

# An amazing offer...

John 4 vs 1-18

In chapter 3 we looked at who Jesus is, and how we get into His kingdom. Now we see:

- Who gets into His Kingdom?

The answer may shock you!

#### Chapter 4

- <sup>1</sup> Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptising more disciples than John -
- <sup>2</sup> although in fact it was not Jesus who baptised, but his disciples.
- <sup>3</sup> So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.
- <sup>4</sup> Now he had to go through Samaria.
- <sup>5</sup> So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph.
- <sup>6</sup> Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

- Jacob was a highly important man in Jewish history. The twelve tribes of Israel are named after his family.
  - One of his sons was Joseph - of 'The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat' fame.
  - His well was a key location in God's 'Promised Land' for the Jews.
  - It's so important, people still visit it today!
- Samaria was the most northern part of Israel. It had been captured by the Assyrians, who deliberately moved in other nations and faiths, to intermarry.
- The result - a Samaritan was totally despised by the Jews, as not being 'pure Jewish'.
- They were not allowed to worship in the Temple in Jerusalem.

7 When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, 'Will you give me a drink?'

8 (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

9 The Samaritan woman said to him, 'You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?' (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

10 Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.'

What is Jesus offering?

- A gift from God v 10

What is the gift?

- 'Living water' v 10

What is 'living water'?

Jesus is using water (H<sub>2</sub>O) and the life that it brings as a picture for the spiritual life that He offers.

What a contrast!

11 'Sir,' the woman said, 'you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water?'

12 Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?'

13 Jesus answered, 'Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again,

14 but whoever drinks the water I give them will **never** thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to **eternal life.**'

What do we get from Jacob's well?

Just a temporary thirst quench...  
'you can't get no satisfaction!' v 13

What do we get from Jesus?

*ETERNAL* Life – never-ending...  
fulfilling, thirst quenching...  
satisfying! v 14

Why does Jesus use  
the image of water?

Water is an *absolute* necessity for life! Jesus has come to satisfy and meet our most basic spiritual need. What He gives will quench our spiritual thirst *for ever* – essential for life!

Spiritual water is a picture of the Holy Spirit – God's gift to us:

- God satisfies our deepest need – forgiveness.
- He takes up residence within us!
- He gives us life to the full!

15 The woman said to him, 'Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.'

16 He told her, 'Go, call your husband and come back.'

17 'I have no husband,' she replied. Jesus said to her, 'You are right when you say you have no husband.'

18 The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.'

*'For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him'.*

### To whom is this offer made?

Think of the last two very different characters that Jesus has talked to.

Imagine they were in the boxing ring... with all the makings of a 'spiritual' contest!

#### In the red corner:

- A non-Jew (a Samaritan)!
- A woman no less!
- Married five times
- Living in sin: there is a name for her... and it's not polite!

#### In the blue corner:

- The high and mighty, totally religious Nicodemus of John chapter 3: 'The teacher of Israel', yet who Jesus told must be 'born again'

### How does this help a

### person who might say...

- 'I've tried everything! Sex, drugs and rock and roll - I just can't get any satisfaction!'
- 'There's no hope for me. I've done too much wrong.'
- 'I'm really religious - but I'm not sure it's enough.'

The answer is in John chapter 3 vs 16, 17

- Jesus has come to die for us so that we need not face God's judgement for our sin. His death gives us the relationship with God we need.

## So what is the conclusion?...

Jesus has come to make this offer of membership in God's Kingdom to the whole world!

He crosses over:

Race/Sex/Religion/Morality

In contrast to the 'snooty' behaviour of the 'pure' law-abiding religious Jews, we see God giving himself to the rank outsider.

Here's a chance to re-read what we've looked at today!

### John 4 vs 1-18

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and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?' (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) <sup>10</sup> Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.' <sup>11</sup> 'Sir,' the woman said, 'you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water?' <sup>12</sup> 'Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?' <sup>13</sup> Jesus answered, 'Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, <sup>14</sup> but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.' <sup>15</sup> The woman said to him, 'Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.' <sup>16</sup> He told her, 'Go, call your husband and come back.' <sup>17</sup> 'I have no husband,' she replied. Jesus said to her, 'You are right when you say you have no husband. <sup>18</sup> The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.'

## What comes next?

- Clarity as to who Jesus is.
- A real lesson for the disciples!
- A village transformed!

# Worship revolution

John 4 vs 19-26

So far in chapter 4 we've seen  
what God gives (v 14 'a spring of  
water welling up to eternal life.')

In the coming pages  
we'll see:

- what God wants
- how it's possible
- who makes it happen

## What God wants

There is lots in this passage about 'worship'...

But what is 'worship'?

<sup>19</sup> 'Sir,' the woman said, 'I can see that you are a prophet.'

<sup>20</sup> Our ancestors worshipped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.'

In Greek the word used here means 'to kiss towards'. This is from the days when subjects were to get on their knees and kiss the ground towards the ruler or god. In other words... total surrender.

Not only were the Samaritans radically different from the Jews, they had also set up their own centre of worship in Samaria!



## Why does Jesus say this?

<sup>21</sup> 'Woman,' Jesus replied,  
'believe me, a time is coming  
when you will worship  
the Father neither on this  
mountain nor in Jerusalem.

<sup>22</sup> You Samaritans worship what  
you do not know; we worship  
what we do know, for salvation  
is from the Jews.

- no need to visit the Vatican
- no need for a pilgrimage to Mecca, or the Holy Land

Now Jesus has come with His offer of forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life, true worship is no longer confined to holy places such as:

- **This mountain** – Samaritans would go to worship on Mount Gerazin instead of the temple in Jerusalem, where they were viewed as impure.
- **Jerusalem** – Three times a year Jews had to go on a pilgrimage to the Temple. Instead Jesus is saying there is no longer any need for pilgrimages to find God – He will soon be fully available everywhere!

## How is it possible?

Jesus' death and the forgiveness He brings means that worship is no longer about special places or times. Instead...

- Our sins have been forgiven...
- We know God personally...
- We have a relationship with God living within us... through His Spirit... He is with us all the time, everywhere.

<sup>23</sup> 'Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks.'

<sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in the (Spirit) and in (truth).'

With Jesus now on the scene He announces that worship has changed for ever!

### What does this teach us about God?

He's not confined to a building, or worshipped on our terms. He is Spirit, so He is available to everyone, *everywhere*.

This is big news and a 'nail in the coffin' of religion.

To get right with God, we don't need:

- wonderful buildings
- special clothes
- religious ritual

It's totally liberating!

### How does John summarise

### what God wants?

He wants true worshippers who give everything to Him, all the time, everywhere!

This is *not* about religious ritual or being 'happy-clappy' but rather... in Jesus we have both...

- His Spirit and
- His truth (His Word)

... not either/or!

## Who makes it happen?

### What does Jesus tell us?

He is the Messiah. ▼ 26

*This is an amazing revelation from Jesus! Not to the high and mighty 'Teacher of the Jews' Nicodemus ... but to the lowest of the low!*

### What does this mean to us?

It's not about 'getting right with God on Sunday' (because Jesus has made us right with God).

It's not about how we look, where we are, or what religious ritual we go through.

What God says is bigger than any religious ceremony or practice.

As we read His Word, then by His Spirit, we will understand its truth, and will be able to worship Him as He wants. This means reading and understanding His Word is the most important thing we do.

<sup>25</sup> The woman said, 'I know that Messiah' (called Christ) 'is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.'

<sup>26</sup> Then Jesus declared, 'I, the one speaking to you - I am he.'

With their Jewish background, Samaritans were waiting for the Messiah.

Take a moment to read  
the section from today...



John 4 vs 19-26

<sup>19</sup> 'Sir,' the woman said, 'I can see that you are a prophet. <sup>20</sup> Our ancestors worshipped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.' <sup>21</sup> 'Woman,' Jesus replied, 'believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. <sup>22</sup> You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. <sup>23</sup> Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. <sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.' <sup>25</sup> The woman said, 'I know that Messiah' (called Christ) 'is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.' <sup>26</sup> Then Jesus declared, 'I, the one speaking to you - I am he.'

Next time:

- Why has Jesus come?
- And what is He up to?!

# Responding to Jesus

John 4 vs 27-54

## Recap:

- What does Jesus offer?...  
Life with Him for eternity
- How does the offer come?...  
Being born again through  
washing (forgiveness) and a new  
heart (God's Spirit living in us)
- To whom is the offer made?...  
To all through GRACE
- What does he want?...  
True worship!

Isaiah 25 vs 6, 8a, 9

<sup>6</sup> On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine - the best of meats and the finest of wines.

<sup>8a</sup> He will swallow up death for ever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; ...

<sup>9</sup> In that day they will say, 'Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation.'

Read this first...

We are at the close of the first section of John's Gospel, which started with the wedding at Cana in chapter 2.

Now the section finishes with the conquering of disease.

This is exactly as was expected of Jesus the Messiah - foretold by the prophet Isaiah 700 years before.

Back in John chapter 4...

27 Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, 'What do you want?' or 'Why are you talking with her?'

28 Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people,

29 'Come, see a man who told me everything I've ever done. Could this be the Messiah?'

30 They came out of the town and made their way towards him.

Why are the disciples surprised?

Because Jesus is talking to a Samaritan woman! **v 27**

She is an outcast - not exactly likely to have been in the 'in' crowd. YET - She leaves for town - and boldly starts to speak of Jesus.

The people from the town then set out to find Jesus. Imagine the people turning up en masse, walking across the fields to find Him.

Meanwhile... what are

the disciples thinking about?

Lunch! Jesus should eat something...

But Jesus doesn't seem to be hungry.

The disciples can't make it out – who popped out to get Him a sandwich?! ▼ 33

<sup>31</sup> Meanwhile his disciples urged him, 'Rabbi, eat something.'

<sup>32</sup> But he said to them, 'I have food to eat that you know nothing about.'

<sup>33</sup> Then his disciples said to each other, 'Could someone have brought him food?'

<sup>34</sup> 'My food,' said Jesus, 'is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.'

● But Jesus is talking of spiritual food – His 'food' is to do God's will and God's work.

This leads to two big questions...

What is God's *will* and

what is God's *work*?

● Over the page Jesus will be talking about 'harvest time'. From the moment that Jesus arrived it has been 'harvest time'. We'll see that the Samaritans are offered a chance to enjoy entry into Jesus' Kingdom – we are also given the same opportunity. We will also see what His will and work are.



<sup>35</sup> Don't you have a saying, "It's still four months until harvest"? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.

<sup>36</sup> Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together.

<sup>37</sup> Thus the saying "One sows and another reaps" is true.

<sup>38</sup> I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labour.'

- We see that Jesus' work (God's will) is to invite everyone to His Kingdom, regardless of:

Race/Religion/Background

### What is Jesus telling them to look at?

- With four months until harvest the crops would still be a lush green. It wouldn't go white until harvest time. As the people stream over the fields to see Jesus, He tells His disciples that these Samaritan people are the harvest. He's talking about a harvest of people not grain.

A loose translation of v 35 could be: 'Stop thinking about your stomachs – I have come to do something far more important – the work of God – His will is to gather a harvest of people for eternity...'

- Put simply – the disciples are thinking of physical needs – whereas Jesus is concerned about the spiritual!

### How would you translate v 36?

*'Seize the moment! It's harvest time!'*

We live in a period of God's history where not only is the seed of God's Word sown but there is a harvest of people to enter His Kingdom.

### What is the shock for the disciples?

- The harvest starts with *this* woman – a Samaritan!
- Now they look up and see a whole village of Samaritans coming!

## What is the right response?

### What did the Samaritans do?

Believe!

- because of the woman's testimony
- because of His Word
- He's the Saviour of the world!

*\*What a fascinating comment - v 41: 'And because of his words many more became believers.' It wasn't the miracles that did it - it was HIS WORD!*

True faith is based on Jesus' word.

The belief of the Samaritans came through hearing God's Word. As far as Jesus is concerned, it seems signs and wonders do not produce genuine faith.

The question for us is:

Are we willing to trust in God's Word,  
and become 'genuine' fruit?

<sup>39</sup> Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, 'He told me everything I've ever done.'

<sup>40</sup> So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days.

<sup>41</sup> \*And because of his words many more became believers.

<sup>42</sup> They said to the woman, 'We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Saviour of the world.'

43 After the two days he left for Galilee.

44 (Now Jesus himself had pointed out that a prophet has no honour in his own country.)

45 When he arrived in Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him. They had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, for they also had been there.

46 Once more he visited Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. And there was a certain royal official whose son lay ill at Capernaum.

47 When this man heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death.

48 'Unless you people see signs and wonders,' Jesus told him, 'you will never believe.'

49 The royal official said, 'Sir, come down before my child dies.'

I came... I ~~saw~~ heard... I believed!

Jesus is now asked to come and heal this official's son. **v 47**

What is surprising about Jesus' response?

Jesus' response is just like what he said back in chapter 2:

**John 2 vs 23-25** '...many people saw the signs he was performing and believed in his name. But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all people. He did not need any testimony about mankind, for he knew what was in each person.'

What happens next?

By verse 50 things have changed...

- The official **believed the Word** – that Jesus spoke
- Just as the Samaritans had done:



• **v 42** '...We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Saviour of the world.'

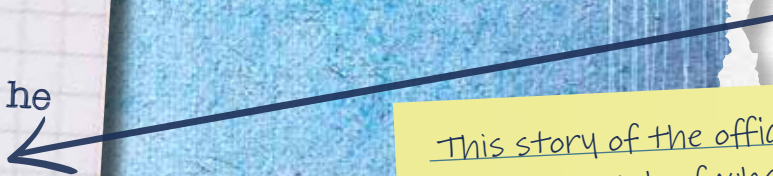
How do we know the official was right to believe?

The boy was healed.



Who else believes?

The whole household.



*This story of the official is a summary passage that captures much of what we have learned in this section of John's Gospel from chapters 2-4:*

- The only way that any of us can believe is to listen to Jesus' word and learn to trust Him!
- The man believed the word that Jesus spoke.\*
- And he himself believed, and all his household.\*

50 'Go,' Jesus replied, 'your son will live.' The man took Jesus at his word and departed.\*

51 While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living.

52 When he enquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, 'Yesterday, at one in the afternoon, the fever left him.'

53 Then the father realised that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, 'Your son will live.' So he and his whole household believed.

54 This was the second sign Jesus performed after coming from Judea to Galilee.

## Consider...

It's a good time to ask ourselves some questions...

- What is now clear about the Samaritan villagers?

They are able to say - v 42:  
'We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Saviour of the world.'

- How is it that the Samaritan villagers reach this point?

They listen to His word and believe what He has to say - v 41:  
'And because of his words many more became believers.'

- So how can one get to the point of belief?

Keep listening to Jesus' word...

- If we are able to say what the Samaritan villagers say, 'this man really is the Saviour of the world' then what does Jesus want from us? The Father is seeking true worshippers who worship Him in Spirit and in truth.

- What will it look like to worship Him in Spirit and in truth?

I will need to go back to His word to be taught how to do it!

We could say to God:

'If You are there and this is true, help me to listen carefully to Your word. Help me to believe it, and to put my trust in You.'

Please re-read our final section below...

## John 4 vs 27-54

<sup>27</sup> Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, 'What do you want?' or 'Why are you talking with her?' <sup>28</sup> Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, <sup>29</sup> 'Come, see a man who told me everything I've ever done. Could this be the Messiah?' <sup>30</sup> They came out of the town and made their way towards him. <sup>31</sup> Meanwhile his disciples urged him, 'Rabbi, eat something.' <sup>32</sup> But he said to them, 'I have food to eat that you know nothing about.' <sup>33</sup> Then his disciples said to each other, 'Could someone have brought him food?' <sup>34</sup> 'My food,' said Jesus, 'is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. <sup>35</sup> Don't you have a saying, "It's still four months until harvest"? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. <sup>36</sup> Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. <sup>37</sup> Thus the saying "One sows and another reaps" is true. <sup>38</sup> I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labour.' <sup>39</sup> Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, 'He told me everything I've ever done.' <sup>40</sup> So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. <sup>41</sup> And because of his words many more became believers. <sup>42</sup> They said to the woman, 'We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man

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### What comes next?

A whole new section, as we start to look at what Jesus' work is...

# the Word

one to one

The Word One to One

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