



4 WAYS TO
ENCOUNTER

GRACE & TRUTH



A STUDY OF JOHN, CHAPTER 4



INTRODUCTION

Even in the super-connected society that we live in, there are some people that we just pass by and never meet. Sometimes, we miss an encounter that could challenge, teach, or change us.

Jesus, however, was always intentional with the people that he met. One example is in [John 4](#) when he stops and talks with the woman known as “the Woman at the Well.”

In this passage, Jesus is on his way to a place called Galilee. Instead of just continuing on, he chose to go through the town of Samaria, where he stopped beside a well. While he was there, a woman from the town of Samaria came to draw water. Their conversation went like this:

“...Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” ...The Samaritan woman said to him, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?”...Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is 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 do you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob? 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.” - John 4:7-15, ESV





I. GOD UNDERSTANDS WHAT WE ARE GOING THROUGH

He stopped in Samaria at the well because he was “wearied” and thirsty. God in the flesh was exhausted, needed to rest, and needed some water to drink. Not only that, but he had sent his disciples to get food because they were all hungry. This reminds us of Jesus's mortality and humanity (which is incredibly important).

Throughout his whole life and into his crucifixion, we clearly see that Jesus knew pain, loss, weariness, loneliness, grief, and all the other struggles in life. God understands what we are going through more than we can imagine. The writer of Hebrews reminds us that:

HEBREWS 4:15-16

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

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.”





How does knowing that Jesus experienced weariness and thirst help you relate to Him on a deeper level?

In what ways does Jesus's humanity give you comfort in your own struggles?

How does reflecting on Jesus's moments of pain and exhaustion encourage you in your daily life?

What can you learn from Jesus's vulnerability in seeking rest and nourishment, and how can it apply to your own self-care?



HEBREWS

4:15-16

READ THE FOLLOWING
TRANSLATIONS/PARAPHRASES OF HEBREWS 4:15-16.
CIRCLE/HIGHLIGHT WHAT STANDS OUT TO YOY.

NEW LIVING TRANSLATION

This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin. So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.

ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION



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

AMPLIFIED BIBLE

For we do not have a High Priest who is unable to sympathize and understand our weaknesses and temptations, but One who has been tempted [knowing exactly how it feels to be human] in every respect as we are, yet without [committing any] sin. Therefore let us [with privilege] approach the throne of grace [that is, the throne of God's gracious favor] with confidence and without fear, so that we may receive mercy [for our failures] and find [His amazing] grace to help in time of need [an appropriate blessing, coming just at the right moment].

THE MESSAGE (PARAPHRASE)

Now that we know what we have—Jesus, this great High Priest with ready access to God—let's not let it slip through our fingers. We don't have a priest who is out of touch with our reality. He's been through weakness and testing, experienced it all—all but the sin. So let's walk right up to him and get what he is so ready to give. Take the mercy, accept the help.





LET'S PRAY

Dear Heavenly Father,
I come to You today with a heart full of gratitude, knowing that You truly understand the struggles I face. I'm reminded of the moment when Jesus, wearied and thirsty, stopped at the well in Samaria. Jesus, in His humanity, experienced the same exhaustion and thirst that I often feel. How comforting it is to know that my Savior, though divine, also walked this earth in the fullness of human frailty.

Lord, I thank You for understanding pain, weariness, and loneliness. Jesus knew grief, loss, and every struggle that I encounter. You are not distant from my trials, but rather You are intimately aware of what it means to be human. You felt the sting of rejection, the heaviness of sorrow, and the exhaustion that comes with life's demands. I find so much comfort in this, knowing that I can come to You, knowing You understand my heart

Your Word in Hebrews 4:15-16 reminds me that I have a high priest who sympathizes with my weaknesses. Jesus faced temptation and trials yet remained sinless. So, I come before Your throne with confidence, seeking Your grace and mercy in my time of need.

Father, I ask for Your strength in moments of weariness. Help me to trust in Your perfect understanding and to rest in Your grace. Remind me that I am never alone, for You walk with me through every trial. Fill me with Your peace, knowing that You are the source of my strength.
In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.



2. GOD ALWAYS INITIATES THE CONVERSATION WITH US.

When he went to Samaria, he went to the well and started talking with the Samaritan woman first. Or to zoom out and see the big picture, God has been relentless to take the first step to call us to himself from the very beginning. Without nothing (including us) would exist.

When Adam and Eve sinned and hid from God, he went looking for them. God called to Moses, who had run away from his people many years before.

Then, of course, God sent his Son out of the throne room 2,000 years ago to put on human flesh in order to initiate the conversation with lost humanity that we might be saved. I love how Jesus said that he came to “seek and save those who are lost.” (Luke 19:10).

Why does God come to us? Because he loves us, and he knows we cannot get to him because of our sin. In fact, whenever any of us respond to God’s grace by faith and get saved, we can be certain that God has always been there, leading us to Himself.

LUKE 19:10

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”





How does knowing that God always initiates the conversation with us change the way you view your relationship with Him?

Can you identify moments in your life where God reached out to you, even when you felt distant or lost?

What does it mean to you that God actively seeks and saves those who are lost, like He did with the Samaritan woman and others in Scripture?

How does God's relentless pursuit of humanity through love and grace encourage you to draw closer to Him in your own faith journey?



LUKE 19:10

READ THE FOLLOWING STUDY NOTATIONS OF LUKE 19:10. CIRCLE/HIGHLIGHT WHAT STANDS OUT TO YOU.

ESV GLOBAL STUDY BIBLE

“Jesus’ encounter with Zacchaeus is an example of the kingdom of God bringing salvation to outcasts. It also provides a lesson on the proper place of money and possessions in God’s kingdom.”

THE NIV STUDY BIBLE NOTES

“The key verse in Luke’s Gospel. Son of Man. A Messianic title (see Introduction: Plan; see also note on Mk 8:31). to seek and to save. An important summary of Jesus’ purpose—to bring salvation, meaning eternal life (18:18), and the kingdom of God (18:25). See note on 15:32.”

NRSV CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS STUDY BIBLE

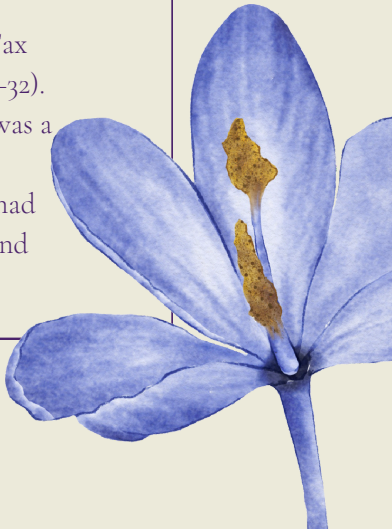

“To seek and to save the lost. God had promised to seek the lost members of his people (Ezek 34.4, 11–12, 16).”

NIV CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS STUDY BIBLE

“To seek and to save the lost. God had promised to seek the lost members of his people (Eze 34:4, 11 – 12, 16).”

HALLEYS BIBLE HANDBOOK NOTES

“Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector, head of a large office of tax collectors. Tax collectors were considered to be on a par with prostitutes (v. 7; Matthew 21:31–32). They were generally hated, because the taxes went to a foreign power. Jericho was a city of priests. Jesus chose a tax collector rather than a priest to stay with. Zacchaeus was converted immediately and gave genuine evidence of it. Jesus had told the rich young ruler to give all (Luke 18:22). Zacchaeus gave half (19:8), and Jesus pronounced him an heir of salvation.”





LET'S PRAY

Dear Heavenly Father,

I come before You in awe of Your relentless love and pursuit of me. You are always the one to initiate, the one who takes the first step, just as You did with the Samaritan woman at the well. I am humbled to know that You seek me out, even when I fall short or feel distant.

From the very beginning, when Adam and Eve hid from You, to the day You sent Jesus to seek and save the lost, You have always been calling us back to You.

Thank You, Lord, for not waiting for me to come to You, but for reaching out in love when I could not. Your grace is beyond what I can comprehend, and I am so grateful that You lead me gently toward Your presence. Help me to respond to Your grace with faith and trust, knowing that You are always near, guiding me closer to Your heart.

Lord, continue to draw me in, and help me to listen when You speak. May I never take for granted Your pursuit of my soul. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.





3. GOD LOOKS PAST OUR SITUATION AND SEES OUR NEED.

This Samaritan woman was somewhat of an outcast. The Jews had no respect for the Samaritans, she was a woman in an often male-dominated culture, she was not wealthy enough to have anyone else go get the water for her, she had a rough past and bad reputation because of failed marriages. But Jesus looked beyond her broken past and her current state and saw what she really needed: living water.

The all-seeing eye of God always looks past what we look like on the outside and sees our hearts. This is great news because only God is able to not only see what we really need, but he is able to provide it! Human nature is to drink the dirty, un-satisfying water from the well of their world instead of the pure, living, satisfying water that God provides.

JOHN 4:7-15

Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Please give me a drink." He was alone at the time because his disciples had gone into the village to buy some food.

The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans. She said to Jesus, "You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?"

Jesus replied, "If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water."

"But sir, you don't have a rope or a bucket," she said, "and this well is very deep. Where would you get this living water? And besides, do you think you're greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us this well? How can you offer better water than he and his sons and his animals enjoyed?"

Jesus replied, "Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life."

"Please, sir," the woman said, "give me this water! Then I'll never be thirsty again, and I won't have to come here to get water."





How does it comfort you to know that God looks beyond your past and current situation to see your deepest needs?

How can you trust God more to provide what you truly need, rather than focusing on external circumstances or appearances?

In what ways have you been drinking from the "unsatisfying water" of the world instead of seeking the living water that Jesus offers?

What does Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman teach you about how God views and loves those who feel like outsiders or outcasts?



JOHN 4:7-15

READ AND REFLECT ON THE FOLLOWING
TRANSLATIONS/PARAPHRASES OF JOHN 4:7-15.
CIRCLE/HIGHLIGHT WHAT STANDS OUT TO YOU.

ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION

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 is 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 do you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob? 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."

THE MESSAGE PARAPHRASE

A woman, a Samaritan, came to draw water. Jesus said, "Would you give me a drink of water?" (His disciples had gone to the village to buy food for lunch.)


The Samaritan woman, taken aback, asked, "How come you, a Jew, are asking me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" (Jews in those days wouldn't be caught dead talking to Samaritans.)

Jesus answered, "If you knew the generosity of God and who I am, you would be asking me for a drink, and I would give you fresh, living water."

The woman said, "Sir, you don't even have a bucket to draw with, and this well is deep. So how are you going to get this 'living water'? Are you a better man than our ancestor Jacob, who dug this well and drank from it, he and his sons and livestock, and passed it down to us?"

Jesus said, "Everyone who drinks this water will get thirsty again and again. Anyone who drinks the water I give will never thirst—not ever. The water I give will be an artesian spring within, gushing fountains of endless life."

The woman said, "Sir, give me this water so I won't ever get thirsty, won't ever have to come back to this well again!"



LET'S PRAY

Dear Heavenly Father,
Thank You for seeing beyond my circumstances and looking straight into my heart. Just as Jesus saw the Samaritan woman's true need for living water, I know that You see my deepest needs as well. In a world that often judges based on appearance or past mistakes, I am grateful that You look past all of that and focus on what really matters—my heart and my relationship with You.

Lord, I confess that too often I have sought satisfaction from the world's empty wells, drinking from what cannot truly fulfill.

I ask for Your forgiveness and help to turn to You, the source of living water that satisfies completely. Fill me with Your love, grace, and peace, and remind me that only You can meet my deepest needs.

Thank You, God, for loving me despite my flaws and failures, and for providing what I truly need. Help me to trust in Your provision and to look to You in times of brokenness or doubt. May I always seek the living water You offer, and may my life be a reflection of Your grace and love. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.





4 . W H E N W E E N C O U N T E R G O D , W E R E C E I V E E T E R N A L L I F E .

God stopped by the well that day to have a face-to-face encounter with this woman because he showed up where he would be welcomed. He understood what she had been through. He initiated the conversation. He looked past her situation and saw her need. And then she received what Paul in Romans 6:23 calls the “free gift of God”: eternal life.

How could he offer that to humanity?

Because after Jesus died on the cross and was laid in a tomb, he (the Living Water) burst forth from the ground! And this same constant stream of living water will still be flowing throughout eternity. John tells us in the last chapter of the last book of the Bible of the “river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb” (Revelation 22 [1-2]).

Because Jesus lived and lives again, we can live again - forever.

Just like this Woman at the Well, wherever you are on your journey, God is waiting patiently, looking past your situation, offering you eternal life. All you have to do is receive it. Here is God’s promise to us through the prophet Isaiah:

“Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat!” - Isaiah 55:1

If you want to have an encounter with God, too, pray this prayer:

Dear God,

Thank you for speaking to me today. I believe in Jesus and his death, burial, and resurrection. Forgive me for my sin and wash me clean. I receive your living water and eternal life for my soul.

In Jesus’s name, Amen

R O M A N S 6 : 2 3

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.

R E V E L A T I O N 2 2 : 1 - 2

Then the angel showed me a river with the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb. It flowed down the center of the main street. On each side of the river grew a tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, with a fresh crop each month. The leaves were used for medicine to heal the nations.

I S A I A H 5 5 : 1

“Is anyone thirsty?

Come and drink—

even if you have no money!

Come, take your choice of wine or milk—
it’s all free!





How does knowing that God patiently waits for us, looking past our situation, encourage you to seek Him in your daily life?

In what ways do you see God initiating a conversation with you, just as He did with the Woman at the Well?

How does the promise of eternal life through Jesus' resurrection shape your understanding of your relationship with God and your future?

What might be holding you back from fully receiving the "living water" that God is offering, and how can you respond to His invitation today?



JOHN 4:39-41

READ THE PASSAGES/NOTES BELOW.
UNDERLINE/HIGHLIGHT WHAT
STANDS OUT TO YOU.

Many Samaritans from the village believed in Jesus because the woman had said,

“He told me everything I ever did!”

When they came out to see him, they begged him to stay in their village.

So he stayed for two days, long enough for many more to hear his message and believe..

Then they said to the woman,

“Now we believe, not just because of what you told us, but because we have heard him ourselves.

Now we know that he is indeed the Savior of the world.” - John 4: 39-41

ESV GLOBAL STUDY BIBLE

Savior of the world.

The Samaritans’ response to Jesus marks the first indication of the universal scope of his saving mission (compare 10:16; 11:51–52; Acts 1:8).

ACTS 1:8



But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

JOHN 10:16

I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock with one shepherd.

JOHN 11:51-52

He did not say this on his own; as high priest at that time he was led to prophesy that Jesus would die for the entire nation. And not only for that nation, but to bring together and unite all the children of God scattered around the world.





LET'S PRAY

Dear Heavenly Father,
Thank You for seeking me out just as You sought the Woman at the Well. I am in awe that You look past my circumstances, my failures, and my mistakes to see my deepest need for Your living water. Thank You for offering the free gift of eternal life through Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection.

Lord, I come to You today, acknowledging my thirst for something more, something eternal. Just as You promised through the prophet Isaiah, I come to You with empty hands, ready to receive the living water that only You can provide.

I am so grateful for Your patience and relentless love, knowing that You meet me where I am, offering life that will flow for all eternity.

I ask for Your forgiveness for the times I have turned to other sources to fill the emptiness in my heart. Cleanse me, Lord, and help me to fully receive the eternal life You offer through Jesus. Fill me with Your presence and guide me to live in a way that reflects the new life You've given me.

In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.



