

JESUS SATISFIES

How Jesus Satisfies Your Deepest Needs

John 4:1–42

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CHANCE ENCOUNTERS

The Wrong Turn on Franz Josef Street (1914)¹

After an initial assassination attempt against Archduke Franz Ferdinand failed in Sarajevo, the Archduke changed his itinerary to visit injured officers in the hospital. However, his driver was never properly informed of the route change. Realizing he was on the wrong street, the driver slammed on the brakes to reverse – stopping directly outside Schiller’s Delicatessen. Standing right on the curb was Gavrilo Princip, one of the failed assassins, who had given up and walked over to grab a sandwich. Princip pulled out his pistol and fired point-blank. Those two shots triggered World War I, which directly led to the collapse of empires, World War II, the Cold War, and the modern geopolitical map.

The Secret Nighttime Conversation (1785)²

William Wilberforce, a 26-year-old rising star in the British Parliament, underwent a profound Christian conversion. Feeling that politics was too corrupt for a follower of Christ, he contemplated abandoning public office to enter full-time ministry. In secret, fearing political ruin if discovered, he sought out an elderly pastor who had once been a slave-ship captain: John Newton, author of *Amazing Grace*. Newton firmly urged Wilberforce *not* to leave politics, telling him that God had raised him up "for the good of the nation and the church." Wilberforce stayed in Parliament and dedicated the next 46 years of his life to the crusade that eventually abolished the British slave trade.

Life can sometimes be marked by significant moments of “chance encounters” that result in great opportunities or disastrous outcomes. There are possible instances in your life where a “chance meeting” led to something unexpected, changing the trajectory of your life!

One of the sweetest encounters of Jesus’s ministry involved His meeting a broken, lonely, outcast Samaritan woman to whom He showed gracious, unconditional love through the gospel. Jesus displayed God’s impartiality of salvation’s call to all peoples. The meeting between Jesus and the Samaritan woman is set in contrast to His previous visit with a prominent religious leader, Nicodemus. Nicodemus represented Israel’s spiritual elite who should have understood God’s redemptive plan.

"Historical Examples of Chance Encounters" prompt. *Gemini*, 1.5 Pro version, Google, 24 Sept. 2026, gemini.google.com.

¹ Dedijer, Vladimir. *The Road to Sarajevo*. Simon and Schuster, 1966.

² Aitken, Jonathan. *John Newton: From Disgrace to Amazing Grace*. Crossway Books, 2007.

SAMARITANS: BIBLICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The people group known as the Samaritans, occupied the territory of the northern part of Israel below Galilee. Samaria had been the capitol city of the Northern Israel kingdom after the nation split under Rehoboam. The Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel were constantly at odds until their eventual overthrow. In 722 B.C., the Assyrians conquered Samaria (2 Kings 17:6, 24-33) and dispersed the people throughout the empire, but left the poor and helpless in the land. Assyrian kings resettled peoples of various nationalities in the Samaritan region, who intermarried with the current residents.

After the Babylonian captivity, Southern Jewish settlers returned to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple. The people already living there had remarried with Gentile settlers “mixing” the race of Israel with Gentile. These “Samaritans” offered to help rebuild the temple under Zerubbabel but were sternly rejected. In retaliation, the Samaritans attempted to subvert the rebuilding projects (Ezra 4:1-10; 10:10-44). The scribe Ezra called for national purity among the people by calling out those who had inter-married to put away their pagan spouses. This drove a further wedge between Jewish and Samaritan relations.

Shechem/Sychar became a prominent city of Samaria. It held important historical and religious value in biblical history (Gen.12; 48:22; Josh.8:30-31). Mount Gerizim was also a significant site, situated opposite of Mt. Ebal. It was location that Moses commanded the reading of the Law of God’s blessings to be done after the conquest (Deut.27:11-14; Josh.8:30-35). It also held a strategic military outpost near the city of Shechem.

When the Samaritans offer to help rebuild the Temple were refused by Ezra condemned and called for national purity excluding the Samaritans, decisive action was taken. They began mimicking much of the Jewish life and customs, and claimed the Pentateuch as the only sacred scriptures. By making some textual changes and placing improper emphasis on certain passages, the Samaritans declared Mt. Gerizim to be the rightful place of worship, even building their own temple in rivalry to Jerusalem. The Jews retaliated by proclaiming Samaritan worship invalid, disowning any kinship of race or religion with them. Jews assumed a superior and self-righteous attitude with regard to their “pure” worship of God compared to the tainted worship of the Samaritans. They often interchanged the word “Samaritan” with the word “stranger/foreigner” in derogatory fashion.

The Samaritan woman was the exact opposite appearing as the least likely person to respond to Jesus Christ in true saving faith. In both Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman, several similarities are observed:³

- 1) *They both thought they were all right spiritually*
- 2) *They both were crudely literal, materialistic, in their reactions to Jesus’s teaching*
- 3) *They both were empty spiritually, sensing a need for God but denying it by intellect or outlook on life*
- 4) *They both were spiritually lost*

³ Boice, James Montgomery. *The Gospel of John: An Expositional Commentary*. Baker Books, 2005.

From John 4, we observe a Samaritan woman experiencing soul-thirsty satisfaction in Jesus Christ that met her greatest need resulting in true worship. **IN THE SAME WAY, YOU CAN EXPERIENCE JESUS'S FULL SATISFACTION OF YOUR LIFE'S DEEPEST NEEDS THAT WILL LEAD TO TRUE SPIRITUAL WORSHIP IN CHRIST.**

I. JESUS'S DIVINE APPOINTMENT [4:1-8]

^{ESV} **John 4:1** *Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John² (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples),³ he left Judea and departed again for Galilee.⁴ And he had to pass through Samaria.⁵ So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.⁶ 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. A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."*

DIVINELY NECESSARY

As the apostle John wrote his gospel years later, he likely reflected on how the sovereign plan of God was revealed in seemingly ordinary details. Like tracing a picture of "divine connect the dots," John relates this encounter from the perspective of how Jesus proved He is the "*Savior of the world*." The scene opens with Jesus not wanting to compete with the ministry of John the Baptist or draw unnecessary attention from the Pharisees this early into His ministry. Jesus decided to head north, but He chose a path that was considered defiling and not the preferred route of any strict teacher of the Law – "*He had to pass through Samaria*."

Jesus was not interested in the prejudices and barriers that separated His people from the rest of the world. His salvation is for all peoples (3:16), which meant it was **necessary** for the people of Samaria to also receive His gospel message. Following this course of action, Jesus travelled through "enemy" territory where he would specifically meet with a certain Samaritan woman at just the right time. This was no chance encounter but a divine appointment that would open the door of salvation to a despised, segregated people.

In this passage we observe both the humanity (100% man) and deity (100% God) of Jesus Christ on display. Humanly speaking, He was physically exhausted, thirsty and famished from the current pace of life and ministry. In His divinity, the Holy Spirit directed His steps and led Him on the pathway toward Samaria where He stopped outside the town Sychar to send His disciples for food. The time of day was around noon, in the heat of the day. The appointment was divinely Spirit-led with an unsuspecting, sinner whom Jesus would radically change forever. This was not chance, but God's gracious providence in her life.

JESUS HAS MADE A DIVINE APPOINTMENT WITH YOUR LIFE

God is actively involved in meeting you at the moment of your greatest need. There is never a situation or conflict where God is not always at work to reveal Himself to you and show your need of total dependence upon Him. In all pathways of life, are you seeking God by asking what is He teaching you or how are you learning to trust Him? *Are your eyes open to what God is doing and how He is working in your life right now? Have you established a regular rhythm and rendezvous of fellowship with God and His people in order to learn how He meets your greatest needs? Where is God meeting you to show your need to depend upon Him today?* God makes regular appointments in your life to meet you where you're at, first beginning with your salvation then continuing throughout your lifetime.

II. JESUS'S DIVINE SATISFACTION [4:9-15]

John 4:10 *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."*¹¹ *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?"*¹² *Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock."*¹³ *Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,"*¹⁴ *but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty forever. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."*¹⁵ *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."*

PHYSICAL VS. SPIRITUAL THIRST

This divine appointment unfolded as an unnamed woman came by herself to a well farther outside the city. Most women came together in the cool of the evening to draw water for their needs, avoiding the noonday heat. This woman in an apparent attempt to avoid social interaction was instead met by a Jewish, male stranger who makes an awkward request. This entire situation was considered shameful and defiling for a Jewish teacher to even speak with a woman, let alone share a drink from her bucket!⁴

Jesus immediately directs the conversation to offer her something greater than her physical need. He is offering a life-changing gift that only He has authority to bestow. The ironic surprise in this meeting isn't Jesus asking the woman for a drink, but that she doesn't know to ask Him! She can't understand since her mind was on the menial task at hand. Jesus graciously presses the conversation further by differentiating between her physical thirst and spiritual thirst. Still her present thinking only remained on alleviating her current need, even questioning Jesus's ability to provide this mysterious water source.

Jesus's offer of "living water" was far more valuable and satisfying than any bucket of water could quench. What Jesus was offering was a complete, permanent soul-satisfying alleviation and eternal joy. His offer was consistent with what the prophets beckoned God's people to understand previously:

⁴ "For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans" – literally reads, **συγγρῶνται**, "to have dealings with, to use common vessels." Harris, W. Hall, III. *The Lexham Greek-English Interlinear New Testament: SBL Edition*. Lexham Press, 2010. John 4:9

"For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants." (Isaiah 44:3)

"for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water." (Jeremiah 2:13)

"Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." (Isaiah 55:1)

The "living water" Jesus offered was His life-giving words and the gift of the Holy Spirit (7:37-39). It included forgiveness from a sinful life, to be replaced with new desires of obedience for God's glory. This gift would become a perpetual source of spiritual refreshment capable of satisfying the soul's deepest longings.

JESUS ALONE SATISFIES YOUR SOUL'S DEEPEST DESIRES

What is it you really want? Why do we all spend our time and energy pursuing stuff, comfort, pleasure or people believing they can provide satisfaction? Like the woman, you must first overcome any ignorance in believing that temporal, physical pursuits can satisfy spiritual desires. Your deep desires of security, comfort, contentment and joy can only be satisfied in Jesus Christ; any other pleasures will only leave you thirsting for more. Only the gift of Jesus Christ and His Holy Spirit can perpetually produce in you a quality of life that brings relational contentment and eternal satisfaction.

III. JESUS'S DIVINE DISCLOSURE [4:16-26]

John 4:16 *Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."¹⁷ The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband';¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true."*

EXPOSING SIN

Before receiving this "living water," the woman needed to acknowledge the reality of her sin problem. Jesus omnisciently addressed the failure of her past and sinfulness of her present living arrangement. She quickly perceived His spiritual insight, but preferred He not address those sensitive areas of her life. At this point, there was nothing she could personally hide from Him; and there was nothing she could receive from Him until her sin had been exposed. In order to accept Jesus's offer of soul-satisfying water, she would need to know Him as Savior.

"This is always the way it is in the spiritual realm. Jesus comes to us first. If we were left to ourselves, we would leave him sitting on the edge of the well forever. But he does not leave us to ourselves. Instead he comes to us. He asks the first question. He initiates the conversation. He uses all devices to break through to our hearts. Sometimes it is a question, sometimes a command, sometimes a chance remark made by someone else, but it is always from him."⁵

⁵ Boice, James Montgomery. *The Gospel of John: An Expository Commentary*. Baker Books, 2005, p. 279.

JESUS SATISFIED YOUR SIN PROBLEM

You are to take 100% responsibility for your sin through confession and repentance. There is no place in your life or heart where you can say, "This is OFF LIMITS, Jesus!" *"Scripture knows nothing of a salvation without repentance, and that always involves turning from sin."*⁶ In order to receive the satisfaction your soul desires, your sin must be dealt with. God cannot simply overlook your sin or pretend it doesn't exist. His holy justice requires satisfactory payment that you and I cannot afford. Jesus Christ satisfied the payment of God's wrath through His death on the cross and resurrection from the grave. **(Romans 5:9-10)**

TRUE WORSHIP

John 4:21 *Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father."²² You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.²³ 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.²⁴ God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."²⁵ 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."²⁶ Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."*

The woman's spiritual interest was piqued. Yet there was conflict in her understanding due to social and religious barriers preventing her from knowing the truth. The Samaritans believed in a type of messiah called, *Taheb* ("Restorer") based loosely on Deut.18:18, but their knowledge was deficient in truth and insufficient to save. Jesus explained how the ritual of worship in the past was for a time in the plan of God. That time was being redefined now that Jesus had arrived to restore the true nature of worship. He would strip away any mechanical practice of worship by proclaiming it could not be found in a specific location, or a certain nation, or through futile rituals. Worship itself is essential; the place is only secondary and temporary. True worship is offered through conviction and belief, not fabricated or formulaic ritual.

JESUS SEEKS WHOLE-HEARTED HONEST WORSHIP

"IN SPIRIT": God the Father seeks worshipers who honor Him with their whole being according to His revealed truth. Worship by "*spirit*" here refers to the **inner core** of a person, *your heart's affections*. Worship is offered from the inner delight and desires of your being as produced by Spirit-filled conviction and belief. Worship in "**spirit**" **must** involve your emotions, affections, desires that erupt in praiseworthy delight of the One True God and His Son Jesus Christ.

"IN TRUTH": Worship by "*truth*" is to be consistent with who God is as revealed in Scripture and the person of Jesus Christ. If you have a wrong understanding of God and what He expects, it will result in improper worship. Just as Cain's offering was rejected for not meeting God's expectations (Gen.4), so will your offering of worship fail if it is not according to God's revealed truth.

⁶ John MacArthur, *MNTC John 1-11*, p. 147

The more accurate and thorough your knowledge of God, the greater and more pleasing your worship will be. Neither “*spirit*” nor “*truth*” can be separated from true worship. Since God is Spirit, He requires worship from our spiritual inner being. While truth directs our focus and affections on Who God is and how He has revealed Himself in His Word.

“Truth without emotion produces dead orthodoxy and a church full (or half-full) of artificial admirers (like people who write generic anniversary cards for a living). On the other hand, emotion without truth produces empty frenzy and cultivates shallow people who refuse the discipline of rigorous thought. But true worship comes from people who are deeply emotional and who love deep and sound doctrine. Strong affections for God rooted in truth are the bone and marrow of biblical worship.”⁷

IV. JESUS’S DIVINE SUMMONS [4:27-42]

John 4:31 *Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.”³² But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.”³³ So the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought him something to eat?”³⁴ Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.³⁵ 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.³⁶ Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together.³⁷ For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’³⁸ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”*

JESUS CALLS YOU TO HIS EVANGELISTIC HARVEST

The Samaritan woman’s encounter with Jesus led to a progressive realization of His true identity: *Sir, prophet, Messiah, I AM, Savior*. The moment of profound truth in Jesus’s identity led her to leave her empty water bucket behind and return to her town unashamed to share the remarkable news of Who she just met! Meeting Jesus satisfied her soul’s greatest need for salvation, prompting her to worship by bringing others to encounter Him for themselves. He satisfied her deep spiritual thirst causing her to forget her temporary physical thirst.

As the disciples returned to a socially perplexing scene before them, Jesus turns the moment into a greater spiritual lesson. While they had left to run a simple errand trying to meet Jesus’s physical hunger needs, He took the opportunity to share His true priority and soul satisfaction in traveling to Samaria. His greater task was always to do the will of the Father which took precedence over drinking and eating. As the woman testified, “*Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?*” and then returned with the townspeople to meet Him, Jesus summoned His disciples to recognize the plan and work of God in the gospel message. These Samaritans rejected by God’s people, in contrast accepted God’s chosen Messiah inviting Him into their homes and hearts to hear His truth.

⁷ Piper, John. *Desiring God: Meditations of a Christian Hedonist*. Revised ed., Crossway, 2025. p.72

CONCLUSION

Every true worshiper of Jesus Christ has the mission to do the will of God by proclaiming His gospel. The gospel crosses all social barriers and racial distinctions by meeting people's deepest needs. Jesus is the gift of God providing His continual life-giving Spirit to bring true satisfaction of eternal quality. This is only experienced as you confess and repent of your sins, receiving Jesus as Lord and Savior. Jesus Christ satisfied God's eternal wrath for your sins, and will satisfy your deepest need to delight yourself in God by transforming your heart's affections in true worship. This leads to your greater purpose in fulfilling God's gospel commission at any sovereign encounter you experience in this life.