

John 3:22 - 4:54

John the Baptist's Testimony; The Samaritan Woman; Healing the Royal Official's Son

Day 1

Read John 3:22-36

John the Baptist's testimony

1. Why do you think John the Baptist was still baptizing even after Jesus' disciples (compare 4:2) had started baptizing? 3:22,23 (Consider the purpose of John's baptisms. - Luke 3:3-6.)

2. What prompted a concern on the part of John's disciples? 3:25,26

- How do you think they expected John to respond? (Compare Romans 15:20)

Optional Digging Deeper

For the details of John's imprisonment and death, see Matthew 14:1-12 and Mark 6:14-29.

3. In your own words, state what John said about his ministry in:

- 3:27 "God is in charge" or "A person can only do what God enables him to do"
- 3:28
- 3:29
- 3:30

4. How would you summarize John's attitude?

- What was Jesus' assessment of John the Baptist? Matthew 11:11

Optional Digging Deeper

What spiritual significance did a wedding have for a Jew? Isaiah 62:1-5; Hosea 2:16-20

For Your Information: "John compared himself to the friend of the bridegroom, who was appointed to arrange the preliminaries of the wedding, to manage the wedding, and to preside at the wedding feast. When the friend of the bridegroom finished his job, he had to get out of the way. His joy came from the success of the bridegroom. John was satisfied with his position in life. He was content to be a 'voice' (1:23) and a friend." - The Nelson Study Bible (1765)

5. What did John say about Jesus' origin and position versus his own? 3:31

6. What do Jesus' origins say about the truth He proclaims? 3:32

- What does a believer affirm? 3:33 (Compare 1 John 5:10-12)

7. What did John say about Jesus' authority and power?

- 3:34a
- 3:34b

For Your Information: "Unlike human teachers, Jesus was not given *the Spirit by measure* - that is, in a limited way (See Isaiah 11:1,2). The Holy Spirit was given to Jesus completely...without measure." - The Nelson Study Bible (1765)

- 3:35 (Compare Matthew 11:27, 28:18)

8. What does believing versus rejecting the Son bring? 3:36

For Your Information: "The wrath of God": "The word does not mean a sudden gust of passion or a burst of temper. Rather, it is the settled displeasure of God against sin. It is the divine allergy to moral evil, the reaction of righteousness to unrighteousness." (Tenney) - David Guzik

"No Jew would admit to disbelieving God. Because Jesus is the Word of God, failing to trust Him is the same as choosing to disbelieve God...John said to his students, in effect, 'Don't forget that this "rival" you are prepared to oppose is none other than God in human flesh; to oppose Him is to rebel against the Almighty.'" - Charles Swindoll (80)

Applying the Word:

"Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist..." Matt. 11:11

As you studied the life of John the Baptist, what did you learn about "greatness" in God's eyes?

Day 2

Read John 4:1-27

The Samaritan woman

9. Why did Jesus leave Judea and go north to Galilee? 4:1-3 (Compare John 7:1; 8:59)

- Where did he *have* to go? 4:4,5a

For Your Information:**"He had to go through Samaria" (4:4)**

"Jesus had to go through Samaria not because of geography but because of His mission.

After King Solomon died in 931 BC, Israel split in two. The northern tribes called themselves Israel and made Samaria their capital city. The southern tribes were called Judah and kept Jerusalem as their capital. In 723 BC Assyria destroyed Israel, deported most of its population, and resettled the land with other conquered people. The whole region was now called Samaria. Most of the new mixed population began to practice a religion that combine elements of pagan religion with elements of biblical faith. [See 2 Kings 17:23-41] The polytheism gradually faded, but Samaritan religion continued to be unique. The Samaritans regarded only the five books Moses as Scripture; they rejected the Prophets and other books. They also sacrificed on Mount Gerizim instead of at Jerusalem

The Jews (the people of Judah) regard the Samaritans as in same ways worse than gentiles because they worshiped the God of Israel in a corrupt fashion. In response, the Samaritans hated the Jews for rejecting them and also for taking over Galilee. Therefore, Samaritans often refused overnight shelter to Jews traveling between Galilee and Jerusalem for pilgrim feasts, and many Jews would rather go miles out of their way than set foot in Samaria." - John (Life Change Series) (59,60)

10. What was significant about the place that Jesus stopped to rest?
4:5,6 (Compare Genesis 33:18-20; Joshua 24:32 - *Sychar has been identified with ancient Shechem.*)

- How is Jesus' humanity demonstrated in 4:6,7? (Compare Luke 4:2; 8:23)

Optional Digging Deeper

What do the following reveal about Jesus' humanity?

Hebrews 2:17-18

Hebrews 4:15,16

11. Why would Jesus' request for water assist in bringing down barriers? 4:7,8

- How did the woman respond to Jesus' request for a drink of water? 4:9

For Your Information:

"This woman came for water at an unusual hour [6th hour in Jewish time = noon] and alone. Typically, women came for water earlier in the day and in groups. Perhaps there was a sudden need, or perhaps she was a social outcast...By tradition, a rabbi would not speak with a woman in public, even his own wife. It was also *very* unusual for a Jewish person of that time to ask a favor or accept a drink from a Samaritan's cup. Jesus' request genuinely surprised the woman." - David Guzik

12. What three things did Jesus introduce into the conversation? 4:10 On what level was He relating to her?

- Based on her reply, on what level did the woman understand Jesus' words? 4:11,12

13. What difference did Jesus make between physical water versus living water? 4:13,14 (Compare Jeremiah 2:13; 17:13)

- Although the woman remained on an earthly level, do you see any change in her response in 4:15?

14. Compare Jesus' offer in 4:13,14 to the invitation He made in John 7:37-39.

For Your Information: "Jesus played on images of well water, which is stagnant, and running water, which is 'living,' to describe the kind of life available to those who believe in Him. Those who trust in Christ never need to look outside themselves for satisfaction because He dwells within them, supplying every emotional and spiritual need. They will never be without water again."
– Charles Swindoll (90)

15. What do you think Jesus was trying to do when he seemingly changed the subject in 4:16? (Do you see a connection with the idea of being "thirsty?")

- How did Jesus respond to her evasive answer? 4:17,18 (i.e. What was Jesus doing with a painful area of her life?)

Food for Thought: "The issue of her sinful life must be confronted. This woman had to decide what she loved more: her sin or the Messiah."
– David Guzik

16. Underline Jesus' mission:

- Mark 2:17 On hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." NIV
- Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed NASU
- Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost." NIV
- Romans 5:6 You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. NIV

17. What did the woman realize about Jesus? 4:19

- Why do you think she changed the subject to worship in 4:20?

For Your Information: "Our fathers worshipped on this mountain" (4:20) "By mentioning the two different worship sites, the woman was perhaps trying to shift the conversation away from the subject of her own sins to theological questions. Or perhaps she realized that she was a sinner and knew that she was required to offer a sacrifice. The woman probably assumed that because Jesus was a Jew, He would insist that the sacrifice be offered in the temple in Jerusalem...But the Samaritans had set up a rival worship site on Mount Gerizim."
– The Nelson Study Bible (1766)

"Skillfully Jesus replied both to the controversial issue which she raised and to the deeper personal need concealed behind it. His reply was blunt, and He made no concession to the Samaritan position, for He said, "Salvation is from the Jews" (22). On the other hand, He lifted the whole problem out of the categories of time and space and made it a matter of the heart."
– Merrill C. Tenney (95)

18. List the points that Jesus made about true worship:

- location: 4:21
- object of worship: 4:22
- essence of worship: 4:23-24

Optional Digging Deeper

How is "salvation from the Jews?"

Acts 3:25-26

Romans 1:3; 9:4-5

19. What did the woman reveal about her heart in 4:25?

Food for Thought: "The woman's answer showed that there was a measure of sincerity in her heart. She could have gone away at this time, but did not...[Her] words were a confession both of ignorance and of hope. She was waiting for light, and, soiled as she was, she clung to the ancient promise of God that a Deliverer would come who would take away the darkness from her eyes. To such elementary faith as this Jesus revealed Himself more openly that He did even to Nicodemus."
- Merrill C Tenney (95)

20. How did Jesus respond? 4:26 (Compare Exodus 3:14; John 8:58)

Optional Digging Deeper

Memorize John 4:24

For Your Information:

"I am He" (Literally, "I that speak to you, I am")

"Jesus' timing was perfect. He established a rapport. He allowed the woman to see His genuine concern for her as a person, not an object. He treated her with uncommon dignity and spoke compassionately to her spiritual need. He didn't allow her to distract Him from the real issues involved, including her attempt to flatter Him and then engage in a pointless theological debate...He used her distraction to get the conversation back to the real issue. Her problem – as with most people in John's account – was not intellectual, but volitional."
- Charles Swindoll (91)

Applying the Word: How tender was Jesus in addressing the sensitive areas of the Samaritan woman's life? In what way(s) do you need His compassion and forgiveness?

Day 3

Read John 4:28-42

The Samaritan woman's testimony

21. How did the disciples react to Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman? 4:27

- Why do you think they didn't say anything?

22. What picture do the words "So the woman left her waterpot" give? 4:28

23. What was it about Jesus that became the heart of the woman's testimony to her town?
4:29,30

Food for Thought: "The woman was amazed not only that Jesus knew the facts of her life, but that He loved her knowing the facts of her life. We sometimes fear that if someone knew **all that I ever did**, they could not love us - but Jesus loved this woman."
– David Guzik

24. What titles did the Samaritan woman use toward Jesus?

- 4:9
- 4:11,15
- 4:19
- 4:29

25. What "food" did Jesus want to teach his disciples about? 4:32-34

26. What meaning would you give to the following words in Jesus' analogy in 4:35-37?

- "Fields"
- "White for harvest"
- "Reaps, sows" (Compare 1 Corinthians 3:6,7)
- "Fruit for eternal life"

27. What two testimonies caused the Samaritans to believe in Jesus? 3:39,41

- What declaration did they make about Jesus? 4:42

28. What picture does John 4:40-41 give you about Jesus?

- What lessons about evangelism did Jesus teach the disciples through this encounter with the Samaritans?

Applying the Word: How would you describe Jesus' attitude toward one lost sinner? About breaking barriers?

Day 4

Read John 4:43-54

Healing a royal official's son

29. What was the problem with the people in Galilee? 4:44 (See Mark 6:1-6; Luke 4:24-30 for events that showed why Jesus had “*no honor in his own country.*”) Why do you think He still went there?

For Your Information: "The alternating of Judea-Galilee, Galilee-Judea is important for John, although we are not sure why. It is possible that John is making it clear that Jesus paid attention both to 'His own country' and to the capital. Judea, and especially its capital Jerusalem, was the home of Jesus' opponents...Galilee was Jesus' home territory, but as Jesus himself said, a prophet has *no honor in his own country.* Jesus taught and performed signs both in the place that was hostile to Him and in the one that took Him for granted."
– Africa Bible Commentary (1260)

30. Why did the Galileans receive Jesus? 4:45 (Compare 4:41)
31. What two things did the royal official want Jesus to do? 4:47 (*Capernaum and Cana are about 18 miles apart.*)

"Royal official/nobleman" *basilikos* Strong's 937, an adjective, "royal, belonging to a king" - Vine's Expository Dictionary
"Obviously a person of prestigious rank, this man is probably one of Herod's trusted officers. But his rank means nothing to him now, His son's life is at stake. Consequently, he doesn't go to Herod; he goes to Jesus, the very source of life. Amazing, isn't it, how infirmity draws people to Christ faster than prosperity does. But sometimes that's what it takes. As C. S. Lewis observed: 'How hard it is to turn our thoughts to God when everything is going well with us.'" - Charles Swindoll (EC 62)

32. Why did Jesus rebuke the people? 4:48 (Compare John 2:23-25, 6:26)

Food for Thought: "Before we judge Jesus' words too harshly, we must understand that a 'circus' atmosphere was developing around Christ. To many people, He was fast becoming a traveling sideshow."
- Charles Swindoll (EC 62)

33. How was the royal official's belief limited? 4:49
- What dilemma was the royal official faced with by Jesus' words: "Go your way; your son lives." 4:50 (Note: What did the official "believe"?)

Food for Thought: "Signs and wonders from God are obviously good things, but they should not form the foundation of our faith. We should not depend on them to 'prove' God to us. In themselves, signs and wonders cannot change the heart; Israel saw incredible signs at Mount Sinai and even heard the very voice of God (Exodus 19:16-20:1), yet a short time later they worshipped a gold calf (Exodus 32:1-6)." – David Guzik

"Jesus' first desire was to bring the official to the point where he would see Jesus as the Savior of the soul and not simply one who could miraculously heal the body." – Africa Bible Commentary (1261)

34. How was the official's son healed? 4:51-53

35. After the healing, in what did the man finally "believe?" 4:53b

- What other harvest came about because of the official's faith? 4:53

Optional Digging Deeper
Fill in information the 2nd sign on the chart "Signs in the gospel of John".

Applying the Word:

The growth of the royal official's belief involved "utter confidence in Christ as a person who can be trusted with the dearest treasures and the deepest problems." - Merrill Tenney
What do you need to trust Christ for or with today? How adequate is His ability to meet that need? Do you see any way that your belief is limited?

Optional Digging Deeper

Fill in the following information about Jesus' encounters with people.

	Nicodemus – 3:1-21	Samaritan Woman – 4:4-43	Royal Official – 4:46-54
What Jesus said/ truth shared			
Persons' response			