

JESUS SITTING ON THE WELL

NO. 2570

A SERMON
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DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,
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“Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.”
John 4:6.

IF we were wise, dear friends, we would find a thousand things in the world to remind us of our blessed Lord. It is well to form the habit of connecting things that are seen with Him “whom, having not seen, we love.” If we do so, there will not be an hour in the day when we shall not be helped to think of Him, and scarcely anything that we see in our trade, or in the street, or in the field, or in our house, which will not be the means of reminding us of Him. When we rise in the morning, would it not be well to think of how He rose a great while before day that He might have time for private prayer? He had a hard day's work before Him, and therefore He needed strength with which to do it; and He gained it, not by a longer sleep, but by stealing time from sleep in which to draw near the strengthening Father in prayer. Even when the morning is ended, and we come to the middle of the day, if we are hot and weary, and the sun scorches us, we shall do well to think of our text, “Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well.” When the clock strikes three, Christians should not forget that it was about that hour when He yielded up the ghost, and passed away. When it comes to eventide, and we go to our comfortable bed, or to our hard pallet, as the case may be, would it not be sweet to remember Him who said, “Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man has not where to lay His head”? The whole world might constitute a system of helps to memory if we were but wise enough to use it so. The stars speak of Him to those who have but ears to hear. The morning sun reveals Him, and even the setting of the sun is not without instruction concerning Him. As God is everywhere, so are the footprints of the Only-begotten. He has so taken up materialism into connection with His spiritual and divine nature that He has left His impress upon all materialism, and in His temple of creation everything speaks of His glory.

Our second observation shall be this: how truly human was the Lord Jesus Christ! Nowadays, we do not have to insist much upon that, because it is not often denied; we have to fight for His Deity, but not often for His humanity. Perhaps it is none the better for us that it is so. You know that there were some, soon after the apostle John's days, who denied that Christ took upon Himself a real body; they believed that He existed as a phantom. I will not go into the philosophical way in which they put it; but their main attack was against the humanity of the Son of God. Now, times have changed, and men own that He existed, and they admit His humanity—yes, they so much admit it that they deny that He was anything more than man. We must fight against that thrice-accursed doctrine as long as we have any being; but we must not forget how truly human Jesus was. How really human He appears when the burning sun smites Him, and the sweat rolls off Him, and He is thoroughly weary; and, being weary, He must do what we do when we are tired and worn-out, He must sit down. And the sun is so hot that He thirsts; He is parched with heat, and there is the water in the well, but He has nothing to draw with, so He must sit there in the heat and bear the thirst. You remember also, dear friends, how He hungered. You will never forget how “Jesus wept.” You all know how He suffered, and how at last He died. Treasure up in your mind and heart the assured fact that Christ was most really and truly man; and though the Godhead was most mysteriously united to His manhood, yet He was none the less completely and intensely man. Because He was perfectly and supremely God, His Godhead did not take away from Him His power to suffer and to be wearied.

It seems rather singular, but it is worthy of notice that our Lord appears to have been more weary than His disciples were, for they had gone away into the city to buy meat; I suppose that He might have gone with them if He had not been more fatigued than they were. He was quite worn out, and thoroughly weary; and so, while they went into Sychar to purchase provisions, He sat down on the well. I take it that, in all probability, the reason is this—He had mental weariness associated with His bodily fatigue; and when the two things come together, they make a man wearied indeed. I know that there are some who fancy that, to think and to care for others, to preach and to teach, is not much of work. Well, my dear brother, I can assure you that you may keep on working much longer with your arm than you can with your brain; and I am speaking from experience when I say that careful thought, and great anxiety to do good, bring much wear and tear with them to a man's whole constitution. And if the life is taken out of a man in two ways at once—by fatigue of body and by fatigue of mind too, then you will see that such a man will necessarily be the first to give way. The disciples had little to do but to follow implicitly as their Master led them. He had to be the Leader, and upon the leader comes the strain and stress of thought and care. No man knows what the cares were that agitated the great heart of Christ. Surely, in one sense, He never rested. He was constantly thinking, not only of the twelve, but of all those who were with Him; and not merely of them, but it was as He said in His great intercessory prayer, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word." All believers had a share in His thoughts of love even then, for He was bent upon no less a mission than the salvation of a countless number who shall be His in the day of His appearing. His mind and heart were always at work. That busy brain of His was never still, so I do not wonder that, though the disciples could go into the city to buy meat, their Master could not go, but He must sit down on the well. "Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat *thus* on the well:"—that is, in a thoroughly exhausted condition, He sat down as if He could go no further, could do no more, and there it was that the Samaritan woman found Him. How perfectly human all this proves our Lord to have been!

I want you, while we are speaking of that fact, to admire the great self-constraint which our Divine Master put upon Himself in bearing weariness; because, although He was man, and could be weary, I have also reminded you that He was God, and therefore He could have refreshed Himself if it had been right for Him to do so. According to the divine order of things, it would not have been right. When our Lord was in the wilderness forty days, He hungered. Why did He not turn the stones into bread? He certainly could have done so; but to do so was evidently quite out of order with Him who had come to be a servant, and to suffer as a man; the devil tempted Him to do it, which proves to us that it would have been wrong for Christ to do it. But, only think, if you and I were hungry, and we could turn stones into bread, would we not do it? If we were weary, and could immediately give ourselves the rest we required, would we not do so? Why, I think, the water would have been glad to leap out of the well to refresh the lips of Him who had created it! That well had been honored by suddenly pouring forth all its liquid refreshment that He might drink and be satisfied; but Jesus never worked a miracle merely for His own comfort. He felt that His miraculous power was to be used for others, and in His great work; but as for Himself, His humanity must bear its own infirmity, it must support its own trials; so He keeps His hand back from relieving His own necessities. Oh, I never imagined how strong Christ was till I saw His love hold back His Deity! That omnipotence which restrains omnipotence—it cannot be something more than omnipotence, and yet in a sense it must be; the love of Christ restrains the omnipotence of Christ. He might have broken through all the infirmities of manhood; but He must not do so if He is to be perfectly bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, and He does not do it. He bears exhaustion, He bears deprivation of comfort, He bears, in fact, the very curse of labor which our father Adam brought upon us, that in the sweat of our brow we should eat our bread, and He bears it still with a magnanimity of condescension which cannot be imitated. It is far beyond our conception, and infinitely beyond our venturing to follow Him; we can only admire and adore. We worship You, O Son of God, that for our sins You could even deign to be wearied, and to sit thus on the well!

Another thought I put before you, and it is this. Behold the wonderful sympathy of the Lord Jesus Christ with us. You have been on a very long journey, and you are foot-sore, weary, and worn; you could not go a step further. Now Christ, in the days of His flesh, was like you. He knows what is meant by all that heaviness and heat of the foot, that blistering of the sole, that drawing of the sinews, that testing of every muscle; and the next time you go a long tramp, and sit down because you are weary, think

to yourself, "He who is at the right hand of God remembers when He felt as I do, and He sympathizes with me in this my present distress." Or take it to be another case, that your daily work is very hard—and I know that I speak to many who earn their bread with very severe toil and labor, and when the hour at last comes (alas! alas! how late it often is!) when the shop can be closed, or when your work is finished, you are thoroughly done up; you can scarcely crawl up to your bed, you feel so weary. It is often so with you, and getting to be more often so, now that you are growing old, and years are telling upon your once stalwart frame. Well, the next time you sit down, say to yourself, "Jesus, my Lord, You know all about this, and You can pity Your poor servant, and help and comfort me as I have to bear it." Do you not remember the story about Alexander's soldiers? When they went on long forced marches, they none of them grew weary because, although Alexander had a horse, he never rode. He said, "No, not while one man walks shall Alexander ride." So he tramped side by side with them; and once, when a cup of water was brought for the king, he said, "There is a soldier who looks fainter than I am; pass it over to him;" and every man felt strong because of that sympathy. Now, you who toil, think of Him who is the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the Prince of the kings of the earth, and for your comfort read the text again, "Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well."

Yes, but there are other kinds of toilers beside these. There are holy workers who, I think, ought to have a drink of water out of this well. You try and speak for Christ, or you go about and visit, you are very earnest to bring sinners to Jesus; and sometimes you feel as if you could not do any more. You have not succeeded, perhaps, and you are disappointed and heart-weary. Well, when you are so, say to yourself, "My Lord knows all about His servant: 'Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well.'" Or, perhaps, your weariness comes of suffering; the pain is very sharp, you get very little rest; it seems to you as if all night long you had never slept. You steal a little sleep, and when you wake again, in the morning, you feel more tired than when you went to bed, and you say to yourself sometimes, "I am so weary and worn; will these pains never end? Is there no release from this my chain? Must I drag it always with me?" But when you fall back upon the pillow, oh so weary—and some of us know all about this weariness, for we have many times felt as if we could not even breathe, or lift a finger—remember then that "Jesus being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well." Oh, the deep sympathy of Christ! He knows it, not only by having heard of it, and seen it, but by having felt it. Go to Him without any fear, with a childlike confidence that He who has been tried in all points like as we are, and who was Himself compassed with infirmity, is able to succor us in all times of weariness; and be assured that, if we come to Him, He will give us rest.

I am just getting into my sermon now; all these observations which I have made are only preliminary, but the discourse itself will be a short one.

First, dear friends, if I have here a weary sinner who longs to find rest, I want *his conscience to paint a picture*; and after his conscience has painted it, I want *his faith to come and study it*; and when that has been done, I want *his gratitude and his love to remove that picture, and to paint another*.

I. First, then, I want every conscience here that is awakened, but has never been quieted by the blood of Christ, to PAINT A PICTURE; and that picture is the portrait of a wearied Savior, a Savior wearied by you, worn out by you; wearied, not with His journey, but *wearied with your sin*.

"Can that be?" someone asks. Yes, the Lord has said it in Isaiah: "You have wearied Me with your iniquities." You have wearied Christ by doing wrong, and doing it again and again, and sinning against conscience and against light. You are wearying my Lord, my loving Lord. In the Book of Amos, He says, "I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves." You know how they heap the sheaves on till the wagon creaks and the axle is ready to break; do you treat my Lord like an old wagon, and load on your sins, sheaf upon sheaf, till He can bear no more? He says that it is so with some of you; and I want you to paint the picture of a wearied Christ, wearied with your sin.

Perhaps in the case of some of you Christ is *wearied with your religion*. "Wearied with our religion?" asks one. When you get home, will you read the first chapter of the Book of the prophet Isaiah, and you will see there how God declares Himself to be tired of the empty formalism of the people? "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto Me; the new moons and Sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates: they are a trouble unto Me; I am weary to bear them." It was a weariness unto Him; and, if you pray, but do not pray sincerely, my Lord will be tired of hearing your

mockery of prayer. If you go to sacraments, or come to public worship, and think that this will save you, my Lord will be weary of you; for it is all a sham. There is a shell, but there is no kernel. You mock Him with the solemn sound upon a thoughtless tongue. You sit as His people sit, and your minds are far away on the mountains of vanity. You hear, you join in the hymn, and listen to the prayer; but there is no true worship, praise, or supplication. I tell you, sirs, my Lord is getting weary of you—getting sick and tired of your religion. What a picture! Christ wearied with sin, and wearied with dead religion!

I fear that I might also say that there are some here of whom Christ is *weary because of their broken promises*. When they were sick, they said, “We will repent if the Lord will spare our lives.” They vowed, when they were in danger, that they would turn to Him if He delivered them; but nothing of the kind has happened. My dear friend, you are still here undecided. Twelve months ago, you would not have believed that another year would have passed, and found you just where you are. The wheels of time are running round swiftly as flames of lightning, but you make no advance whatever; on the contrary, I am afraid that you are going backward; my Lord is getting wearied of your excuses and your putting off. “You have lied to Me,” says the Lord, and He will not always endure this treatment from you.

With some, my Lord is getting *weary because of their resistance to His Spirit*. Remember that God said of some who rebelled, and vexed His Holy Spirit, “My Spirit shall not always strive with man.” He shall not always be put to the indignity of striving with men who resist Him, as did their fathers. When holy thoughts arise, you quench them; and you have done this, oh, so long! How many years has this been the case with some of you? If some persons, whom I know, are provoked for only five minutes, their anger boils over; if they stood to be insulted for half-an-hour, they would tell it for a miracle. I know some with whom it is “a word and a blow;” and, often, the blow comes faster than the word. But only think of anyone having lived to provoke God for five years, ten years, twenty years, thirty years, forty years! Shall I go further? I believe that there are some here who have outdone the Israelites in the wilderness, for they provoked God forty years, but these people have provoked Him fifty, sixty, or even seventy years. My Lord is weary! My Lord is weary! You remember, when He grew weary with the Israelites, He lifted His hand to heaven, and swore that they should not enter into His rest. What was the sin that shut them out? “So then,” says the apostle, “they could not enter in because of unbelief.” Christ will not always be quibbled at, nor have His promises belied, nor His sweet invitations cast behind your backs. He is getting very tired and very weary of you; and I fear that He will one day say, “I will ease Me of My adversaries.” Be thankful that He has not said it yet, and turn to Him with true repentance and faith. But there is the picture, and to me it is a very pitiful picture, to see Jesus sitting down by the well of life eternal, wearied by men whom He came to bless.

II. Now I want you to **STUDY THAT PICTURE** of the wearied Christ. Look closely into it—not merely with the eyes of your conscience, but with the eyes of faith; and if you have not any, I must try to lend you mine. For a few minutes, I must believe for you, in the hope that what I tell you, and know to be true, God the Holy Spirit may enable you to believe, too, that you may yourselves spiritually see. Yes, I can see Jesus Christ, very weary, sitting on the well; let me look at Him a while. I like the picture so, it seems to comfort me as I look at it; for, albeit that He is very weary, yet I perceive that *He is waiting*. He sits on the well, for there is a woman coming—a poor fallen woman—and He is waiting to bless her. She ought to have been here early in the morning, and it is now twelve o’clock; the sun has reached its zenith, and is shining at its hottest. The woman will be here soon; Jesus is very weary, but He still waits on. Sinner, that is just the attitude of my Lord towards you. You say you cannot see Him; you have not the eyes of faith, but I can see Him. I remember, when I first saw Him, that He had long been waiting for Me. He waits to be gracious; Himself in no hurry, He allows the sinner time, wicked though the spending of that time is on the sinner’s part; but Christ spends that time in patiently waiting.

I must look again at the picture. As I look, I can see that He is not only waiting, but *He is watching*. I can see that He is turning His eyes toward the city gate. “She will be out very soon,” He says to Himself; “she must come here, and I know that she is coming.” He is not looking round at the scenery; that is not the chief thing to Him just now; He is looking for this poor soul that is coming. Oh, my dear friend, though you have wearied Christ, yet He is still waiting and watching for you! There is many an elect soul that my Lord is spying out over there in the first gallery, or up there in those boxes almost in the roof, or down below in that area, and Jesus is waiting and watching for them.

Now I must look again, for my Lord, though He is very weary, has at last spied out the person for whom He is waiting and watching. Here she comes; and now I perceive *how willing He is*. His heart seems to beat more quickly, His eyes are brighter than usual, He is not half as weary as He was. You may have seen the faint and tired hunter suddenly grow strong when, at last, he spies on the crag the deer he has come to seek; or the fisherman standing wearily in the stream, holding his rod, and ready to go home to his long-needed meal, but, at last, the salmon begins to pull away at his line, now how strong a man he is! He will go on for an hour at that work, and he will not want to eat or drink. The whole of his being is in the fishing. So was it with my blessed Master. That woman was coming, and Christ was “all there,” as we say. He was ready to speak the right word—a word in season to one who was weary—to speak the word of admonition, or of comfort, or of invitation; and He is “all here” at this moment. I thought, when I stood here tonight to speak to you, “I am constantly coming to the Tabernacle to talk to this great throng,” and something seemed to say to me, “You ought to be glad to have such an opportunity.” I thought, “Yes, and I am glad; and I will at my very best preach Christ to them as long as this tongue can move, for it is a delightful privilege to be allowed to tell men about my Master’s pardoning love.” But, oh, if He were here in bodily presence, He would do it so much better than any of us can, for His heart is so much fuller of love than our poor hearts are!

He was at the well, waiting, and watching, and willing; and though He was very weary, yet, when the woman came to Him, and she believed His message, *He saved her right away*. A weary Christ is just in order to save a weary sinner. Though He was tired, yet He could save that great sinner; and now, exalted in the highest heavens, though you have wearied Him with your sins, yet He will blot out those sins even now the moment you put your trust in Him; and even with His weary hand He will wipe away your transgressions. He is, in fact, so weary with your sins that He will put them away, that He and you, too, may never be wearied with them any more. He is so sick of your wanderings that He will end them, and receive you into His heart, that you may never wander any more. This picture looked very sad when I saw it at a distance, and when you saw it with the eyes of your conscience; but, oh, if you can put on the blessed glasses of faith, and spy it out as I have tried to describe it, the picture grows very lovely. “Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well”—waiting, and watching, and willing, and able to save—yes, so to save the woman as to make her the means of saving others. And, maybe, He will now save you who have wearied Him, and start you at once to bringing others to Him. I shall not be surprised if it is so; I shall be wondering if it does not happen, for we have sought it at His hands, and we expect to have it.

III. Now I want to ALTER THE PICTURE ON THE CANVAS.

I suppose I have not an artist here who can help me with his brush. I want to take a little out, and put a little in, for the new picture is to be a portrait of the weary Savior, sitting on the well, refreshed by the very sinner who had helped to weary Him. A woman must be put into the picture now, Mr. Painter. There she is, and the Master is saying to her, “Give Me a drink.” And did she do it? She did not dip her water pot into the well; but did she give Him a drink? Yes, that she did; I am sure she refreshed Him even more than she would have done by a draught of water, because when the disciples came back to their Master, He said to them, “I have meat to eat that you know not of;” so that He had evidently been refreshed; and how was it done? Why, by that woman! What had she given Him which had so refreshed Him?

Well, first, *she had put to Him various inquiries*. She began asking Him a number of questions and the Lord Jesus Christ is always refreshed when He meets with inquirers. If you only want to know all you can about Christ, that, will be some sort of refreshment to Him, for the mass of men pass by Him with indifference, so that He has to say—

*“Is it nothing to you, all you that pass by?
Is it nothing to you that Jesus should die?”*

I am sure that my Master will be glad if some of you will begin to inquire, as the woman did, “Are You greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well?” or, “From where, then, have You that living water?” I do not mind even if your question is a foolish one because that will only show the state of mind you are in, and Christ can cure the foolishness, and give you wisdom. Read the New Testament carefully, go down on your knees, and say, “Lord, teach me what the meaning of this passage is.” You will thus refresh my Master’s heart, and I shall expect to see you before long among the saved.

Next, *this woman refreshed the Savior's heart with prayer*, for when she had asked Him questions, she prayed in her poor way: "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come here to draw." She hardly knew what she said; but, as far as she knew anything, she meant to ask Jesus to give her what He had to give. Dear heart, may the Lord help you to begin to pray even now! The Master's spirit will be wonderfully refreshed by your supplication. He will have a deep draught of cold water from the well when He gets to hear your voice in prayer. "Take with you words," says the prophet Hosea, "and turn to the Lord: say unto Him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously." If one poor soul in this Tabernacle, far away at the back there, who cannot see, and perhaps can hardly hear, is moved to pray, "God be merciful to me a sinner," that petition will touch the heart of the Son of God; even on the throne of the highest heavens He will be refreshed, He always is when He hears a sinner pray.

But, further, this woman not only prayed, but *she confessed her sin*. The confession was not very explicit, but she acknowledged that what the Lord laid to her charge was true. "Sir," she said "I perceive that You are a prophet;" and to the men of the city she said, "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did." A hearty confession to God, while it is good for your soul, is good for Christ's soul, too; He gets refreshed thereby.

Best of all, *this woman believed in Jesus*. When He said that He was the Christ, she accepted His declaration as true; and therefore she said to the men of the city, "Is not this the Christ?" O my Lord, You will again see of the travail of Your soul, and You will be once more satisfied, if some poor sinner does but receive You! Does not a mother rejoice when, after her pangs, she fixes her eyes upon her first-born child? That is the very picture that Isaiah drew of the Lord Jesus Christ: "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied." Oh, to think that you and I can give satisfaction to the heart of Christ for all the anguish that He bore when He poured out His soul unto death! That is no metaphor of mine; it is a Scriptural symbol; I have only given you what the Holy Spirit Himself has said; and, oh! Dear friends, I do pray that some of you may thus gratify, satisfy, refresh, invigorate, delight, and glorify the Christ who now, though He reigns on high, has never forgotten that He did once sit on the well, and thirst; and while He so thirsted, saved a Samaritan sinner, and found Himself refreshed in the doing of it. God bless you, beloved, and bring you to the Savior, for His name's sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: *JOHN 4:1-29.*

I have often read this chapter in your hearing, and you have often read it yourselves; but the Word of God is not like the grapes of an earthly vine, which when once trodden are exhausted. You may come to Holy Scripture again and again; it is like an ever-flowing fountain, the more you draw from it, the more you may draw.

Verses 1-3. *When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (though Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples), He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee.*

Observe here that our Lord at first shunned conflict with the Pharisees. When He knew that they were jealous of Him, He went away from Judaea to a more remote district, "into Galilee." May He help us always to take that which may be the wiser course in every emergency! He was not guilty of cowardice; that, He could not be, for He was the bravest of the brave, and sometimes it will be most courageous on our part to shun a conflict. When you believe it is right to do so, never mind what anybody may say; but do as your Master did on this occasion.

4. *And He must go through Samaria.*

It is true that it was the nearest way, yet He might have gone round about; but He would not do so, for there were souls in Samaria who were to be blessed by His presence. He had a constraint upon Him, an inward impulse, so that "He must go through Samaria." Dear friends, whenever you feel the drawings of the Spirit in any particular direction, do not resist them, but yield yourself entirely to His gracious influence, even as your Lord did.

5, 6. *Then He came to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.*

About twelve o'clock, in the middle of the day, at high noon. You will observe, dear friends, that our Lord spoke to Nicodemus at night, but when He was about to talk to a fallen woman alone, He did it in the middle of the day. There is a time for everything; so let those who serve God be careful as to the best time of their service. Our Lord had a tender delicacy about Him which led Him instinctively to do the right thing at the right time.

7. *There came a woman of Samaria to draw water:*

That was not the usual time for drawing water; women generally went to the well in the morning and in the evening; but this poor fallen creature was not one with whom other women would associate, so she came alone, at the hour when the sun was hottest, and when nobody else would likely be there.

7. *Jesus said unto her, Give Me to drink.*

This was quite a natural way of beginning a conversation; and they will best touch other people's minds and hearts who do not harshly *interject* religion, but who wisely *introduce* it, leading up to it with a holy dexterousness such as our Lord always exhibited. He begins, not with any remarks about the woman's life, or her sin, or even about His great salvation, but with the simple request, "Give Me to drink."

8, 9. *(For His disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat). Then said the woman of Samaria unto Him, How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.*

But our Lord did not come to maintain these distinctions of race and caste. It is altogether foreign to the spirit of Christianity for nationalities to be despised. We sometimes hear people say of a person, "Oh, he is only So-and-So!" mentioning some nation that happens to be in the background. Christ was cosmopolitan, He loved men of every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people. To Him, there was neither Jew nor Samaritan; all such distinctions were banished from His mind. The woman might well say what she did, but her words would have sounded strangely out of place from the lips of Christ.

10, 11. *Jesus answered and said unto her, If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that says to you, Give Me to drink; you would have asked of Him, and He would have given you living water. The woman said unto Him, Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from where then have You that living water?*

Holy knowledge is very advantageous; it often is the means of breeding prayer: "If you knew . . . you would have asked . . . and He would have given." Therefore, beloved, let us teach the truth to all who come in our way, for it may be that we, too, shall meet with many of whom it can be said that, if they know what the gift of God is, they will ask for it; and if they ask for it, Christ will give it to them.

12. *Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?*

Ah, she did not know how infinitely superior Jesus was to Jacob! There could be no comparison between the two. Jesus is the true Father of all Israel, and in that respect He is like Jacob; but He is immeasurably greater than "father Jacob."

13, 14. *Jesus answered and said unto her, Whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*

Hence he will always be contented. He who has grace in his heart is a happy man: he grows more and more satisfied with the grace as it wells up increasingly in living power in his character and life. Oh, if you have never received that living water, may God give it to you just now! You shall never regret receiving it; but you shall rejoice over it evermore.

15. *The woman said unto Him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come here to draw.*

Up till now she has not imbibed a single idea from Christ. The Lord has spoken to her in parables, but she has not seen through the thin veil, so she has missed His meaning. Now He fires another shot, and deals with her in another fashion.

16-18. *Jesus said unto her, Go, call your husband, and come here. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, You have well said, I have no husband; for you have had five husbands; and he whom you now have is not your husband: in that said you truly.*

It was needful to awaken this woman to a sense of her sinfulness. It was no use putting on plasters where there was no knowledge of a sore, and no use attempting to fill the void where there was no feel-

ing of emptiness. So first she must be brought low, she must be made to see herself in the glass of truth, and then she would begin to understand her need of salvation. Oftentimes, in seeking to bless people, the kindest way is not to build them up, but to pull them down; not to begin to encourage their hopes, but to let them see how hopeless their case is apart from sovereign grace.

19. *The woman said unto Him, Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.*

She did not deny Christ's charges; she could not, for they were so accurately descriptive of her whole life.

20-23. *Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and you say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus said unto her, Woman, believe Me, the hour comes, when you shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship you know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour comes, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth:*

It is not the place which makes the true worship: it is the heart. It is not even the day; it is the state of a man's mind. It is not that the place is said to be holy, and therefore prayer is accepted; every place is equally holy where holy men worship God. All distinctions of buildings are heathenish; or, at the best, Jewish; they are done away with by Christ.

23-26. *For the Father seeks such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. The woman said unto Him, I know that Messiah comes, which is called Christ: when He is come, He will tell us all things. Jesus said unto her, I that speak unto you am He.*

And she believed it, for what she had heard had prepared her mind for this declaration. Christ's reading of her heart had convinced her that He was the Messiah. How many have been brought to Christ's feet by having their characters laid bare in the preaching of the Word! The very thing they did in secret, yes, the very thought of their heart which they never communicated even to their best friend, has been told them. Their dream has been revealed to them, and the interpretation of it, too; and they have been convinced that He who can thus read their hearts must be the Son of God.

27, 28. *And upon this came His disciples, and marveled that He talked with the woman; yet no man said, What do You seek? or, Why do You talk with her? The woman then left her water pot, and went her way into the city,—*

So that blessed interview was broken up by Christ's own disciples. What a set of blunderers we are! We sometimes come in between Christ and poor sinners whom He is going to bless. There is many a lover of stern doctrine, with an unsympathetic heart and a harsh tone of speech, who has intruded just when he was not wanted. If we cannot help poor souls, brothers and sisters, let us never hinder them. What Christian would not wish to help a poor sinner to her Savior? Yet these disciples, unconscious of what they were doing, had by their very looks driven this poor woman from their Master; but she "went her way into the city."—

28, 29. *And said to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?*

May we be made useful, even as this woman was, in bringing others to Christ' feet, for His dear name's sake! Amen.

HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—430, 431, 373.

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