

Peace be with you. We greet you in the name of God, the Lord of peace, who wants everyone to understand and submit to the way of righteousness that He has established, and have true peace with Him forever. We are happy to be able to return today to present your program *The Way of Righteousness*.

So far in our study in the holy Gospel, we have seen that Jesus the Messiah was unique in **His birth**, in **His character**, in **His works** and in **His teachings**.

Concerning **His birth** we saw that no one has ever been born like Jesus, because He was born of a virgin, by the power of the Holy Spirit of God. We saw also that Jesus was unique in **His character**, because no one else has ever been born with a holy nature like His. Jesus was also incomparable in **His works**, because no one has ever done miracles like He did. He would simply speak a word, and the sick were healed, Satan and his demons fled, and sins were taken away.

We also discovered that Jesus was unique in **His teaching**. We heard about this in our previous program in the conversation that took place between Jesus and a religious ruler named Nicodemus. Jesus showed Nicodemus that unless the Spirit of God renewed his heart, he could never enter the presence of God. That is why the Lord Jesus said to him, *"You must be born again!"*

Today we will hear how Jesus the Messiah spoke to **someone who was very different** from Nicodemus. Nicodemus was a Jew; however, the person we will see in our lesson today was **not a Jew**. Nicodemus was a man; the person we will see today was a **woman**. Nicodemus was a very religious person, but this woman was a **great sinner** who had had five husbands. In the eyes of man, the religious ruler, Nicodemus, was better than the immoral woman. But that is not how God sees it, because all of Adam's offspring--religious folk and great sinners alike, are under the dominion of sin.

That is why all of Adam's children must be born again by the power that comes from above.

Now let us return to the Gospel and listen to **the conversation that Jesus had with the immoral woman from Samaria**. Samaria was the region between Judea and Galilee in the land of the Jews. Many Samaritans were foreigners; the Jews considered them pagans, which is why they did not get along with each other. However, Jesus the Messiah did not show favoritism because God does not show favoritism. **Jesus came into the world to seek and to save every sinner who wants to have a new and pure heart**. That is why Jesus was not ashamed to talk to the Samaritan woman who had had five husbands.

Now let us listen to what is written in the Gospel of John, chapter four. The Scripture says:

*Now [Jesus] had to go through Samaria. So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you **living water**." "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?" Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but **whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst**."*

Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water." He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back." "I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true." "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are **a prophet**. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem." Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. **God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.**" The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." Then Jesus declared, "**I who speak to you am he.**"

*Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?" Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, "**Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the [Messiah]?"** They came out of the town and made their way toward him.*

Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers. They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just

because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."

This is where the story of the Samaritan woman ends. Truly it is an important story, because it shows how an immoral woman discovered that Jesus is the Savior whom God sent to earth. That discovery transformed her life. At the beginning of the conversation, the woman did not know who was speaking with her. She saw Jesus as just **another Jew among** many Jews. However, during the conversation, Jesus told her some things that a mere man could not know, which was why she concluded that Jesus must be **a prophet**. However, she finally came to see that this Jesus who was talking with her was **more than a prophet**. He was **the Messiah--the One about whom all the prophets had prophesied, the Savior of the world!**

Once the woman recognized that this Man who was sitting on the edge of the well and speaking with her was the Messiah, she put down her water jar and ran into town, telling all, *"Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?"*

After that, the people of the town came out to Jesus and asked Him to stay. Jesus stayed there for two days, teaching them how they could have a new and pure heart and become true worshipers of God. Thus, the Scripture says:

*"And because of his words many more became believers. They said to the woman, **'We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world!'**"*

Now let us continue in the Gospel and see what happened a few days after Jesus' visit to Samaria. We will see that **not everyone received Jesus as the Savior of the world**. In the Gospel of Luke, chapter four, the Scripture says:

*Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised him. [Jesus] went to **Nazareth, where he had been brought up**, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he began by saying to them, "**Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.**"*

With these words, Jesus claimed that He was the Messiah and the Savior about which the prophet Isaiah wrote seven hundred years earlier. However, the Jews who lived in Nazareth could not accept that this Jesus, who had grown up among them, was the Savior of the world sent from heaven! That is why they scorned Him, saying, "*Is he not the son of Joseph?*"

The Scripture goes on to say how Jesus warned the people of Nazareth not to despise the Messiah whom God had sent to them. But that only made them angrier. Thus, the Scripture says:

All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. They got up, drove [Jesus] out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him down the cliff. But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

The people of Nazareth tried to kill Jesus! Why did they try to kill Him? They tried to kill Him because Jesus claimed to be **the Messiah** about whom all God's prophets had

written. An old African proverb says "Truth is a hot pepper." Jesus' words of truth made the people of Nazareth so angry that they tried to throw Him off the cliff. But they could not do it, because the time appointed by God for Jesus to die had not yet come. African wisdom says: "The woodcutter does not cut down the main tree in the village under which people meet." Jesus the Messiah is God's "Main Tree!" How foolish and evil of men to want to "cut down" the One whom God appointed as the Savior and Judge of the world! Later, men would kill Him--but God would raise Him from the dead three days later. We will learn more about this in a future lesson.

Now then, how can we summarize our lesson today? We have heard two narratives about **two groups of people**. Both groups heard that Jesus claimed to be the Messiah, but their responses to His claim were very different.

1.) First, we heard about the sinner woman that Jesus met at the well and the people of Samaria. They received the words of Jesus with great joy and **believed** that Jesus is the Messiah, the Savior of the world.

2.) However, in our second narrative, we saw the religious people of Nazareth. They despised the words of Jesus. They did **not believe** that Jesus, who had grown up in their town, was the Messiah.

In brief, we see that the sinners living in the town of Samaria accepted Jesus as the Savior sent from heaven, but the religious people living in Nazareth did not accept Him.

How about you? Which of these two groups are you more like? Are you like the people of Samaria **who received Jesus as their Lord and Savior**? Or are you like the people of Nazareth, **who refused to believe that Jesus was the Messiah sent from heaven to save them from their sins**? Do you recognize that Jesus is the Redeemer of whom all the prophets wrote? Have you received Him as your Savior?

Listen to what the Holy Scripture says concerning Jesus the Messiah. It says:

*"The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it...He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. **Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God--children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God!"***

Have you been born of God? Do you really believe in Jesus? Have you received Him as your Lord and Savior?

We will stop here today. We invite you to join us in our next study to hear about the signs that Jesus showed, so that everyone might know that He is the One true Savior of the world....

God bless you as you remember what the people of Samaria testified concerning Jesus, saying,

"This man really is the Savior of the world!"

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