

## Sabbath School Lesson #5 – The Testimony of the Samaritans – 26 Oct-1 Nov 2024

**C**hrist is has the words of eternal life. Some of the Samaritans believed on Christ because of what was told them by the woman whom Christ met at the well. But “many more believed because of His own word; And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world” (John 4:41-42). Their faith rested on the true foundation, – Christ’s word. No belief that does not rest on this will be enduring. When many of Christ’s disciples turned from Him because they could not receive His sayings, and Jesus had asked the twelve if they also would go way, Peter said, “Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God” (John 6:67-69). There was none other than Christ who had the words of eternal life; there is none other now. And those who hear His words, believe and are sure that He is the Son of God. They have a knowledge that is not possessed by the others.

**Sunday: The Setting of the Encounter** – Read John 4:1-4. What was the background issue that led Jesus through Samaria? The leaders of the Church, the Pharisees, were antichrist, they denied that Christ was the Son of God, they thought He was merely the son of Mary of Nazareth, they also hated Him for the truth, they had gotten rid of John who was the forerunner of Jesus by causing him to be imprisoned. And now they hear that Jesus was baptising more converts than John (although it was Jesus’ disciples who baptised). When the Pharisees thought they had got rid of John (for he was by this time imprisoned), and were pleasing themselves with that, Jesus appears, who was a greater vexation to them than ever John had been. That which grieved them was that Christ made so many disciples. The success of the gospel exasperates its enemies, and it is a good sign that it is getting ground when the powers of darkness are enraged against it. In these circumstances, our Lord Jesus left Judea and departed again to go to Galilee. He left Judea, because He was likely to be persecuted there even to the death; such was the rage of the Pharisees against Him, and such their impious policy to devour the man-child in His infancy (Revelation 12:5). To escape their designs, Christ quitted the country, and went where what He did would be less provoking than just under their eye; “His hour was not yet come” (John 7:30), He had not finished His work, and therefore would not surrender Himself. He gave an example to His own rule: “when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another” (Matthew 10:23). We are not called to suffer, while we may avoid it without sin; though we may not, for our own preservation, change our religion, yet we may change our place. Christ secured Himself, not by a miracle, but in a way common to men, for the encouragement of His suffering people.

**Monday: The Woman at the Well** – Read John 4:7-15. How does Jesus use this encounter to start witnessing to the woman at the well? Jesus, wearied with His journey from Jerusalem, was sitting at noon by the well of Jacob, near the city of Sychar in Samaria, while His disciples were in the city in search of food. As He sat there a woman of the city came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, “Give Me to drink.” That started the witnessing. The woman was seeking earthly water, but Christ could give her heavenly water. As the hymnal goes, many today seek earthly water that can never quench the thirst: ‘Like the woman at the well, I was seeking; For things that could not satisfy. And then I heard my Savior speaking – Draw from My well that never shall run dry.’ Let us draw from Christ.

**Tuesday: “Sir, Give Me This Water”** – Read John 4:15. What was the water that Jesus would give this woman and give whosoever will receive it today? The woman said to Jesus, “Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.” But at that point, yet she did not realise the nature of the water which Jesus promised. But afterwards when she found out just what He meant, she was still as willing to receive of it. What that water is, which Jesus gives is made very clear by His words on the last day of the feast of the Jews: “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly [out of his very being] shall flow rivers of living water” (John 7:37-38). Here we have the promise of living water, the same as He promised to the woman of Samaria. Here, as there, the water is to be in the very being of the one receiving it. And here we are told that

that water of life is the Spirit of God, which is given to every believer in Christ. Let us now read another statement. The Spirit of God through the apostle Paul said: "They that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Romans 8:8-11). Here we have a parallel to the statement that the water that Christ gives will be in the believer a well of water springing up into everlasting life. It is life itself, because it is righteousness. Paul has said that to be spiritually minded is life in peace (Romans 8:6). And we have also read that the Spirit is life because of righteousness. This, then, is that birth of the Spirit, which makes one an entirely new man; it makes the sinner a righteous man, a keeper of the law of God. "For we know that the law is spiritual" (Romans 7:14). That is, the law is of the nature of the Spirit of God. This is further shown by the fact that those things that are in harmony with the law of God, are the fruit of the Spirit (see Galatians 5:22-23). So the reception of the Spirit of God makes the sinner another person, with a different nature. It makes him living a different life. The Spirit is the Spirit of God, and its righteousness is the righteousness of God, and that is expressed in the ten commandments. The Spirit ministers this righteousness to the man, and lives in him. His character is then the character of God, because he is one with God, he has been made a new creature, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. He has "put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Ephesians 4:24). This is the beginning of eternal life, for the life of the Spirit of God is eternal, and it is that life which the man now lives. This is the life of Jesus manifest in mortal flesh (2 Corinthians 4:11). It is of this that the beloved disciple speaks in his epistle, when he says that he who confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is born of God (1 John 4:2). God dwells in that man as truly as His life was manifest in Jesus. Not because there is anything in man that is comparable to Jesus, but because Jesus, who was the fulness of God dwells in him. Thus, "Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit" (1 John 4:13).

**Wednesday: The Revelation of Jesus** – Read John 4:16-24. What did Jesus do to show this woman that He knew her deepest secrets, and how did she respond? Jesus tells the woman the secret things about her failed marriages, and the woman believed that Jesus was the Christ, Messiah, the Son of God, for only He could know. And the talk transitions to worship. Jesus said to the woman at the well, "Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22). The Samaritans did not know whom they were worshipping. They were worshipping a god of their own devising. The Jews on the other hand were worshipping the Father in Heaven and of them Jesus said "we know whom we worship." There is a famine coming! Do we know whom we worship? Is our God the true God or have we bowed to the modern Baal gods? "This is eternal life, that they may know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3). Our Father is the only true God. Jesus Christ, the Son of the one true God, who has inherited all things from His Father, has directed us to worship His Father in spirit and in truth (John 4:23).

**Thursday: The Testimony of the Samaritans** – Read John 4:27-29. What surprising action did the woman take? She left her water jar and went to the city to call others to see Christ. Every other thing in which men take an interest, they talk about; but Christ is ignored. If the heart be fully sensible of the value of piety to itself; if it has any appreciation of its value to others; if it have any generous promptings toward the spiritual well-being of others; if it have any sense of their danger without it, – then out of the abundance of such a heart the tongue will speak. Even the woman of Samaria, in the newness of her knowledge of Christ, could run with alacrity among her fellow citizens, crying, "Come see a man who told me all that ever I did. Is not this the Christ?" If the testimony of one led many of the Samaritans to believe on Christ, are there not trophies of grace to be won from the world, for Christ, by those who have long tasted that the Lord is gracious? Who will go in the cities in the fullness of their experience, and in the earnestness of their love, like David, saying, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul" (Psalm 66:16)?