

THE SUBJECT OF SIN

JOHN 04:15–18

Introduction

Jesus promised the living water of spiritual rebirth. However, something had to be discussed before spiritual rebirth could be given: the subject of sin.

- I. There was the request for living water (v. 15).
- II. There was the first essential requisite: facing the truth, the fact of sin (vv. 16-18).

I. *John 04:15 The Effects of Living Water*

Satisfaction, Fulfilment and Purpose

There was the request for living water. Jesus had just made a profound claim.

John 4:14 *“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 wanted such water. She asked for it, but note the reasons:

- => That I won't get thirsty (physical thirst).
- => That I will not have to come and draw water every day.

The woman may have been jesting with Jesus; some commentators think she was. They hold that she certainly knew this man (Jesus) did not have a well of water from which she could drink and never thirst again, water that would cause her to live forever, never having to die. She thought that Jesus was jesting with her, so she played along, humouring Him. Others think she was sincere and just did not understand, but whatever the man's magical waters were, she wanted a drink.

Whatever the case may be, the woman was thinking in terms of the physical world, only of the physical benefits. She had grasped nothing of the spiritual meaning, nothing of the inner satisfaction that Jesus could give which would quench all the thirst of a person's heart.

Thought 1. Note two facts.

- 1) Man does thirst, but his thirst is much deeper than physical thirst. Man has an inner, spiritual thirst. (Jn. 4:13-14.)
 - 2) Christ alone can satisfy man's thirst. If a man drinks of the water Christ gives, he is infused with purpose, meaning, significance, energy, and motivation. Once a man drinks of Christ, he does not mind drawing water; that is, he does not mind work and labour. In fact, the water of Christ stirs him to work and serve, helping mankind in every way possible. He wants to help and to share the wonderful news of a saving God, a God who can save from the thirst of...
 - emptiness
 - despair
 - loneliness
 - hopelessness
 - lostness
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II. *John 04:16–18 Sin: Repentance and Deliverance*

There was the first essential requirement of facing the truth, the fact of sin. The woman had requested living water, but before she could be given the living water of spiritual rebirth, she had to be convinced of her sin and renounce it. Four things are revealed.

1. Jesus stirred conviction and the confession of sin. Why was this necessary? Why did the woman have to face the truth of her sin before she could be spiritually reborn? There are two reasons.
 - a. She was weary and burdened, and it was caused by sin. She had to know this in order to seek the cure. Sin had to be removed and renounced, forgiven and cleansed before *true rest* and *true relief* could come. Once she was freed from sin, rest and relief would come. She would no longer be weary and burdened under the load of sin and irresponsibility, guilt and shame. She would be set free and given a life of spiritual rest and security.
 - b. She had the symptoms of disease and did not know what the disease was; therefore, she was unable to find the cure for her disease. She needed deliverance and did not know how to be delivered. The woman's disease was the same as the disease of all men: sin. Sin had to be renounced before the living water of spiritual rebirth could be given.

James 1:21 Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

Rev 22:14 "Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city."

Ezra 10:11 Now make confession to the Lord, the God of your fathers, and do his will. Separate yourselves from the peoples around you and from your foreign wives.

2. Jesus accepted no evasion. Note how the woman tried to evade the fact of her sin. She told the truth; she did not have a husband, but she was living with a man just as she would live with a husband.

Thought 1. The point is clear: the sinner cannot evade his sin. He has to face it and renounce it if he wishes the living water of spiritual rebirth.

Prov 28:13 He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

Jer 3:13 "Only acknowledge your guilt — you have rebelled against the Lord your God, you have scattered your favours to foreign gods under every spreading tree, and have not obeyed me," declares the Lord.

Jer 23:24 "Can anyone hide in secret places so that I cannot see him?" declares the Lord. "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" declares the Lord.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

3. Jesus knew all about the woman, that she had five husbands. He knew the truth about her, what she had done to fail in so many marriages. He knew whether she was guilty...
- of making ungodly, worldly choices
 - of being argumentative and defensive
 - of being a poor housekeeper, wife, and mother
 - of being cold, distant, withdrawn, and indifferent
 - of being unfaithful and immoral

Jesus knew the truth about her sin, and He knows the truth about every man's sin.

Job 10:14 *If I sinned, you would be watching me and would not let my offense go unpunished.*

Jer 16:17 *My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from me, nor is their sin concealed from my eyes.*

Dan 2:22 *He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what lies in darkness, and light dwells with him.*

1 Cor 3:20 *And again, "The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile."*

Jer 2:22 *"Although you wash yourself with soda and use an abundance of soap, the stain of your guilt is still before me," declares the Sovereign Lord.*

4. Jesus reproved her sin. She had not only gone through five different husbands, but she was now living with a man who was not her husband.

Thought 1. Christ not only knows all — He keeps an account. The sinner is guilty of every act of disobedience. He stands guilty of every law he breaks.

Gal 3:10, 12 *All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law." The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, "The man who does these things will live by them."*

Man has to face the truth, the fact of his sin, and renounce it if he wishes to receive the living water of spiritual rebirth. A man has to do what Christ is pointing out to the woman: renounce his sin. Once he has done this, he can then ask for the living water and Christ will give it. But drinking the water of Christ is essential.

John 4:14 *"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."*

Acts 3:19 *Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.*

Acts 17:29-31 *"Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone — an image made by man's design and*

skill. In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.”

Rom 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. ■*