



# WEEK 1 STUDY GUIDE

*BY: PASTOR WALTER DORT*

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# Monday, November 7, 2022

**Read:** John 4:1-36

**Scripture Verse:** *“So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee. Now he had to go through Samaria. So, he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph.” John 4:3-5*

## Today's Thought:

Our studies in this chapter are about changes that Jesus has made. In this chapter, we are going to see different changes that Jesus brought about in the Jewish society and in the life of people. Jesus began his ministry in Judea among the Jews and extended it into other territories. As it is written: *“He had come unto his own, and his own did not receive him.”* John 1:11. So Jesus decided to preach the good news to all who wanted to hear it and put faith in it. So, he left Judea to get to Galilee, but he had to go through Samaria. Before going into the study, to fully understand the change brought by Jesus in Jewish society and in the lives of the people, we will talk a little about the hostility of the Jews towards the Samaritans and the reason for this hostility.

According to the Bible, under the royalty of Saul, David and Solomon, there was a United Kingdom which then experienced a division in two kingdoms. The northern kingdom had as its capital Samaria for Israel and the southern kingdom had as its capital Jerusalem for Judah. The inhabitants of Samaria were called Samaritans and those of Judah were called Jews. For the Jews, Jerusalem is the only place where the liturgy of the temple can be performed. Their temple is the number one and the unique place to worship God. While, for the Samaritans, Mount Gerizim, their holy mountain, is the only place to worship God. The Samaritans believe they possess the one and only true sanctuary.

Samaria is in the center of Palestine, with Judea to the south and Galilee to the north. The Samaritans come from a mixture of Israelites who remained in the country during the Assyrian captivity, and pagans transported from the East to this region, to repopulate it. For the proponents of an orthodox interpretation based on the biblical story (2 Kings 17:24), the Samaritan people were formed from the fusion of foreign populations, idolaters and pagans, destined to populate Samaria after the exodus of a large part of its population. The Samaritans had a temple on Mount Gerizim and recognized only the writings of Moses. Their religion

was a mixture of Judaism and paganism. According to historian Flavius Josephus, the Samaritan people originated around the middle of the 4th century BC, because of an insignificant schism with Jerusalem, in the founding of a temple on Mount Gerizim around 312 BC, an exact imitation of that of Jerusalem. In 128 BC, the temple was destroyed by the Jews of Jerusalem, and the split at this time is clearly attested. The pure Jews thought that the Samaritans were a filthy people and despised them. That's why the Jews wouldn't even talk to the Samaritans.

Lord, in your mercy, teach me to love my fellow human beings and to value them, to live with them in unity despite our disagreements.

- Where do the Samaritans come from?
- Why were the Jews hostile to the Samaritans?
- Describe the religion of the Samaritans.

**Further Reading:** 2 Kings 17: 24

## Tuesday, November 8, 2022

**Read:** John 4:1-36

**Scripture Verse:** *“Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, “Will you give me a drink?”” John 4:6-7*

### Today’s Thought:

We have seen that the Samaritan people came from the fusion of foreign populations, idolaters and pagans, destined to populate Samaria after the exodus of a large part of its population. The Jewish people considered them as ungodly people, they saw them like filthy people and despised them. The Jews hated them and had developed no relationship with them. They had no love for them. Fortunately, Jesus does not show favoritism. In Jesus, love, peace, joy and grace overflow beyond the Jewish people, towards the Samaritans, despised and strangers. God’s love crosses the social barriers and racial boundary and all prejudice to reach the Samaritans, whom the Jews considered to be ungodly people. The gift of God is not only for the Jews but also for the Samaritans, as well as for any repentant sinner.

God, in his inclusive saving plan, wanted Jesus to pass through Samaria. Jesus chose the right time to pass through this territory. Tired of his journey, he decided to rest a bit at the edge of the well. In verse 6 we discover the humanity of Jesus Christ. The verse tells us that he was tired from the journey. He was a man like us, he felt the same needs as us, he was tempted like us. Despite everything, he lived a sinless life, a life that pleased God. In Hebrews 4:15 we read: *“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are -yet he did not sin.”*

Here he is, sitting on the edge of the fountain, exhausted by fatigue. We can tell that he was sitting there to rest a bit, but also in his omniscience he knew that there was a woman in distress whom he wanted to save. He not only wanted to save the thirsty woman from her sins, but also the whole community. Jesus’ basic reason for being at the edge of the well was not to wait for the woman or someone else to draw water from the well for him, but his intention was to offer the woman the real water. His plan was to give her the water that will make her another person with a new perspective.

Jesus wanted to give the woman water that will change her life, make her a new creature. The water at Jacob's well was not clear enough, effective enough to quench her thirst; she will come back to it constantly. Jesus wanted to remove the barriers of discrimination, hatred, revenge, and humiliation that existed among them.

It is also for such people that the Lord Jesus came into the world. He continues to repeat: *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."* Matthews 11:28. You who are weary of the weight of life. Come! You who are fed up with illness, humiliation, drugs, fear, addictions of all kinds. Come! He will give you rest. He wants to give you the water of life that can quench your thirst.

Lord Jesus, you who were, who are and who will be; you who refuse no one, you who gave living water to the Samaritan woman, please quench my thirst. In your love, cause the water of life to spring up in me so that I may become an inexhaustible source of water.

- What can you conclude about God's love for humanity?
- What proof do you see in the text that Jesus was a man like us?
- What was the main reason Jesus had to go through Samaria?
- What did Jesus do for the Samaritan woman?
- What do you want Jesus to do for you?

**Further Reading:** John 7:37-38

## Wednesday, November 9, 2022

**Read:** John 4:1-36

**Scripture Verse:** *"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. 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 4:9-10

### Today's Thought:

Indeed, in verse 9 we see that Jesus wanted to remove a social barrier. Jesus stood up against hatred, wickedness and racial prejudice and disrespectful attitudes to build a solid relationship among people. Jesus did what other Jews could not do to remove those barriers. He decided to cross the territory of the Samaritans. He was resting at the edge of their well, left by Jacob. Jesus conversed with the woman, which the Jews had not been allowed to do. He took the time to carefully listen to the woman. *"You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?"* Jesus' action surprised the woman.

She had never thought one day that a Jew would communicate to her. The woman didn't know who she was talking to; she took Jesus like all the other Jews. She sought to inform Jesus of the custom and misconduct of the Jews towards the Samaritans, saying: *"For Jews do not associate with Samaritans."* She spoke as if Jesus didn't know the behavior of the Jews towards them. The woman expressed her concerns. She didn't think that Jesus knew any more about the subject than she did. The woman had no idea that Jesus was there not based on human relations, but to bring hope for her and the Samaritan as a whole; to put her and other Samaritans in true relationship with God the Father.

Because of the violence and hatred that reigned between them and the Jews, they didn't have any right to the temple in Jerusalem. Jesus was on the edge of the well because he wanted to give her access to the true temple and make her a true temple of God. Jesus is the gift of God to mankind, including the Samaritans. Jesus is God manifested in the flesh, the creator of the earth, the living water, the Son of Man seated on the edge of the well to seek and to save the lost. Jesus brought salvation to the Samaritans. Jesus took every opportunity to do his Father's work. He seized the opportunity to teach the love of God and the way of salvation to the Samaritan woman.

The water from the well of Jacob could only provide temporary satisfaction, quenching her thirst for a short time. Jesus offered her the water of life which can bring joy, peace and consolation to her troubled soul. Jesus in a loud voice said, *"Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them."* John 7:37-38.

Something very important you must know; even though men on this earth may plan and may plot against you, and reject you, God has a wonderful plan for you. He can make rivers of living water flow from within you if you are thirsty and come and believe in Jesus. *"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."* Acts 4:12. Jesus is the cornerstone. He can exalt you to another level. He can give his angels charge over you, he can protect you and help you in distress. All of this is made possible thanks to the great love of God. We were dead by our trespasses, but God who is rich in mercy brought us back to life thanks to this living water of which we had drunk. What a privilege!

Lord, Thank you for your word. Even though men on this earth may plan and may plot against me, and reject me, I know you have a wonderful plan for me. You can make rivers of living water flow from within me. Help me take every opportunity to do your work. To seize the opportunity to demonstrate your love and to teach the way of salvation to others.

- What did Jesus do that surprised the Samaritan woman?
- What kind of water did Jesus give to the Samaritan woman?
- What does Jesus do for you and me on the cross?

**Further Reading:** Isaiah 55:1

## Thursday, November 10, 2022

**Read:** John 4:1-36

**Scripture Verse:** *"He told her, "Go and call your husband and come back." "I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. 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.""* John 4: 16-18

### Today's Thought:

In these verses, we see that Jesus put the woman face to face with reality, he touched the conscience of the woman by saying: *"Go and call your husband and come back."* Jesus' proposal would seem daring, but Jesus did not intend to offend the woman. She said to him: *"I have no husband."* Now, Jesus put his hand in the wound saying: *"You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband."* Sometimes when someone reveals to another what he has done, instead of being aware of his actions, he prefers to disappear. The woman didn't run away from the truth that Jesus revealed in her life. Although Jesus didn't hide anything from her, she remained there.

Something very important to underline in this verse is: *"Five husbands."* This shows us the instability, the frustration and the void in her that she wanted to fill. She was trying in vain to fill a gap in her life. She was looking for someone who could make a difference in her life. This woman who passed from one man to another was in a desperate situation. She was looking for a husband who loved her, who showed her compassion, mercy, forgiveness and respect. She was looking for a husband who would love her as his own body, respect her opinions, not be a dictator. She was looking for a better life, a relationship that could fit her reality. She was trying to discover the true relationship, the true life, a life that can fit her needs, that can bring happiness, satisfaction. She was looking for a brilliant life, a better future. It seems that her attractive beauty and her seduction power allowed people to exploit her and make her a victim. Under a blazing sun she went to the well to draw water. By the way, many women are stressed and overwhelmed to the point of exhaustion. Let me tell you there is hope! The Samaritan woman found her true happiness at the edge of the well. She had a wonderful encounter that transformed her life. Jesus gave her the stability of mind she needed.

Because of her encounter with Jesus, she stopped her wanderings, she found her dignity as a woman because she has found Jesus. Who finds Jesus has found a new future and a better life. We can remark that there is a huge difference between human relations and relations with God. When we enter into a perfect relationship with God, he brings real change. Jesus is the gift of God through whom a new relationship with God is possible and a true change is visible. Jesus offered her what five husbands couldn't give her. Jesus replaced the gap in her by a life of joy, peace and full of testimony. Jesus satisfied her needs and thirst that any husband could never satisfy. Her encounter with Jesus transformed her life and placed in her a source of life that gave her meaning and harmony.

Lord Jesus, thank you that I have met you. Since the day I received you as my savior, you have changed everything in me. Thank you for the peace, joy, love and harmony that you put in my life. Thank you for changing my wandering life into a stable life.

- Why didn't the woman run away from the truth that Jesus revealed in her life?
- According to the lesson, why do you think the woman had five husbands?
- What did her encounter with Jesus bring to her life?
- What has your encounter with Jesus brought to your life?

**Further Reading:** Luke 7: 47-50

## Friday, November 11, 2022

**Read:** John 4:1-36

**Scripture Verse:** *"Then, leaving the water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?" They came out of the town and made their way toward him." John 4:28-30*

### Today's Thought:

In our previous study we saw that the Samaritan woman had a wonderful encounter with Jesus that completely changed her life. She went from a wandering life to a stable life. Jesus offered her what five husbands couldn't. Jesus replaced the emptiness with a life of joy, peace and full of testimony. Jesus satisfied her needs and thirst that no husband ever could. In this study we will see that the woman left her jar and went to the town to say to the people: "Come and see a man!"

The part that interests us in the text is the decision of the Samaritan woman. She has found the Messiah; she does not keep him for herself. She made the decision to go and announce the good news to the townspeople. She decided to leave her water jar behind to tell the townspeople that she found someone who told her everything. She became aware of her condition. She left the jar of water at the edge of the well to go tell the benefits of God in her life. She put Jesus first. If she braved the midday sun to fetch water, then water was important to her. Otherwise, she could wait until nightfall to fetch water. On the other hand, the water was important, but she realized that Jesus was more important than the natural water. Sharing the message in the town became a necessity for her.

The woman behaved like a spark of fire in a forest. The fire is transmitted from one twig to another, in an instant the whole forest is on fire. The gospel of Jesus Christ is contagious. The woman received the gospel of grace and was quick to spread it. She did not allow her past life to prevent her from accomplishing this noble mission. She didn't say, "What are people going to think and say about me? Won't they think I'm crazy?" Far beyond all these thoughts. It was not a question of believing in her, but in the word she carried, in the message she transmitted to them. She was responsible for delivering the message, not making them believe in her. She was quick to tell people in town that she had found someone who had told her most intimate story from beginning

to end. She realized that she couldn't keep this message to herself, that she had to share it with others. This transformational message made headlines across the town.

As Christians, we must make the gospel of Jesus Christ contagious in the truest sense. What do we mean by that? It is our duty to do like the Samaritan woman. She met Jesus, but she didn't hide him, she didn't keep him to herself. Our mission as Christians is to spread the gospel of salvation to others. This transmission must be from husband to wife and children, from friends to friends, from generation to generation.

In John 1:45-46 we see that Philip had done the same thing as the Samaritan woman. He found the Messiah; he invited his friend Nathanael to meet him. The big question now: What about us? With whom will we share this good news? Shouldn't we make a list of friends to accompany us to church to hear the word of God?

What we find is that there has not been a massive transmission of the gospel from generation to generation. There are many who despair, seeing their offspring who have abandoned the true faith and all Christian practice for the pleasures of this world. Is there still hope? Yes! If we decide to do as Philip did for Nathanael, as the Samaritan woman did for her town. The "come and see" of the Samaritan woman was inspired by God. She could be ashamed of it; but she was moved by the power of God to announce the good news. She put aside her past life which could serve as an obstacle. We understand why the apostle Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile." Romans 1:16.

May God give us passion for lost souls!

- What decision did the Samaritan woman make after meeting Jesus?
- What was the Samaritan woman's message to the townspeople?
- What should be our message to our friends, co-workers, our community?

**Further Reading:** John 1:45-49

*"Today is Friday. As Saturday and Sunday are coming, prepare to meet your God. If you don't mind, don't forget to invite a friend with you."*

## NOTES







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