

Introductory

This text is not appointed to be read in the TLH one-year lectionary. It is the reading for Lent 2A in the LW three-year series. LSB have inserted the John 3 text on that Sunday and pushed this one back to this Lent 3A. The optional verses take us nearly three-quarters of the way through the fourth chapter of John, a substantial chunk of material.

The main reading (5-26) take us through the entirety of the conversation between Jesus and the woman. The (optional) readings deal with the aftermath of the conversation; the reaction of the disciples to Him talking to a woman, the woman going on into town, and then the disciples got hungry, and that seems to happen a lot, and what to do about that?

Even though it was not read regularly on Sunday morning until very recent times, most American Christians are familiar with this text. My hunch is that we are familiar with it because it involves Jesus talking to a pagan who is a woman, a prime target demographic for the LCMS of the last fifty years, and we learned the story in Sunday School.

One time, I was saying something about some history thing in Adult Bible Class, and a little old man observed that, “you know, you really have to know what was going on in those days to understand some of these things, don’t you? Do pastors know a lot about history?” I hemmed and hawed and said something like, “yes they should.”

First you have to know what these things meant to the people in that time and place, and then you bring it to these people at this time and in this place. You could probably somewhat understand the Gettysburg Address if you did not know the historical context of its being delivered, but you understand it better if you know when it was delivered.

The Gettysburg Address was delivered at the dedication of the Gettysburg National Cemetery in November of 1863, just a few months after the battle in July of 1863 in the year that began with the Emancipation Proclamation. It was delivered to a people whose homeland of Pennsylvania had been invaded, and the invaders had been defeated.

And you understand it even better if you understand the military significance of the battle, and the political climate of the day, and the mood of the nation at the time. The better we understand the historical context, the better we understand any speech, or any act, including the words and acts of Jesus. It’s called Grammatical Historical exegesis.

Two thousand years of Christian Western Civilization have made it hard for Americans today to get their heads around just how much of an anathema it would have been for a Jewish man like Jesus to be anywhere near this Samaritan woman. That He would talk theology with her – a Samaritan and a woman – would have been unthinkable.

Here we actually see Him not so much delivering a sermon, but engaging in theological dialogue with her, discussing religion in a very serious and straightforward manner. You are likely aware of the morning prayer that has a Jewish man saying, "Thank God that I was born neither a Gentile, nor a woman, nor a slave," and you have probably quoted it.

The prayer that expressed those sentiments has taken several forms. It is both noteworthy and ironic that the Greeks would have considered the Jews to be Barbarian; people below them by race, religion and culture, while at the same time the Jews would have considered the Greeks to be Gentiles; people below them by race, religion and culture.

It was said by the Ancient Greeks, who thanked their gods "that I was born a human and not a beast; a man and not a woman; a Greek and not a Barbarian." The Jewish version thanks God, "...who has created me a human and not beast, a man and not a woman, an Israelite and not a gentile, circumcised and not uncircumcised, free and not slave."

Some versions replace "slave" with "ignoramus," and some leave off the positive and not the negative, as quoted earlier. In light of such prayers, the words of the Apostle are as revolutionary as they are profound; "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3: 28).

As we see here and in other places, Paul got that idea from Jesus, and the further our society moves down the path of equality, the harder it is for those who come later to understand the concept of inequality. The ancient world was filled with inequality, as a matter of course, and Christianity brought with it the idea that all people are equal.

When the guide at Canterbury Cathedral told us that the rich people sat in the choir while the serfs stood in the nave, I was horrified that he would make such an accusation against Christians. I was certain that he was lying just to make the Christians look bad. He wasn't lying, and I get it, and that was their world, and social equality took longer.

The medieval man would not have even understood why I would be horrified at such class segregation. That's just the way things were in feudal society and nobody would have given such a thing a second thought. Eventually, the Christians came around to the idea that "all men are created equal" in secular as well as in spiritual matters.

I'm not just telling a story here. I am telling a story, and we like stories, but I'm making a point. When we tell stories during the sermon, and we should tell stories during the sermon, there has to be a point. We of this Millennium spend a lot of time harshly judging, and not even trying to understand, the humans from other times and places.

I think we should stop that. I get the feudal system, and I get putting witches to death, and I get Luther's wanting the rulers to drive the Jews out of Germany. Leave them alone, and let's deal with the sins of our own age, because when it's all said and done God may be a lot less happy with us now than He was with them then.

John tells us that this incident takes place in Samaria, near Sychar, a city in the Bible called “Shechem.” Modern-day Nablus, (population 126,000 WIK), sits on the site today, flanked on one side by Mt. Gerizim and on the other by Mt. Ebal. There’s an Eastern Orthodox monastery on the site today, and it doesn’t seem to be much of a tourist draw/

If you look at the map, you will see the shortest distance from Judea to Galilee was through Samaria. We have noted that people journeying the other way, south from Galilee to Judea, would often be harassed by Samaritans. The Samaritans hassled the travelers because they were often going to Jerusalem to go to Temple,

Never mind that there was no Temple on Gerizim anymore, the site was and still is known to them as Temple Mount, and it is the proper place for God’s Temple, not Mt. Zion in Jerusalem. In the Samaritan mind, they wanted to know why their Temple Mount was not good enough for them, especially if the travelers were Samaritans.

Looking at this conversation, I sort of go back and forth on the idea that there is some good-natured sarcasm going on here, some give and take that almost looks like flirting, but not the sinful kind, and if you can’t flirt without sinning, then Jesus did not flirt, but the woman was a full-blown sinner, so she’s wide open to perhaps being a flirt.

Sarcasm is a figure of speech well-known to most of us. It is one of my favorites, and also one of the most dangerous of all figures of speech. Paul, Luther, and Jim Rome, three of my favorite people ever, use it, and sometimes so does Jesus my Savior. Perhaps His most well-known use is when His fellow Jews are about to stone Him in John 8.

There, He looks at those stoners, and He goes, “I have done many good works among you. For which of these do you stone me?” Now that’s funny. I don’t care who you are. That’s funny. There’s an example of using sarcasm on your enemies. When using it on friends, be careful and don’t even think about being sarcastic to your wife.

As chapter 4 begins, John tells us that Jesus left Judea and went to Galilee because the Pharisees had gotten word that Jesus was attracting a larger following than John the Baptizer. With the Pharisees, it’s always about the numbers. That John was popular was problematic to the Pharisees. That Jesus was not more popular was more problematic.

Textual Notes

5. His course takes Him to πόλιν τῆς Σαμαρίας λεγομένην Συχάρ – a city of Samaria called Sychar,” located in the outskirts of Nablus, an Israeli city on the West Bank with a population just over two hundred thousand. Genesis (33: 18-20) relates how Jacob purchased the land from “the sons of Hamor, Shechem’s father” and built an altar there.

Today, Jacob’s Well in Samaria lies within the monastery complex of the Eastern Orthodox Church in Nablus, a part of the Palestinian West Bank.

Jacob's Well is also about 250 feet from the archaeological ruins of ancient Shechem. Shechem has a long history in the Hebrew Scriptures, and was the first capital of the northern Kingdom of Israel (www.drivethruhistory.com).

John notes that this was indeed the plot of land purchased by the ancestors of Jesus, and the ownership of the well certainly plays into the coming interaction. The Romans would have considered this place to be part of the Province of Judea, but to all the players in this account, this would have been considered Samaria, and it contained Samaritans.

6. You wonder if travelers then had canteens or something to carry water. At any rate, a well must have been a welcome sight, and perhaps they planned their journey to stop here when they did, “ὥρα ἦν ὡς ἕκτη – about the sixth hour,” noon. By then, κεκοπιακὸς ἐκ τῆς ὁδοιπορίας – being tired from the journey,” He took a seat next to the well.

The Samaritans

You may want to briefly review the whole Samaritan thing. After King Solomon (ending ca. 931), Israel had a civil war and ended up divided into two different kingdoms, ending the United Kingdom and beginning the time of the Divided Kingdom. From then on, we refer to the Southern Kingdom as “Judah” and the Northern Kingdom as “Israel.”

The inherent animosity between these two groups was exacerbated when two temples were set up in the North, one at Dan and one at Bethel. What? Did you want them to go to Jerusalem, in the south, for Temple? That the northerners were not as orthodox as the southerners did not go unnoticed by the residents of Judah, which did not help.

When the Assyrians conquered people, it was their practice to export the conquered to other places and to import conquered people from other places to the newly-conquered place. In 722 Sennecharib and the Assyrians invaded Palestine, conquering the north but not the south. When they conquered Israel, they shipped Israelites to other places and shipped non-Israelites in to Israel. Those groups intermarried, as groups are wont to do, a religious tradition that had been syncretistic became even more so, the region came to be known as Samaria and their inhabitants as Samaritans.

Then in the 5th century B.C. the Nebuchadnezzar conquered the south, Solomon's Temple was destroyed, and Judah was taken away to the Babylonian Captivity. After about seventy years, mostly because of Esther, the Jews started returning to Judah with Ezra and Nehemiah as their leaders. When they went to rebuild the Temple, the Samaritans harassed them. About this time the Samaritans, who retained the Torah is a modified form that says that the Temple should be built on Mt. Gerizim, built a Temple on Mt. Geranium. That Temple was later destroyed a couple of hundred years later by.... the Jews from the south.

So there's a little bit of history between the Jews and the Samaritans. What has been related here is the tip of the iceberg. Josephus gives us information that some smart guy in Denmark put into a nice, tight paper, which can be found at:

<http://shomron0.tripod.com/articles/thesamaritansinjosephus.pdf>

Other information about modern-day Samaritans, who number 700 and who still observe much of the OT ritual, can be found at www.samaritanupdate.com

7. The well would have been the ancient equivalent of a rest area or a mini-mart, and it is located at a fork in the road. Here comes the “έρχεται γυνή ἐκ τῆς Σαμαρίας – a woman from Samaria,” a local coming to the well “ἀντλήσαι ὕδωρ to draw water.” This appears to be a very routine thing for the woman, who likely came daily at this time.

Barclay wonders why she doesn't just use the well in town and save herself the half-mile walk to this well. He wonders further if she was maybe something of a loose woman, but I don't really see any textual evidence to think that – except for her having all those husbands, and she's living with a guy she's not married to even as we speak.

Jesus “λέγει αὐτῇ ὁ Ἰησοῦς Δός μοι πειν – give me (water) to drink.” The verb is an Imperative – a command. The unneeded “water” is not in the text, and that's an ellipsis. He uses the grammatically unnecessary personal pronoun “μοι – to me” to emphasize that He's telling her to serve Him, and it sounds like maybe He's bossing her around.

8. John thinks we need to know that the disciples are not there at this time, telling us that “ἀπεληλύθεισαν εἰς τὴν πόλιν, ἵνα τροφὰς ἀγοράσωσιν – journeyed into the city so as to buy food.” He uses the conjunction γάρ to begin the thought, here best translated “since,” as in “since the disciples had gone...” and why does he mention that?

Does he by that statement want to clarify that *if* the disciples had been there; a) Jesus would not have talked to the woman, or b) that they would not have let Jesus talk to the woman, or c) that they would have been the ones fetching the water from the well, not this woman. Or does it just mean to say that Jesus and only Jesus was talking to her.

I do not get the impression that Jesus would have done anything differently had they been there. One of the first things they would have noticed about Jesus when they became disciples was that Jesus was unconventional, especially when it came to the people with whom He did or did not interact socially, but they would be surprised by this one.

As far as His command to her to serve Him, none of us would think of asking a stranger to serve us like this, but we are of a different time and place. Etiquette is a recent development, and this woman would have simply complied with the command from the man and thought nothing of it, and she would wonder what we don't get about that.

9. But this one does not obey the command, and she strikes us as being just a little bit spunky, not so likely to defer to a man. Instead of fetching a drink for Jesus, she points out the obvious; “Πῶς σὺ Ἰουδαῖος ὢν παρ’ ἐμοῦ πεῖν αἰτεῖς γυναικὸς Σαμαρείτιδος οὔσης – how do you, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, being a Samaritan woman?”

She is surprised that Jesus is “asking” her to serve Him, and it’s not so much an issue of gender; He is a man and she is a woman, but because of religion; He is a Jew and she is a mongrel Jew, a Samaritan. She explains it like this; “οὐ γὰρ συνχρῶνται Ἰουδαῖοι Σαμαρείταις – because you Jews do not associate with Samaritans,” and they didn’t.

To say that is to use the figure of speech called understatement, in this case perhaps used as a euphemism, another figure of speech. It would not be too much to say that by this time these two groups hated each other. The word “συνχρῶνται – associate” is a hapax logomena (it only occurs once) in the NT, and the root is “to use” or “take advantage of.”

It means that the estrangement between the two groups was extreme, and they avoided doing business with each other even if it were mutually advantageous. It looked a lot like the current Palestine looks, and not to belabor the point, but she finds this entire scenario to be just a bit ironic, and her words carry a certain degree thinly-veiled sarcasm.

10. I don’t normally do object lessons, especially during the Sunday School opening when I’m trying to communicate to children. Jesus will often use object lessons for the adults, but He never brings an object from home. What He does is what we see Him doing here; using an object that is already there and is both visible and common.

The reason why Jesus and I – there may be others – do that is to export the Word into the hearer’s everyday life. He’s going to talk to her about the well and the water that comes from it. Tomorrow, when the woman comes to the well for water, is it possible that her doing and seeing that will cause her to recall the words of Jesus that He is about to speak?

When He says, “Εἰ ᾔδεις τὴν δωρεὰν τοῦ Θεοῦ – If you had known the gift of God,” He’s saying that she does not know it. In saying it with a conditional “if,” He’s telling her that she could have, but she doesn’t. He is the gift of God, and she very clearly doesn’t see Him like that. What she sees right now is a Jewish man who seems to be talking to her.

If she had known Him – and she doesn’t – then “σὺ ἂν ᾔτησας αὐτὸν καὶ ἔδωκεν ἅν σοι ὕδωρ ζῶν – you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.” The upshot of this is that Jesus appears to need her to draw Him a drink of water, but He had much more to give her than she had to give Him. But she didn’t know Him.

The “living water” is a noun and a modifying present participle, and it’s a double entendre. Living water is water that is flowing, like water in a river or well, as opposed to water that is not flowing, like a lake or pond. Living (flowing) water is to be desired for drinking over water that isn’t flowing, and that may well be stagnant.

If you don't know how a well works; you dig a hole in the ground until you get to the water table, which can be anywhere from a few feet to hundreds of feet, and then water flows into the hole. Sediment sinks to the bottom, and when you take pure water out, more water flows in. Early Christians preferred to be baptized in "living water."

11. She addresses Him as "sir," like Nicodemus before her, and now He has her attention, and do we detect a hint of respect or sarcasm? But she's having trouble with the metaphor, pointing out to Jesus that, since He has nothing with which to draw water – and the well is deep – it's going to be hard to get water of any kind from it, living or not.

12. Referencing "τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἰακώβ – our Father Jacob," she asks rhetorically, "μὴ σὺ μείζων – are you greater than" him? The rhetorical question begins with "μὴ," expecting a negative answer of "no, I'm not greater than Jacob, that would be crazy." But we now know such a thing would not be crazy, and He actually is greater than Jacob.

13. He knew that, but He did not say that, and He seems to be ignoring her question, but He's going somewhere with this. He points out that people who drink from this well – or any well like this one – will thirst again, and that's the nature of the thirsting/drinking cycle. But He has a water that is like that water, but different in a very important way.

14. Of this water, He says, "ὃς δ' ἂν πίη ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος οὗ ἐγὼ δώσω αὐτῷ, οὐ μὴ διψήσει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα – however, whomever should drink from the water I will give to him, will never ever thirst forever." The subjunctive – it doesn't come out in some translations, speaks to the conditional nature of maybe drinking from that water, or maybe not.

The piling on of two negators on top of "forever" or "eternity" emphasize the lasting nature of the quenching of the thirst sated by this living water. Emphatically, "ἀλλὰ τὸ ὕδωρ ὃ δώσω αὐτῷ γενήσεται ἐν αὐτῷ πηγὴ ὕδατος – but the water I will give to him will become in him a spring of living water." A spring is water flowing out of the ground.

A spring occurs when the water table is higher than ground level, and often a spring will be located on elevated ground and it may be permanent or not. The spring He's talking about here is "ἀλλομένου εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον – leaping up into eternal life." The imagery here is that of a spring with water not just flowing like normal but gushing out of it.

This sounds a lot like an actual spring that actually springs from Mt. Gerizim, the actual mountain on which they stand. It's hard to know with any amount of certainty how that spring looked two thousand years ago, but today that spring has "a high yield of fresh water" (Jewish Encyclopedia), and spring water is purer (better) than well water.

15. And yes, that is actually more than Jacob did, making Him "greater" than Jacob. The woman's response is "Κύριε, δός μοι τοῦτο τὸ ὕδωρ – Sir, give me this water." The verb is in the imperative mode; she's commanding Him to give her this water, and she's. There's nothing impolite about it. Etiquette was invented by the Victorians.

She wants that water, and there's a reason why she wants that water "ἵνα μὴ διψῶ μηδὲ διέρχωμαι ἐνθάδε ἀντλεῖν – so that I should not thirst or come here to draw." Another subjunctive: if she were to drink that water, then she would never have to go to the well to draw water again. Sort of like we don't ever have to go out to the well to draw water.

16. Jesus commands her very specifically to "Ὑπαγε φώνησον τὸν ἄνδρα σου καὶ ἐλθὲ ἐνθάδε – go call your husband and come here." She is to leave Him, go back to the village and get her husband, and then return with him to Him. Being Divine, Jesus is certainly able to know the woman's living arrangements, but that doesn't mean He does.

On the surface, His telling her to do what He told her to do seems odd, and Expositor's Greek Testament acknowledges that, reviews some wrong explanations for it, and then gives us the correct one. The Expositor's is – like most better commentaries – from the 19th Century. Its editor was William Robertson Nicoll, a Free Church (Scotland) Pastor.

The natural interpretation is that in response to her request Jesus gives her now the first draught of the living water by causing her to face her guilty life and bring it to Him. He cannot give the water before thirst for it is awakened. The sure method of awaking the thirst is to make her acknowledge herself a sinful woman (cf. Alford).

The Calvinist sounds a lot like a Lutheran. If, in fact, Jesus is trying to convict the woman of her sin (The Law), so that He can proclaim forgiveness (The Gospel), then we have to conclude that He did know about her "husband," et al. It's a rather creative way to proclaim the Law, and it works better than calling her a tramp or something like that.

17. If we think that living together outside of marriage is a new thing, then we need to think again. In the world in which I grew up, you didn't live together until you were married, and the exceptions were noted and condemned, sometimes harshly. What we see these days is The Culture going back to the typical, if not the typical social norm.

She says that she doesn't have a husband, and she seems to be trying to pass herself off as a single woman, and rather than call her a liar, Jesus keeps it real and concurs that she does not have a husband, "Καλῶς εἶπες ὅτι Ἄνδρα οὐκ ἔχω – correctly you have spoken; you don't have a husband," and she thinks she's gotten away with it. But wait!

18. How did this Stranger passing through know about her husbands? He doesn't call her a liar, and He agrees with her, and in doing those things He creatively proclaims The Law, and then He drops the hammer; she has had five husbands, and the one she has now is not her husband, "τοῦτο ἀληθὲς εἶρηκας – truly this you have spoken," you are correct!

19. Again addressing Him with respect, she says "Κύριε, θεωρῶ ὅτι προφήτης εἶ σύ – Sir, I understand that you are a prophet." The fundamental work of an OT "prophet" is to

publicly proclaim the Word of God. Secondly, the OT “prophet” often predicted the future. Sometimes, the OT prophet has supernatural powers to know things he shouldn’t.

This exchange about husbands and lovers, and because Jesus “told me all that I ever did (v. 39),” signals a shift in the conversation. She recognizes Him to be more than just some nut case who thinks He can ladle out “living water.” When she calls Him “sir” she means it deeply, perceiving Him to be a Prophet; one who speaks the Word of God.

20. This is a teachable moment. The woman mentions the elephant in the middle of the living room; that she and Jesus worship at different temples – and we note that different things go on inside those different temples – a rift that went back hundreds of years, one that was by this time pretty solidly established, and that in fact continues to this day.

Jesus does not tell the woman that, if she is truly repentant, she will go back to her first husband as a fruit of that repentance. I know some Lutheran pastors who would tell her that, but Jesus does not. Divorce is not a good thing, but in this sinful world divorce happens. Sometimes it can be fixed. Other times, you just have to repent and move on.

The woman expands on the earlier “our father” (singular), and now speaks of in the plural saying, “οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν ἐν τῷ ὄρει τούτῳ προσεκύνησαν – our fathers worshiped on this mountain. The mountain of which she speaks, the location where this conversation happens, is Mt. Gerizim (Geranium), and it was the location of the Gerizim Temple.

She says to Jesus, “καὶ ὑμεῖς λέγετε ὅτι ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις ἐστὶν ὁ τόπος ὅπου προσκυνεῖν δεῖ – you say that Jerusalem is the place where it is necessary to worship.” The “you” is plural; she wasn’t necessarily saying that Jesus was saying that, but that the Jews were, and they were. The word “δεῖ – necessary” means you “have to” worship in Jerusalem.

21. Both of statements about mountains are true, and quickly now getting to the crux of the matter, Jesus speaks in eschatological terms; “γύναι, ὅτι ἔρχεται ὥρα ὅτε οὔτε ἐν τῷ ὄρει τούτῳ οὔτε ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις προσκυνήσετε τῷ Πατρί – woman, the time is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you (pl) worship the Father.”

The reference to the Jerusalem Temple is to its destruction in 70 A.D. Neither it nor the Gerizim Temple is needed, because we have the Christ, our High Priest, the presence of God among us, who comes to us in Word and Sacrament. The Temple has served its purpose, it’s gone, and it is not likely to come back soon or ever, and that’s okay.

22. Jesus then makes the good confession, telling the woman that her religion does not know the true God, nor does she, but that He and His religion does, even being bold to proclaim the truth; salvation comes from the Jews, and only from the Jews, “σωτηρία ἐκ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἐστὶν – salvation is from the Jews,” i.e. by means of the Jewish Messiah,

23. He then takes the buildings and the mountains out of the equation, and He states that a new time is upon us, a new way of thinking and doing, the time is now upon us, ὅτε οἱ

ἀληθινοὶ προσκυνηταὶ προσκυνήσουσιν τῷ Πατρὶ ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ - when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth,” meaning heart-felt worship.

Meaning worship coming from and being the Word of God. The transition of the Jews from a people of The Building (Temple) to The People of the Book is being completed, and God is good with that; “καὶ γὰρ ὁ Πατὴρ τοιούτους ζητεῖ τοὺς προσκυνοῦντας αὐτόν – for the Father seeks such to worship Him.” He’s tired of worship with empty ritual.

This might be a good time to point out the Sacramental and Sacrificial aspects of Divine Service, where God speaks to us (Sacramental) in His Word, and we speak (Sacrificially) to God in His Word. Point out the red writing next to the various parts of the liturgy in LSB, and then tell them that the Introit comes from the Bible (Psalms) as well.

24. Now it’s the woman’s turn to make the good confession, agreeing that “Πνεῦμα ὁ Θεός, καὶ τοὺς προσκυνοῦντας ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ δεῖ προσκυνεῖν – God is Spirit, and those worshipping in Spirit and truth it is necessary (have to) worship Him.” God is not interested in being worshipped falsely or by people using false words and beliefs.

25. She professes belief in the coming Messiah, but she talks a lot like a lot of Christians who believe in Jesus but got stuck in the wrong church, “Οἶδα ὅτι Μεσσίας ἔρχεται, ὁ λεγόμενος Χριστός· ὅταν ἔλθῃ ἐκεῖνος, ἀναγγελεῖ ἡμῖν ἅπαντα – I know that Messiah is coming – called Christ – when He comes, He will proclaim to us all things” i.e. truth.

Being stuck in the wrong church means being a Christian and having a bad or unfaithful shepherd, and that can take a lot of forms. The first sentence in Tolstoy’s Anna Karenina is “Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.” The doctrine of good pastors is all alike; the doctrine of bad pastors is bad in its own way.

26. And Jesus says “ἐγώ εἰμι, ὁ λαλῶν σοι – I am he, preaching to you.” This is not the only time Jesus calls Himself “ἐγώ εἰμι,” and those two little words generally cause quite a stir when He utters them, because by those two words He is essentially calling Himself God. Those two words were what made them want to stone Him in John 8, but not here.

The verb is λαλέω, the normal word for “preaching.” Unbeknownst to her, He has been preaching to the woman all this time, and as this thing plays out, it looks like the proclamation of the Word has been fruitful. Whatever sort of believer she had been, she now goes into town and “testifies” (39), and her testimony caused others to believe.

Law/Gospel

No Water/Living Water – Whether we’re talking about people, plants, or animals, water is one of the basic components of life. No water, no life. In Baptism, Jesus administers “living water” to bring life, and He sustains that life by the Word, especially by our remembrance of the waters of Baptism. Talk a lot about Baptism in this sermon, and use water metaphors, like Jesus does.

False/Truth – The woman and those in her village are living under the Law and somewhat under false teachings. They had the Torah, but with the part about Gerizim as the Temple site wrong, and their version of the Ten Commandments is significantly different from the real Ten. Jesus brings truth.

No Food/Food – Jesus talks about food. See **No Water/Living Water**.

Sermon Titles

Conversation with a Samaritan Woman

Jesus Talks to a Woman

Incident at a Rest Stop

About the Samaritans...

Hymns

Christ the Life of All the Living – LSB 420

Anything from the *Baptism* Section

Sing Lenten hymns during the Lenten Season.

Rev. Steven L. Anderson
Pastor, Immanuel Lutheran Church
Grand Mound, Iowa

Resources

ACC – Manlio Simonetti, *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture* (Matthew).
Intervarsity Press, 2002

BAG – Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. Translated by
William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, University of Chicago Press, 1979

BCLY – William Barclay, *The Gospel of Luke*. The Westminster Press, 1975

FGG – James W. Voelz, *Fundamental Greek Grammar*. Concordia Publishing House, 1993

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