

Woman at the Well

I met Jesus in the most unusual way. It really never should have happened -- that is if things just happened. Because, you see, he is a Jew and Jews don't talk to Samaritans, and men don't just talk to women, no one in my town talks to me, and normally, I would not have been there at the well, and if he really knew what I was like, he would not have wanted to talk to me, except he did.... Am I confusing you?

I'd better start over. My life was really a mess. You can't say it was anybody's fault. It was not my father's fault that he died when I was young. It was not my mother's fault that she married me to an old man. It was not his fault that he could not tolerate my erratic behavior. But then when he divorced me, I became even more erratic. I threw myself at men, looking for love and acceptance. Divorce had not been very common in my little village, but I single-handedly changed that. Finally, the man I was then living with could not even bear to acknowledge through a wedding that he was going to give me a try and so we just lived together. If you had told the little girl I used to be that this is how it would turn out, I would have screamed and run.

So, anyway, no one ever spoke to me. I was THEIR worst nightmare, too. Rather than embarrass them I just stayed clear. That was why I went to get water in the middle of the day when no one would be there. Imagine my surprise when I saw a man sitting alone -- a Jew of all things. I had seen the other Jews going into town as I walked out. Of course, they did not even look at me, but this man did. All sorts of thoughts raced through my head and I nearly turned and walked away, but then he spoke. And of all things, he asked me to do something for him! He asked for a drink! Then even more things raced through my head but I was really intrigued.

So I told him everything I was thinking -- that's what I do when I am flustered. This was really unheard of. Jews won't even use the same dishes as Samaritans much less talk to us. And, of course, no man would ever talk to a woman. But he was treating me like a real person and ignoring all the traditions. Then, to top it off, when I asked him a superficial question, he answered another, deeper question, and did it in a way that got me to think about it like I never had before.

I asked him why he was talking to me and he asked me if I wanted living water. I wondered how could he draw water, and, of course, why he had asked me if he could have done it himself. He said that I would never thirst again and I started to talk about almost everything I knew about the well, about Jacob who gave it to us, and so on -- people usually didn't give me any credit for knowing anything.

But as I babbled on about how nice it would be never having to draw water again, he got to the heart of the matter and turned my thoughts to my real need. He did it by asking me to bring my husband. Now, of course, I was divorced and all this was irrelevant and too messy to talk about so I just said I did not have a husband. He told me how many times I had been married and that I was now living with another man.

That absolutely floored me! First of all, how did he know? Then since he did know, why did he not condemn me? Why did he even talk to me?

He was obviously a prophet and I had a few questions I had always wanted to ask a prophet, like where we should worship -- who was right, my religious leaders or the Jews? He started to talk about worshipping God in spirit and truth. I said that when the Messiah came, he would teach us. Then he said that he was the One.

Just at that moment, his friends came back and started to ask him why he was talking to me and I wanted to disappear. But I realized that I could not ignore what I now knew. He was the answer to all my questions. I did not slink away out of embarrassment, I had a mission.

It suddenly did not matter that I was the pariah of the town or what people would think if I approached them, I ran back, even forgetting my water jar, and told them all that this man knew everything and that he must be the Messiah. In fact, I knew that if He were the answer to MY deepest longings, he was also the answer to every one else's, too.

John 4:1 - 41

[For a shorter version click [here](#).]