

Reading Plan for the Week of May 24, 2020

Hey Students!

These past few weeks, we've looked at Jesus' power, mission, and character. This week, we will examine Jesus' teaching on living water and find that He gives the Living Water, the Holy Spirit, who satisfies us as believers. He also enables the true worship of God. As we enter into genuine worship, we open the gates for others to see the possibility of fulfillment in a relationship with Jesus.

Day 1

Read John 4:1-6

Had to are two small words with plenty of power behind them. Jesus "had to" travel through Samaria (v. 4). He was required to. He was obligated to. But why?

It is likely that Jesus had to travel through Samaria because of the woman He encountered. Either He knew that this woman needed to have a conversation with Him or the Holy Spirit led Him to Jacob's well for the divine encounter that takes place in this chapter.

We too have been sent on a similar mission, to reach all people from every tribe and nation with the gospel. As such, our goal is not merely to abstain from avoiding others as the Jews did with the Samaritans, but, like Christ, intentionally to connect with them. Like Jesus, we are to go out of our way—geographically, culturally, and socially to take the gospel to anyone and everyone God prepares for us to reach.

Who might God be sending you to as His agent to share the gospel? How will you obey Him and go this week?

Day 2

Read John 4:7-14

If you have ever been thirsty—really thirsty to the point of being parched—you understand what it is like to need a drink of water. Imagine, though, that you couldn't get a drink of water by grabbing a bottle of cold water out of the refrigerator or even from a sink. Imagine you had to walk to a community well, lower a bucket, and hoist that bucket back up. Then you had to fill the pitchers you had brought and haul them back home. This is what you had to do every day and the water you carried wasn't cold and wasn't the cleanest.

The Samaritan woman did not have to imagine this because this was real life for her and the other Samaritans and Jews of Jesus' day. Imagine then the woman's surprise and great interest when Jesus told her that He had living water—cool, fresh, clean water—that would leave a person to never thirst again.

Of course we understand what the woman missed—that Jesus wasn't talking about water, but life in Him. It's a beautiful picture though, isn't it? All people are parched spiritually—always struggling to find what satisfies the deepest cravings of their soul. Jesus alone is what quenches our spiritual thirst, and He alone is what satisfies it for good.

In what ways does your soul thirst? How might you try to satisfy it apart from Jesus at times? Why?

Day 3

Read John 4:15-18

Up to verse 16, Jesus and the Samaritan woman were having a nice conversation about water. But then Jesus threw the woman a curve ball. When she asks for the water Jesus spoke of, He responds by telling her to get her husband. Where did that come from? It seems to be out of nowhere—their conversation, let alone her preceding request for water, had nothing to do with her husband.

In this we see the heart of Christ for the woman. That might be odd to say considering this statement by Jesus led to Him addressing the woman living with a man in sin. But don't miss the impact it had on the woman. Because of this statement of Jesus, the woman was able to see, at least in part, the omniscience of Christ. She was able to see that He was not just a kind Jewish teacher. Jesus' knowledge of her sin was precisely what drove her toward what she needed to know—that she was talking with the Messiah (v. 25-26).

In what ways does the church tend to address wrongly the sins of others? What can you learn about addressing others' sins from this account?

Day 4

Read John 4:19-24

It has been said that everyone is wired to worship—the issue is that we often worship the wrong things. We see this desire in the woman's question to Jesus after she comes to understand that He was not a regular teacher—that He was at least a prophet. Of all the questions she might have had, and surely understanding the uniqueness of the opportunity to ask this Jewish rabbi a question, notice that her question centered on worship.

Many of us understand worship better than the Samaritan woman did that day, however, we too often struggle to worship the way Jesus prescribed: in Spirit and truth. While location may not be relevant today, music style, time of day, and many other factors might impact our practice of worship. Our prayer should be that we might push past all of the meaningless items that could hinder worship and be the worshipers the Father wants.

What can sometimes hinder your worship of God? What can you do to move past these hindrances and instead worship in Spirit and truth no matter what?

Day 5

Read John 4:25-42

Jesus had to travel through Samaria because of this encounter. This is the way God works: that no person is unworthy of His attention (this is the point of the three parables in Luke 15). But while Jesus would have traveled through Samaria just for this woman, He did not. This woman was a first domino with others to follow. After her encounter with Jesus, the woman left her water jar, went into town, and told all the people about Jesus. The people then left the town and went to meet Jesus. The result is that many of the Samaritans believed in Jesus (v. 39-42).

We see here that our faith is not our own. That is not to say that we do not trust in Jesus for salvation on our own, but rather that living out our faith is never intended to be done alone. We aren't here just for us, we are here for others as well. Even if we are like the Samaritan woman—new in our faith—we are called to share what we have experienced with others. It's never too early to start. It's never too late to begin.

How comfortable are you with sharing the gospel with others? What can you do to be more comfortable, and perhaps more obedient to share your faith with others?
