

Accepted: The Samaritan Woman

She had accepted her lot. Every day she was required to travel the same path, to the same deep well, to draw the same water that left her feeling the same as the day before. The vessel she carried was as empty as her heart; its weight as heavy as the shame she bore. Her attempts to change her situation had been as useless as her efforts to find lasting satisfaction at the bottom of the well. And yet here she was again, staring into its depths.

And then He spoke; His words echoing into the chasm, *“If you only knew the gift God has for you, and who I am, you would ask Me, and I would give you living water”* (John 4:10, NKJV).

1. What does it mean to be accepted? Before you knew Christ, what were you willing to do to fulfill this need?
2. Turn to John 4 and read verses 1-18. Based on what you know of the Samaritan woman, why was she alone at the well in the heat of the day (v.6)?
3. How might the long path, the empty vessel, and the deep well, represent her life?
4. The King James Version states that Jesus *“must needs go through Samaria”* (v.4). What does this suggest about the urgency of their meeting? Christ’s knowledge of her life? Your life?
5. Describe Jesus’ physical state. (v.6, 7) What was He willing to do to reach her? What social prejudices was He willing to break? (v.9) How might these things have enabled her to let down her guard?
6. What was the woman unwilling to give Jesus? (vv. 7, 9) Figuratively, have you ever found yourself unwilling to grant His request? Why?
7. What did Christ offer her? (vv.10, 13, 14).ⁱ Identify the gift.ⁱⁱ

Have you ever been offered a gift you knew you didn’t deserve? What resulted?

8. *"The well is deep"* (v.11). Oftentimes the complexity of our situation leaves us asking, "Lord, how are you ever going to draw anything out of this?" Have you ever felt as if a situation was irredeemable? Why did you feel this way?

9. It is likely that the Samaritan woman had accepted her lot. In this context, to accept is "to tolerate or submit to something unpleasant or undesirable; to believe or come to recognize an opinion or explanation as valid or correct." What does this belief lead to?

10. Christ had no bucket; *"nothing to draw with"* (v.11). Like the Samaritan woman, is your acceptance of His ability limited by your understanding of how, or by what method, He will accomplish it? Why do we often seek physical evidence for what He can accomplish supernaturally?

11. *"Are you greater than our father Jacob?"* (v.12). What didn't she know about what He could accomplish?

12. In what ways do you seek to satisfy your thirst with something other than God?

Describe the difference between good and bad thirst.

Has your desire for Him been replaced with something else? Do you believe that you can be fulfilled in Christ alone?

13. *"If you knew...you would ask"* (v.10). Is there anything that prevents you from asking for more of Him, for greater blessings? (Consider Luke 11:9-13.)

14. What did the Samaritan woman understand the acceptance of this water to mean? (v.15) Did this mean that her circumstances would change? Per verse 14, where would the change occur?

15. Reread verses 16-18. How might she have repeatedly found herself in this situation? Read Romans 6:12-13, 16. (Also consider Deuteronomy 22:22, 24:1-4, 25:5-10, Matthew 19:3, 7-8; also consider barrenness, etc.)

What did Christ need her to acknowledge to understand the nature of the gift?

16. Continue reading: John 4:19-30, 39-42. Why do you think she sought to avoid discussing her personal life? (What else might she have been seeking to avoid by drawing water at noon?)
17. If Jesus had entered into her argument, she would not have had to face herself or her sin. In spite of her attempt to evade the subject at hand, Christ revealed the the two most important aspects of her healing (vv.23-24). What were they? (Consider Proverbs 28:13.)
18. The Samaritan woman's expectation of the coming Messiah was that He would "*reveal all things*" (v.25). Compare this to her statement in verse 29. Why do you believe that Christ's supernatural knowledge of her failings was what captured her heart?
19. "*All that I ever did*" (v.29). It seemed that she had accumulated a list of her grievances against God. Based on her statement and her actions, what did she experience within? (v.14)
20. What did she lay down in order to accept Christ's gift? (v.28)
21. Why do you believe she first made her announcement to the men of the city? (v.28)
22. How is the fountain of living water observed in her personal life after her encounter with Christ? (vv.28-29, 39-42)
23. Back in verse 13, Jesus stated that whoever "*drinks*" of earthly water will "continually drink". In verse 14, the word "*drinks*", used of Christ's living water, is consumed "absolutely; with

finality; once and for all”. What would Christ satisfy in her that man could not? (Consider Matthew 5:6.)

It was to the Samaritan woman that Christ first revealed He was the Messiah. She knew that one day He would come and that He would provide all the answers. What she didn’t know was that He was coming for her.ⁱⁱⁱ

In closing, Isaiah 54:4-8 says, *“Do not fear, for you will not be ashamed; neither be disgraced, for you will not be put to shame; for you will forget the shame of your youth, and will not remember the reproach of your widowhood anymore. For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is His name; and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; He is called the God of the whole earth. For the Lord has called you like a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, like a youthful wife when you were refused,’ says your God. ‘For a mere moment I have forsaken you, but with great mercies I will gather you. With a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment; but with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you,’ says the Lord your Redeemer.”*

ⁱ See also Matthew 11:28.

ⁱⁱ Romans 6:23.

ⁱⁱⁱ For further reading, see Luke 15.