

[10 : 20] Thy grace I am redeemed. Thy grace I am restored and now I'm breathing on with two the arms of Christ my Lord.

The grace that I cannot explain don't find my earthly wisdom.

The prince of mine without the stain was traded for his sinner.

By grace I am redeemed. By grace I am restored and now I freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord.

voy voy voy voy voy voy voy Lord, my song resound forever.

[11 : 43] For faiths will see me on the door to walk beside my Savior.

By grace I am redeemed, by grace I am restored. And now I really walk into the arms of Christ my Lord.

It's all about grace. Hopefully we'll get that message and I'll get that message tonight as we look at this passage, which is from John, the Gospel of John chapter 4, beginning at verse 1.

John chapter 4, beginning at verse 1. Entitled here in the Bible, Jesus and the Woman of Samaria.

It's a very well-known story, event that happened.

And we're going to try and look at that tonight. Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John, although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples, he left Judea and departed again for Galilee.

[13 : 19] And he had to pass through Samaria. So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.

Jacob's well was there. So Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour. A woman from Samaria came to draw water.

Jesus said to her, Give me a drink. For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?

For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered her, If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that's saying to you, Give me a drink, you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.

The woman said to him, Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where did you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob?

[14 : 26] He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock. Jesus said to her, Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again.

The water that I will 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 will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water.

Jesus said to her, Go call your husband and come here. The woman answered him, I have no husband. But Jesus said to her, You are right in saying I have no husband.

For you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you said is true. The woman said to him, Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.

Jesus said to her, Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know.

[15 : 36] We worship what we know. For salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.

For the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth. Jesus said to her, I know that Messiah is coming.

He was called Christ. When he comes, he'll tell us all things. Jesus said to her, I who speak to you am he. Just then his disciples came back.

They marveled that he was talking with a woman. But no one said, What do you seek? Or why are you talking with her? So the woman left her water jar and went away into the town and said to the people, Come and see a man who told me all I ever did.

Can this be the Christ? They went out of the town and were coming to him. Meanwhile, the disciples were urging him, saying, Rabbi, eat. But he said to them, I have food to eat that you do not know about.

[23 : 30] Shaking heads? Some people have, yes. Well, I mean, there's actually two wells, at least two wells on our croft, which are quite difficult to find.

In the old days, perhaps some of the people here, before there was piped water, that's where you've got the water, fresh water to drink and to wash.

And in Harris, I think all of the wells are actually just seeping from under the rocks, and there's just a small pool there from which you gather the water. The well we're talking about here, that Jesus was at, was a very deep well, because they had to dig, deep, deep down.

In fact, this one apparently is 100 foot deep to get to the water. So that's a bit about the wells. Do you wonder sometimes if God really cares about you?

Many people go through life wondering if God really bothers much without them. And there are many reasons for this. For example, you may feel that your past life is too sinful, or you've done and thought many things that you're ashamed of.

[24 : 45] You feel that your past is too much for God to really care about your welfare, or even to save you. Many people look back on their lives and assume that they have blown up.

It's too late, they feel, for any hope from God. Others may feel that their lives are chaotic, and they give little quality time to God. Why would God pay any heed to them or care for them?

Life seems so busy and so preoccupied with just managing family, work, relationships, illnesses, you name it. Why would God get involved?

Or some may look at some Christians and think, I could never be like that. They seem to have it all, godly, upright even, dare I say, even respectable in the church.

Perhaps some here or online are feeling that way. The standards of God are too high for you. You don't seem to be able to make contact with God.

[25 : 48] He seems distant. In fact, many people go through the formalities of the church without really believing in a God who loves and cares individually for them.

But this episode in the life of Jesus is a wonderful antidote to such thinking. And we read here of our Lord caring deeply about a Samaritan woman who is full of shame, who doesn't know him, whose life is both sinful and chaotic.

And yet he goes out of his way to meet her, to speak to her, and to gently reveal himself to her. And we read at the beginning of the chapter how Jesus needed to leave Judea in the south and go to Galilee in the north.

And apparently, according to those verses, the Pharisees were taking notice of him because his disciples were baptizing many people. And Jesus didn't want a confrontation at this stage in his ministry of the Pharisees.

And so he decided to leave and go to Galilee. Now to get to Galilee, the short route, the straight route, led through Samaria. But the very religious people and many other Jews hated the people of Samaria so much that they would take a much longer route on the east side of Jordan simply to avoid contact with the Samaritan people.

[27 : 15] I was thinking it's probably a bit like an Israeli today wanting to go to Egypt and deciding to go through Gaza instead. Something like that.

That was the sort of feeling that was going on. And there was a long history to the hatred between the two, Jews and Samaritans. The Samaritans were not considered clean.

They worshipped at a different temple in Samaria. Samaria. They only used the first five books of the Bible. And they had many other beliefs which the Jews felt were in complete error.

So we see here in verse 4 that Jesus had to pass through Samaria. You see the word had in the verse. And we know, of course, strictly that he didn't have to pass through geographically.

He could have taken the longer route which most people would have done. But the way it is put here suggests that he had to because of a particular mission. A mission to a Samaritan woman.

[28 : 19] An outcast. And someone most Jews would have completely shunned. Now in verse 5 they came to a town called Sychar. And a well that Jacob had dug centuries before.

In fact, that well still exists. It's apparently. I don't know if anyone's been to Israel and seen it. But it's within a church. And it's believed to be the same well.

It's very deep. It's about a hundred feet deep. Verse 6. Jesus was weary from his journey and he sat down by the well. Jesus was tired.

He was probably exhausted. He had traveled far. It was midday. That's the sixth hour in the heat of the day. He was very tired and likely very thirsty.

Jesus here is shown to be the fully human person that he is. Yes, he's God the Son. But he took on human nature and became one of us. Completely.

[29 : 21] He felt tired. He was thirsty. And you know, this is so comforting. Our Savior is a man. He's our brother. And as such, he represented all of us when he took our sins on the cross.

Fully man. Fully God. We should never really imagine that the one we pray to has not experienced all of human life. Just like ourselves.

even experiencing temptation as we do. There's that wonderful passage in Hebrews that explains how he was like us tempted in all things.

Hebrews 4.15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses but who in every respect has been tempted as we are yet without sin.

And the following verse Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

[30 : 21] Do you have a time of need? Do you need this mercy? I certainly do. We can draw near to him confidence and find grace.

And that's what I hope we can learn from this meeting with the woman at the well. The woman came and asked Jesus Sorry, the woman came and Jesus asked her for a drink verse 7.

Now this to a Jewish person at the time even to a Samaritan was completely outrageous. Firstly she was a Samaritan and Jews didn't talk to them.

Secondly she was a woman and the rabbis wouldn't even talk to their own wives in public. Jesus broke all the rules here. But Jesus doesn't try to obey manly rules.

He breaks through all the boundaries to reach us. Already Jesus knew all about her as we shall see. Why was she coming alone to the well when there were no other women and in the heat of the day?

[31 : 26] The normal time for this would have been in the cool of the evening. Why was she trying to avoid the others in the community? We soon find out. But Jesus knew.

Notice he begins the conversation with a question and a quest for help asking for a drink. In this conversation you see a perfect model of how to approach someone with the gospel.

To begin with a question draws the other person out and to be in need of help is a wonderful way of breaking down barriers. A reply in verse 9 says it all.

How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria? She's actually completely aghast that he's doing this.

She's shocked and puts it very clearly he's a Jew, she's a woman and she's a Samaritan. Unheard of. Quite apart from anything else the very utensil she would use to draw water would be seen as unclean by a Jew and would not be able to use it.

[32 : 35] Jesus replies in verse 10 If you knew the gift of God and who it is that's saying to you give me a drink you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.

We see here Jesus altering the way the conversation goes and gently leading her to question who he is. If you knew the gift of God and who it is that's saying to you he then offers her living water.

Now apparently the water in Jacob's well is not from spring running into it it seeps or percolates into the well from the surrounding rock.

But Jesus here is speaking of living water water that flows and runs free. Of course he's speaking in spiritual terms and bringing her to spiritual truths and we can see this in John 7 38 where Jesus says if anyone thirsts let him come to me and drink whoever believes in me as the scripture has said out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.

So the living water that he gives is the Holy Spirit working in our lives. And we can see the same picture in the Old Testament in Isaiah 55 verse 1 Come everyone who thirsts come to the waters and in verse 3 of that chapter incline your ear to me and come to me here that you may live.

[34 : 11] And in Isaiah 44 verse 3 For I will pour water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground I will pour my spirit upon your offspring and my blessing on your descendants.

And so Jesus is drawing this woman into thinking about her spiritual thirst that no physical water is going to help. And she replies in verse 7 Sir are you nothing to draw with?

She knew that he couldn't use her utensil here you do. You've nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob?

You see here how she wants to divert the conversation back to what she knows. The well the water in it the question of how he is to get it out not using her utensils and the history of Jacob.

She's trying to bring it back to earthly things. And all this seems to be avoid what seems to be going too near her heart spiritual truths.

[35 : 19] Are we not like this sometimes? We keep to the safe topics. When you speak to somebody about God often that person will try to revert to the ordinary and the comfortable.

We try to keep our spiritual lives closed and secret through uncertainty and often shame. Jesus is not in the least put off by this as some of us would be.

He continues to gently lead her to what really matters. See what he says in verse 13 everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again.

The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life. You see here Jesus keeping to his theme he's not put off in any way by her comments.

She's clearly confused he knows that and uncertain about who this is Jesus lovingly brings the subject back to what's important.

[36 : 30] He elaborates about the water that only Jesus can give and the way in which he persists is so encouraging to us. Many people feel that perhaps they refuse to answer the call of Jesus and so it's too late.

it's never too late. Some feel that they've not really understood the gospel message fully and so have great worries that Jesus might give up on them.

But with this woman who really understood very little Jesus gently persists. He understands her confusion just like he does ours. He doesn't give up and he never gives up on you or I.

See how he speaks more about this living water. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life. This is no stagnant pool.

This is abundant and flowing and refreshing. Notice that this water springing up is in the person in him or her who receives it.

[37 : 40] He's speaking about the Holy Spirit and he's offering this to a poor rejected sinful shamed Samaritan woman. And the question really is to you and I do we believe that he offers that water to us as well?

She answers still lacking understanding and interpreting and literally in verse 15 she says Sir give me this water so that I will not be thirsty again or have to come here to draw water.

Now you might think that Jesus would give up at this point. She's still in the dark and doesn't engage on a spiritual level with him. Jesus then says to her verse 16 Go call your husband and come here.

She replies I have no husband. He says you're right in saying I have no husband for you have had five husbands and now the one you have is not your husband.

What you've said is true. Again you see how Jesus who knew all there was about her introduces the situation of her husband. He could have rebuked her.

[38 : 53] He could have shamed her for having so many husbands so many disastrous relationships so many divorces. He could have just come out with the truth and shocked her.

But on the contrary he gently introduces the subject by simply asking her to call her husband. And this shows his sensitivity and his care not to overwhelm her with her situation.

But at the same time he's opening up the whole subject of her sinful life. He doesn't move away from that. He knows that this must be dealt with. And he will do the same with us.

He will prompt us to examine our lives and realize our sin and our need for the Savior. But he does it lovingly just as with this woman.

And this reminds us of his great call in Matthew 11 28. Come to me all who labor and are heavy lading and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am gentle and lowly in heart and you will find rest for your souls for my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

[40 : 08] See how he describes himself as gentle. The creator of the universe gentle. This is shot so clearly in his dealing with this woman.

And the astonished woman then realizes that he is at the very least a prophet. And she says in verse 19 Sir I perceive you are a prophet. She then engages with him regarding how to worship God.

Perhaps I think lost for something to say. And she says in verse 20 Our fathers worshipped on this mountain that's Mount Gerizim which is in Samaria.

But you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship. She is now seeing Jesus in a new light certainly and coming to ponder what is important about worshipping God just as with us Jesus has led out of consideration of spiritual things.

And Jesus gives a wonderful answer to this. An hour is coming he says when neither on this mountain in Samaria nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.

[41 : 18] He goes on to say salvation is from the Jews but that the time is coming when true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. God is spirit and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

Notice the intimate use of the word Father for God here. This would have been a revelation to this woman. He's showing us the close relationship we can have with the Father as children of God. Jesus is pointing her and us to the fact that soon there will be no temple either in Samaria or Jerusalem and the true worshipers you and I do not need a specific place.

What we need and this is true this evening in Tarbert is to worship God in spirit and in truth. The ultimate truth being of course Jesus Christ who said I am truth the way and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through me. He then says in verse 25 I know the Messiah is coming he who is called the Christ when he comes he will tell us all things.

[42 : 30] Then these shattering words from Jesus I who speak to you am thee. Jesus has led this woman sensitively and lovingly to the truth.

It's an absolute master class in how to engage with a stranger and to speak truth into their lives. The intricacies and subtleties that are in this conversation between Jesus and the woman are quite wonderful.

It could not have been made up. His disciples return at this point and they're astonished that he should be talking with a woman. They still had a great deal to learn about Jesus didn't they?

And what was the result of this for the woman? Verse 28 she abandoned her water jar. She just left it there. She wanted much more than physical water and completely forgot about it.

She went to the town, a place she was afraid of in the past to be seen in public and told them about Jesus. Can this be the Christ? She already knew.

[43 : 39] And we read in verse 39 many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony. And in verse 41 many more believed because of his word.

And so on this evening you and I can realize that Jesus really does care about each one of us.

He cared about a woman who was a foreigner, hated by the Jews, who was unclean in Jewish eyes, who had a chaotic and sinful past, who was full of shame, and could not even join the other women to collect water.

He led her gently to understand. He does that with you and with I. He is gentle, he is loving, he wants no one to be lost. It doesn't matter how bad things are with you or I, or what we've done, he's speaking to us today.

And when I say us, I do mean both Christians and non-Christians. Christians, we let the Lord down in many ways. We are frail, and we often don't put on the full armour of God in the battle.

[44 : 55] We fall and we grieve the Holy Spirit. And this is the honest truth. Let me read some verses from John's first epistle, chapter 1. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Notice when we confess, he cleanses us from all unrighteousness, not just a part. And then there's wonderful and reassuring words at the beginning of chapter 2. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous.

He is the propitiation for our sins. He is our advocate. And if you've committed your life to him, he will not forsake you or leave you.

He is the propitiation for our sins, which means he is our substitute on the cross, taking the punishment that has been to us. And we should be reminded that the only other time we have a reference to Jesus being thirsty was on that terrible cross when he said, I thirst.

[46 : 10] It seems too good to be true, but it is true. It's pure, unmerited grace, the sort of grace that this poor, smargin' woman received. She did nothing to merit it, pure love and grace.

And she came at last to understand who he was. grace. And when she did, she didn't hesitate to receive the truth and act upon it, free unmerited grace to be received by faith.

The question is, why would any of us hesitate to receive this grace? And so let us, like this woman, receive the truth and act on it, tell other people what she did.

Jesus elsewhere, Jesus elsewhere said, I am the way, the truth and the life. We should put our faith in the one who is tired and thirsty on that hot day of the well, who forgot about his own physical needs and of course in the end, he never got the water from the well.

And he gave himself to speaking to this woman of Samaria. He cared for this poor woman and what I hope this passage is conveyed is that he cares for you alive.

[47 : 30] Ultimately, he would give absolutely everything for us by going to the cross and taking her sins and ours on himself. We are now free to be able to worship here tonight in spirit and in truth.

What a Savior. Let's just pray. Lord, we thank you for opening up this passage of scripture.

Thank you for the wonderful way that you sought out this woman of Samaria just as you seek out us and pursue us.

And help us, Lord, like her to, even with little understanding, to come to believe, to see that wonderful grace, the gentle way in which you knock on our door, and help each one of us, Lord, to receive, to know, and to live, and to worship you in spirit and in truth.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Okay, we're now going to sing from Psalm 116, verses 1 to 8.

[48 : 52] Psalm 116, verses 1 to 8. I'll just read the first verses of that. I love the Lord because my voice and prayers he did hear.

I, while I live, will call on him who bowed to me his ear. Of death the cords and sorrows did about me compass round. The pains of hell took cold in me.

I grief and trouble found. Upon the name of God the Lord, then did I call and say, deliver thou my soul, O Lord, I do thee humbly pray.

And it goes on to talk about the mercy and the grace of the Lord. Let's just sing this to God for this. I love the Lord, Lord, he cross my voice and prayers he did hear.

I, while I live, will follow him, who I to be his and On death the courts and sorrows did other people run.

[50 : 28] The pains of hell to hold on me. I voy voy!

voy! voy! O Lord, I truly humbly pray.

God merciful and righteous is, Yea, gracious is our Lord.

God saves the meek, I was brought low, He did me help afford.

O thou, my soul, do thou return, Unto thy quiet rest.

[52 : 06] For large people, the Lord to thee, His bounty of death spreads.

For my dispensed soul from death, Deliver what I thee.

Thou didst my morning night, My strong tears, My feet from falling free.

And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the love of God, And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, Be with us all, now and evermore. Amen.