere men are unsatisfied.** They long for something to supply the need of the soul. Only One can meet that want. The need of the world, ‘The Desire of all nations,’ is Christ. **The divine grace which He alone can impart, is as living water, purifying, refreshing, and invigorating the soul**” (DA 187)
- **“Jesus did not convey the idea that merely one draft of the water of life would suffice the receiver. He who tastes of the love of Christ will continually long for more; but he seeks for nothing else.** The riches, honors, and pleasures of the world do not attract him. The constant cry of his heart is, More of Thee. And He who reveals to the soul its necessity is waiting to satisfy its hunger and thirst. Every human resource and dependence will fail. The cisterns will be emptied, the pools become dry; but our Redeemer is an inexhaustible fountain. **We may drink, and drink again, and ever find a fresh supply. He in whom Christ dwells has within himself the fountain of blessing,—“a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” From this source he may draw strength and grace sufficient for all his needs**” (DA 187).
- Vs 15: “As Jesus spoke of the living water, the woman looked upon Him with wondering attention. **He had aroused her interest, and awakened a desire for the gift of which He spoke.** She perceived that it was not the water of Jacob's well to which He referred; for of this she used continually, drinking, and thirsting again. ‘Sir,’ she said, ‘give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw’” (DA 187).
- Vs 16: “Jesus now abruptly turned the conversation. Before this soul could receive the gift He longed to bestow, she must be brought to recognize her sin and her Saviour.
- Vs 17: “... She hoped to prevent all questioning in that direction. But the Saviour continued, ‘Thou hast well said, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly’. **The listener trembled. A mysterious hand was turning the pages of her life history, bringing to view that which she had hoped to keep forever hidden.** Who was He that could read the secrets of her life? There came to her thoughts of eternity, of the future Judgment, when all that is now hidden shall be revealed. In its light, **conscience was awakened**” (DA 187).
- Vs 19: She could deny nothing; but **she tried to evade all mention of a subject so unwelcome....** Then, hoping to silence conviction, she turned to points of religious controversy. If this was a prophet, surely He could give her instruction concerning these matters that had been so long disputed. Patiently Jesus permitted her to lead the

conversation whither she would. Meanwhile He watched for the opportunity of again bringing the truth home to her heart” (DA 188).

- Vs 20: **“The place of worship had been a subject of contention between the Jews and the Samaritans....** When the temple at Jerusalem was rebuilt in the days of Ezra, the Samaritans wished to join the Jews in its erection. This privilege was refused them, and a bitter animosity sprang up between the two peoples. **The Samaritans built a rival temple on Mount Gerizim.** Here they worshiped in accordance with the Mosaic ritual, though they did not wholly renounce idolatry. But disasters attended them, their temple was destroyed by their enemies, and they seemed to be under a curse; yet they still clung to their traditions and their forms of worship. They would not acknowledge the temple at Jerusalem as the house of God, nor admit that the religion of the Jews was superior to their own” (DA 188).
- Vs 21: **“Jesus had shown that He was free from Jewish prejudice against the Samaritans. Now He sought to break down the prejudice of this Samaritan against the Jews.** While referring to the fact that the faith of the Samaritans was corrupted with idolatry, He declared that the great truths of redemption had been committed to the Jews, and that from among them the Messiah was to appear” (DA 188).
- Vs 23: “He desired to lift the thoughts of His hearer above matters of form and ceremony, and questions of controversy.... **Not by seeking a holy mountain or a sacred temple are men brought into communion with heaven. Religion is not to be confined to external forms and ceremonies.** The religion that comes from God is the only religion that will lead to God. **In order to serve Him aright, we must be born of the divine Spirit.** This will purify the heart and renew the mind, giving us a new capacity for knowing and loving God. It will give us a willing obedience to all His requirements. This is true worship. It is the fruit of the working of the Holy Spirit. By the Spirit every sincere prayer is indited, and such prayer is acceptable to God. **Wherever a soul reaches out after God, there the Spirit's working is manifest, and God will reveal Himself to that soul. For such worshipers He is seeking.** He waits to receive them, and to make them His sons and daughters” (DA 189).
- Vs 26: “As the woman talked with Jesus, she was impressed with His words. Never had she heard such sentiments from the priests of her own people or from the Jews. As the past of her life had been spread out before her, she had been made sensible of her great want. She realized her soul thirst, which the waters of the well of Sychar could never satisfy. **Nothing that had hitherto come in contact with her had so awakened her to a higher need.** Jesus had convinced her that He read the secrets of her life; yet she felt that He was her friend, pitying and loving her. While the very purity of His presence condemned her sin, He had spoken no word of denunciation, but had told her of His grace, that could renew the soul. **She began to have some conviction of His character. The question arose in her mind, Might not this be the long-looked-for Messiah?** She said to Him, ‘I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when He is come, He will tell us all things.’ Jesus answered, ‘I that speak unto thee am He’” (DA 189).
- VS 26: “As the woman heard these words, faith sprang up in her heart. She accepted the wonderful announcement from the lips of the divine Teacher.... **The plain statement made by Christ to this woman could not have been made to the self-righteous Jews.** Christ was far more reserved when He spoke to them. That which had been withheld from the Jews, and which the disciples were afterward enjoined to keep secret, was revealed to her. Jesus saw that she would make use of her knowledge in bringing others to share His grace” (DA 190).
- *Read John 4:1-26. Preferably let one person read it. Let everyone then put down their Bibles and get the group to reconstruct the passage in their own words. This teaches the group to be careful in quotation Scripture correctly and to use it as the basis of their discussions.*

- **Discussion Questions** (*use only a few*). *The notes in italics after some of the questions below are for the facilitator, and not to be read out to the group.*
 - Why do you think Jesus left the area just because His disciples were baptising more people than John the Baptist? What lessons are there in this approach (cf. Matt. 10:23)? (*ask one question at a time*)
 - How might a person feel put off by another's background, nationality, gender, or race? How do these barriers affect the Christian's witness (*ask one question at a time*)
 - What are some practical ways we can break these barriers in order to share the gospel with people?
 - How is the world's need for Jesus and salvation like thirst? What are practical ways in which Jesus quenches this thirst? (*ask one question at a time*)
 - What evangelistic lessons can we learn from Jesus' interaction with the woman at the well? What were the steps He used to move her from resistance to acceptance? (*ask one question at a time*)
 - Why do you think Jesus suddenly changed the subject, and asked her to call her husband?
 - What did this woman's past possibly reveal about her?
 - What does it mean to worship God in spirit and in truth?
 - What is the difference between false and genuine worship?
 - Why do you think Jesus revealed Himself as Messiah to this Gentile woman, when he refused do so to His own people, the Jews (cf. John 10:24. See vss 25-27 for a hint)
- **Application Questions** (*select a few depending on your time. One has to be the I WILL STATEMENT*)
 - How have you responded to Jesus' invitation to receive living water?
 - When someone alerts you to your sins, do you generally repent or retaliate?
 - How can you encourage someone to quench his/her spiritual thirst this week? Is there anyone you specifically have in mind?
 - What are some prejudices you will ask God to help you overcome?
 - I WILL STATEMENT: Formulate an I will statement in response to what you have discovered in the Word. Let the group's secretary also record these in an A4 notebook. Ensure that everyone gets a chance to give their I WILL STATEMENT. You have to be specific. E.g. "I will share the book, *Steps to Christ*, which outlines how to know Jesus, with 2 friends this week."

6. Share (*Purpose: To be witnesses of our faith*)

- Do you have anyone you could share today's lesson with this week? *Be specific.*

7. Closing prayer

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