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Living Water, Jesus Fulfills the Law

“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.” John 4:10

Key verses: Matthew 5: 17-20; John 4:1-45; Romans 8:1-17

Key personalities: Jesus; the woman at the well; and, the Disciples.

Timeline: The God of Eternity walked and taught, The Kingdom of God, being fully God and fully Man, about 26-28 A.D.

The Bible directs us to the social contempt that the Jews and Samaritans held for one another. Jesus demonstrated to us that we can overcome cultural walls to reach a woman in need. Know this: Jesus went out of His way to meet with her. He ignored the customs and cut His way right through the prejudicial barriers of ignorance, narrow-minded thinking, and fear to sit down. Jesus asked an outcast, a sinful woman for a drink. Jesus interacted with a race extremely hated and rejected by the Jews. This should cause us to think about our own cultural ideas and bigoted reactions, those we do either unconsciously or deliberately. Jesus exhibits the importance of acceptance and calls us to remove the prejudice, narrow-mindedness, and intolerance we have, just as the Jews and Samaritans held for each other.

Key Happenings: Jesus is our *Living water!*

The cup that Jesus brings us is living. Jesus IS fresh and flowing over what is stagnant. This *living water* refers to God's "Divine Activity," that God refreshes us. This is about the work of the Holy Spirit upon someone. The water Jesus was offering was not the substance of a drink or to quench a physical thirst; rather, it was the refreshment of eternal life. The Holy Spirit imparts to us the new transforming, cleansing, and spiritual life. This new life impacts us totally, constantly, and continually to usher us into eternity. However, it is still up to us to accept that impact and let it come in contact with our application of life to God, ourselves, our environment, and others (Isa. 12:3; Jer. 2:13; Ezek. 47:1-9; Zech. 14:8; John 7:37-39; 8:24; 11:50-51; 19:19).

Water means life, both in the ancient world and now. Water is everything in life, from the growing and prospering of crops to the cleansing of selves. Without water, everything dies. Revelation calls, *River of the Water of Life* what is needed for life, even life itself, comes from God. Living Water is a continual theme used in Scripture, and it also refers to the river that flowed under Jerusalem and to the theme of Paradise and "God with us." The Greeks saw *water* and *river* together to mean "virtue". John uses this imagery to represent the Spirit and renewal in his Gospel. This also means Jesus is the answer to our thirst in life and for salvation! God is our abundant supply of all we need now and forevermore (Gen. 2:10-14; Psalm 46:4; Prov. 13:14; Jer. 14:3; Ezek. 47:1-12; Joel 3:18; Zech. 14:8; John 4:10-14; 7:37-39; 2 Pet. 2: 17-19; Rev. 22:1-6).

Samaria. They were a sub-Jewish cultural group that also followed the Law of Moses, but with a few distinctions. The Samaritans were the remnant of the 10 tribes of the Northern Jewish Kingdom who had been taken captive by the Assyrians in 729 B.C. They intermarried with Gentiles, and forsaking much of the Law, they have been regarded as reprobates--a hated, heretical, Jewish cult (1 Kings 16:24; 2 Kings 17:1-31; Ezra. 4:1-24; Neh. 4:1-6; Luke 10:25-37; 17:6; John 8:48).

Will you give me a drink? Jesus came to call all, Jews as well as Gentiles, to repentance, setting us on the right path. "I did not come to call the righteous to repentance, but sinners" (Matt 9:13, Mark 2:17, Luke 5:32).

Gift of God. This is a statement that salvation cannot be earned or even merited. It can only occur by God choosing to grant it to us by His grace (John 3:16; Gal. 2:20-21; Eph. 5:25).

Worship in spirit and in truth. Real, effectual, true worship comes from hearts that truly love God, are grateful for His work, and are dedicated to His Truth. This is a worship of Jesus, Who is Truth, of Christ as LORD. He is the only Way to God that we are to recognize with our spirit and soul. This is not based on location or liturgy or externals and formalities; rather, it is recognizing Christ our Savior and Lord with proper attitudes and motives. This also means a sacrifice of our hearts over animals and an offering of our praise over burnt offerings. Jesus is emphasizing a manner of heart and obedience from our gratitude over and above ceremonial requirements and orders. This manner recognizes and honors God's holiness with our grateful hearts for giving us, unearned and unmerited salvation and by placing the Living Holy Spirit in us. This is in contrast to worship services that are merely rhetorical, obligatory, and historical--meaningless ritual and liturgy that just spins one's pride and/or hides one's heart (1 Sam. 10:5; 1 Chron. 25:1-6; John 1:18; 3:3:21; 14:6, 16-18;; Acts 4:12; Acts 2:33; Rom. 1:25; 9:4-5; Phil. 3:1-14).

This impact from the Spirit nourishes, invigorates, and empowers us to deal with life here and now. His qualities and character become real in us and are modeled as real to others around us. This empowerment gives us salvation and builds our maturity, so we can have joy and contentment, purpose and meaning. It allows us to know we are deeply loved and makes us able to replicate that love to others. In that way, we can worship Him in power and adoration on a deeper level than we could do without that growth and maturity.

I who speak to you am he. The Samaritans were expecting a returning Moses or some kind of Moses-like person. Here, Jesus is proclaiming that He is the anticipated Messiah. Understand that rarely does Jesus draw this attention to Himself, because of political misunderstandings of people who do not understand His true mission--to save souls, not be a political or military figure (Deut. 18:15-18; Mark 9:41; John 6:14-15; 8:58).

The first thing the woman realized was that God has compassion and love; He cared for and had a plan for her, even though she did not think that was possible and that she was considered a social pariah. She was willing to be challenged and confronted for her sin. She was willing to repent and become clean. She was able to learn and develop character, so God used her to transform her community. It is the same for us. We must see our sin and deal with it by confession and removal. We have to see His love and care for us! We are to study the Word, seek wisdom, be prudent, and lean on the strength of the Lord! These things do not come merely by chance; they come by knowing and following Christ. The woman at the well had to learn and follow. Have you learned that lesson? Do not forsake your living water, your "gift of God" (Proverbs 12:4; 28:20; 31:10).

This woman represents most of humanity as she had a thirst and a longing for something real in a life; the yearning left a hole in her that was filled with sin and other things. She had a desire, perhaps throughout her life, to obtain the Living Water. Before she found the Living Water, though, she found everything meaningless and chose the lust of sin and rebellion as a coping mechanism. Christ fulfilled her desire, and this transitioned her from sin to Him and translated her lust to the willingness to grow, willingness to strive, and to be challenged in the faith. She was able to do so--crossing her fears and hurts in order to know Him, and to grow in Him. The barriers of fear and past hurts is one most Christians may never cross, but they are possible to overcome with His Hand

guiding us. For us, this is a lesson given to shake us from our false thinking and complacency or bad situations to see what is in front of us.

By understanding faith and what Christ has done for us, we will be able to have more gratitude and live a more transformed life. Once this happens, the result will be more faith, better relationships, more impact, and of more use to Christ.

Jesus fulfills the Law on our behalf. Jesus accomplished His purpose by giving us a new covenant. If He had not, we would still have to observe and keep the Law in all the strictest points (John 17:4; Heb. 7:11-14-22; 8:6-13)!

Christ came to fulfill the Law, not to destroy it. Many people believe that Jesus destroyed the Law. This is not what Scripture teaches. Many also believe that we do not need to be bothered by the Law or teach it. This belief causes many to miss the purpose of the Law, and waters down what Christ did.

The Law is a reflection of God's purity and holiness. He is perfect and calls us to be like Him and do as He does. But, in the history of humanity, because of our fallen nature, we are unable to be perfect and follow the Law. So, the only way we can do so is to have a perfect human follow it on our behalf and to have a loving and merciful God to impute it (apply) on us. That is what Christ does. He takes our place in His perfection and gives us His purity. That is what *propitiation* and *atonement* mean. God withholds His wrath because of our sin, accepting Christ's offering and work on our behalf that deflects it.

The Sermon on the Mount is not a weaker version of the Law of Moses, but a stronger one as our hearts and motives are "keyed" into it. Thus, Jesus did not abolish the Law; it is still in place. He points to it, gives it a deeper meaning, and enforces it (Matt. 5: 21-26). The entire Sermon on the Mount is a reflection of purity and law! Christ fulfilled it, as the theme *Living Water* represents! Through Him, we can be righteous, satisfying the Law, by what Christ has done on our behalf!

We, as His disciples, must make every diligent effort to observe ALL that Jesus commanded-- and more-- to the best of our ability, (Matt. 28:20; John 8:31-32; 2 John 9), as well as stay free from the temptation and lure of materialism (1 Tim. 6: 9-10; 1 John 2:15-17)! The good news, besides that of His grace, is that Christ gives us His mercy and strength, providing forgiveness and ability to those in Christ (1 John 1:9 Phil. 4:13)! Our call is not just to do good things, but have a good heart! That means we must be virtuous in our thoughts, motives, and aspirations, with the best intentions toward others, as Christ did with us.

Allow Christ's most amazing and wondrous gift to be imputed to you, so your most inward being is transformed and renewed! Without this, we cannot be or do any good!

Key Takeaway: The point for us all is that it is only God Who satisfies us and quenches our deepest spiritual needs. There is none other than can or will do--not the pleasures, fulfilling of desires, or even sin. Jesus is contrasting what is physical, fleeting, and limited to what is spiritual. Jesus is contrasting what is temporary to what is eternal and abundant--what we think is important to what really is important (Isa. 44:3; 55:1-3; John 2:19-21; 3:3-10; 1 Cor. 2:14).

For us today, we can receive forgiveness of our sins because Jesus represented us as a man and was also fully God to take our sins and receive God's wrath in our place. We can see Christ's attitude and willingness to conform to God's will even with the looming consequences that was to come. By His power, grace, and obedience to the Will of the Father, we receive His righteousness by what He has done and can live with the motivation and guidance He has to offer us as Lord. When we try to live for and by ourselves without Christ or even try to serve Him without relying on Him, we

are showing an incredible amount of disrespect! We need to have the right focus and perspective so we can know what God wants us--me-- to do! We can do this by learning about our Lord, His obedience and be willing to go through times of waiting, discouragement, and even suffering, and see them as opportunities for personal growth, faith building and strengthening.

The Call to the Church? We are to point to Christ and do our best to be a true follower of Christ. We are to be disciples, learners who can look at what hinders us, reach out to Christ, and grow beyond the barriers that block our spiritual formation and intimacy with Christ. We have to understand Him and His teachings, be deeply convicted, and be willing to grow through our trust and obedient actions. If we do not do this as a church, we will stagnate into apathy, disillusionment, depression, dysfunction, or some other kind of abuse to one's self or others. We have to be convicted; Jesus shows us how by these examples, and He makes the Way for it!

Questions to Ponder

1. What does "living water" mean to you? What does "gift of God" mean to you?
2. How are prejudices a barrier to Christ? What do you do when you meet an outcast or someone in deep need or in deep sin? How should you respond? What gets in your way?
3. Why does Jesus take the time to deal with the social contempt that the Jews and Samaritans held for each other? What does Jesus need to show you about how you feel and deal with others who may not look or act like you?
4. How do God's ways give us freedom? How does Jesus show love to the unlovable? How does He call us to do the same? What are our challenges to do so?
5. How would quenching this woman's spiritual thirst redirect her from sin to Jesus, and transform her life? How have you seen this so in others or yourself?
6. What did it take for you to know about the gift of God? What is God saying to you about what to give or take as a drink?
7. What does this passage tell us about worship? How can you have more focused worshipful experiences with our Lord? What do you need to do to make this happen?
8. How does our intimacy with Christ gives us the confidence and completeness to know and do God's Will, His purpose?
9. When have you had, or what would it take for you to come to, a mindset of realization of the serious nature of your lost state and need for Christ?
10. The good news of the Gospel imputes Christ's righteousness to us, so we do not need to fear His wrath and punishment when we accept, by faith, His election! How does this make you feel? Does that feeling and thinking translate into your daily life?
11. How can "right-being" motivate you to "right-doing"?
12. What does it mean to you that only God satisfies us, not the pursuance of pleasures, fulfillment of desires, or even sin? How can this help you form a deeper trust and relationship with Christ?