

## JESUS RESTORES BROKEN LIVES

By Jennifer Lieberum  
Christian Centre Abbotsford

5 March 2023

---

Key verses: John 4:1-42

### INTRODUCTION

My text today is from John chapter 4, the Samaritan woman at the well. My message from it is that God loves us, He came to save us and be with us and He wants us to reach out to those who are lost and in darkness.

The title of my message is: Jesus restores broken lives. I was one of those broken people whom He rescued and restored, **and He's still working in me.**

Testimony: My story of redemption and restoration

Today I'm going to tell you the story of another broken life that got restored. I'm going to introduce you to a woman who was in trouble. She knew deep rejection and pain and had probably given up on happiness. To start with, **she was a Samaritan, which I'll elaborate on**, then she was a woman who had been married 5 times and was now living with a man to whom she was not married. She was an outcast in her community.

In order to fully appreciate this story, I need to give you a bit of background, as it touches deeply on racial and religious issues. Jews and Samaritans had deep rooted animosity toward one another, they hated one another. This goes back to what happened centuries before.

*"It dated all the way back to the days of the patriarchs. Jacob (or Israel) had twelve sons, whose descendants became twelve tribes. Joseph, his favourite, was despised by the other brothers (Gen. 37:3-4), and they attempted to do away with him.*

*But God intervened and not only preserved Joseph's life, but used him to preserve the lives of the entire clan. Before his death, Jacob gave Joseph a blessing in which he called him a **"fruitful bough by a well"** (Gen. 49:22). The blessing was fulfilled, as the territory allotted to the tribes of Joseph's two sons, Ephraim ("doubly fruitful") and Manasseh, was the fertile land that eventually became Samaria.*

*Later, Israel divided into two kingdoms. The northern kingdom, called Israel, established its capital first at Shechem, a revered site in Jewish history, and later at the hilltop city of Samaria.*

*In 722 B.C. Assyria conquered Israel and took most of its people into captivity. The invaders then brought in Gentile colonists "from Babylon, Cuthah, Ava, Hamath, and from Sepharvaim" (2 Kin. 17:24) to resettle the land. The foreigners brought with them their pagan idols, which the remaining Jews began to worship alongside the God of Israel (2 Kin. 17:29-41). Intermarriages also took place (Ezra 9:1-10:44; Neh. 13:23-28).*

*Meanwhile, the southern kingdom of Judah fell to Babylon in 600 B.C. Its people, too, were carried off into captivity. But 70 years later, a remnant of 43,000 was permitted to return and rebuild Jerusalem. The people who now inhabited the former northern kingdom—the Samaritans—vigorously opposed the repatriation and tried to undermine the attempt to re-establish the nation.*

*For their part, the full-blooded, monotheistic Jews detested the mixed marriages and worship of their northern cousins. So walls of bitterness were erected on both sides and did nothing but harden for*

the next 550 years." (The Word in Life Study Bible, New Testament Edition, (Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville; 1993), pp. 340-341)

In short, Jews and Samaritans started out with the same ancestor, Jacob, but after the kingdom was divided, those in Samaria intermarried with foreigners and started worshipping their gods. They were thought of as half-breeds and looked down on by the Jews. Furthermore, Samaritan women were considered unclean by the Jews.

Jews and Samaritans had no dealings with one another. In fact, Jews would usually go around Samaria when travelling from Judea to Galilee, but Jesus had an appointment at a well so He chose to travel through Samaria this time. This was no chance meeting. Jesus only did what His Father showed Him.

## AN ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS

*John 4:6-27 ESV*

<sup>6</sup> Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour. <sup>7</sup> A woman from Samaria came to draw water.

Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."<sup>8</sup> (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.)<sup>9</sup> The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)

<sup>10</sup> Jesus answered her, "**If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.**"

<sup>11</sup> The woman said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?"<sup>12</sup> Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock."

<sup>13</sup> Jesus said to her, "**Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,**<sup>14</sup> but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

<sup>15</sup> The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water."<sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."<sup>17</sup> The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband';<sup>18</sup> for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true."

<sup>19</sup> The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet."<sup>20</sup> Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship."<sup>21</sup> Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father."<sup>22</sup> You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.

<sup>23</sup> But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.<sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

<sup>25</sup> The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things."

<sup>26</sup> Jesus said to her, "**I who speak to you am he.**"

<sup>27</sup> Just then his disciples came back. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you seek?" or, "Why are you talking with her?"

Picture this story. Sometimes we read these stories but we don't actually think about how it really might have happened. Click on the link to watch a video clip enactment of this encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman, from "The Chosen" <https://youtu.be/ordhsDeAt60>

This is an important story. John chose to include it in his line-up of witnesses and signs, to reveal **who Jesus is**, "so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." John 20:31 ESV – the purpose of his letter.

He wants people to know who Jesus is, so they can believe in Him and get saved!

This is the longest dialogue recorded between Jesus and any other person in the Bible. It is given significance and importance, so we ought to take note of it.

There are many deep messages in this portion. You will need to study it out yourself to get everything out that is contained in these passages. I will bring out a few aspects:

## 1. God loves us.

In this encounter we **see God's love in action**: Jesus broke down religious, racial, gender and cultural barriers in order to reach this woman. He smashed them down!

Think about her situation. She had no way forward in life. She was stuck! She was an outcast in her own community, her many sins being obvious. She had no way into the temple because non-Jews were not allowed. There was no sacrifice for her sins, no forgiveness, just an empty life ahead.

Yet Jesus chose her! He sought her out and engaged in conversation with her. He treated her with dignity, like a human being made in the image of God. She would never have considered approaching Him like Nicodemus had, even by night.

He chose her to whom to clearly reveal Himself publicly as Messiah for the first time. Note that He did confront her sin, but He did not reject her. It didn't matter to Him where she was from or what she had done.

This is what God is like. Jesus showed us the Father. He loves sinners and saints alike. He came down to be with us, to demonstrate His love for us, to bring us His message of reconciliation.

## 2. He came to save us and be with us.

He used different language to Nicodemus but in essence revealed and explained salvation to her.

He used the metaphor of living water and told her He was the Messiah (Saviour). He said **"whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."** v14

See the reference in [John 7:37-39](#) when Jesus told the Jews in Jerusalem the same thing. It explains it a little bit further.

<sup>37</sup> *On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. <sup>38</sup>Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'"*

<sup>39</sup> *Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.*

Jesus was speaking about the new birth, about being regenerated by His Spirit.

God's desire has always been to live with his people, to be close to them. He wants to be involved in our lives, included in our day. He came down. He made a way for us to be reconciled to Him. Then he sent and left his Spirit to be with us always and to live in us. He's with us wherever we go, because we're his home. Love came and love stayed, by His Spirit. The life of God in us will flow in us and through us.

*"When our Lord ascended he received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, and then a new era broke on the world. The life of the believer was no longer only an imitation of obedience. It was the uprising and outpouring of the Holy Spirit from within. We become strengthened with might in the inner man and Christ dwells in our hearts by faith. Thereupon we not only are infilled of the Spirit, but it is His gracious ministry to mankind through us that makes the desert rejoice and blossom." F.B. Meyer*

This is the work of the Spirit. This is what Jesus was offering to this non-Jewish woman of suspect character and allegiance.

That stream is meant to go out. We are meant to take this living water and share it with others; that's when it flows, when it bubbles and springs up and flows out of us. When we're actually doing what Jesus told us to do.

What was her response?

She ran into town and spread the good news to everyone she came across! She had met the Messiah who had given her hope where she was hopeless!

*John 4:28-30 ESV*

*<sup>28</sup>So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, <sup>29</sup>**"Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?"**<sup>30</sup> They went out of the town and were coming to him.*

She was so overwhelmed and so overjoyed that she left her water jar there and ran into town, forgetting her shame and status. The town responded to Jesus. Her status in that town changed that day – I'm pretty sure she went from outcast to hero! Jesus restores broken lives, in every way.

*John 4:39-42 ESV*

*<sup>39</sup>Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, **"He told me all that I ever did."** <sup>40</sup>So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. <sup>41</sup>And many more believed because of his word. <sup>42</sup>They said to the woman, **"It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that THIS IS INDEED THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD."***

This group of Samaritans got this revelation that Jesus is the Saviour of the world!

3. He wants us to reach out to those who are lost and in darkness.

Illustration: See picture



Explanation of picture:

The top part represents the Kingdom of God, coming into God's kingdom when we get saved. As we come to know Him more, as we come to have more revelation of truth, we come to really see and understand and know His GOODNESS.

In the bottom section where it is dark and hazy; this is how it is for people who don't know Jesus. They're stumbling around.

The only way to the Kingdom of God, to come to understand and know God's goodness is THROUGH JESUS! Jesus is the only Way to the Father. You must be born again, by His Spirit, have God living IN YOU, to experience the Kingdom of God.

**Scale of different kinds of people...** Nicodemus was religious, moral, a respected leader of the Jews. The Samaritan woman was unnamed, irreligious and immoral. Both were lost without receiving Jesus. Where would you have found yourself on this scale in your former life?

God is wanting and needing us; those who have experienced the Kingdom of God, those who have come to know His goodness, to reach out, to reach down and cross those barriers; to tell those who are in darkness the good news that Jesus loves them, that Jesus saves!

No-one is excluded. No one is beyond the need for grace or the reach of grace.

Meanwhile Jesus was teaching his disciples something – there are many who need to hear His message.

He was teaching them by His own demonstration what they ought to do. This is what He told them:

*John 4:35-38 ESV*

<sup>35</sup> *Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, then comes the harvest'? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. <sup>36</sup> Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. <sup>37</sup> For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' <sup>38</sup> I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.'*

"Lift up your eyes... I sent you to reap!"

Jesus showed us how to do it – He engaged in conversation. The Samaritan woman also showed us – she went and told her story.

### WHAT DOES HE WANT US TO DO?

Will we join Jesus on His mission to save the lost?

- Can you think of someone or perhaps a people group that He wants you to reach?
- Listen to **what He's saying to you. What will you do to reach them?**
- If you can, write it down or capture it on your device. Make a commitment today, to DO something.

We can't hold this good news to ourselves, we need to shine His light in our neighbourhoods and city; to tell people about our wonderful Saviour!

### CONCLUSION

God loves us all, saint and sinner alike. He came to save us and be with us and He wants us to reach out to those who are in darkness with His message of hope.

His love and goodness, the good news about Jesus is for every person. Just like Jesus crossed barriers to reach a lost woman and town, so too are we commissioned by Him to reach into the world of the religious and the irreligious, to share His message and life with all.

He wants us to reach out to those in darkness and bring them into the Kingdom of God – through sharing the story of Jesus and our story (our testimony of what Jesus has done in our lives).

Will you respond today, knowing He is with you always, wherever you go?

---

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Have you encountered the grace of God and how is He working in your life?
2. Are you experiencing God's goodness in your life or are you weighed down by the pressures of life, e.g. relational issues, financial burdens, health problem etc.?
  - If the latter, bring your burdens to Jesus; He cares for you.
  - Matthew 11:28 "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (see v 29-30 too)*
  - 1Peter 5:7 "casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you."*
  - (Read, meditate on and apply these Scriptures and reach out to a Christian friend who can stand with you.)
3. Are you willing to cross any barrier necessary to reach the lost? What is holding you back?