



The Samaritan Woman (John 4:1-41)

Code: 8/NT/8

1. Overall Aim:

Better Understanding of the Journey of the Lent to live in its spirituality.

2. Key Memory Verse:

"I am not ashamed of the good news. It is God's power. And it will save everyone who believes. It is meant first for the Jews. It is meant also for those who aren't Jews". - Romans 1:16

Introduction:

Explain to the students the background information about the Samaritan people:

Because the Pharisees wanted to cause trouble for Jesus, He and His disciples left the Jewish town of Judea (**John 4:1-2**). They headed toward the town of Galilee (**John 4:3**). The quickest route between these two towns was through another town, called Samaria.

However, the Jews despised the Samaritans. The Samaritan people were half-Jewish. Because they were half-Jewish, Samaritans believed only part of the Jewish religion. The Jews believed the Samaritans were “unclean” in God’s eyes. Therefore, most Jews would never travel through Samaria. They would travel way out of their way to avoid getting near a Samaritan person. There had been bitter feelings between Jews and Samaritans for centuries.

Ultimately, Samaritan theology differed greatly from that of Judaism. The Samaritans accepted only the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament) as inspired and authoritative. They rejected the Psalms, the prophets, and other books of the Old Testament. When the Babylonian exiles returned to the Holy Land, the Samaritans made efforts toward merger, but were rebuffed and rejected (and rightly so).

As a result, open hostility sprung up from time to time. The Samaritans held that the center of worship was at Mt. Gerizim, while the Jews maintained that it was Jerusalem. The Samaritans actually tampered with the Scriptures to substantiate their theology. Around 400 B.C, a Samaritan Temple was built on Mount Gerizim. Around 128 B.C, this temple was destroyed by the Jews and relations between these two peoples worsened. Such was the background to this conversation between Jesus and the woman. Evidence to the friction between the Jews and the Samaritans is easily found.

(The information above is from Bob Deffinbaugh, "The Manifestation of Messiah to the Samaritan Woman" ©1996-2006 Biblical Studies Press, from www.bible.org).

Main points of the lesson:

- *Jesus came to give new life to ALL people who put their trust in Him.
- *The Samaritan woman had her sins "washed away" by Jesus. This story shows that Jesus offers divine mercy in the living water of grace, which washes away our sins and cleanses our souls. The woman went to the well to water though she got much more, including a cleansed and refreshed spiritual life.
- *Her story is also relevant because it becomes an antecedent of Christian practices; that one may seek God's forgiveness for any wrongdoing.

Body:

***Going to the well:**

Because of the Samaritan woman's lowly status, she travels to the well during the hottest point of the day to avoid the wagging tongues of her fellow townspeople and the judgment. The woman of Samaria knows this and seizes the opportunity to get water for her home without being bothered.

Jews didn't normally travel on a Samaritan road, but Jesus chose to walk this way anyway. He comes upon the well, where he meets the Samaritan woman and asks her for a drink of water. The woman, who understands her low social status in the eyes of a Jew, is astonished that this pious Jew requests water from her.

***Experiencing renewed spirit:**

Jesus uses the water as a metaphor to teach this woman. He speaks about the living water, which gives eternal life, divine grace, or God's life within the soul. The woman craves this type of water, because she wants to have eternal life. But first Jesus has a lengthy but honest conversation with her. He makes her understand that she needs to confess her sins and change her life before she can obtain this life-giving water grace. Jesus shows her that he already knows she is living with a man who is not her husband.

* Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!"

(John 4:16–18)

* The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us." Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you."

(John 4:25–26)

The Samaritan woman's spirit is enlightened, accelerated, and illuminated by Jesus. She now realizes what it means to take freely of the water of life, which is the spiritual refreshment that comes into her soul after her encounter and confession with Jesus. Not only was she impressed and surprised that Jesus knew all her sins, but she was also given the opportunity to have those sins forgiven. She believes He is truly the Messiah, the Anointed One. She repents of her past misdeeds and goes back to tell her family, friends, and neighbors how she met Jesus and how he revealed his knowledge of her sins and his offer of live-giving water, which brings eternal life. She went on to lead many conversions in this area through her zeal and love for God (**John 4:39–42**).

The Samaritan woman doesn't appear again in scripture, but for centuries afterward, numerous spiritual writers, theologians, and scholars retold and pondered her encounter with Jesus. Augustine (AD 354–430), for instance, uses the example of the woman at the well to describe the spiritual thirst the human heart has for goodness and truth and that thirst is never quenched until people are in the presence of God forever (after they die and leave this earth).

***Concluding Activity:**

If the students are keen then role playing the story of the “Samaritan Woman” would be a good option to help them better understand the story and accompany the play with the explanation of the main points of the lesson.

OR

Showing the students this youtube clip of the “Samaritan Woman” story to help better visualize the lesson and keeps them engaged and interested.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJ2pYmKIOOg>

Good luck, God Bless.